

Christian Evidences

A Study of the Evidences for the Christian Faith



Christian Evidences

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Lesson Outline for the Quarter

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Lesson 1 - An Introduction

"¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the light of men ... ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-3,14)

We introduce this lesson with an introduction whose significance cannot be equaled. As John begins his gospel account, he speaks of that which mankind has debated for millennia. Is there a God? How did this world come to be? Who was this Jesus?

♪ There is a God; He is Alive; In Him we live; and we survive. ♪

You probably know the song, "Our God, He Is Alive" by A.W. Dicus; one of my favorites. There Is A God! This statement is at once both profound and challenging. It is the basis for all that we believe as a Christian. It is thought provoking. It provides a reason to live and influences the way we live. The statement is also one that causes controversy with some. Those who deny God array themselves against us. What will be our response? Are we cowed into silence by their supposed intelligence? Are we intimidated as they parade their philosophical and scientific experts before us? We must take a stand, but this takes confidence. Are you sure of what you believe? Are you willing to put your faith to the test? Let us examine the evidence and build a rock-solid faith! Let's equip ourselves to defend our faith.

In this first lesson, we will discuss the idea of Christian evidences or apologetics. Is this a Biblical concept and something we should study? Should we use reason to examine our beliefs? Or is blind faith what God expects?



- Sometimes, believers are afraid to speak out when others challenge them. Why do you think this is? List a few possible reasons.

- What could be the consequences of such attitudes?

- Define apologetics (or apology).

This word comes from a Greek word (apologia) used a number of times in the New Testament. It is usually translated as “defense” or “answer,” as in the following admonition:

*“...sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a **defense** to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear ...” (1 Pet. 3:15)*

This was an admonition to Christians then and should certainly be one we heed today. Are you ready to give a defense?

I. Biblical Basis for the Christian as an Apologist

Is apologetics a Biblical concept? Do we ever see anyone presenting evidence and arguing or proving a point? Consider the following passages. For each one, note the one making a defense and what is being defended or argued.

- Job 38-41

- Isa. 41:21-29

- Mt. 11:2-6

- Mt. 12:24-37

- Acts 22:1-24

- 1 Cor. 9:1-18

- In the following passage, note the use of the terms “witness” or “testimony”: John 5:16-47. What do you conclude from this?

Is it not appropriate for us to present evidence for our beliefs? Can we not build a case and present it to others? Should we not be set for the defense of the gospel? Paul was and so must we (Phil. 1:16-17; 1 Pet. 3:15). No doubt, the Bible has an apologetic element.

II. Rational Basis for the Christian as an Apologist

- First let’s consider a question. What makes mankind different from the creatures of this world?

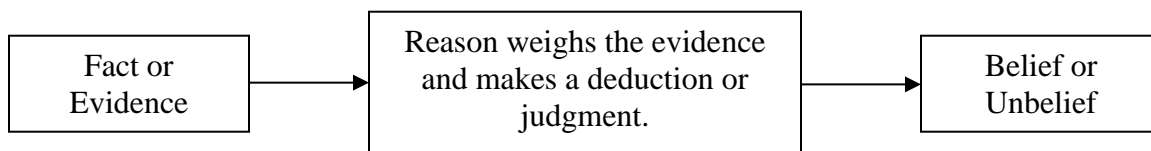
“**Human reason is divinely given**; it is such that man cannot believe that which seems to him incredible. ‘We cannot believe unless belief is more rational than unbelief.’ Therefore, for any belief, the rational ground for the belief must be presented.

“**The powers and functions of reason are limited.** Reason must have the necessary evidence before it can decide on the truth or falsity of any proposition. Therefore, reason demands that we have a sufficient and satisfactory ground for our faith in the Word of God.

“**The scope of reason is limited:** Creation and Revelation. One can reason only on that which he finds as a creation, or that which is revealed.”¹

- Note the following passages: Lk. 8:18; 1 Thes. 5:21; 1 Jn. 4:1. What are we being warned against?

We might summarize this section as follows:



¹ Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], pp. 6-7.

“Acceptance of the evidence depends on five things:

- 1) The **weight** of the evidence.
- 2) The **clarity** with which the evidence is presented.
- 3) The **honesty of the examiner** of the evidence, i.e., the hearer.
- 4) The **logical ability of the hearer** to evaluate the evidence.
- 5) The **background prejudices** of the hearer.”²

III. Our Study of Christian Evidences

We live in a world that seems to be sinking deeper and deeper into unbelief. Of course, the denial of God’s existence is not anything new. Thousands of years ago, Pharaoh responded to God’s message by saying, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.” (Ex. 5:2) Today, there are many spiritual descendants of Pharaoh.

- What terms are some of the philosophies of unbelief known by?

“Each of these philosophies is deadly wrong and can only lead to eternal ruin. Those who subscribe to such views have, for various reasons, **forced** the evidence for God’s existence from their minds (cf. Rom. 1:28), for unbelief is not natural. Rather, it forces reason aside to capture the mind.”³

- Why do you think some people do not believe in God?

- Think about it. What are some things they must necessarily believe instead?

“Christian evidence is the scientific proof of the divine authority of the Christian religion. Christian evidences, as we conceive of it, is especially concerned with the demonstration of the factuality of the Christian religion. Factuality is necessary in order to establish truthfulness.”⁴

- What are some reasons we should study Christian evidences?

² Jenkins, p. 7.

³ Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *A Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, Inc.], p. 2.

⁴ Jenkins, p. 3.

During this quarter, we will answer such questions as ...

- Why we believe in God
- Why we believe the Bible to be God's word
- Why we believe in Jesus Christ
- Why we believe in the Biblical account of creation

We will also deal with other questions and issues related to these. Fundamentally, we will show that there is ample evidence to prove that God Is! In doing so, we can strengthen our own faith and equip ourselves to defend that faith.

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”
(Heb. 11:6)

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Lesson 2 – Evidences for the Existence of God

“Faith in God is a choice that we make between two alternatives. The river of evidence for God’s reality runs strong and deep, but its current is not irresistible. Many people do swim against it, at least for a while.” (Gary Henry)⁵ Alternatives ... choices ... our lives are full of them. Most, if not all of us in the class, have made a choice to believe in God; more than that, we take a stand for what we believe. This stand will not be without its costs, yet the rewards are great. What is it that led us to make this choice? Why do we believe in God?

“According to the principle in logic called the Law of the Excluded Middle, a thing either is, or it is not. There is no middle ground. Applied to the matter of God – He either does or does not exist. A person is driven to one or the other of these conclusions.”⁶ What is it that leads to one of these conclusions? Can the existence of God be proven? Yes. This does not mean God’s existence can be scientifically demonstrated in the same way a person might prove that a package of flour weighs five pounds. However, adequate evidence is available to prove conclusively that God exists. “Legal authorities recognize the validity of a *prima facie* case. A *prima facie* case exists when adequate evidence is available to establish the presumption of a fact, which, unless such can be refuted, **legally stands as a fact**. So it is with the existence of God. There is a vast body of evidence which makes an impregnable case for the existence of God – a case which simply cannot be refuted.”⁷ Let’s present the case.

I. Revelation

- What do Job 11:7 and Isa. 55:8-9 say about our ability to know God?
- How can a person be known? What does this mean: “a person is known as he chooses to be known”?

God is above us in every way. He is “not obligated to reveal Himself to man. And if He is pleased to do so, it is for Him alone to determine the content, form, timing, and extent of His self-disclosure.”⁸ So, how has He made Himself known?

⁵ Henry, Gary (2003), *Diligently Seeking God*, [Indianapolis, IN: Wordpoints], Jan. 12 reading.

⁶ Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *A Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, Inc.], p. 13.

⁷ Thompson (1992), p. 14.

⁸ Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], p. 16.

- Read Psa. 19:1-14. What are the two themes of this psalm? You might think of these as two means of revelation. What does each reveal about God?

God reveals Himself in two ways:

- 1) General Revelation (or Natural Revelation) – this is what can be known about God from nature.
- 2) Special Revelation – this is God’s Revelation of Himself in Scripture.

A. Natural Revelation

We can learn some information about God by observing that which is around us: this material universe. As we read in Psa. 19, the heavens declare His glory. Paul made use of this type of revelation in two sermons to Gentiles. “The approach to Jews was to show that Jesus is the Christ in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies; the approach to Gentiles was to show that there is one true God to whom man is accountable.”⁹



- Read the two sermons and describe what is revealed about God: Acts 14:15-17; 17:22-31.

- Paul also argues that certain invisible things about God can clearly be seen by observing things made (Rom. 1:18-23). What are these invisible things?

Just as Paul made use of Natural Revelation to make his arguments about God, we can do so today as well. Sometimes this is the only appeal some will listen to, for they reject God’s written revelation out-of-hand.

⁹ Jenkins, p. 17.

B. Special Revelation

Today, this type of revelation is made available to us through the scriptures, but I like to think of it more generally as through communication. In the beginning, God spoke directly to man (Gen. 1:29-30; 2:16-17; 3:9-19). As time progressed, God spoke only to the patriarchs, and then only through prophets. God's self-disclosure culminated in the person of Jesus (Jn. 1:18; 14:7-9) who was Immanuel (God with us). Finally, God communicated through the apostles, those with the gifts of prophecy, and inspired writers.



Only certain things can be learned about God through Natural Revelation (e.g. that He Is, of His power, of His divinity). Special Revelation is required to reveal God's will for mankind. It is only in this manner that man can learn of his plight and the need for a redeemer.

God has chosen to reveal Himself and has done so in two ways. These are not two different revelations, but two aspects of His revelation. We have two great books to turn to: Nature and the Bible. In this lesson and the next, we will look at evidences from nature.

II. The Classical Proofs

Proofs for the existence of God have developed over many years. Aristotle developed arguments for an original First Cause which is Himself uncaused. Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274 A.D.) is probably the most famous originator of philosophical arguments for the existence of God. He stated that “reason must infer the existence of God from the effect of God in nature.” There were five arguments of Thomism. These have been modified and added to over the years until several “classical proofs” were finally developed. These are:

- 1) The Ontological Argument – We can think of one who is perfect
- 2) The General Argument – Universal belief in God
- 3) The Cosmological Argument – The cosmos is an effect produced by an adequate cause
- 4) The Teleological Argument – Based on the evidence of design in the universe
- 5) The Moral Argument – There is within man a moral nature
- 6) The Esthetical Argument – The presence of beauty and sublimity in the universe

We will only discuss some of these in detail. You can find more information about each in books on Christian evidences. The first we will discuss is the cosmological argument.

III. Cosmological Argument

- Define cosmos (also cosmology)

The cosmological argument addresses the fact that the universe (cosmos) is here and therefore must be explained in some fashion. It “went from the presence of a cosmos back to a creator of the cosmos. It sought a rational answer to the question, ‘Why is there something rather than

nothing?’ It sought a sufficient reason for a real world.”¹⁰ “The Universe exists and is real. Atheists and agnostics not only acknowledge its existence but admit that it is a grand effect. If an entity cannot account for its own being (i.e., it is not sufficient to have caused itself), then it is said to be “contingent” because it is dependent upon something outside of itself to explain its existence.”¹¹

This argument is closely tied to the Law of Cause and Effect, which states every material effect must have an adequate and antecedent cause. Notice what this law says in more detail.

“Material” – anything composed of matter or energy. “Adequate” – an effect is never superior to in quality, or greater than in quantity, the cause. “Antecedent” – causes occur before the effect.

- Is this law suggested in Heb. 3:4? Explain.

Even a child understands this fundamental logic. They might ask, “Where did this apple come from”? After giving them the answer, “from a tree,” they will probe further. “But where did the tree come from”? And so it goes. The Christian would ultimately respond “God made it.” How might an atheist respond? They may go into a discussion of evolution and talk about a succession of transformations by accidents, but finally they come to the point of saying what? From nothing?

The cosmological argument then asks the question, what caused the universe? “There are but three possible answers to this question: (1) the Universe is eternal; it has always existed and will always exist; (2) the Universe is not eternal; rather, it created itself out of nothing; (3) the Universe is not eternal, and did not create itself out of nothing; rather, it was created by something (or Someone) anterior, and superior, to itself.”¹²



The first alternative was proposed years ago by several evolutionists who developed what was called the “Steady State Theory.” They suggested that at points in space, hydrogen was coming into existence from nothing. It was eventually discounted and rejected because of the first law of thermodynamics: neither matter nor energy may be created or destroyed in nature. Others who advocated an eternal universe encountered another problem – it violated the second law of thermodynamics: as energy is employed to perform work, it is transformed from a usable to a non usable form. As astronomer Dr. Robert Jastrow stated, “The Universe is running down like a clock. If it is running down,

¹⁰ Sproul, R.C. (1994), *Not A Chance* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker], p. 169.

¹¹ Thompson, Bert (1995), “The Case for the Existence of God [Part I]”, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press].

¹² Thompson (1995).

there must have been a time when it was fully wound up.” The Universe is “running down” because energy is becoming less available for use.

The second alternative, the universe created itself, has been proposed by some. Yet, there is no known process whereby matter could fashion itself from nothing. From nothing comes nothing. For a time, in the 1980’s, the “inflationary model” was proposed and the idea of the universe evolving from nothing was speculated. Prominent scientists, such as Stephen Hawking, eventually dismissed this idea.

- Which law of thermodynamics would this idea violate?

