

Think Believe

Discover Creation...Worship the Creator

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Why believe in the Genesis Account of Creation? *By Steven Thornberg, Ph.D.*

The Christian position of the literal six-days of creation is under attack but that is nothing new.

Often, we think that the theory of evolution began with Charles Darwin in the 1800s. However, the origins of the cosmos, earth, plants, animals, insects, and life itself have been debated since the beginning of recorded history. Great ancient philosophers like Aristotle (development of the imperfect to the perfect), Plato (the universe contains all forms of existence), and Democritus (atoms to life) wrestled with our origins.

Similarly, theories about the origin of all things via a divine being (i.e., God) have a parallel history dating back into ancient times. Heraclitus believed things were formed according to a rational process in accordance with the Logos. The Stoics added that God was directing the result through His power.

Recently, intelligent design is being debated as a rational alternative to evolution because of the irreducible complexity observed in countless systems of the living world. In this challenge to Darwinian evolution, a designer must have, at

a minimum, made and assembled all the parts of certain complex systems since, without any one of these parts, the system would not function. (Look up examples of intelligent design in the cell, body, and nature, for some amazing evidences for a creator!)

While we have plenty of theories put forth by theologians, philosophers, and scientists, the only eye witness to creation was God! Therefore, any story about creation which people develop is based on their own imagination, biases, and philosophies.

Why is believing in the biblical account of creation important? We all have a built-in desire to know the answer to questions like: Who am I? Where do I come from? Why do I exist? What is the meaning of life? The answers to these

questions are critical since they drive a person's thinking, actions, and reactions.

With a loving, all-knowing, all-powerful creator, life has meaning, hope, purpose, morality (a sense of good/evil), and destiny.

Qualities such as mercy, gentleness, and love are viewed as

admirable and a reflection of the Creator's character.

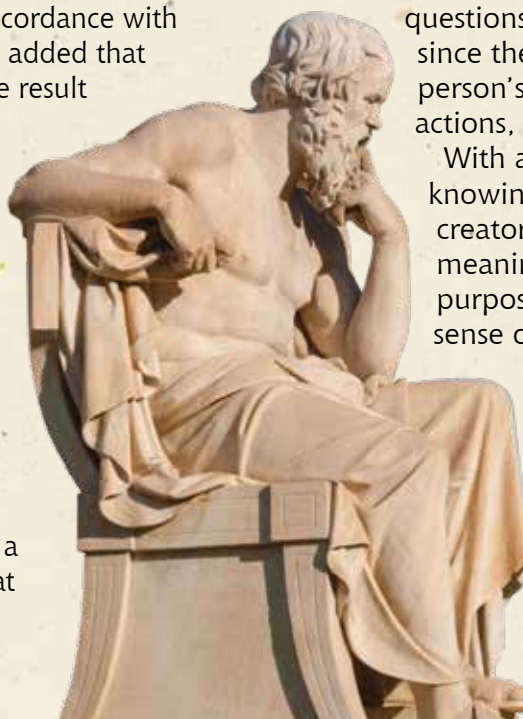
Without a creator, we are just the product of random chance events. Ultimate meaning does not exist (except to blindly further the species); hope does not exist (everything is doomed to die and turn to dust); purpose does not exist (except to survive); morality does not exist (murder, abuse, lying, stealing, etc. are merely acts toward survival). Noble character qualities such as generosity, mercy, gentleness, and love are viewed as weaknesses per the survival-of-the-fittest mantra.

I have studied the arguments and theories for evolution as well as theistic evolution (one of many varieties of old-earth creationism) and have found both wanting. Only the biblical, six-day creation fits the evidence (historical, archaeological, geological, biological, etc.).

Jesus believed and taught creation (Mat. 19:4-6, 23:35, 24:27-29, etc.) as did Peter (2 Pet. 3:1-7) and Paul (Rom. 5:12).

At AOI, we strive to engage in civil, respectful dialogue with everyone – including those who passionately (sometimes vehemently) disagree with our stance of biblical creation.

