

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VILLA RICA, PCA

How It All Began

By
Rev. Todd W. Allen

Villa Rica 9/26/04

Genesis 1:1-31

Where did it all begin? How did this world get here? How old is the earth? How old is man? Are there answers to these questions? We know that the world and the universe are here. We know that man is here and that man has a history. How do we account for the world, and all that is in it?

There is only one way you can authoritatively answer such questions, and that is from the Bible. Philosophy has no answers, only speculations. Unless you believe God created the world and all things you are faced with an impossible problem.

Allow me to address the current evolutionary view held by many people concerning the origin of the universe. I will rely on some of the reading I have done in Robert L. Dabney's *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Henry M. Morris' book *Creation and the Modern Christian*, E. J. Young's book *In the Beginning*, James Montgomery Boice's book *Genesis* and the *Bible-Science Newsletter*.

We can separate evolution into two types. There is atheistic evolution and theistic evolution. Evolutionary theories can be traced back to Greek philosophers. Already in the fifth Century B. C. Empedocles (495-435) had described the naturalistic development of life from non-life. His stated purpose was to do away with the need for God by explaining all things that exist, including living things, as the result of mindless mechanical meanderings. He wrote, "All adaptations to be found in the universe, and especially organic life, are merely special cases of the infinite possibilities of mechanical events." According to Empedocles there is no need for a personal Creator because matter is eternal and is its own creator.

Democritus, who also lived in the Fifth Century B. C., openly opposed the idea of design in nature because it led to the conclusion that there was some sort of God over the creation. This conclusion was considered inadmissible, so he concluded that the universe must be a closed system, totally governed by mechanistic laws.

By the time of Aristotle in the Fourth Century B.C. the drive for naturalism based primarily on this irreligious motivation to explain things without God was well developed.

Charles Darwin, under pressure from the classical scholars of his day, included a lengthy footnote in the 3rd edition of *Origins* recognizing that Aristotle had first laid out many of his principles, especially natural selection.

The irreligious motivations behind evolution became even more evident in the First Century B. C. with the writer Lucretius. He was familiar with the Hebrew Old Testament. But he wanted to deliver man from the Biblical view so he prefaced his detailed comments on the naturalistic evolution of all things by saying, "Accordingly, when we have seen that nothing can be created out of nothing, we shall then have a clearer picture of the path ahead: the problem of how things are created and occasioned without the aid of gods."

He called the Genesis account of creation a fiction which is "sheer nonsense", and then followed this denunciation of the Bible with a long explanation that people's fears, and therefore their evil tendencies, can be overcome by doing away with the idea of gods and the concept of personal responsibility for our actions. The *Humanist Manifestos* 1 and 2 give parallel points of view and in many places use almost identical wording.

Evolutionists would say that the earth was self-generated billions of years ago, and that from this unexplained beginning the entire universe developed. Non-living things were first to appear, but after an immense period of time a principle of life was introduced. Where this came from they cannot say. It really takes a lot of faith to be an evolutionist.

Harvard Zoologist, P. D. Darlington has penned a remarkable statement of this evolutionary faith in his book *Evolution for Naturalists*. He acknowledges that the creative abilities of matter are mysterious, puzzling, and enigmatic. I quote, "The outstanding evolutionary mystery now is how matter has originated and evolved, why it has taken its present form in the universe and on the earth, and why it is capable of forming itself into complex living sets of molecules. This organization is inherent in matter as we know it, in its organization and energy"

In other words, Matter without any outside agent or power takes the forms it does by some inherent, inborn and unexplainable power. This is the same view that Empedocles held in the Fifth Century B.C.

Not only did this principle of life suddenly and mysteriously appear as a single living cell, but from that one life cell all other forms of life eventually emerged through vast periods of time, and man is supposed to be a product of that development.