So, we come to the third, and only remaining alternative. The universe was created (caused) by a) something that existed before it did, b) something superior to it, and c) something of a different nature since the finite, dependent Universe of matter is unable to explain itself!¹³

From nothing comes nothing. Think about that statement. In order for something to exist now, something always had to exist. What was that something? There are only two choices: that which is mind or that which is material (matter or energy). But the idea of the material being eternal has been dismissed. What then is the only conclusion? “Mind” (or Spirit) is eternal. That Mind is identified and described in the Bible as God. There Is a God!

“The fool has said in his heart, There is no God.” (Ps. 14:1)

“... the doctrine of the one living and true God, Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor of the universe, as it solves so many problems, resolves so many doubts, banishes so many fears, inspires so many hopes, gives such sublimity to all things, and such spring to all noble powers, we might presume would, as soon as it was announced, be received by every healthy human mind.”¹⁴

¹³ Thompson (1992), p. 18.

¹⁴ Thomson, Edward (1872), *Evidences of Revealed Religion*, [Cincinnati, Ohio: Hitchcock and Walden], p. 1.

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Lesson 3 – Evidences for the Existence of God (Part II)

Young Joey and his granddad were lying in the lush grass of the backyard one day studying the clouds. They were enjoying the beauty of the clouds and imagining objects in the shapes that were there. Suddenly, a flock of ducks flew overhead. They were in a long, flowing “V” formation. After studying the passing ducks for a minute, Joey asked, “Granddad. Who trained those ducks to do that?”

An interesting question. As we continue our study of the evidences for the existence of God in Nature, we will look at three more arguments that have been presented over the years. Joey’s question gets at the first of these: the obvious design that is present in nature. Let’s take a closer look at this argument as well as the moral and aesthetical arguments.



I. Teleological Argument

- Define teleological.

This argument is based on the evidence of design in the Universe. Where there is purposeful design, there must be a designer. “The deduction being made, of course, is that order, planning, and design in a system are indicative of intelligence, purpose, and specific intent on the part of the originating cause. In logical form, the theist’s argument may be presented as follows:

- 1. If the Universe evinces purposeful design, there must have been a designer.**
- 2. The Universe does evince purposeful design.**
- 3. Thus, the Universe must have had a designer.”¹⁵**

Most will agree with the idea that the presence of design demands a designer. You probably ride in an automobile almost every day. Have you ever thought about the obvious design that is there? Thousands of components make up the subsystems of that car: the chassis, the engine, the transmission, the steering, the body, the interior, the comfort conditioning, etc. Some cars will

¹⁵ Thompson, Bert (1995), “The Case for the Existence of God – Part II,” *Reason & Revelation*, Vol. 15, June, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press], p. 42

even give you your location on a map and directions to your destination. Is there any doubt that your automobile was designed by somebody? In fact, 100's of engineers planned and developed every component on that auto, down to the smallest button on the dashboard. If your engine seized and left you on the side of the road, who or what would you blame? Would you blame the iron ore from which the engine block was made? Or would you have ill thoughts about the dumb engineers that designed such an unreliable piece of machinery?

The disagreement between a believer and an atheist is not whether design implies a designer. Instead, the point of contention is whether there is evidence of design in nature adequate to draw this conclusion. Let's take a look at the evidence; I believe all should conclude that

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork..."
(Ps. 19:1)



The Universe operates according to precise astronomical laws. Only because of this, can we put a rover on Mars in a specific location. Eclipses can be forecast centuries beforehand. "Modern physicists who prefer to solve their problems without recourse to God emphasize that nature mysteriously operates on mathematical principles. It is the mathematical orthodoxy of the Universe that enables theorists like Einstein to predict and discover natural laws, simply by the solution of equations."¹⁶

Consider our solar system. The Earth is situated in a way that reveals purpose in maintaining human and animal life. "The sun's interior temperature is estimated to be over 20 million degrees Celsius. The Earth, however, is located at exactly the correct distance from the Sun to receive the proper amount of heat and radiation to sustain life as we know it ... As the Earth moves in its orbit around the Sun, it departs from a straight line by only one-ninth of an inch every eighteen miles. If it departed by one-eighth of an inch, we would come so close to the Sun that we would be incinerated; if it departed by one-tenth of an inch. We would find ourselves so far from the Sun that we would all freeze to death."¹⁷

Animal instinct is another place one can look to see obvious purpose and design. Consider just a few:

1. Salmon return to the place they were born after many years at sea.
2. Eels from Europe and America migrate to the abysmal depths south of Bermuda where they breed and die. Their young then return to either Europe or America, depending on the place from whence the parents came.
3. Migration pattern of birds has been a mystery to ornithologists for years.
 - a. Starlings fly by day using the sun as a compass.
 - b. Old World Warblers migrate by night and navigate by the stars. Their migration comes to a temporary halt if fog, rain, or clouds obscure the stars.
 - c. The Indigo Bunting has a "biological clock" according to one ornithologist. It is set by the birds' internal response to seasonal changes in the length of days. The

¹⁶ Barnett, Lincoln (1959), *The Universe and Dr. Einstein*, [Mentor, NY], p. 22.

¹⁷ Thompson (1995), Vol. 15, p. 43.

only star they definitely need in migration is Polaris, the North Star. Chance or design?¹⁸

- Give your own example(s) of something in nature that evinces design.
- Perhaps the strongest evidence for design is referred to in Ps. 139:14? What does the Psalmist exclaim? Give some specific examples of this that point to a Great Designer.

“One does not get a poem without a poet or a law without a lawgiver. One does not get a painting without a painter, or a musical score without a composer. And just as surely, one does not get purposeful design without a designer. The design inherent in the Universe is evident – from the macrocosm to the microcosm – and is sufficient to draw the conclusion demanded by the evidence, in keeping with the law of rationality. God does exist.”¹⁹

II. Anthropological Argument (the Moral Argument)

There is within man a moral nature. All people have a sense of what “ought” to be done in certain circumstances, a sense of fair play. C.S. Lewis called it the *Law of Human Nature*. “So far as creatures of the Earth are concerned, morality is uniquely a human trait, as even unbelievers concede. For example, although evolutionist George Gaylord Simpson argued that ‘man is the result of a purposeless and materialistic process that did not have him in mind,’ he admitted that ‘good and evil, right and wrong, concepts irrelevant in nature except from the human viewpoint, become **real and pressing features** of the whole cosmos as viewed morally because **morals arise only in man.**’ Animals do not operate according to any ethical code. A dog feels no pangs of conscience when it steals a bone from one of its peers; a cock knows no remorse when mortally wounding another. Men, however, acknowledge the existence of morality and ethics.”²⁰

Since this idea of morality is evident, what is its origin? There are but two alternatives: either there is an external source of eternal goodness, God, or morality evolved naturally in man as a result of inanimate forces. Of course, the believer points to God as the source and motivation for morals and ethics. God has instilled in man this sense of right and wrong and calls upon man to be like Him; “*Be holy, for I am holy.*” (1 Pet. 1:16)

¹⁸ Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], p. 33.

¹⁹ Thompson (1995), Vol. 15, p. 47.

²⁰ Thompson, Bert (1995), “The Case for the Existence of God – Part III,” *Reason & Revelation*, Vol. 15, July, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press], p. 56.

- How does Paul allude to this in Rom. 2:13-15? What is his point?

How does the atheist explain the origin of morality? "... he must contend that somehow raw, eternal, inorganic matter was able, by means of an extended evolutionary process, to concoct, promote, and maintain morality. Such a theory is self-defeating for two reasons. First, it wrongly assumes that man, with that evolved mass of cerebral tissue between his ears, somehow is capable of discovering 'moral truth.' Why should he be ... since no other animal on the long, meandering evolutionary chain can locate and live by 'moral truth'? Second, it should be clear that 'raw matter' is impotent to evolve any sense of moral consciousness ... Thus, if morality is man-authorized, hence, man-centered, it is utterly impossible to argue for any singular system of ethics to which one could consistently argue his fellows to subscribe ... Who could ever charge correctly that someone else's conduct was 'wrong,' or that a man 'ought' or 'ought not' to do thus and so?"

Let's examine this issue closer. "Morality" is the character of being in accord with the principles or standards of right conduct. "Ethics" is generally viewed as a system or code by which attitudes and actions are determined to be either right or wrong. Morality and ethics require a differentiation between right and wrong. So then, there must be some ultimate standard to distinguish between these. The atheist, of course, will claim there is no such standard. In an attempt to explain human ethics, they propose various philosophies. Two of these are as follows:

- Hedonism. Define this term and think about the problems with it.
- Utilitarianism. Define this term and think about the problems with it.

Whatever philosophy atheists may adopt, they must assume some standard by which moral judgments are made. Here are some of them; define or explain each.

- Nihilism
- Relativism
- Situationism
- Determinism

“The plain fact of the matter is, if there is no God, **there is no such thing as ‘evil’** ... Surely it ought to be obvious to every thinking person that if there are no eternal consequences for one’s actions, then we are but brute beasts with absolutely no moral responsibility!”²¹

III. Aesthetical Argument

This is the argument which is based on the presence of beauty and sublimity in the universe. Most will agree that there is beauty all around us. What can explain this presence of phenomena? There must be a sufficient cause for the effect we observe.

- Give some examples of beauty that are undeniable in nature.

A further part of this argument has to do with man’s response to beauty, which is unlike the response of the creatures of the world. There is an aesthetic ability in man to recognize and appreciate the beautiful in nature. Ferrell Jenkins points out the following:

1. Mortimer Adler: “Only man decorates or adorns himself or his artifacts, and makes pictures or statues for the non-utilitarian purpose of enjoyment”
2. Francis Schaeffer often says: Only man makes works of art; such is not characteristic of non-man.
3. The repulsive, which is sometimes seen in nature and in man, only accentuates the beautiful and the sublime.

How can one account for the things we have studied in this lesson? What sufficient cause is there for the evidence of design, the inherent morality in man, the beautiful and our appreciation of it? There can be but one conclusion; to deny it is foolish. There is a God!

²¹ Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *A Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, Inc.], pp. 29-30.

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Lesson 4 – Evidences for the Bible as God’s Word (Part I)

One could spend years studying about the existence of God from natural evidence, but that would still leave a person wondering what the implications are? What does the fact that God exists mean to me, and how does it affect the way I live my life? I believe God Is, but what does He expect of me? Without “Special Revelation” we would be left wondering. However, God has provided this additional means of revelation. We have the Bible to turn to for answers to all of life’s questions. But how do we know the Bible is from God? What evidence do we have to attest to the belief that this is God’s message to mankind?

It is natural to begin the examination of any piece of literature by looking at the work itself. What does the work claim, and what basis is there to support those claims? Is the work authoritative? Thus, we will begin our examination of the Bible. Does the Bible claim to be God’s revelation? If so, what are the evidences that support that claim?



“The Scriptures are either inspired of God, or they are not inspired of God. If the writings of the Bible are not inspired of God, then they are the mere productions of men, and as such would merit no religious respect; in fact, in view of their exalted claims, they would merit only contempt.”²² I believe you will see that there is overwhelming evidence that attests to its Divine origin. If the Bible is not from God, surely, it is the greatest deception ever produced by man. Does it matter? Well, as Paul said:

“And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up--if in fact the dead do not rise ... And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.” (1 Cor. 15:19)

I. The Inspiration of the Bible

The first question we should ask is whether the Bible claims to be of Divine origin. Does the Bible claim to be from God? One of the plainest statements in this regard is found in 2 Tim. 3:16-17. Here we find the statement,

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God ...”

²² Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *A Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, Inc.], p. 101.

The phrase “Inspiration of God” is from the single Greek word “theopneustos.” This is a compound word formed from the two words: “theos” – God and “pneo” – to breathe. Literally then, Scripture is “God-breathed.” It is “the product of the creative breath of God. This does not mean that Scripture is breathed into by God or that it is the product of the Divine in-breathing into its human authors, but that it is breathed out by God.” (according to B.B. Warfield).²³

The term “Scripture” is from the Greek word “graphe.” This term can be used in a general sense of “writing” or in a technical sense of “Scripture,” or the “Oracles of God.” The word is used 51 times in the N.T. and always refers to the “Oracles of God.”

- Read 1 Tim. 5:18. What two passages are quoted here? What is the significance of this in regard to our discussion?
- What does 2 Pet. 1:20-21 say about the origin of the Scriptures? Notice especially the word “moved” (Greek word “phero”).

“More than 3800 times in the Old Testament the claim is made that the Scriptures are the word [or words] of God.”²⁴ For examples, look at Ex. 17:14; 2 Sam. 23:2; Jer. 1:9; Psa. 119. Jesus emphasized the authority of Scripture throughout His ministry. In John 10:34-35, Jesus refers to a passage in the Psalms as “law,” thus giving legal authority to the entirety of Scripture. He further states in this argument with the Jews, that the “Scripture cannot be broken.” In other words, “it cannot be undone, unloosed, or deprived of its binding authority.”²⁵ Also in Mt. 5:18, we find the statement,

“... till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”

“Jot” was the Hebrew Yod, the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. “Tittle” probably referred to the projection of a letter which distinguished it from another letter. Basically, He is claiming that the Scriptures are perfect down to the smallest detail. Is Jesus saying that the very words in the Old Testament were inspired by God? Yes. In fact, Jesus even argued from the tense of a verb in Mt. 22:32.

The type of inspiration we are talking about is sometimes referred to as verbal and plenary. “Verbal Inspiration is the work of God through the Holy Spirit so directing men in their choice of words that their writings contain, written accurately, exactly what God desired, and all that He desired, them to contain. It is the doctrine of the superintendence, or guidance; that is, God so guided in the writing of the books of the Bible that the words are His words in the style of the

²³ Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), Introduction to Christian Evidences, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], p. 49.

²⁴ Thompson (1992), p. 103.