I encourage you to undertake a deep, soul-searching look into the issue of the origin of life and the universe. As I did many years ago, look at the data/facts for yourself. See where the evidence, and not the philosophies, stories, and theories, leads you. **AOI**

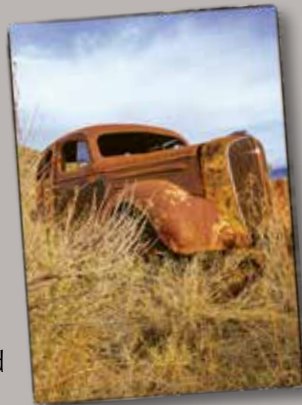


The Biology of Aging by Mark Sonmor

Upon joining AOI, Dave cautioned me against making the type size of Think & Believe too small so “old” people like him could still read it. Since then, *my eyes have committed mutiny* – insisting I bring all reading material to a focal plane eighteen annoying inches from my face.

I can hear some of you saying, “If you think that’s bad, just wait!” – and you’re right. As we age, everything that’s supposed to be firm, isn’t and what’s supposed to be flexible, stiffens. This means our hearts have to work harder, our gums recede, and we make more trips to the bathroom. Our metabolism slows down, memory gets faulty, and we lose muscle. In fact, doctors estimate that between the ages of 20 and 75, humans lose 40% of their fast-twitch muscle fiber.

Biologically, aging is the sum total of a number of degenerative processes. Throughout life, our cells wear out and replace themselves on a regular basis. A red blood cell, for example, only lasts an average of 120 days. During this division/replication process, genetic information can be damaged. When this happens, special proteins and enzymes repair the DNA, but in so doing, they deplete the limited supply of molecules and



enzymes necessary for this repair. That exhaustion eventually leads to unchecked damage and disfunction.

In each cell of our bodies, DNA condenses into bundles called chromosomes. At the ends of each chromosome, are telomeres which protect the DNA. With each cell division, telomeres shorten and eventually leave the genetic material exposed.

Genes can be “turned on” or “turned off” by adding or suppressing certain markers in a process called methylation. Alterations in these markers increase with age and damage the gene’s ability to express itself properly. This can lead to cancer, atherosclerosis and dementia.

As the basic building blocks of our bodies, proteins are essential to a myriad of functions. When they are folded improperly, it is the job of chaperone proteins to repair or destroy them. As we age, chaperone proteins can malfunction allowing a buildup of non-functional proteins leading to more disfunction and disease.

As cells age, they can decrease in functionality and stop dividing. Known as cellular senescence, the immune system normally destroys these cells in a process called phagocytosis. As we age, however, the immune system loses its efficiency allowing these dysfunctional cells to accumulate.

Another factor contributing to aging

is the degeneration of stem cells. These “self-renewing” cells are found throughout the body and act as sources for replenishing dying or damaged tissues. However, this ability declines with age causing older individuals to heal more slowly.

The problem of aging has many factors relating directly or indirectly to the breakdown, or mutation, of the genetic code. Like a car, we eventually rust away from the inside out and no amount of paint can stop the molecular deterioration.

While environmental attacks such as UV radiation and oxidation account for some of the degeneration, they don’t explain all the errors in transcription and the seeming “planned obsolescence” of these systems.

Biblically, we understand death is a sober reality resulting from sin and the Fall. In fact, the Apostle Paul says the entire creation groans, waiting for deliverance from this corruption (Rom 8:21). However, to many evolutionists, these harmful mutations are actually seen as essential for life. After all, it’s reasoned, they provide variation on which selection can operate.

Can all these genetic mistakes provide the basis for upward evolution? Or, is this a wishful attempt to paint a happy face on a rusting genome? Read pg. 3 for more. **AOI**

Source: “Aging 101: Biological Causes of Aging” by Julie Cavallasca, 2017, www.longlonglife.org

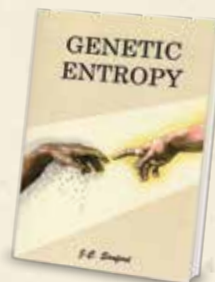
Genetic Entropy

Review by Mark Sonmor

Truly mind-blowing! Dr. John Sanford, former Cornell University professor with a Ph.D. in plant breeding/genetics, gives conclusive evidence that the genomes of all living creatures are slowly degenerating due to the accumulation of mutations. This work has enormous implications and largely invalidates

classic neo-Darwinian theory by showing that not only is mutation/selection incapable of creating the human genome, it can’t even preserve it.