By this unexplainable and mysterious beginning matter now follows a pattern of natural selection and an interminable struggle for existence, which Darwin called "the survival of the fittest". In this struggle those organisms that possess new and advantageous mutations would prevail over the older organisms, which lack the new mutations. The atheistic evolutionist would reject any supernatural explanation for matter or life. It affirms random chance, not divine design, is the ultimate cause of all matter. Since the atheistic evolutionist rejects the existence of God, we ought not be surprised to see them describe man as no more than a highly developed animal. With this atheistic view man has a purposeless existence, living out his days without any more meaning than a leaf dropping off a tree in autumn.

G. K. Chesterton observed, "It is absurd for the Evolutionist to complain that it is unthinkable for an admittedly unthinkable God to make everything out of nothing, and then pretend that it is more thinkable that nothing should turn itself into anything." -- G. K. Chesterton in *The Quotable Chesterton*. Christianity Today, Vol. 31, no. 13.

Several years ago a scientist wrote an article entitled, "Seven Reasons Why I Believe in God." He said, "Consider the rotation of the earth. Our globe spins on its axis at the rate of one thousand miles an hour. If it were just a hundred miles an hour, our days and nights would be ten times as long. The vegetation would freeze in the long night or it would burn in the long day; and there could be no life."

He said, "Consider the heat of the sun. Twelve thousand degrees at surface temperature, and we're just far enough away to be blessed by that terrific heat. If the sun gave off half its radiation, we would freeze to death. If it gave off one half more, we would all be crispy critters."

He said, "Consider the slant of the earth. I think twenty-three degrees. If it were different than that, the vapors from the oceans would ice over the continents. There could be no life."

He said, "Consider the moon. If the moon were fifty thousand miles away rather than its present distance, twice each day giant tides would inundate every bit of land mass on this earth."

He said, "Think of the crust of the earth. Just a little bit thicker and there could be no life because there would be no oxygen. Or the thinness of the atmosphere. If our atmosphere was just a little thinner, the millions of meteors now burning themselves out in space would plummet this earth into oblivion. These are reasons," he said, "why I believe in God." -- Frank Pollard, "Our Greatest Victory," *Preaching Today*, Tape No. 175.

Theistic evolution attempts to maintain the tenets of evolution while at the same time positing God as the intelligent and controlling power of the evolutionary process. This is the position of many people. I must admit that at one time I thought along these lines. It was not a conscious nor carefully thought through position, but evolutionistic thinking had been planted in my mind. I suppose I was like so many others who all their lives had heard only an atheistic view of the origin of the universe and life and since I was not a Christian the first 29 years of my life, and the Bible was not a book I was familiar with. I just accepted what I thought was a well investigated and scientifically grounded position. So the first year or two of my Christian life I tried to superimpose evolution over the Biblical account. I said to myself, those days might very well have been ages. Just a little change in meaning and presto, evolution fits right on top of Genesis 1. No problem! Why couldn't God have employed physical laws of the universe to produce new things? Why couldn't all things, including man, have developed out of the original matter, even from that one single life-cell? Can't God work through secondary causes and apply natural law to bring about all that we see?

But later I came to see that there are problems with this compromise between the creation account in the Bible and evolution. One must make room in the creation account for billions of years. Adam cannot be a man created in the image of God in one day out of the dust of the ground, but is instead a product of evolution that developed from a subhuman life form. The fall of man and the explanation for sin and evil is no longer tenable. Man did not fall but rather has progressed to the highest stage of an animal existence. Death did not begin with Adam but was in the world for untold billions of years before he came along. Evolution theory cannot view death as bad or undesirable. Death is the good engine of evolution that moves everything onward and upward. And then how am I to interpret the incarnation of God in Christ who is called the Second Adam? How could there be a virgin birth of Christ? Doesn't that fly in the face of evolution? And what about the resurrection from the dead and the second coming of Christ?

Indeed, what was the purpose of His coming at all if Adam did not fall at all? My confidence in the Bible is seriously undercut if I attempt to superimpose evolution over God's Word. No wonder evolutionists dispute or discard the Bible.