²⁵ Jenkins (1989), p. 50.

writers. Verbal Inspiration is the opposite of Inspired Concepts.” (H.S. Miller as quoted in Jenkins)²⁶ Plenary means full, complete, extending to every part.

- What did Jesus promise His disciples in Mt. 10:19-20 (also Lk. 21:14-15)?

Note also that the New Testament writers were conscious of the fact that they were recording the words of God: 1 Cor. 11:23; 1 Thes. 4:15; Acts 8:14; especially, 1 Cor. 2:11-13. Further, the writers referred to one another’s letters as inspired of God: 1 Tim. 5:18; 2 Pet. 3:15-16.

When you speak to others about the Bible’s inspiration, you will often find that they have a false concept of what this really means. Many think this means inspired in the same sense that other literary works are inspired. In other words, the Bible is simply the result of natural genius, characteristic of men of unusual ability. This makes the biblical writers out to be liars since they claimed the Holy Spirit as the source of their documents. It also begs the question as to why modern men have failed to produce a comparable volume.

Other people will only agree that certain portions of Scripture are inspired in the sense that we believe. For example, they say that only those portions dealing with faith and morals are inspired; other sections, especially those with a miraculous element, are “merely the product of good, but superstitious and fallible, men.”²⁷ Again, this is not consistent with the declarations of the writers.

- Also, how did Jesus view Old Testament accounts of the miraculous? (see Mt. 12:39-40; 19:4; Lk. 4:27; Jn. 3:14-15)

Does the Bible claim to be from God? Clearly, it does. The very words of the Scriptures are claimed to be “God-breathed.” Jesus viewed them as authoritative down to the smallest detail and stated that they “cannot be broken.” Paul wrote that “all Scripture” is of Divine origin. So should be our belief.

II. The Unity of the Bible

We have seen that the Bible claims to be from God. Of course, to the unbeliever, this would be nothing more than that - a claim. What evidence do we have to support the claim? In the next few lessons, we will examine some of the evidence.

First, we will notice the marvelous unity in the Bible. Each of the 66 books in the Bible as well as the collection as a whole bears out this unity, which can only be explained in one way: the Bible is from God. “It is sometimes charged that Bible believers are arguing in a circle when

²⁶ Jenkins (1989), p. 51.

²⁷ Thompson (1992), p. 102.

they turn to the Bible itself as evidence that it is the word of God. We must remind the critics that there is no other way to demonstrate the unity of any book. One would not be critical of a book reviewer for judging a book on the basis of its content. If the Bible is not a book of harmony and consistency, then there is no point in turning elsewhere in an effort to defend it.”²⁸

The Bible was written over a period of some 1600 years by 40 different men. These men were from different walks of life, spoke different languages, and lived in different cultures. Notice some of the diversity as pointed out by Jenkins²⁹:

Time of writing: Law of Moses (1450-1400 B.C.), Joshua and Judges (1050 B.C.), Psalms of David (1000 B.C.), Isaiah (725 B.C.), Daniel (6th century B.C.), Ezra (5th century B.C.), 1 Thessalonians (50-51 A.D.), Acts (61 A.D.), Ephesians (62 A.D.), John (around 90 A.D.).

Place of writing: Moses (in the Sinai Wilderness), Daniel (in Babylon), Jeremiah (in Jerusalem), Paul (in prison in Rome), John (at Ephesus).

Occupations of some writers: Moses (trained in Egypt, shepherd, leader), Joshua (military leader), David (a king), Amos (a herdsman), Daniel (a statesman in Babylon), Ezekiel (a priest), Nehemiah (a cupbearer to a Persian king), Ezra (a scribe), Luke (a physician), Matthew (a tax collector), Peter (a fisherman), Paul (trained in the law).

Languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, Koine Greek.

Types of writing: law, poetry, history, narrative, biography, prophecy, apocalyptic.

“For all that, the Bible is not simply an anthology, there is a unity which binds the whole together. An anthology is compiled by an anthologist, but no anthologist compiled the Bible.” (F.F. Bruce) There is tremendous unity in the Bible; all of the parts work together perfectly. Some have compared this to an orchestra; all of the various instruments combine into one great harmony. Its direction is under one guiding hand.



- Put this literary diversity in present day terms. What kind of product would you have if it were a work of man?
- As you look at the Scriptures, you see a **unity in doctrine or purpose**. What is this purpose? (Eph. 3:10-11)

²⁸ Jenkins (1989), p. 41.

²⁹ Ibid.

Throughout the Bible, there is agreement in all its teachings. What one writer affirms; no later writer denies. Is this characteristic of the works of men? Modern man's supposed wisdom always rises above that of his predecessors (at least in his mind). Historians of the same generation often disagree on particulars of the recent past. Science books are constantly being revised and updated with new knowledge. In stark contrast, the Bible has stood the test of time. Critics often try to point out contradictions within the Bible, but these are always resolved with careful study. The Bible never fails to vindicate itself.

In the Bible, there is also an "organic unity" which Arthur T. Pierson described as follows. "Organic unity implies three things: first, that all parts are necessary to a complete whole; secondly, that all are necessary to complement each other; and thirdly, that all are pervaded by one life-principle."

- 1) All parts are necessary to its completeness. As F.F. Bruce observed, "Any part of the human body can only be properly explained in reference to the whole body. And any part of the Bible can only be properly explained in reference to the whole Bible."
- 2) All parts are necessary to complement each other.
 - How do the Gospels illustrate this point?
- 3) One life-principle must pervade the whole. God's fingerprint is found throughout. His relationship to and will for mankind can be clearly seen. But for the scheme of redemption, we would be without hope.

Christian Evidences



Lesson 5 – Evidences for the Bible as God’s Word (Part II)

“Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.” (Ps. 119:89)

Best-sellers come and go. Sometimes, they may sell as many as a million copies or in rarer cases 10 million. The number of Bibles sold reaches into the billions. Staggering, is it not? In 1998 alone, the United Bible Societies’ member organizations distributed 20.8 million complete Bibles and another 20.1 million testaments. And that is just for this society. From the inception of the printing press, no other book has seen such circulation; the Bible is truly unique.

Most books are never translated into another language. Among those that are, they are usually translated into just two or three languages; few books reach into the teens. According to the United Bible Society, the Bible (or portions of it) has been translated into more than 2,200 languages. What is it about the Bible that has created such a demand?

*“Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day ...
Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” (Ps. 119:97,105)*

“Although it was first written on perishable materials and had to be copied and recopied for hundreds of years before the invention of the printing press, the Scriptures have never diminished in style or correctness, nor have they ever faced extinction. Compared with other ancient writings, the Bible has more manuscript evidence to support it than any ten pieces of classical literature combined ... Bernard Ramm speaks of the accuracy and number of biblical manuscripts: ‘Jews preserved it as no other manuscript has ever been preserved. With their massora they kept tabs on every letter, syllable, word and paragraph. They had special classes of men within their culture whose sole duty was to preserve and transmit these documents with practically perfect fidelity: scribes, lawyers, and massorettes. Whoever counted letters and syllables and words of Plato or Aristotle? Cicero or Seneca?’”³⁰

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” (Mt. 24:35)

The Bible has survived countless attacks by its enemies. Persecutions of Christians from the time of the Romans to the communist regimes of today have attempted to thwart its influence. They have tried to ban it, burn it, and outlaw its followers. The Roman emperor Diocletian issued an edict ordering the razing of churches to the ground and the destruction by fire of the Scriptures. Through the centuries, infidels and skeptics have attempted to refute and discredit the Bible yet to no avail; still, it stands as solid as a rock. How has it survived the ravages of time and persecution unscathed? Could it be that this book is indeed from God?

³⁰ McDowell, Josh (1999), *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, [Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers], p. 9.

"Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while. And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men ... And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God." (Acts 5:34-39)

If the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, then it should be accurate in all respects. "Works that are strictly human – no matter how scholarly or painstaking the authors – are always characterized by unintentional mistakes which betray fallibility. For example, when the Encyclopedia Britannica was first published, it contained so many mistakes regarding places in America that the publishers of the New American Cyclopaedia issued a special pamphlet exposing the blunders of its rival!"³¹ While accuracy alone is insufficient to prove that the Bible is of Divine origin, it certainly can attest to its trustworthiness. If accuracy were lacking, one could go no further in presenting evidence to the unbeliever.

I. Evidence from Archaeology

"Archaeology is a systematic study of ancient people as that life of ancient people can be learned by what they left behind. Ancient peoples have left behind exposed material objects, partly covered objects, and completely covered objects. In the Middle East many of the ancient cities took the form of 'tells.' 'Tell' is from the Arabic word for hill or mound. A 'tell' may represent as many as 20 to 25 cities, one built on top of the other."³² It is in these mounds where abundant archaeological evidence can be found, and we have only begun to touch the hem of the garment in uncovering what is there.



Archaeology always corroborates the Biblical record. Let's notice a few examples of how archaeological finds through the years help establish the trustworthiness of the Scriptures. Most of these examples (except as noted) are taken from Jenkins' book.

For years, the Hittite people mentioned throughout the O.T. (e.g., Deut. 20:17) were of doubtful existence by critics. In 1906, the Hittite capital at Boghazkay was excavated by Hugo Winckler. About 10,000 Hittite and Akkadian texts were found. Today you can earn a graduate degree in Hittite civilization at the University of Pennsylvania.

³¹ Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *A Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, Inc.], p. 114.

³² Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], p. 58.

Solomon was noted for his many building projects. These included the cities of Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer (1 Ki. 9:15). Gateways, walls and other buildings from the period of Solomon have been found in these three cities. The gates and walls follow the same architectural plan.

- What were some of the other building projects of Solomon, as recorded in Scripture?

Pharaoh Sheshonk I of Egypt (Shishak of the Bible) invaded Jerusalem in the days of Rehoboam taking away treasures (1 Kings 14:25-26). Shishak's campaign to Palestine is confirmed by a triumphal relief on a wall in the temple of Amun at Karnak in Egypt.



The conduit, or tunnel, cut by Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:30) was cleared of debris in 1909. It is now possible to walk through the tunnel which connects Gihon spring with the pool of Siloam. The tunnel is nearly 1800 feet long and at some places is 150 feet below ground level.

One of the more intriguing examples is in reference to Hezekiah and the Assyrians. Read 2 Kings 18:13 - 19:37. "Much was learned about the Assyrians when twenty-six thousand tablets were found in the

palace of Ashurbanipal, son of the Esarhaddon, who took the northern kingdoms into captivity in 722 B.C. ... Among the most interesting finds is Sennacherib's record of the siege of Jerusalem. Thousands of his men died and the rest scattered when he attempted to take the city and, as Isaiah had foretold, he was unable to conquer it. Since he could not boast about his great victory here, Sennacherib found a way to make himself sound good without admitting defeat: 'As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke. I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts, and to the countless small villages in their vicinity. I drove out of them 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting and considered (them) booty. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage.'"³³

- What actually happened to Sennacherib's army when he laid siege to Jerusalem?

³³ McDowell (1999), pp. 110-111.

“In the late 1800’s, Sir William Ramsay, a scholar who was skeptical of the authenticity of the Book of Acts, set out upon an archaeological expedition in Asia Minor with the declared intention of disproving the historicity and accuracy of Luke’s narrative. After years of research, literally digging up the evidence, Ramsay was forced to conclude that Acts was historically accurate. In Acts, Luke mentions thirty-two countries, fifty-four cities, and nine Mediterranean islands. He also mentions ninety-five persons, sixty-two of which are not named elsewhere in the New Testament. And his references, where checkable, are always correct. This is truly remarkable in view of the fact that the political / territorial situation of his day was in a state of almost constant flux. How does one account for Luke’s precision? Inspiration!”³⁴

II. Agreement of Book and Land

If the Bible were a fictitious work, you would expect to find errors throughout. This would especially be true in its description of the land and customs. Yet, as we examine the Bible, we find an amazing correspondence. Every geographical reference is accurate; discussions of nations and people are correct.

“J.W. McGarvey, a believer, visited Palestine in 1879. In his book, *Lands of the Bible*, he presented an ‘Argument from Agreement of Land and Book.’ He said: That there is a general agreement between the Bible and the geography of Palestine is a well-known fact. Its plains, mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, cities, and deserts are in all parts of the Bible correctly named and correctly located. The political divisions known to exist are invariably recognized, as are also all the changes of government through which the country passed in the course of its long and varied history. In not a single known instance, from the beginning to the end of the book, is there a failure in any one of these particulars.” (as quoted by Jenkins)³⁵ Let’s notice some examples of this unfailing accuracy.

The land of Palestine varies considerably in **elevation**. Jericho, near the Dead Sea, is 825 feet below sea level, while Jerusalem is about 2500 feet above sea level. The Bible often describes traveling up or down between various cities, and these descriptions are always correct. For example, notice the following passages: Jn. 2:13; Lk. 10:30; Acts 9:30, 32; 24:1.

- Another example can be found in Lk. 19:1, 11, 28, 29, 37, 41. Describe the journey.

³⁴ Thompson (1992), p. 115.

³⁵ Jenkins (1989), p. 68.

“In regard to the **trees** of a country a writer may so inform himself as to speak with accuracy when formally naming the trees which grow there; but if he locates a narrative in a country with which he is not personally familiar, in his incidental or unstudied allusions to the trees he is very likely to betray himself by unconsciously substituting the trees of his own country. Yet nothing of this kind is found among all the Bible writers.” (J.W. McGarvey)³⁶ In Judg. 9:7-21, a number of trees and plants are alluded to, all of which are indigenous to Palestine. The oak tree is in fact found to grow in the places mentioned (Gen. 13:18; 2 Sam. 18:9). The sycamore is a type of tree growing only in the Jordan valley and along the coast; references to this tree place it only there (1 Ki. 10:27; Lk. 19:4).