Having examined this problem in greater depth than possibly any other scientist, Sanford illustrates the logistical problems in seeking a remedy



and why cloning won’t work to solve this dilemma. While citing work by other top geneticists, Dr. Sanford reveals how many share his concerns and conclusions but are often blinded by evolutionary bias.

With an awareness of the grim reality of his findings, Sanford offers hope to the reader sharing his confidence and trust in Jesus Christ. Available from AOI for **\$25 + S/H.** **AOI**

Bigfoot, Unicorns, and Beneficial Mutations

by Mark Sonmor

After Darwin wrote *Origin of the Species*, it wasn't long before scientists realized that, while natural selection could account for variety within a species, it was not enough to produce new species. Mutations, it was believed, could add the needed variation and thus, Neo-Darwinism was born.

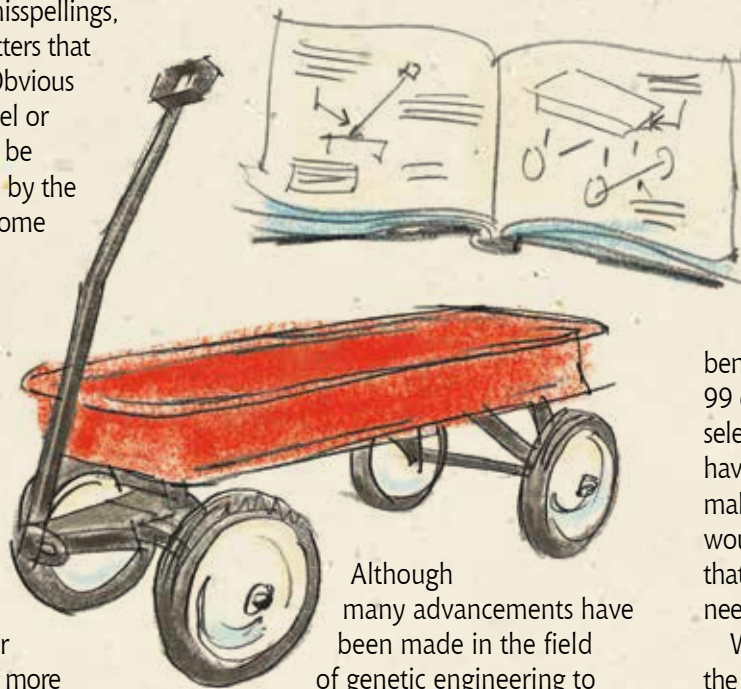
Scientists believed that good and bad mutations were occurring at equal rates and that natural selection would assimilate the good and reject the bad. However, in his book, *Genetic Entropy*, Dr. J.C. Sanford indicates that idea is naive at best.

Comparing the human genome to the instruction manual for producing a red wagon, Sanford likens the four basic building blocks (nucleotides) of DNA to the letters in that instruction manual. As new manuals are transcribed, some errors will occur. These could be misspellings, deletions, or additions of letters that initially will go unnoticed. Obvious mistakes like a missing wheel or an additional handle, won't be purchased or will be broken by the kids in the neighborhood. Some wagons, however, will look normal only to rust or have their paint fade.

It's the accumulation of these misspellings or "near-neutral" mutations that Sanford warns are building up over time within the human genome. For example, it's common knowledge that first cousins shouldn't marry because their shared genetic mutations are more likely to be expressed in their offspring. While the rate at which mutations are accumulating is debated, conservative estimates indicate there are 100-300 misspellings, per person, per generation. In a genome the size of 3 billion letters, that doesn't seem like much until you consider that each of the six billion people in the world are all contributing their mutations to the same genome. Statistically, Sanford indicates that in our lifetime, there have been 200 mutations for each letter position

within our entire genome! While this is being felt to a significant degree (See healthdirect.gov.au/genetic-disorders), he is confident it will be increasingly manifested in coming generations. "When selection is unable to counter the loss of information due to mutations," Sanford warns, "it leads to a situation called 'error catastrophe' where fertility declines and the species becomes extinct."

