



Think & Believe

A Publication of Alpha Omega Institute

May/June 1989; Vol. 6, No. 3

Evolution: An Old Idea

by Dave & Mary Jo Nutting

Many people believe that Darwin originated the idea of evolution. Actually, the idea has been around for a very long time. Two thousand years before Christ, the Chinese believed that evolution had occurred from simple plants on up through grubs, insects, birds, leopards, and horses to man. The ancient religions of India had an evolutionary base, as did those of the Persians, Syrians, and Egyptians. In fact, the only ancient religion that did not have an evolutionary base was the Hebrew religion (Morris, Henry. *The Troubled Waters of Evolution*. p. 68)

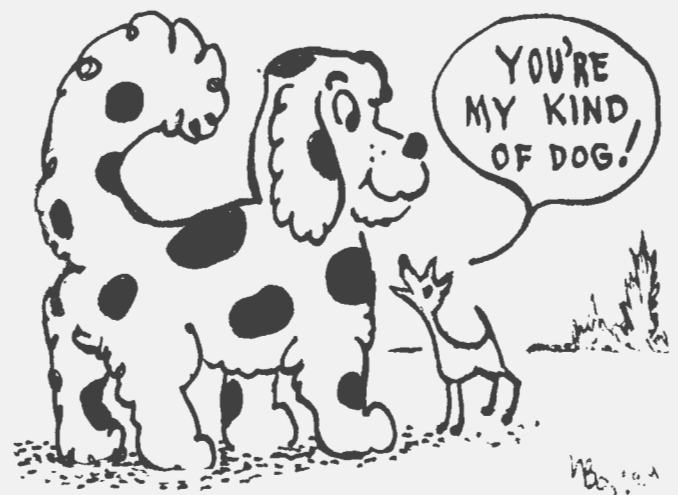
Aristotle and other influential Greek philosophers accepted evolutionary ideas similar to those advanced today. While many of these philosophers were outright atheists, some believed in God, yet rejected Divine revelation and intervention in human affairs. Although many of Aristotle's views are now known to be wrong, they were considered authoritative in science for hundreds of years and had an impact even on the early Christian church. Although most Christians accepted the Biblical account of Creation and the Flood as accurate history, some of the church leaders began to look for rationalistic explanations of Biblical miracles or to interpret them in a symbolic way. This led to questioning the historical accuracy of the Scriptures and to doubting Divine intervention in the affairs of men.

In the 1700's and 1800's, great strides were made in understanding the physical world through careful scientific investigation. Men like Newton, Boyle, Kepler, Pascal and others made great discoveries during this era. Most of these great men of science accepted the Bible as literal history and believed in a literal Creation and Flood. At the same time, though, there was a move by others to look for purely rationalistic and materialistic ways to understand earth history.

Men like Descartes and Rousseau viewed God as uninterested and uninvolved with His creation. Miracles were rejected and naturalistic explanations were sought.

This, then, was the intellectual climate which set the stage for wide-spread acceptance of evolution in Europe. In addition, many people were tired of the dogmatism and over-bearing authority of the church (at that time more of a political institution than a spiritual one). They were ready for a change.

Darwin was not the first to propose an evolutionary model. Lamarck and others (including Erasmus Darwin, Charles Darwin's grandfather) had already put forth the major tenets of evolution. Men like Hutton and Lyell had already reinterpreted the rock layers and fossils as evidence of long ages rather than evidence of a world-wide catastrophic flood. Darwin drew heavily upon these earlier works. His ideas caught on quickly because the climate was ripe for (R)evolution. Evolution became the scientific justification for rejecting God.



*The Same Species!
See Spotlight on Science*

NOTES & QUOTES

■ Neanderthal Could Talk — at least according to a recent newspaper article. *The Daily Sentinel* (April 27, 1989) reports the discovery of a bone which indicates Neanderthals were capable of modern speech. This just bears out what we have often said — there is nothing about Neanderthal that should classify him as anything less than human. Yet pictures in books still continue to show him as a brutal ape-like creature — contrary to the evidence!

■ “Changing views of early man were highlighted in the February 27, 1989 *U.S. News and World Report*. The general drift of the article is that our ancestors appear to have been much more like us, and less ape-like, than previously thought. Anthropologists are basing these conclusions on a growing collection of ancient human artifacts. Nevertheless, the article assumes that evolution is a fact, so it engages in a lot more story-telling than it does describing evidence.” (*Bible-Science Newsletter*, May 1989)

■ *Creation Magazine* (Sept.-Nov. 1988) has an interesting article by Ian Taylor about *Archaeopteryx*, the supposed transition between reptiles and birds. Taylor makes a good point as did Sir Fred Hoyle elsewhere, that the fossil was indeed a forgery. He also delves into a character study of the people involved. Interestingly, he shows that two giants of evolution, Darwin and Huxley, did not accept this as a transition. Regardless, *Archaeopteryx* is not now, nor has it ever been, the transition high school textbooks claim it is.