Climate is another area in which we see correspondence between book and land. The Mediterranean Sea on the west and the desert on the east largely influence the weather. Some examples of rains coming off the sea are found in 1 Ki. 18:43-45 and Lk. 12:54. Another common effect is the east wind called the Sirocco (easterly); it brings dry, dust-laden air from the desert which absorbs what little moisture there may be. This is alluded to in Gen. 41:23 and Jonah 4:8.

Numerous examples of the **manners and customs** could be given to further illustrate the Bible’s accuracy. Here are just a few: 1) the common scene of sheep following the shepherd (Jn. 10:4); 2) rock-hewn sepulchres from the first century found around Jerusalem, some with stones rolled in front (Mt. 27:60); 3) animal skins used as containers (Mk. 2:22); 4) many references to threshing grain on a threshing floor can be found in the Bible, and this practice is still observed today (Ps. 1:4); 5) vineyards with winepresses cut in the rock are common along with rock walls and rock towers (Mt. 21:33); heaps of rock for the purpose of marking the fields can still be seen throughout Palestine (Dt. 19:14; 27:17; Prov. 23:10).

- List other examples you can think of that show agreement between book and land.

After examining the evidence from archaeology and the agreement between land and book, the Bible is seen to be completely accurate and trustworthy. Would we expect anything less from a book that is Divinely given? Although some have tried to use archaeology to refute the Bible, it has vindicated itself every time. Surely, the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

“All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the LORD endures forever.” (1 Pet. 1:22-25)

³⁶ Jenkins (1989), p. 70.

Christian Evidences



Lesson 6 – Evidences for the Bible as God’s Word (Part III)

Many accept the Bible as merely a “good” book; they view it as a source of guidance for moral living, but nothing more. Of course, anyone who holds such a view has not likely read very much of it. What would it take to convince someone with this view that the Bible is in fact from God? Something miraculous? In the pages of this great Book, you will find just that. Numerous prophecies of future events were given and later fulfilled in detail. Scientific concepts are referenced that were not understood until centuries or millennia later. What can explain this? The Bible must be from God.

“Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.” (Ps. 100:3-5)

I. Evidence from Prophecies

“Prophecy is a declaration of future events, such as no human wisdom or forecast is sufficient to make – depending on a knowledge of the innumerable contingencies of human affairs, which belongs exclusively to the omniscience of God; so that from its very nature, prophecy must be divine revelation.” (M’Llvaine as quoted in Jenkins)³⁷ “Biblical prophecy is not a guess, a forecast, a calculation, a mere conjecture, a vague generalization, or an educated analysis of a forthcoming situation. Nor is it making a lot of predictions about the future and then having a few, or even most, of them come to pass. In Biblical prophecy, everything that has been predicted has come to pass.”³⁸

H.W. Everest gave the criteria for true prophecy as follows: a) the event must be beyond the power of man to foresee, b) it must be demonstrated that the prediction was written before the event, c) the language of the prediction must be unambiguous and unmistakable, d) the prediction must have a clear and demonstrable fulfillment.³⁹

The O.T. word for “prophet” is from the Hebrew word “nabhi” which meant to speak or to announce. He was one who spoke directly for God. Sometimes this involved foretelling future events, and it is this aspect of the prophets’ writings that we look to as evidence for inspiration.

³⁷ Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], p. 87.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 87.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 87-88.

- Note Deut. 18:9-22. What was the test of a true prophet? (see Jer. 28:1-17 for an example)

Fulfilled prophecy provides evidence that God has spoken. Jesus used the fulfillment of prophecy to show that He was from God (Jn. 5:39, 46; Lk. 18:31). The purpose of fulfilled prophecy is seen in Jn. 14:29: that we may believe. Read also 2 Pet. 1:19-21. Let's notice some examples of prophecies in the Scriptures and their fulfillment.

A. Israel in Prophecy

The first we will notice is a prophecy about Israel. There are many prophecies regarding Israel throughout the Old Testament, but in Deut. 28:1-64 we have an especially lengthy one. This was written around 1400 B.C., and it becomes their history foretold.

- Israel to have a king (28:36) – fulfilled in Saul 1050 B.C.
- To be defeated and carried away into bondage and there serve idols (28:25, 36, 41, 49) – fulfilled in Assyria (722 B.C.), Babylon (597 B.C.), Rome (70 A.D.).
- Cities to be destroyed (28:52) – archaeology illustrates that this happened many times (e.g., Lachish destroyed by both Assyrians and Babylonians)
- Great sufferings would accompany siege (28:53-57; Jer. 19:9; Ezek. 5:10) – notice what happened during a Syrian siege (2 Ki. 6:24-31); a Babylonian siege (Lam. 2:20; 4:10); a Roman siege (Josephus documents these same conditions – *Wars, Bk. 6, Ch. 3, Par. 4*)
- To be scattered and sold again into Egypt (28:64, 68) – Josephus tells of Jews sold into Egypt and a glutted market (*Wars, Bk. 6, Ch. 9, Par. 2*).

B. Tyre in Prophecy

Read the prophecy of Tyre in Ezek. 26. This was written in about 592-570 B.C. Its fulfillment continues even to this day. Shortly after this was written, Nebuchadnezzar led the Babylonians in besieging the city of Tyre. After a long siege, some of the people fled to the island city nearby; Nebuchadnezzar left the mainland city in ruins. During the Greek Period (332 B.C.), Alexander built a causeway to the island city using the ruins of mainland Tyre. After a 7-month siege, they breached the 150-foot-high wall on the island and took the city. The island city has had a small population over the centuries consisting mostly of fishermen who “spread their nets” on the ruins. To this day the mainland city has never been rebuilt.



The ruins of Tyre

C. Babylon in Prophecy

The city of Babylon was one of the great cities of the ancient world. Note Dan. 4:30. Babylon covered about 200 square miles and had 17 miles of walls wide enough for chariots to ride on. There were 250 towers and 8 gates. The hanging gardens were considered one of the seven

wonders of the ancient world. The Babylonian empire maintained world supremacy between 626 and 539 B.C. Long before Babylon came into power Isaiah penned the prophecy regarding its destruction (Isa. 13:17-22 written about 740-700 B.C.). Jeremiah also described the downfall of Babylon (see Jer. 50-51 written about 627-585 B.C.).

In 539 B.C., Cyrus the Mede captured the city of Babylon without even breaking down the walls. Herodotus (a Greek historian, 484-425 B.C.) reports that “Cyrus had his men to divert the water which flowed under the city walls around the city. The invaders then went in under the city wall and surprised the Babylonians who were having a drunken party.”⁴⁰ The Persians made their capital at Babylon for a while, but it eventually declined in importance. Alexander the Great came there in 331 B.C. intending to make it the capital of a new commercial empire. This was not to be, however, because he died at Babylon in the grip of some sudden and mysterious



The ruins of Babylon

disease in June of 323 B.C. The city’s decline continued, and the Parthians stripped the city of its substance in 124 B.C. The last mention of Babylon is on a tablet dating from 10 B.C. The ancient location of Babylon today consists of only desolate ruins. In 1938, H.V. Morton wrote of Babylon in one of his travelogues, “And as we wandered over the lonely mounds, silent except for the hum of the wild bee and hornet, I thought how literally Isaiah’s prophecy of the fall of Babylon had been fulfilled. It is, indeed, overthrown as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.”⁴¹

D. Messianic Prophecies

Henry Liddon said that there are 332 prophecies fulfilled in Christ, and that the mathematical probability of all of these being fulfilled in one person is 1 in 84×10^{123} . The prophecies of Christ were written centuries before He walked the earth. The Septuagint (a Greek translation) was started around 280 B.C. Surely, these prophecies were beyond the power of man to foresee. Let’s notice just a few of the prophecies.

- For each of the passages below write down what was prophesied and fulfilled:
 1. Micah 5:2 – Mt. 2:1-6
 2. Gen. 49:10 – Heb. 7:14
 3. 2 Sam. 7:12-14 – Lk. 1:32; 3:31

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 103.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 104.

4. Isa. 7:14 – Mt. 1:21-25

5. Zech. 9:9 – Mt. 21:1-9

6. Zech 11:12 – Mt. 26:14-15

7. Ps. 22:16 – Lk. 23:33; Jn. 20:25,27

8. Zech. 12:10 – Jn. 19:34,37

9. Isa. 53:9 – Mt. 27:57-60

10. Ps. 16:10 – Acts 2:24-32

As Bernard Ramm said, “One real case of fulfilled prophecy would establish a supernatural act. But if our interpretation of the prophetic passages be correct, there are great numbers of them. One unequivocal miracle, one indubitable fulfilled prophecy would show the fallacy of naturalism, for the causal web of the universe would be ruptured at that point through which the supernatural is intruded. Therefore, radical doubt must be certain it has silenced the testimony of all prophecies, whereas the Christian asserts that rather than resting on the case of one prophecy, we have dozens at our beck and call.”⁴²

II. Evidence from Scientific Foreknowledge

“One of the most arresting evidences of the inspiration of the Bible is the great number of scientific truths that have lain hidden within its pages for thirty centuries or more, only to be discovered by man’s enterprise within the last few centuries or even years.” (Dr. Henry M. Morris) “Many scientific facts, which prove the infallibility of Scripture, are tucked away in its pages. These proofs are given in nonscientific language; nevertheless, they substantiate the claims of authenticity of the Holy Scriptures ... In some cases, scientific concepts have been known through the ages, but these concepts are mentioned in a unique manner in Scripture. In

⁴² Ibid, p. 89.

other cases, scientific topics have been mentioned hundreds or even thousands of years before man discovered them.” (Dr. Jean S. Morton)⁴³



“Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806-1873) was once confined to his bed during a lengthy illness. His son, upon being asked to read to him from the Bible, turned to Psalm 8 and drew his father’s immediate attention as he read verse 8 – ‘... and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea...’ Using this verse, he decided to find the ‘paths of the sea.’ Indeed, he found just that! He was the first to recognize that the seas were circulating systems with interaction between wind and water. His book on physical oceanography is still considered a basic text for studies of this sort... How did the Psalmist know about the ‘paths of the sea’? Just a lucky guess?”⁴⁴

Let’s notice some more examples from the various sciences.

- Job 38:16 – “springs of the sea.” The earliest secular reference – Strabo (a Roman geographer, 63 B.C. - A.D. 21). It is now known that freshwater springs exist in a number of places (e.g., off the coasts of Greece, Italy, Syria, Australia, and New England).
- Eccl. 1:7 – “All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place from which the rivers come, there they return again.” Also, read Eccl. 11:3 and Amos 9:6. The idea of the hydrologic cycle was not completely understood until the late 16th and early 17th centuries.
- Lev. 17:11-14 – “the life of the flesh is in the blood.” Moses was scientifically correct because the red blood cells carry oxygen and make life possible. We understand this today, but as recent as the time of George Washington (whose doctors bled him to death) this was not fully understood.
- Gen. 17:12 – “He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised...” Why the eight day? Vitamin K and the resulting prothrombin are necessary for proper blood clotting. Not until the 5th – 7th days of a newborn’s life does vitamin K begin to be produced. And only on the 8th day is the level of prothrombin above 100% of normal. A mere coincidence?
- In three places the Bible states that the earth is wearing out: Isa. 51:6; Psa. 102:26; Heb. 1:11. The Second Law of Thermodynamics says the same thing; everything is running down or wearing out. The Bible writers spoke of this, but we did not understand it until recently in history.

⁴³ Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *A Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, Inc.], pp. 126-127.

⁴⁴ Thompson (1992), pp. 127-128.

- Isa. 40:22 – “It is He who sits above the circle of the earth...”
The Hebrew word for “circle” is “khug,” which literally means something with roundness or sphericity. People of Isaiah’s day and even centuries later thought the earth was flat.

Many other examples of scientific foreknowledge could be given. For a good reference on some of these see the book *Has God Spoken?*, by A.O. Schnabel.



There certainly is scientific foreknowledge in the Scriptures. How did it get there? How could these writers have understood such concepts? Many of these principles were not understood until hundreds or thousands of years later. Only one answer is sufficient. God was behind it all. The Bible is the very Word of God.

*“The entirety of Your word is truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.” (Ps. 119:160)*

Christian Evidences



Lesson 7 – Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Part I)

“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” (Jn. 20:30-31)

We have examined the evidence showing the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. This naturally brings us to its central Person – Jesus the Christ. Who is this Jesus? Who did He claim to be? What evidence do we have to support His claims? I believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. As you will see, this is exactly who He claimed to be. In the following lessons, we will look at the evidence that proves He is the very Son of God. By so doing, we will provide further evidence for the existence of God. If Jesus is God, then God Is!

*“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him ... He who has seen Me has seen the Father ...”
(Jn. 14:7-9)*

I. Who is Jesus?

“Jesus Christ cannot be ignored! His friends love Him, and His enemies hate Him, but all must acknowledge the fact of His existence. He demands an attitude on our part. Every individual develops an attitude toward Him, upon which depends the eternal destiny of the soul. Modern Bible critics are prone to ascribe to Him a place lower than that of deity. They say, ‘he is earth’s greatest man, its greatest teacher, greatest philosopher, He has revealed God to us as no one else has.’ But beyond this they do not go. To them He is “a good, a great man,” but no more. The question of supreme moment becomes, ‘Who say ye that I am?’⁴⁵

“When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Mt. 16:13-16)

Just as we began our examination of the Bible as God’s word by noticing its claims of inspiration, let’s begin by reading the claims Jesus made for Himself. Did He claim to be the Son of God? What other statements did He make in regard to this claim? Read the following passages and note what He claimed:

- Jn. 5:17-20; Jn. 10:27-33

⁴⁵ Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], p. 111.

