



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Quest Lesson A-4

The Problem: Among the deepest questions that confront us in life are these: Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going to? Philosophers, scientists, and religious leaders have presented many different and even contradictory answers. Some attempt to give a “scientific” explanation of the origin of life. They argue that complex organisms developed from simple ones. These simple organisms appeared when conditions were favorable to their formation, and then evolved into higher forms of life.

This theory of evolution is given a slightly different explanation by some Christians who try to reconcile the Bible with the so-called findings of science. They believe the theory called theistic evolution. They argue that evolution was the process used by God to bring our world and its inhabitants into being. They say God created the simplest form of life which over a period of aeons developed into life as we know it today. They think that the days of creation week (Genesis 1) are a reference to those aeons during which the evolutionary process was taking place.

Creationists take the Bible as it reads, and accept the Genesis account as a literal explanation of how God created our world and its inhabitants. They argue that if you believe the Bible you cannot accept the theory of evolution. In fact, they point out that it takes more faith to believe the theory of evolution than it does to believe the Bible.

Our concern is to discover from the Bible how our universe and our world came to exist. Which belief is more consistent with the Bible account, theistic evolution or creationism?

Objectives

First, we will discover what the Bible says about the origin of our universe?

Second, we will see how our world and its earliest inhabitants came into existence.

Third, it is important to answer the question we have raised: What does the Bible teach, evolution or creation?

Fourth, we will consider the kind of being mankind was before he chose to sin.

Fifth, it will be shown that God's purpose is to bring mankind into the state of perfection which he originally enjoyed.

I. The Origin of the Universe

Does the Bible say that the universe just evolved in some naturalistic way, or did God create it?

The Word

1. How were the heavens with their planets and stars brought into existence? Psalm 33:6, 9.
2. How did God bring the angels and other inhabitants of the universe into existence? Psalm 148:1-5; Nehemiah 9:6.
3. How much of our universe did Christ bring into existence? Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2.

Explanation: The Bible teaches that the universe and its inhabitants came into being in response to God's command. It says nothing about a slow development over billions of years. There are other worlds in the universe which are inhabited by perfect beings whose total loyalty is given to God, their Creator.

Relevance: Does God also have your loyalty?

II. The Origin of Our World

How long did it take God to bring our world and our first parents into existence? Let's look at the Bible account.

The Word

4. What did God create on each of the first six days of creation week? Genesis 1.
 - a. Day 1
 - b. Day 2
 - c. Day 3
 - d. Day 4
 - e. Day 5
 - f. Day 6
5. What was created on the seventh day? Genesis 2:1-3.
6. What phrase does the Bible repeatedly use indicating that the days of creation week were 24 hour periods? Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; (compare Exodus 27:20-21; Leviticus 24:2-3).
7. What later reminder of creation week clearly established that the days of creation week were 24 hour periods? Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; (compare Exodus 27:20-21; Leviticus 24:2-3).
8. How were man and woman brought into existence? Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7, 21-22.
9. From what kind of material did God create our world? Hebrews 11:3.

Explanation: The phrase "evening-morning," as it is used in the Old Testament, always refers to a 24 hour period. The Hebrew word for day is yom. In the Old Testament, whenever yom is accompanied by a definite number, it means a literal day of 24 hours. (See Genesis 7:11; Exodus 16:1; Leviticus 23:34; Ezekiel 45:21; Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:7). Adam was created on the sixth day. If the days mean aeons, or long ages, he would have been much older at death than the 930 years given in Genesis 5:5. The Sabbath commandment (Exodus 20:8-11) establishes that the six days of creation week were literal. Surely God was not commanding the Israelites to rest for an aeon! The constant Old Testament references to the importance of the Sabbath (a 24 hour period) prove conclusively that the days of creation week were literal days.

Relevance: In six literal days God created our world and its first inhabitants. Genesis 1 cannot be made to teach the geological ages theory. By a remarkable succession of miracles, God brought the world into existence. (See Acts 14:15-17:24; Job 26:7).

III. Evolution or Creation?

As we have seen, the Bible teaches creation not evolution. The Genesis account cannot be brought into agreement with the so-called facts of science by means of theistic evolution. In fact, evolution is not fact, it is theory. Let us list a few reasons why the evolutionary theory is less credible than the Bible account of creation.