So I gave up theistic evolution. I simply accepted God's Word as being true and trustworthy. I still cannot explain how God did what He did in simply speaking into existence all that exists. But it is very comforting to know that I am in the company of the apostles and Jesus Christ Himself when I accept as inspired the Genesis account given to Moses by God.

Jesus told the disciples on the road to Emmaus that they were "foolish" and "slow of heart" for not believing all that the prophets had spoken (Luke 24:25) Jesus taught in Luke 16:31 that only those who hear Moses and the prophets can be persuaded to believe. Jesus told the unbelieving Jews, ⁴⁵"Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. ⁴⁶"For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷"But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" John 5:45-47

The Word of God explains the beginning in Genesis 1:1-31 and again in Exodus 20:11 -- **"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. Ex. 20:11**

On the first day God brought forth out of nothing the formless substance and matter out of which the earth was to be formed. There was no "Big Bang". There was no noise. Just the Spirit of God hovering, brooding over the formless waste of matter that was to be the earth. All was dark, very dark, and there was water, very much water. Then God said, "LET THERE BE LIGHT"; and there was light. This light was not the light of the sun, for the sun had not yet been made. This was light from God. God is Light.

In John's vision of the New Jerusalem, he saw no temple in the city, ²³**And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. Rev. 21:23 (NASB)**

God is the source of light. He never intended for man to worship the sun, as the ancient Egyptians did. So he did not make the sun to be an idol for man to worship. He gave light apart from the sun on that first day.

On day two the waters are separated with an expanse between the waters on the earth and the waters above the earth.

On day three the water on the earth was gathered into one place, and the dry land appeared., God, gave the name earth to the dry land and the name seas to the waters. Then he caused vegetation to spring forth, plants with seeds, fruit trees with seed in them.

We learn from this that God created the vegetation full grown with their own powers of reproduction: the seeds were in them. We even see an instance of how God can make things grow in a night in the case of Aaron's rod that was put along with eleven other rods from the heads of the tribes of Israel in the tent of meeting. God said that the rod of the man He chose would sprout. The next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony and Aaron's rod for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds. God did that overnight. That was an act of creation, for that rod was a dead piece of wood. But God made it alive, with buds, and blossoms and ripe almonds on it. Is that not the way he created the vegetation and fruit trees fully grown with seed in them? (See Num. 17:1-8).

On day four God made the sun, the moon, the stars. They were to give light and orientation. Man can locate himself in time and space by the celestial bodies. The ships at sea depend upon the sun and stars for their navigation.

On day five God made the living creatures in the waters and the birds of the air. God blessed them and commanded that they should multiply and fill the water and the air.

On day six he made the cattle, the beasts of the field, the creeping creatures, and last of all he made man. Man was blessed by God and told to be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. And it was all very good.

God saw His creation as perfect. It was beautiful and all very good on that sixth day. Fresh from the hand of God it was full of promise and assured of blessing.

What an elevated view of man this gives us. Man was the crowning creation of God. He was given intelligence and had the privilege of being in communion with his Creator. It was a paradise on earth. He was not a brute creature evolved from lower forms of life, but a unique creation of God, with dominion over all that God had made. Luke the Physician, the most scientific writer of the New Testament, traces back the genealogy of Jesus to Adam, the son of God (Luke 3:23-38).

You and I are the descendants of Adam and Eve. They are our first parents, and though they fell into sin and caused sin and death to ensue on themselves and their posterity, we had a divine beginning. We were made in the image of God, and we can never be satisfied with anything less than a personal relationship with our Creator. Do you have that relationship today? Are you trusting in Jesus Christ as your Creator and your Redeemer? Come to Him today and begin a life of son ship in Christ.

The paper and sermon manuscripts from **Pastor Todd W. Allen** are made freely available for review and distribution. We only request that proper web page attribution be provided if distributed for any reason. Please be gracious to forgive typos and errors of expression. These notes are faithful approximations of what has been preached. May God be glorified in the preaching of His Word.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VILLA RICA
519 MAIN STREET
VILLA RICA, GA. 30180
770-459-5276**

Developed and Maintained by: eAirCommunications