- Jn. 8:46 (see Lk. 18:9-14)
- Jn. 8:58
- Jn. 8:12; 10:10,11,16; 14:6
- Mt. 16:16-18
- Mt. 26:28; 20:28
- In reference to Mt. 4:10 and Jn. 4:23, see Mt. 8:2; Mt. 9:18; Jn. 9:35-38; Mt. 28:9; Jn. 20:26-29

If Jesus was who He claimed to be, then He truly was “Immanuel” – God with us. If not, then He was not “a good, a great man” as many Bible critics hold. Instead, He would be a deceiver and a hypocrite. However, as we examine the evidence, it should become abundantly clear that Jesus was and is the Son of God.

Was Jesus a Historical Person?

In his essay “Why I Am Not a Christian,” philosopher Bertrand Russell asserts, “Historically it is quite doubtful whether Christ ever existed at all, and if He did, we do not know anything about Him.” Many will raise questions about Jesus Christ, and some doubt the truthfulness of what the Bible says about Him. However, there are few people today with any knowledge of history that would agree with Russell’s statement. “Some writers may toy with the fancy of a ‘Christ-myth,’ but they do not do so on the ground of historical evidence. The historicity of Christ is as axiomatic for an unbiased historian as the historicity of Julius Caesar. It is not historians who propagate the ‘Christ-myth’ theories.” (F.F. Bruce)⁴⁶

II. External Evidence for Jesus

The historicity of Jesus of Nazareth is undeniable. Of course, the Gospel writers spoke in great detail about Jesus and His work. Is there external evidence to support their testimony? There certainly is. In addition to the evidence, we have already examined for the inspiration of the Bible, there are a number of references by historical writers to the Person of Jesus.

⁴⁶ As quoted in McDowell, Josh (1999), *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, [Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers], p. 120.

A. Pagan Writers



Cornelius Tacitus (A.D. 55-120) was a Roman historian who lived through the reigns of over a half dozen Roman emperors and has been called the ‘greatest historian’ of ancient Rome. In writing of Nero and his attempt to dispel the belief that he set fire to Rome, Tacitus stated, “Hence to suppress the rumor, he falsely charged with the guilt, and punished with the most exquisite tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. **Christus, the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius...**”⁴⁷

One of the first secular writers who mention Christ is Thallus. He wrote a history of the Eastern Mediterranean world from the Trojan War to his own time, dated around A.D. 52. His writing now exists only in fragments that have been cited by other writers. Julius Africanus, who penned his work around A.D. 221, wrote about a comment made by Thallus regarding the darkness during the late afternoon hours when Jesus died. “Thallus, in the third book of his histories, explains away this darkness as an eclipse of the sun – unreasonably, as it seems to me (unreasonably, of course, because a solar eclipse could not take place at the time of the full moon, and it was at the season of the Paschal full moon that Christ died).”⁴⁸

Other secular writers that speak of Jesus include:⁴⁹

- a) Lucian of Samosata (a Greek satirist of the late 2nd century) – he wrote, “The Christians worship a man to this day – the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account.”
- b) Suetonius (a Roman court official under Hadrian) – wrote of the expulsion of the Jews because they made “constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus”
- c) Pliny the Younger (Governor of Bithynia, A.D. 112) – he had been killing Christians and “made them curse Christ, which a genuine Christian cannot be induced to do ...they affirmed, however, that the whole of their guilt, was, that they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verse a hymn to Christ as to a god ...”;
- d) Mara Bar-Serapion (a Syrian and probably Stoic philosopher, A.D. 70) – compared Jesus to Socrates and Pythagoras and stated, “What advantage did the Jews gain from executing their wise King? It was just after that that their kingdom was abolished.”

B. Jewish Writers

Scholars have found many reliable references to Jesus in Jewish writings. Here are a couple of these:⁵⁰

- a) In the Babylonian Talmud – “It has been taught: On the eve of Passover, they hanged Yeshu the Nazarene [Yeshu translates as Jesus] ... he practiced sorcery and enticed and led Israel astray ... not having found anything in his favor, they hanged him on the eve of Passover” [hanged is another way of referring to crucifixion]

⁴⁷ Ibid, pp. 120-121.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 122.

⁴⁹ Ibid, pp. 121-123.

⁵⁰ Ibid, pp. 123-126.

b) Josephus ben Mattathias (A.D. 37 – 100, a Jewish historian captured by Vespasian in 67 to serve as a mediator and interpreter) – one of the more lengthy references in *Jewish Antiquities* is as follows: “Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, *if it be lawful to call him a man*, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. *He was the Christ*, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; *for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him*. And the tribe of Christians so named from him are not extinct at this day.” The italicized phrases are of questionable authenticity; they may have been later added by Christian copyists. However, most of this passage is accepted as further evidence of the events in the life of Christ.

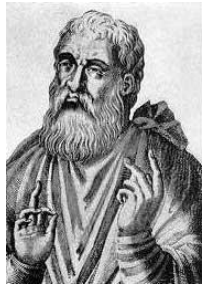


C. Post-apostolic Christian Sources

Shortly after the time of the apostles, there were church leaders, teachers, and apologists who wrote about Jesus. While these were not inspired works, they provide further evidence for the historical nature of Jesus Christ. Here are a few quotes from these works:⁵¹

a) Clement of Rome (bishop of the church at Rome, late 1st century) – “The Apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. So, then Christ is from God, and the Apostles are from Christ. Both therefore came of the will of God in the appointed order. Having therefore received a charge, and having been fully assured through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ...”

b) Ignatius (bishop of Antioch) – “Jesus Christ who was of the race of David, who was the Son of Mary, who was truly born and ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died in the sight of those in heaven and on earth and those under the earth; who moreover was truly raised from the dead, His Father having raised Him, who in the like fashion will so raise us also who believe on Him.”



c) Justin Martyr (A.D. 100-167, one of the greatest early Christian apologists) – “Now there is a village in the land of the Jews, thirty-five stadia from Jerusalem, in which Jesus Christ was born, as you can ascertain also from the registers of the taxing made under Cyrenius, your first procurator in Judea.” “For when they crucified Him, driving in the nails, they pierced His hands and feet; and those who crucified Him parted His garments among themselves, each casting lots for what he chose to have, and receiving according to the decision of the lot.”

d) Other early writers who spoke of Christ: Quadratus (A.D. 125), Aristides (around A.D. 138 – 161), Hegesippus (1st century)

⁵¹ Ibid, pp. 130-135.

“The result of the examination of the sources outside the New Testament that bear directly or indirectly on our knowledge of Jesus is to confirm his historical existence, his unusual powers, the devotion of his followers, the continued existence of the movement after his death at the hands of the Roman governor in Jerusalem, and the penetration of Christianity into the upper strata of society in Rome itself by the later first century.” (Howard Clark Kee)

Christian Evidences



Lesson 8 – Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Part II)

III. Internal Evidence for Jesus

Lesson 7 demonstrated that external sources confirm the facts of Jesus' life as recorded in the gospels. As we turn to the internal evidence supporting Jesus' claims; we must first answer the question, "Are the gospel accounts trustworthy?" This takes us back to the question of inspiration already examined. Evidences for its inspiration are weighty and include: archaeology, agreement of book and land, fulfilled prophecy, scientific foreknowledge, the unity of the Bible, and the claims for inspiration. Although we did not examine the manuscript evidence in detail, the following quotes are noteworthy.

"Sir Frederick G. Kenyon, formerly Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum, compared the New Testament with ancient classical literature and drew the following conclusion: 'So far from the New Testament text being in an abnormally unsatisfactory state, it is far better attested than that of any work of ancient literature ... We are far better equipped to observe the early stages of textual history in the manuscript period in the case of the New Testament than of any other work of ancient literature.'"⁵²

"F.F. Bruce, Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis in the University of Manchester, says: 'The evidence for our New Testament writing is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning. And if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt. It is a curious fact that historians have often been much readier to trust the New Testament records than have many theologians.'"⁵³

Furthermore, the Gospel accounts were not written by men totally unconnected to the life of Jesus. Many of the New Testament documents claim to have been written by eyewitnesses. This should give additional weight to the Bible record as it relates to proving these things to unbelievers. Notice the claims in the following passages: Luke - Lk. 1:1-4; John - Jn. 19:35, 1 Jn. 1:1-4; Peter - 2 Pet. 1:16.

Miracles

Jesus claimed equality with God; He claimed to be eternal. He stated, "*He who has seen Me has seen the Father.*" How did He prove these claims? What should cause us to believe that He was who He claimed to be? Jesus answered this question by pointing to the miracles He performed.

⁵² Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], p. 125.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 125.

“Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?”

The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.” Jesus answered them, “... If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.” (Jn. 10:31-38)

A. What is a miracle?

- How would you define a miracle?

James Orr described a miracle as follows: “It may suffice here to define miracle as any deviation from or transcendence of the order of nature, due to the interposition of a supernatural cause.”⁵⁴ “A miracle cannot be explained by reason or science. It is an act of God different from or above the natural order.”⁵⁵

“Some people adamantly claim that any type of miracle is absolutely impossible ... A person who believes that the Universe and all living things evolved through natural processes over billions of years cannot believe in miracles, because he or she thinks that there is nothing outside of nature. Since a miracle is an event that has only a supernatural explanation, no such event could ever occur in a world where only natural forces operate. Once a person denies the greatest miracle of all – creation at the hand of God – then he or she is forced to deny that miracles of any kind can occur.”⁵⁶



“Another idea suggests that God did create the Universe, but that His activities stopped at creation. Therefore, He no longer intervenes in this world through miracles, because that would break the natural laws He established at the time of creation. The problem with this is that it does not consider the fact that the natural laws do not apply to God since He is not a natural being ... Think of the Universe as one room. God established natural laws that apply to everything in that room, and then He locked the door. It is impossible for matter or energy to be created or destroyed in that room. But, now suppose that

God unlocks the door and puts another chair in the room or takes a chair out of the room. Did God break the law He established in the room? No, because everything in the room (Universe) still functions according to the natural laws, but since God is outside of the room then the laws do not apply to Him.”⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Orr, James, *The Faith of a Modern Christian*, p. 65.

⁵⁵ Jenkins, p. 122.

⁵⁶ Butt, Kyle (2001), *Out With Doubt*, [Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, Inc.], p. 128.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 129-130.

As C.S. Lewis states in his book, *Miracles*, “If God annihilates or creates or deflects a unit of matter, he has created a new situation at that point. Immediately all Nature domiciles this new situation, makes it at home in her realm, adapts all other events to it. It finds itself conforming to all the laws ... In calling them miracles we do not mean that they are contradictions or outrages; we mean that, left to her own resources, she (nature) could never produce them.”⁵⁸

B. The purpose of miracles

Read each of the following passages and state the purposes given for miracles as recorded in the New Testament:

- Jn. 20:30-31
- Mt. 11:2-5
- Jn. 3:2

C. The power demonstrated in Jesus’ miracles

The New Testament records about 35 miracles of Jesus performed during His public ministry. These provide strong evidence in support of the claim that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. As the man born blind stated,



“Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.” (Jn. 9:32-33)

Jesus had power over the human body and could heal sickness and disease with the gentle touch of His hand or a kind word from His mouth (Mt. 8:1-4). On other occasions, He proved that He



had power over the spiritual world by casting out demons (Lk. 4:33-37); He demonstrated His power to forgive sins by healing a physical ailment (Lk. 5:17-26). Jesus had the power to control the physical world and demonstrated this by stilling the storm (Mk. 4:35-41). His power over death was seen several times as in the case of Jairus’ daughter (Mt. 9:18-26).

D. The New Testament Words for Miracles

Three words are used to describe the miracles in the Bible. These are:

- 1) Signs (Greek, *semeion*). Used when the appeal is to the understanding. (Jn. 2:11)
- 2) Wonders (Greek, *teras*). Used when the appeal is to the imagination. (Jn. 4:48)
- 3) Miracles (Mighty Deeds). (Greek, *dunamis*). Indicates the source as supernatural. (Mk. 6:2)

⁵⁸ As quoted by Jenkins, p. 122.

E. Signs in the Gospel of John

The word sign (*semeion*) is the one used almost every time in the book of John. The use of this word implies that the deed is an indication of some power or meaning behind it to which it is secondary in importance.

- John selected seven signs from the ministry of Christ; complete the following table:

SCRIPTURE	THE SIGN	SIGNIFIED POWER OVER:
John 2:1-11		
John 4:46-54		
John 5:1-9		
John 6:1-14		
John 6:5-21		
John 9:1-11		
John 11:1-53		

F. The Reality of the Miracles Was Not Questioned

It is important to see how the people reacted to the miracles of Jesus. Such words as “astonished,” “marveled,” and “amazed” often described the reaction by witnesses. These witnesses sometimes included those opposed to Christ. The Pharisees charged that Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebub the prince of demons (Mt. 12:24), but they did not deny the fact of the miracles. After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, “... *the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, ‘What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.’*” (Jn. 11:47-48)

Jesus’ fame for performing miracles even reached the ears of Herod. “*Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.*” (Lk. 23:8) As we noticed in our previous study, secular historians, such as Josephus, even referred to the miracles of Jesus. Of course, they used such terms as “marvelous deeds” and “sorceries.”