■ *Science Magazine* (April 14, 1989) reports on a computer simulation of the solar system's planetary motion. It appears that the solar system reveals an element of chaotic motion especially among the inner planets, including earth. It seems that the assumption of 4.5 billion year universe could come under serious attack since these types of “chaotic motions” multiplied through time would pose great problems. If modern evolutionary science didn't revolve around the unshakable idea of an ancient universe, it would certainly see the evidence for its youthfulness. Perhaps this small amount of “chaotic motion” could be blamed upon the fall which affected a perfectly orderly system or perhaps on activity surrounding the time of the global flood.

■ “Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that a *spirit is manifest in the laws of the universe* — a spirit vastly superior to that of man, and one in the face

of which we with our modest powers must feel humble.” (Albert Einstein, from *Summit Ministries' Journal*, April 1989)

■ “If the world's finest minds can unravel only with difficulty the deeper workings of nature, how could it be supposed that those workings are merely a mindless accident, a product of blind chance?” (Paul Davies, *Superforce*, p. 236, as reported in *Summit Ministries' Journal*, April 1989).

■ **As you travel this summer, keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities to share the evidence for creation.** We have found people to be particularly open to talk as they view the wonders in our nation's parks and national monuments.

■ In our July/August, 1984 issue of *Think & Believe*, we discussed the tremendous evidence of design as illustrated by the woodpecker. Some additional information was reported in the Reader's Digest book *Fact & Fallacies* (1988, p. 74). The woodpecker beats its head against a tree 15-16 times per second. Its head is travelling at 1300 miles per hour — more than twice the speed of a bullet. The stress produced upon impact is about 1000 times the force of gravity (or 250 times the force to which our recent space shuttle astronauts were subjected). If the woodpecker doesn't happen to hit just right, that's it for him. Fortunately for him, “the woodpecker's superbly coordinated neck muscles keep its head and beak in a perfectly straight line.” That doesn't sound like random, accidental, lucky mutations, does it?



*The Woodpecker,
An Engineering Feat!*

SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

The Origin of Species

Although Darwin's famous book was entitled *The Origin of Species*, today there is even disagreement over what constitutes a species. Generally, the term is defined as a group of similar animals or plants which are able to breed and produce fertile offspring. However, when it comes down to deciding just what is and what isn't a species, there are many practical difficulties. Even biologists who specialize in this type of work cannot seem to agree.

From an evolutionary perspective, new species must be originating all the time in order to explain the diversity of life. However, according to observations of the living world, new species are not rushing into existence today. The rule instead seems to be extinction, and apparently the same thing was true in the past.

Some modern-day evolutionists try to explain these observations of the fossil and living world by an idea they call "punctuated equilibrium." The idea is that species exist at equilibrium for long periods of time. Then, for some reason a small group becomes isolated and is exposed to radically different environmental conditions. It must either change rapidly to adapt to the new environment or die out. Thus, they believe that "evolution" of radically different forms takes place quite rapidly, over just a few generations, when conditions are severe and small breeding populations are involved.

The big questions are, "Just how much can a species change?" and "What are the mechanisms of change?" Unfortunately, the answers to these questions are not quick in coming. We do see tremendous variety possible within any one "species." But variety does not mean evolution! Consider, for example, the dogs. Who would ever suspect that a Pekinese and a Saint Bernard are of the same species? Yet they are! At least in some types of animals, there seems to be room for lots of variation within the species. We also know, from studying dogs and other animals and plants, that this variation comes about quite readily just by selective breeding — combining the genes which are already there in new ways. This is known as genetic recombination. It is not evolution in itself because it does not involve any new genetic information.

Evolutionists suggest that this mechanism can eventually lead to vastly different kinds of organisms. However, this is merely speculation — an extrapolation of familiar processes into the

mysterious reaches of the unknown. Biblical creationists believe that God created each "kind" of organism with the ability to vary to adjust to changing conditions, but with built-in limits. These "kinds" appear to have been wider in scope than the "species" in most cases, perhaps being roughly equivalent to the genus or family level in modern classification schemes.