1. The idea that life began by the appearance or creation of the simplest possible organism (protoplasm) is not demonstrable by any scientific method. Such a belief is mere theory! By contrast, the Bible account does not claim to be demonstrable scientifically. We can have confidence in Bible truth because of many other evidences. Hence, accepting the Bible and the God of the Bible, we have no difficulty accepting by faith the Genesis account.
2. The evolutionary theory that life developed from simple to complex forms has never been proved scientifically:
 - a. The fossil remains in the rocks do not demonstrate any such evolutionary process.

- b. Variation in plant and animal life is always within a particular kind or type. They reproduce "after their kind." There is no evidence of new kinds evolving. Cats do not become dogs, rose bushes do not develop into redwood trees, and apes do not become men.
 - c. It has not been proved that so-called vestigial structures in many animal bodies serve no useful purpose at any period of life, or that they once functioned as part of a different type of organism.
 - d. The chemical similarities between the blood of humans and the blood of some animals does not prove a common ancestor. This is pure speculation! The fact is that the diets of man and some animals contain similar chemical substances. You would expect their bodies to have some chemical substances in common.
3. The Christian Gospel of spiritual restoration and salvation through Christ is quite irrelevant and pointless if theistic evolution is accepted. The Bible teaches the fall of man into sin, necessitating the sacrificial death of the Savior. Evolution teaches the rise and progress of man from primitivism to perfection. There is no need of the death of the Son of God if the evolutionary theory is to be believed. Christianity and evolution are totally incompatible.

"We must conclude that evolution remains an undemonstrated theory which is maintained not by scientific findings but by speculative interpretations of scientific findings. It actually requires more faith on the part of its adherents than does the Genesis account of special creation." T. H. Jemison, *Christian Beliefs*, p. 122.

IV. Mankind in His Perfect State

In his sinless state immediately after creation, mankind was spiritually, intellectually, and physically perfect. He had no fallen nature, no bias toward evil, and no moral or mental blemishes.

The Word

- 10. How does the Bible describe man in his earliest state? Hebrews 2:7-8; Genesis 1:26-28.
- 11. What event after the fall into sin indicates that man and woman originally had face to face communion with God? Genesis 3:8-9.
- 12. Was it possible for man to disobey God and die? Did he have the power of choice? Genesis 2:16-17.

Explanation: Adam and Eve were sinless beings in a sinless world. No taint of evil or suffering marred their happy existence. They had dominion over God's other creatures, and enjoyed unveiled communion with their Creator. They had the power of choice, and they could be tempted at one point. God wanted to test them to see if they would love and serve Him willingly. He did not want forced obedience. God did not create robots but thinking, feeling, choosing human beings.

Relevance: God wants us to serve Him because we love Him, not because of fear or force. Only the allegiance of love is acceptable to the Lord. (See John 14:15, 23; 15:10).

V. The Divine Plan of Re-creation

The Bible says that God's plan is to restore man to that state of spiritual perfection in which he was created. Our Creator is also a Re-Creator. The purpose of life now is that by His Spirit within we might be made more and more like Him in character. When Jesus comes again we will be given the final touch of glorification, and restored to the state of perfection which Adam and Eve enjoyed after creation.

The Word

- 13. What is the "new man" which we are to put on? Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:9-10. °
- 14. As the second Adam, what does Jesus Christ give to those who believe? 1 Corinthians 15:45-49; (compare verses 22-23).
- 15. When will our world again be recreated in its state of Edenic beauty and perfection? Revelation 21:1-5.

Explanation: Creation and re-creation are the work of our God. Father, Son and Holy Spirit were each the Creator, and each are supremely involved in the great work of bringing man back to his original state of perfection. God is in no sense responsible for evil. He created angels and men free from all impurity, and gave them a perfect universe in which to live. As we will discover in a future lesson, evil was brought into the universe, and into our world, by forces alien to God and antagonistic to His will. The plan of salvation is God's blueprint for purging the universe of evil and restoring man to the Eden which he lost.

Relevance: Christ wishes to re-create your life and restore you to the spiritual image of your Maker. Are you willing to give Him that opportunity?

Review Questions

1. True or False

- a. The Bible teaches evolution.
- b. God created our world in one week.
- c. Evolution is scientific fact.
- d. The Bible teaches the fall of man, not the theory of evolution.

2) Discuss: If the theory of evolution were correct, why would Christ have needed to come and die for man's sin? Couldn't God just have allowed man to evolve further to the point at which he would not sin any more? In other words, what is the point of the Christian message if evolution is correct?