“The greatest opponents of Christianity for four centuries did not question the reality of miracles. In the Memoir of Richard Watson, who, in 1776, addressed a series of letters to Edward Gibbon, in which he offered an apology for Christianity to the author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Watson said: ‘Three men of distinguished abilities rose up at different times and attacked Christianity with every objection which their malice could suggest, or their learning could devise: but neither Celsus in the second century, nor Porphyry in the third, nor the Emperor Julian himself in the fourth century, ever questioned the reality of the miracles related to the Gospels.’”⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 123.

“Miracles are only impossible in a world with no God. In the past, God used miracles to create the Universe and to provide credibility for the men who had been entrusted with His message. Jesus repeatedly performed miraculous deeds in order to prove to His followers (and to His enemies) that He was the Son of God. Sadly, many people during Christ’s day refused to believe in Him as God’s Son. And just as sadly, many today stubbornly refuse to believe in the Sonship of Christ. As He told the unbelieving Pharisees of His day, so will He tell the modern-day disbelievers,”⁶⁰

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.” (Mt. 11:21-24)

⁶⁰ Butt, p. 131-132.

Christian Evidences



Lesson 9 – Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Part III)

From the moment that man first sinned, a plan was set in motion. Sin separated man from God, but because of God's great love, He would provide a means of redemption. His plan unfolded over a great many generations and finally culminated in the person of Jesus the Christ – the Promised One and the very Son of God. It was through His death and resurrection that all have the hope of salvation.

“... according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.” (Eph. 3:11-12)

If there is anything that proves the divinity of Jesus it is His death and resurrection. Of all the miracles He performed, this is THE miracle. It is the pinnacle proof that Jesus was and is who He claimed to be.

I. Internal Evidence for Jesus – His Death

“The manner of Jesus’ death and the supernatural events surrounding it are sure evidences of His divinity. He predicted the time, place, and circumstances of His death. He predicted the reactions of His disciples to the event. Then there were the signs that were given at the actual time of His death – the opening graves around Jerusalem, the ripping open of the temple veil, the thick darkness. No mere mortal could have known all the circumstances of His death in advance! Heaven and earth do not react to a mere mortal’s death as they did to the death of this man!”⁶¹

A. Jesus Foretold His Death

Can any mere man know the time and manner of his death? Do we know where we will die and the circumstances? Jesus was not merely man; He being both man and God was able to tell of His death in some detail. He also told His disciples how they would react to His death. All of this helped prepare His disciples for what was sure to unsettle them, but more than that, it proved His divinity.

Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? “He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, “saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’” And they remembered His words. (Lk. 24:5-8)

⁶¹ Shelly, Rubel (1970), *Simple Studies in Christian Evidences*, [Henderson, TN: Rubel Shelly], p. 31.

Read the following passages and note what Jesus predicted about His death:

- Mt. 12:38-40
- Mt. 16:21
- Mt. 17:22-23
- Mt. 20:18-19
- Jn. 2:18-22
- Jn. 6:70-71; Jn. 13:21-22, 26
- Mk. 14:27; 14:50
- Mk. 14:29-30; 14:66-72

B. Events at the Death of Jesus



If Jesus' foretelling of His death is not enough, the events at the time of His death are further evidence affirming His claims. This was no ordinary man.

“And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.” (Mt. 27:50-53)

“How can these things be understood apart from the power of God? These obviously were not normal events! They were signs from God that the man who was dying was His only begotten Son and that the Father was accepting His sacrifice of Himself for the sins of wicked men! Our reaction to these events surrounding His death can only be the same as that of the centurion who was present and saw many of these things with his own eyes.”⁶² *“So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, ‘Truly this was the Son of God!’” (Mt. 27:54)*

II. Internal Evidence for Jesus – The Resurrection

“Jesus Christ met death face-to-face and defeated it! The tomb was empty Sunday morning because He was alive. By His resurrection, every claim Jesus made about His divine nature was confirmed “with power” (Rom. 1:4). He not only kept His word that He would be raised, but He fulfilled a thousand-year-old prophecy by David (see Ps. 16:1-2 and Acts 2:24-36). In our

⁶² Shelly, p. 32.

modern, skeptical age, people often wonder if such a claim can be proved. The answer is “Yes!” A believable case for the resurrection of Jesus can be made from the information contained in the Gospel records.”⁶³

A. The Empty Tomb

We first consider the tomb to find some solid evidence of Jesus’ resurrection. The historical record shows that Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea (Jn. 19:38-42). Furthermore, a guard was assigned by Pilate to make the tomb secure until the third day because the chief Priests and Pharisees knew of Jesus’ prediction. They feared His disciples might try to steal the body to deceive the people (Mt. 27:62-66). “But one fact that has never been disputed by even the most bitter enemy of Christianity is that the *tomb was empty on the following Sunday morning!* How did the tomb become empty?”⁶⁴



Note that it was impossible for Jesus to escape from the tomb undetected.

- All four Gospel records plainly declare that the Lord was dead prior to entering the tomb (Mt. 27:50; Mk. 15:44-45; Lk. 23:46; Jn. 19:32-34).
- Tombs have only one entrance or means of access.
- The opening was blocked by a massive stone door (Mt. 27:60).
- The tomb was sealed and watched by soldiers (M. 27:66).

The tomb was clearly empty on Sunday morning. The testimony of several witnesses confirmed this.

- At least six of Jesus’ followers saw the empty tomb: Mary Magdalene (Mt. 28:1-10); Mary and Salome (Mk. 16:1-8); Joanna (Lk. 24:10); and Peter and John (Jn. 20:2-8).
- Some of the Roman guards, no doubt, saw that the tomb was empty (Mt. 28:2, 11-15).
- Jesus’ enemies never denied that the tomb was empty; they merely attempted to explain why it was empty.
- Peter proclaimed that the tomb was empty on the day of Pentecost in the presence of literally thousands of Jews who would have denied it if they could (Acts 2:24-36).⁶⁵

As we consider the empty tomb, think about the following questions.

- Who moved the stone? Give possible explanations some might offer and the problems with each.

⁶³ Bromling, Brad T. (1995), *Be Sure! A Study in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press], p. 97.

⁶⁴ Shelly, p. 33.

⁶⁵ Bromling, p. 98.

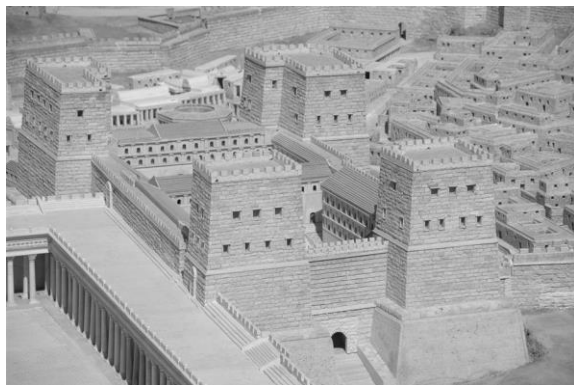
- Why did the chief priests and elders bribe the guards? (Mt. 28:11-15) What was reported among the Jews even to the time of writing of Matthew’s gospel? What fact did this confirm?

B. The Testimony of Witnesses to His Resurrection

During the forty-day period from Jesus’ resurrection to His ascension, there were a number of recorded appearances that the Lord made to various individuals in various circumstances. List the names or numbers of witnesses to the resurrected Christ and the circumstances.

SCRIPTURE	NAMES (OR NUMBER)	CIRCUMSTANCE
Mt. 28:1-10; Mk. 16:1-8		
Jn. 20:11-18		
Lk. 24:34		
Lk. 24:13-35		
Jn. 20:19-25		
Jn. 20:26-29		
Jn. 21:1-23		
1 Cor. 15:6		
1 Cor. 15:7		
Lk. 24:50-52; Acts 1:3-10		
Acts 9:1-9		

C. Where the Claim was First Published



“Another important consideration is that the claim that Jesus had risen from the dead was first published in the very city where it was purported to have happened and no one was able to controvert it! The people who were closest to the event in history and who would have most assuredly wanted to put a stop to such a report were powerless in the face of the facts at hand. The apostles preached a resurrected Christ in a place and at a time when it was fully possible to check every piece of evidence, to interrogate

every witness and to expose every tract of fraud. Our only reasonable conclusion is that they were telling the truth and had nothing to fear from an investigation of their claim!”⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Shelly, p. 34.

D. Subsequent Lives of the Apostles

Subsequent to the death and resurrection of Jesus, the apostles dedicated their entire lives to spreading the good news of salvation that came through Jesus the Christ. Were their actions consistent with men who honestly believed in Jesus or consistent with deceivers? Many spent their whole lives preaching the resurrected Christ under extremely difficult circumstances. They were cursed, hated, driven out of cities, imprisoned, and tortured because of their message; many died as martyrs.

- What would their lives more likely have been like if they were deceivers?

III. False Theories

Regardless of the strong evidence for the resurrection of Jesus, some persist in doubt. Instead of accepting the evidence, skeptics have offered various explanations as to what happened to the body. Following are some of these theories that we will discuss:

- The swoon theory – that Jesus did not actually die on the cross, but just fainted.
- The wrong tomb theory – that Jesus’ followers went to the wrong tomb and only thought He had been raised.
- Friends stole the body – that His friends stole the body while the guards slept.
- Enemies stole the body – that the body was stolen by Jews to keep the Christians from doing so.
- Hallucination theory – that the disciples never actually saw the Lord’s risen body, but only imagined they did.
- “I believe it and that is enough” theory – that Jesus only lived on in the memory of His followers.

After examining the evidence, the conclusion should be clear. Jesus Christ was “*declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*” (Rom. 1:4)

Christian Evidences



Lesson 10 – Creation vs. Evolution

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1)

It is a simple yet profound statement that begins the Bible. With this statement and the passage that follows, we have a description of the origin of mankind and all that we see. It is stated as a fact of history and not suggested as a working hypothesis or theory. It is either true or it is not. Have we concluded the Bible to be reliable and of Divine origin? Then, we should accept these truths.

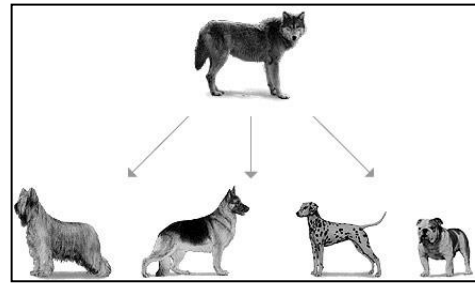
The question of origins is one that has been debated for a long time. It is only natural to wonder where we came from and what cause is sufficient to explain all that we see. The Bible is quite clear on the subject. The Lord was the creative force and it was all spoken into existence in six days: Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11; Heb. 11:3; Psa. 33:6ff; Jn. 1:3,10; Acts 17:24; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11. Furthermore, He continues to govern or sustain all things: Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; Acts 17:28; 2 Pet. 3:7. Of course, many people have attempted to offer other explanations for the origin of mankind, life, and the universe. The most popular theory is that of evolution.

I. Evolution

You’ve heard the term throughout your life. What do people mean when they talk of evolution? The term literally means an “unfolding” or “unrolling,” as in the opening of a rose bud or the development of an embryo. However, the term has generally come to be used to describe a theory for origins. “The theory of evolution may be defined as the hypothesis that millions of years ago lifeless matter acted upon by natural forces, gave origin to one or more minute living organisms which have since evolved into all living and extinct plants and animals, including man. A simpler definition: belief in change with descent from a common ancestor. Evolution as defined here, involves pure chance.

“Dr. G.A. Kerkut, an evolutionist, makes a distinction between the General Theory of Evolution and the Special Theory of Evolution: ‘There is a theory which states that many living animals can be observed over the course of time to undergo changes so that new species are formed. This can be called the “Special Theory of Evolution” and can be demonstrated in certain cases by experiments. On the other hand, there is the theory that all living forms in the world have arisen from a single source which itself came from an inorganic form. This theory can be called the “General Theory of Evolution” and the evidence that supports it is not sufficiently strong to allow us to consider it as anything more than a working hypothesis. It is not clear whether the changes that bring about speciation are of the same nature as those that brought about the development of new phyla. The answer will be found by future experimental work and not by dogmatic assertions that the General Theory of Evolution must be correct because there is

nothing else that will satisfactorily take its place.”⁶⁷
 Others use the terms “micro-evolution” (small changes like the improvement of animal stock; change within bounds; differentiation, variation, fluctuation) and “macro-evolution” (large changes; e.g. a water animal becoming a creeping thing, which becomes a beast, which becomes a man). Micro-evolution is easily observed, and there is no debate over this. Macro-evolution, however, has never been observed.



The development of dog breeds is an example of micro-evolution.

“All reputable biologists have agreed that evolution of life on Earth is an established fact (Drs. Vance and Miller).’ ‘The first point to make about Darwin’s theory is that it is no longer a theory, but a fact (Sir Julian Huxley).’ Such statements could be multiplied many times. Their intent is to teach that indeed, evolution is a ‘fact’ of science, and that anyone ‘reputable,’ anyone ‘entitled to a judgment,’ accepts evolution as a fact.

“Organic evolution is **not** a ‘fact’ of science. It is not now, has never been, and will never be. Even many prominent evolutionists have been willing to admit openly that it is not. Dr. Robert A. Millikan, Nobel laureate in physics, has well said: ‘The pathetic thing is that we have scientists who are trying to prove evolution, which no scientist can ever prove.’ Dr. G. A. Kerkut listed seven assumptions upon which evolution is based, and then made this startling remark: ‘The first point that I should like to make is that these seven assumptions by their nature are not capable of experimental verification.’