Conditions after the Flood would have been ideal to encourage diversification within the kinds. As the animals came off the ark and spread out, they faced new and different conditions. Because of relatively small populations at first, "new" traits could appear through ordinary genetic recombinations. (Remember, this is not "evolution" since no new genetic information is involved.) These "new" traits could easily become fixed in the population as organisms became established in new niches. Later, as populations grew and organisms became better established, the rate of diversification would slow. Thus, the animals we see today are descendants of the various "kinds" of animals that came off the ark. As such, they are related only to others within the kind, and the kinds themselves are distinct from each other, having been created especially by God and commanded by Him to reproduce "after their own kind." This model seems to be consistent with observations in both the living and fossil world.

Creation Magazine

Have you been wanting a quality magazine on Creation for your whole family? There is an excellent one available which is published in Australia. *Creation: Ex Nihilo* is a very well-done magazine containing interesting and educational articles on a wide variety of creation topics: Biblical, scientific and philosophical. Each issue contains a special children's section. There are many feature articles and short highlights for the layman as well as more technical articles for those wishing to delve more deeply into the subject. This is a high quality production you can feel proud to share. For a limited time, you can obtain a free sample copy — just drop us a note in the enclosed envelope.

Think and Believe is published bi-monthly by Alpha Omega Institute, P.O. Box 4343, Grand Junction, CO 81502. Editors: Dave & Mary Jo Nutting. Single copies of this publication are sent free upon request. Please write for permission to reprint material in this publication. Alpha Omega Institute is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your donations are tax deductible.

Calendar of Events

- May 7: Seminar, Montrose Christian Church, Montrose, Colorado – Contact Richard Godsil (303) 249-5432 for more information.
- May 20-21: Seminar, Redstone Church, Redstone, Colorado – Contact Doug Self (303) 963-3783 for more information.
- May 28: Morning Service, Glade Park, Colorado – Contact Del Golike (303) 243-6147 for more information.
- June 4-7: Christian Church Senior Camp, Newcastle, Colorado – Contact Ronnie Hanna (303) 249-7744 for more information.
- June 11-16: Highschoolers' Week on Campus, Ozark Christian College, Joplin, Missouri – Contact Rex Wolfe (417) 624-2518 for more information.
- June 18-21: Creationfest, Walker Christian Church, Walker, Missouri – Contact Dave Cochran (417) 465-2582 for more information.
- July 30-Aug. 4: YWAM, Discipleship Training School, Cimarron, Colorado.
- Aug. 6-10: Alpha Omega Mountain Science Adventure, Camp Id-Ra-Ha-Je, Somerset, Colorado – Call (303) 245-5906 for more information.
- Aug. 13-17: Alpha Omega Family Mountain Adventure, Camp Redcloud, Lake City, Colorado – Call (303) 245-5906 for more information.
- Aug. 20-25: Alpha Omega Singles' Mountain Adventure, Camp Redcloud, Lake City, Colorado – Call (303) 245-5906 for more information.
- Sept. 12-13: IFCA Pastors' Conference, Twin Peaks Bible Camp, Collbran, Colorado – Contact Cal Shepard (303) 434-8308 for more information.
- Oct. 1-3: Seminar, First Baptist Church, Golden, Colorado – Contact Ron Bridges (303) 279-4605 for more information.

Fall Scheduling

NOW is the time to schedule a creation seminar for the coming fall or winter. These fascinating slide-illustrated seminars deal with topics such: Making a Monkey out of a Man, Old Fossils Tell a New Story, It Must Have Been Designed, What about the Dinosaurs, Dating: A Timely Issue, and many others. Presentations can be geared for any age-group, 4th grade through adult, and are designed to fit the needs of any group: church, school or university. For more information, write soon or call us at (303) 245-5906.

TRIVIA QUESTION

What is packed with excitement, is educational, is recreational, is super fun for the whole family and is very affordable?

Answer: You guessed it! Alpha Omega's Mountain Adventures!

August 6-11 Camp Id-Ra-Ha-Je

Cost: between \$165 - \$275 total for a family of 4. Especially meant for home-educators.

August 13-18 Camp Redcloud Family Adventure

Cost between \$295 - \$515 total for a family of 4. This is not your usual camp!

August 20-25 Camp Redcloud for Singles

Cost \$195.

Cost includes all meals, lodging, activities, and full creation/evolution seminar — write or call for details.



Alpha Omega Institute

P.O. Box 4343
Grand Junction, CO 81502
(303) 245-5906

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

*Note enclosed!
A report on the highs
and lows of Europe enclosed.
What's next??*

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Grand Jct., CO
Permit No. 393