Producing a harmful mutation takes nothing more than a simple mistake – a misspelling, deletion, etc. While some alterations result in desirable ends, they are still mistakes. A broken car alarm, for example, may be a relief to some owners but results from damage, not design. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria have acquired their resistance through disfunction – not new information.



Although many advancements have been made in the field of genetic engineering to mitigate damage, this is largely done with existing genes in what amounts to more of a transplant situation than creation of new information.

While Sanford didn't go so far to say beneficial mutations can't happen, it might be easier to find a unicorn or get a glimpse of Bigfoot than to produce and integrate a beneficial mutation by chance. The simple addition of one letter of DNA code, for example, can

only be evaluated in the context of the other letters around it – not to mention the instructions governing that particular sequence. Since each of those surrounding letters has its own context, Sanford indicates we run the danger of destroying the very context we try to build upon.

He goes on to say that DNA is poly-functional – that the same sequence has meaning on many levels. Therefore, the entire framework must be understood in the mind of the author before he/she can even decide what the desired mutation should be. Sanford illustrates this by sharing the following Latin phrase:

S A T O R
A R E P O
T E N E T
O P E R A
R O T A S

Poly-functional ancient Latin phrase: "The sower from Arepo holds the working of the wheels."

Since it can be read four directions simultaneously, changing one letter would destroy both the structure and meaning on several levels.

Even if all these criteria could be met, it would take an extremely long time for this "happy accident" to be assimilated into the general population. Based on genetic probabilities, Sanford indicates this beneficial mutation would be randomly lost 99 out of 100 times. Even if it was naturally selected for, this random scenario would have to happen 1,000 more times just to make a gene. According to Sanford, this would take about 12 million years – and that doesn't account for the instructions needed to express that gene!

While we are thankful for advancements in the medical field allowing us to cope in some measure, the tide of harmful mutations is increasing. Because selection happens on the level of whole organisms, Sanford says, it's like trying to fix a computer with a hammer. The complexity of the computer makes the hammer largely irrelevant. Rather than random mutations providing selective variety for upward evolution, we overwhelmingly observe the opposite. If we can't stop the degeneration of the genome, Sanford, reasons, how can we believe it could arise by chance in the first place? **AOI**

Director's Column by Dave Nutting



“You’re shooting yourself in the foot!” My father said, “If you train others to teach creation,

then they (churches, schools, etc.) won’t need you to speak. You’ll be out of a job.” Wouldn’t that be nice! In God’s economy, every Christian should be aiming for their foot!

For years, we have looked for ways to “shoot ourselves in the foot.” Many of you have heard AOI’s Lanny and Marilyn Johnson or Rich Stepanek who now have excellent ministries. Brian Mariani has now taken over my Southwest tour for Jackson Hole Bible College and is working in college ministry. PTL! Please pray for some quality student leaders for this coming academic year!

In my last communication with you, I wrote about the potential of training a group of Costa Rican tour guides to incorporate creation


into their tours. A good group of guides has now committed to meet for intensive training sessions in June. Since this is their heavy rainy season, pray that Mary Jo and I can quickly “evolve” some gills! (BTW, if evolution is true, why did we give up gills in the first place?)

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

(2 Tim. 2:2)

Oscar, who has coordinated four years of AOI’s Costa Rica creation tours, immediately caught the vision to reach people around the world with Creation and the Gospel. He is now working with us to coordinate this training and will also use these sessions to help launch his own tour group subtitled “The Creation Tours.”

Yep, I surely shot myself in the foot this time! But think of how many more people can be reached with the creation message compared with our limited, once-a-year tour! Pray for success in this training endeavor and for “The Creation Tours” to blossom!

Want to be trained?, I still have more bullets. Just contact us. 

Remember us through the summer...

During summer months, support for many ministries can wane. Please remember the ministry of AOI during your festivities and vacations. Thank you! **YOU** are an important part of this ministry.

Are you in the Grand Junction area?

We need help with various projects like stuffing *Think & Believe* newsletters, writing articles, and the college ministry at CMU. If you’re interested, please call AOI ASAP at 970-523-9943.

Costa Rica 2020!

Interested? Call 970-250-2923 so we can start planning and find the best dates.



Check out our posts on FaceBook, Twitter, YouTube, and DiscoverCreation.org.

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