“Why do people believe evolution? Why is evolution such a popular theory? 1) ‘The main reason most educated people believe in evolution is simply because they have been told that most educated people believe in evolution (Dr. Henry Morris). 2) ‘Evolution itself is accepted by zoologists, not because it has been observed to occur ... or can be proved by logically coherent evidence, but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible (D.M.S. Watson, an evolutionist).’ ‘Evolution is unproved and unprovable. We believe it because the only alternative is special creation, and that is unthinkable (Sir Arthur Keith).’ 3) Some are honestly convinced that there is evidence to support such a belief.”⁶⁸

II. Supposed proofs of evolution

A. Comparative embryology

“In his *Origin of Species*, Darwin asserted (in a discussion that occupied 12 pages) that similarity among the various embryos of animals and man was a primary proof of the theory of evolution. He called it, in fact, ‘second to none’ in importance. Ernst Henrich Haeckel (1834-1919) was a German biologist and follower of Darwin. He developed the so-called ‘theory of embryonic recapitulation’: successive stages of embryonic development repeat the evolutionary stages of one’s animal ancestry. He said that ‘ontogeny (the development of one) recapitulated (repeated) phylogeny (the development of the race).’”

⁶⁷ Jenkins, Ferrell (1989), *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, [Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation], p. 24.

⁶⁸ Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, Inc.], pp. 47-49, 61.

In recent decades, this theory has been rejected by evolutionists such as Dr. George G. Simpson and Sir Arthur Keith. Keith stated, ‘It was expected that the embryo would recapitulate the features of its ancestors from the lowest to the highest forms in the animal kingdom. Now that the appearances of the embryo at all stages are known, the general feeling is one of disappointment; the human embryo at no stage is anthropoid in appearance. The embryo of the



mammal never resembles the worm, the fish, or the reptile. Embryology provides no support whatsoever for the evolutionary hypothesis.”⁶⁹

Haeckel was also an accomplished artist, and he used falsified drawings to accompany his articles. He altered the illustrations of his colleagues and also used the same illustration labeled as a human, a dog, and a rabbit to show their similarity. The University of Jena was forced to convene a university court, and five professors “convicted” Haeckel of fraud. His works were first published in 1866, and we have known for over 100 years that this theory is not correct. Yet,

Haeckel’s drawings are still turning up in modern biology texts as “proof” of evolution. This quote from Dr. John Tyler Bonner, who was head of the Biology Dept. at Princeton, explains why: “We may have known for almost a hundred years that Haeckel’s blastaea-gastra theory of the origin of the metazoan is probably nonsense, but it is so clear-cut, so simple, so easy to hand full-blown to the student.” (1961)

“For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb.” (Psa.139:12)

B. Vestigial Structures

“Vestigial structures are those found in man and animals which evolutionists claim to be degenerate and thus useless. We are told that these so-called “degenerate” structures, while useless to present day animals, were at one time useful to their evolutionary predecessors. These structures are said to be “remnants” – leftovers – which eventually will be lost through evolutionary processes of selection. Years ago, when this “proof” was first set forth, there were literally hundreds of examples of these so-called vestigial structures. For example, Alfred Weidersheim published a list of 180 vestigial structures in the human system – which came to be thought of as a walking museum of antiquity!

“As Dr. R.L. Wyszong puts it: ‘Not too long ago man was imputed to have 180 vestiges. Organs like the appendix, tonsils, thymus, pineal gland and thyroid gland were on the list. Today, all former vestigial organs are known to have some function during the life of the individual. If the organ has any function at any time, it cannot be called rudimentary or vestigial ... As man’s knowledge has increased the list of vestigial organs decreased. So what really was “vestigial?” Was it not man’s rudimentary knowledge of the intricacies of the body?’

“Another point that needs to be considered is this: ‘If man does have 180 vestigial organs, organs that were once functioning, then in the past he would have had more organs than he now has. In the past he would have been developing the organs that he presently has plus he would have had the 180 functional vestigial organs. So the farther we go back in time, the more complex the

⁶⁹ Thompson, pp. 62-63.

organism! Rather an interesting evolutionary twist.’ (Wysong) Those evolutionists who keep up with the scientific literature rarely discuss this issue any longer. Actually, when you consider that there are no evidences of the transitional stages between functioning organs and useless organs, then these so-called ‘useless’ appendages would prove degeneration, not evolution. Evolution is the rise of new, different, and functioning organs, not the wasting away of organs.”⁷⁰

C. Comparative Anatomy

“Dr. Carl Sagan, the eminent Cornell University astronomer, wrote: ‘The inner workings of terrestrial organisms – from microbes to men – are so similar in their biochemical details as to make it highly likely that all organisms on the Earth have evolved from a single instance of the origin of life.’ It is no secret that the comparative sciences, especially anatomy and physiology, are considered among the strongest alleged evidences for evolution. In fact, much of the case for ‘amoeba-to-man’ type evolution is built upon arguments from similarity.

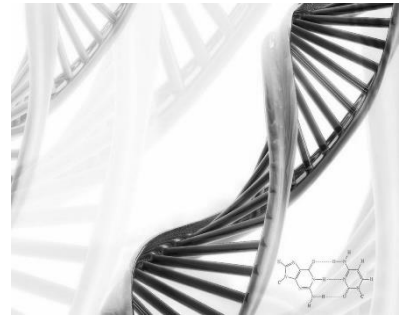
“It goes without saying that using descent from a common ancestor to explain similarities is one of the most ‘logical’ and appealing ideas used by evolutionists today. This ‘descent from a common ancestry’ idea **seems** to make sense. For example, that is how we explain such similarities as brothers and sisters looking more alike than, say, cousins. They have parents closer in common. And, evolutionists have an impressive array of data at their disposal. They point out, for example, that the wings of a bat, the forefoot of a turtle, the forefoot of a frog, and the arm of a man all have the same general structure. They also point out that the forefoot of the dog, the flipper of the whale, and the hand of a man have essentially the same bones and muscles.

“It is here that an extremely valuable lesson can be learned in the creation / evolution controversy. That lesson is this: it is rarely the data that are in dispute – **it is the interpretation placed on the data** that is in dispute. In the case of similarities, both evolutionists and creationists examine the same data. The evolutionist, however, says that similarity is proof of **common ancestry**. The creationist, on the other hand, says that similarity is proof of **creation according to a common design!** ... There is a ‘catch,’ however. Dr. Ferenco Kiss, Dean of the medical Faculty, University of Budapest, reminds us: ‘...it is necessary for the evolutionists – in order to maintain their theory – to collect only the similarities and to neglect the numerous differences.’ Dr. T.H. Morgan, evolutionist of Columbia University, candidly admitted what many evolutionists do not wish to become common knowledge when he said: ‘If, then it can be established beyond dispute that similarity or even identity of the same character in different species is **not** always to be interpreted to mean that both have arisen from a common ancestry, **the whole argument from comparative anatomy seems to tumble in ruins.**’ Or, as Wysong puts it: ‘If the law of similarity can be used to show evolutionary relationships, then dissimilarities can be used to show a lack of relationship ...’

“The textbooks on evolution usually concentrate solely on the **similarities**. Now, however, we have data (from the evolutionists themselves) concerning the **differences**. Among some of the most interesting data, however, are those presented by Dr. Colin Patterson, senior paleontologist of the British Museum of Natural History, during a 1981 visit to the United States. Dr. Patterson

⁷⁰ Thompson, pp. 65-67.

suggested to the scientific societies in this country to which he spoke that he had ‘experienced a shift from evolution as knowledge to evolution as faith.’ He then presented specific example after example of how the evolutionary hypothesis of common ancestry acted as an ‘anti-theory’ that conveys ‘anti-knowledge.’ He presented data on amino acid sequences for the alpha hemoglobins of vipers, crocodiles, and chickens.



Evolutionists ‘know’ that vipers and crocodiles (two reptiles) should be much more closely related than either is to a bird. But the crocodile and chicken showed the greatest similarity (17.5% of their amino acids in common), with the viper and the chicken the next most similar (10.5%) and the two reptiles with the least similarity (5.6%). An examination of the amino acids in myoglobin showed that crocodiles and lizards (two reptiles) share 10.5%, but that a lizard and a chicken (reptile/bird) also share the same percentage (10.5%)! Dr. Patterson also dealt with the differences between men and apes – differences he said must be re-evaluated in light of new data at hand. He then described studies of mitochondrial DNA done on man and various primates. Where there should have been a high percentage of similarities, there was a very low percentage. After all of his data were presented, Dr. Patterson (a confirmed evolutionist) remarked: ‘The theory makes a prediction, we’ve tested it, and the prediction is falsified precisely.’

“The creation model suggests similarities due to a common Designer who used ‘economy of design’ (just like architects and other designers do today, locating items that work well and using them consistently in each thing they design). The Creator used those things He knew would work well in all (or most) organisms, because He knew we would all have to breathe the same air, drink the same water, eat the same types of organic foods, and in general co-inhabit the Earth. He then varied the ‘blueprint’ as He saw fit, to adapt an organism to a particular environment... The creation model accounts for **both** similarities **and** differences. The evolution model cannot account for numerous differences, thereby ‘tumbling in ruins.’”⁷¹

*“I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.” (Psa. 139:14)*

⁷¹ Thompson, pp. 67-70.

Christian Evidences



Lesson 11 – Creation vs. Evolution (Part II)

“... Then god saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good ... thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.” (Gen. 1:31-2:1)

The Bible is quite plain about God’s work in creation. It is not a point of debate with the Bible writers, and there is no ambiguity. God was the originator of all that exists. Of course to the unbeliever, the question of origins is hotly debated. Evolution continues to be the assumed answer, and to question it often brings scathing ridicule. How can we defend the truth when confronted with the theory of evolution? As we will continue to see in this lesson, it’s really not that hard. The long road of changing thought on evolution is littered with dead concepts and debunked ideas. Evolution can easily be refuted when it is examined honestly and openly; let’s continue with our look at the supposed evidence.

I. Spontaneous Generation

“In biology, one of the most widely respected laws of science is the Law of Biogenesis ... It simply says that life comes only from previous life of its own kind. We see this law play out every day all around the world. Everyone knows that kittens come only from female cats; cows produce only calves, etc. Over the years, the truthfulness of this law has been documented by thousands of scientists, one of the most famous of which was French microbiologist Louis Pasteur. His work dealt a crushing blow to the notion of spontaneous generation (the idea that life arises on its own from nonliving sources). While teachers and professors will talk about the importance of Pasteur’s work, they often go on to tell their students that evolution has occurred as a result of spontaneous generation.

“The truth of the matter is that evolution could not have occurred without some form of spontaneous generation. For this reason, some scientists have concocted experiments in an attempt to create life from nonliving substances. But after all these attempts, life never has been created from something nonliving. Now, think critically for a moment. If scientists have *designed* carefully planned experiments to create life from something nonliving, and yet have failed miserably every time, how can we be expected to believe that ‘nature’ did it using accidents, chance, and blind forces? On the contrary, whether *in nature or in the laboratory, scientists never have documented a single case of spontaneous generation. Life comes only from previous life of its own kind, which is exactly what the creation model teaches.*”⁷²

II. The Fossil Record

“Dr. LeGros Clark, a renowned evolutionist, said: ‘That evolution actually did occur can only be scientifically established by the discovery of the fossilized remains of representative samples of those intermediate types which have been postulated on the basis of the indirect evidence. In

⁷² Butt, Kyle (2001), *Out With Doubt*, [Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, Inc.], pp. 71-72.

other words, the really crucial evidence for evolution must be provided by the paleontologist whose business it is to study the evidence of the fossil record.’ Indeed, if the theory of evolution is a true account of the origin of life on Earth, it is obvious that the record of gradual development of plant and animal forms to higher forms should be found imbedded in the crust of the Earth in successive layers.”⁷³

A. Predictions

Before we evaluate the fossil record, let’s ask ourselves, ‘what do we expect to find?’ Depending on your belief, your prediction would be quite different.

The evolution model predicts:

- 1) the oldest rocks that bear evidence of life would contain the most primitive forms of life capable of fossilization;
- 2) younger rocks would contain evidence of more complex forms of life;
- 3) there would be a gradual change in life forms from simple to complex;
- 4) there would be huge numbers of transitional forms (as Darwin said, “The number of intermediate and transitional links between all living and extinct species must have been inconceivably great.”);
- 5) boundaries between types should blur as we look back in their fossil history (It should get more difficult to tell cats from dogs and mammals from reptiles, etc.);
- 6) the criteria we use to classify plants and animals today would be less and less useful as older and older fossils show the in-between characteristics of presumed common ancestors for different groups.

The creation model predicts:

- 1) the fossil record would show a sudden and explosive appearance of very diverse and highly complex forms of life;
- 2) there would not be a gradual change in life forms from simple to complex;
- 3) there would be a regular and systematic absence of transitional forms, since there were no transitional forms;
- 4) variations of the types created would be found with extinction evident among some;
- 5) the same kind of criteria used to classify plants and animals today ought to work just as well with fossils.

B. An “Explosion” of Life



A trilobite fossil

As we examine the fossil record, what do we in fact find? Evolutionists will classify various sedimentary layers with corresponding periods of evolutionary history; we will use these terms accommodatively. When the lowest layer of the evolutionary geologic timetable (the pre-Cambrian) is examined, what is found? Very little. The “oldest” fossils found have been some marine blue-green algae near Australia where the same kind of algae can be found today. Some invertebrates such as soft-shelled jellyfish have also been found in this layer but not much else. However, as we examine the next layer (the Cambrian), there is an “explosion” of life. Millions of

⁷³ Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, Inc.], p. 78.

fossils of highly complex forms of life have been found including sponges, corals, jelly fish, worms, mollusks, crustaceans, etc. Every one of the invertebrate forms has been found as well as some vertebrates. “As John Klotz comments: ‘It is hardly conceivable that all these forms should have originated in this period; and yet there is no evidence for the existence of many of them prior to the Cambrian period.’ The creation model predicts such an explosive appearance of these highly diversified forms. The fossil record actually yields facts in strong disagreement with the evolution model!”⁷⁴

C. Absence of Transitional Forms

“As one begins to examine other parts of the fossil record, searching diligently for those ‘transitional forms’ which Darwin said must be there in ‘inconceivably great numbers,’ what we actually find does not fit with what the evolution model predicts. It turns out that the ‘transitional forms’ are quite elusive – or, in fact, absent altogether! Consider these quotations from evolutionists as they comment on the paucity of the fossil record in regard to transitional forms:

‘... I still think that to the unprejudiced, the fossil record of plants is in favor of special creation’ (E.J.H. Corner)

‘This regular absence of transitional forms is not confined to mammals, but is an almost universal phenomenon, as has long been noted by paleontologists. It is true of almost all orders of all classes of animals, both vertebrate and invertebrate. A fortiori, it is also true of the classes, and of the major animal phyla, and it is apparently also true of analogous categories of plants.’ (G.G. Simpson)

‘It is a feature of the known fossil record that most taxa appear abruptly.’ (G.G. Simpson)
‘Despite the bright promise that paleontology provides a means of ‘seeing’ evolution, it has presented some nasty difficulties for evolutionists, the most notorious of which is the presence of the ‘gaps’ in the fossil record. Evolution requires intermediate forms between species, and paleontology does not provide them.’ (David Kitts)

The ‘transitional forms’ which must be in the fossil record if evolution is to be true are simply not to be found! The creation model predicts the abrupt appearance of highly complex and diverse forms of life, and no evidence of transitional forms between these basic forms of life. The fossil record reveals exactly that.”⁷⁵

D. Classification Criteria

“Creation is also supported by our ability to use the same criteria to classify both living plants and animals and those found as fossils. Even among extinct types, we don’t find ‘in-between forms,’ or forms that are any harder to classify (when the fossil evidence is complete enough) than plants and animals living today. Most people just assume that fossils and evolution go hand in hand. Some people even seem to think that ‘believing’ in fossils is almost the same as ‘believing’ in evolution. We’ve been thoroughly indoctrinated with educational materials and entertainment touting evolution, and it’s hard to even think that fossils argue so strongly *against* evolution and *for* creation ... Charles Darwin wrote the following: ‘intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated organic change, and this is perhaps the most

⁷⁴ Thompson, pp. 79-80.

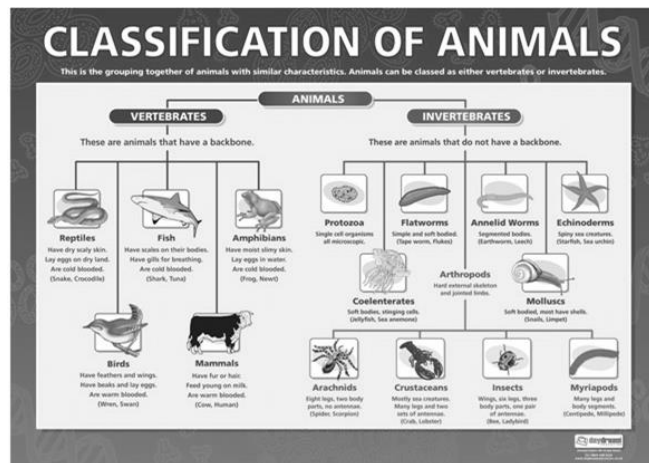
⁷⁵ Thompson, pp. 80-81.

obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory.’ ... He blamed the conflict between fact and theory on ‘the imperfection of the geologic record.’

“Well, it’s now over 120 years [as of 1982] since Darwin made that statement, and we’ve unearthed thousands of tons of fossils from all over the world. What does all this massive amount of evidence show? David Raup reviews the evidence for us. He has been the curator of the famous Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. That museum houses 20% of all fossil species known, so Raup is in a position to speak with considerable knowledge about the fossil evidence. The title of his article in the January, 1979, issue of the *Field Museum Bulletin* is ‘Conflicts Between Darwin and Paleontology.’ Raup starts by saying that ‘most people assume that fossils provide a very important part of the general argument made in favor of Darwinian interpretations of the history of life. Unfortunately, this is not strictly true.’ He mentions that Darwin expected those gaps in his theory, those missing links, to be unearthed by future discoveries. Then Raup summarizes those discoveries:

‘Well, we are now 120 years after Darwin, and knowledge of the fossil record has been greatly expanded ... ironically, we have *even fewer examples* of evolutionary transition than we had in Darwin’s time. By this I mean that some of the classic cases of Darwinian change in the fossil record, such as the evolution of the horse in North America, have had to be *discarded or modified* as a result of more detailed information.’

What a statement! Darwin said the fossil evidence was perhaps the most obvious and serious objection against his theory. Raup is saying that 120 years of research have made the case for Darwinian evolution *even worse*.⁷⁶



III. Genetics as Evolution’s Mechanism?

“Darwin, in his *Origin of the Species*, had argued that species are always changing, the result of natural selection. His concept was that of descent with modification, with continual and gradual change. Geographical distribution and natural selection, Darwin felt, were the modes of evolution. Then, at the turn of the century, the science of genetics began to appear on the scene. Some geneticists came to believe they had the answers as to *how* variation and change occurred. It was done, so they said, by *genetic mutations*. The new idea, in regard to evolution, then became that species arose by mutations which were incorporated into the system by natural selection. Today the alleged mechanism of Neo-Darwinism is *genetic mutations plus natural selection*. Theodosius Dobzhansky, the renowned evolutionary geneticist, stated that ‘the process of mutation is the only known source of the new materials of genetic variability, and hence of evolution.’

⁷⁶ Morris, Henry M. and Parker, Gary E (1982), *What is Creation Science?*, [El Cajon, CA: Master Books], pp. 129-132.

“Evolution without a mechanism is like a car with no engine – it’s not going anywhere. Evolutionists soon realized that natural selection alone was not a sufficient mechanism. Organisms would not change from one species to another unless the genetic material somehow changed. Mutations are hereditary changes caused by alterations of the original genetic material ... We are told that ‘nature’ has ‘selected’ beneficial mutations and incorporated them into various organisms, eventually causing those organisms to change from one kind to another. If mutations are the ‘only known mechanism for evolution,’ there are some very serious problems.”⁷⁷

A. Problems with Mutations

- 1) **“Mutations are random.** C.H. Waddington, the famous evolutionary geneticist, once said: ‘It remains true to say that we know of no way other than *random* mutations by which hereditary variation comes into being ...’ Henry M. Morris agrees: ‘There is no way to control mutations to make them produce characteristics which might be needed. Natural selection must simply take what comes.’ In other words, ‘nature’ isn’t selecting at all. Rather, ‘nature’ is pressed into accepting whatever it is that appears.
- 2) **Mutations are very rare, not common.** How often do random mutations occur? Dr. F.J. Ayala, evolutionary geneticist, states that ‘It is probably fair to estimate the frequency of a majority of mutations in higher organisms between one in ten thousand and one in a million per gene per generation.’⁷⁸ “The mathematical problem for evolution comes when you want a *series of related* mutations. The odds of getting two mutations that are related to one another are one in a hundred trillion. Any two mutations might produce no more than a fly with a wavy edge on a bent wing. That’s a long way from producing a truly new structure, and certainly a long way from changing a fly into some new kind of organism. You need more mutations for that. So, what are the odds of getting three mutations in a row? That’s one in a billion trillion (10^{21}). All of a sudden, the ocean isn’t big enough to hold enough bacteria to make it likely for you to find a bacterium with three simultaneous or sequential related mutations. What about four mutations? 10^{28} . All of a sudden, the earth isn’t big enough to hold enough organisms to make that very likely. Four mutations don’t even make a start toward real evolution. But even at this point some evolutionists have given up the classic idea of evolution, because it just plainly doesn’t work.”⁷⁹
- 3) **“Good mutations are very, very rare.** There are at least three types of mutations, theoretically: bad, good, and neutral. How often do good mutations occur? Dr. H.J. Muller, Nobel laureate in genetics, said: ‘Accordingly, the great majority of mutations, certainly well over 99%, are *harmful* in some way, as is to be expected of the effects of accidental occurrences.’ Dr. Dobzhansky remarked that ‘Most mutants which arise in any organism are more or less *disadvantageous* to their possessors...’ Dr. C.P. Martin, an evolutionist, said: ‘Accordingly, mutations are more than just sudden changes in heredity; they also affect viability, and, to the best of our knowledge, invariably affect it adversely. Does not this fact show that mutations are really assaults on the organism’s central being, its basic capacity to be a living thing?’⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Thompson, pp. 75-76.

⁷⁸ Thompson, pp. 76.

⁷⁹ Morris, p. 97.

⁸⁰ Thompson, pp. 77.

B. Conclusion on Mutations

What can we conclude from these problems with mutations? As Dr. Simpson stated, “Unless there is an unknown factor tremendously increasing the chance of simultaneous mutations, such a process has played no part whatever in evolution.”

“Harvard’s Stephen Gould (1977) quite clearly recognizes the difference between evolution and mutations. Evolution, he says, involves ‘profound structural transitions.’ Mutations, he says, produce only minor variations, like we see in experiments with ‘flies in bottles,’ that start as flies and end up as flies. In a later article, Gould (1980) simply says, ‘That theory [orthodox neo-Darwinian extrapolationalism], as a general proposition is effectively dead, despite its persistence as textbook orthodoxy.’ Gould believes our knowledge of genetics is now sufficient to completely reject the explanation of evolution as the slow, gradual selection of small mutational changes. He prefers to believe instead that evolution occurs in giant steps, radical restructuring of whole DNA sets producing what he himself calls ‘hopeful monsters.’ But he admits that no such hopeful monster has ever been observed.”⁸¹

“The list of arguments used to support both evolution and creation could go on and on. There probably are as many arguments for each model of origins as there are scientists to make them. But we always must remember that the facts behind the arguments are the important things, not the false interpretations(s) of those facts. The facts say that life comes only from previously existing life; evolution says life comes from nonliving sources. The facts show that no transitional forms of half-and-half organisms exist in the fossil record; evolution maintains that there should be millions of transitional forms. The facts show that similarities sometimes show common ancestry, but also can show common design. Facts are stubborn, impartial things that refuse to budge for people of high estate or low degree. The concepts of creation and evolution stand on opposite sides, and the facts stand behind only one of them. Which is it?”⁸²

⁸¹ Morris, pp. 108-109.

⁸² Butt, pp. 75-76.

Christian Evidences



Lesson 12 – The Error of Theistic Evolution

As we learned in our previous two lessons, the evidence against evolution is weighty. Many who believe in God, however, have not seen the evidence. They often feel threatened by the supposed factuality of evolution. How do they deal with this tension between their belief in the Bible and the pull of the “intellectual community”? Unfortunately, the answer for many is compromise. Since the time when evolution was first proposed, people have tried to develop compromise positions. Even among brethren, some have come to believe in the concept known as *Theistic Evolution*.

I. Theistic Evolution

Bert Thompson writes the following in regard to this concept: “The word ‘theistic’ derives from the Greek word, *theos*, meaning God. Therefore, when one claims to be a ‘theistic’ evolutionist, he is claiming to believe in both God and evolution at the same time. It is not always easy to provide a simple, comprehensive definition for theistic evolution because the concept is altered by its adherents to suit their own situations. Some, for example, would suggest that God created the first building blocks of matter and then allowed the evolutionary process to take over – including the spontaneous generation of life. Others contend that God created not only the initial building blocks of matter, but life itself, and then placed into operation natural laws through which evolution operated over time. Still others would argue that God not only created the building blocks and gave life a ‘push,’ but actually intervened from time to time, even though evolution was the mode of operation. Generally speaking, those in this last group prefer to be called ‘progressive creationists.’”⁸³

“The point is clear. The theistic evolutionist believes organic evolution was simply ‘the way God did it’ as He brought the Universe and its contents into existence. And although there are almost as many varieties of theistic evolution as there are people who espouse it, a few characteristics are common to all. For example, the theistic evolutionist believes in: a) an old Earth; b) wholly natural processes responsible for life as we see it, once the initial matter was brought into existence by God, and; c) a figurative (non-literal) interpretation of the Genesis account of creation.”⁸⁴

⁸³ Thompson, Bert (1995), *Creation Compromises*, [Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, Inc.], p. 58.

⁸⁴ Thompson, Bert and Jackson, Wayne (1992), *Study Course in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, Inc.], p. 90.

II. Why Some Believe in Theistic Evolution

It's only natural to wonder why a believer in God would believe in theistic evolution. What is it that brings one to such a belief? Certainly, we can't presume to know in every case, but I think we can deduce, in general, the reasons. Thompson lists the following as some of the reasons: a) they feel the evidence for organic evolution is just too strong to ignore, b) they are convinced that it is compatible with the Divine Record (not contradictory), c) some feel it "heightens" God's glory by allowing Him to have created the universe through an evolutionary process, d) some feel it just doesn't matter one way or the other, e) others feel Genesis has not told us HOW God created but merely WHO created, f) many are influenced by a steady stream of propaganda in such publications as *National Geographic*, *Reader's Digest*, *Discover*, *Scientific American*, and others, g) some fear being labeled "anti-intellectual," and h) some desire to avoid controversy at all costs.

III. What's Wrong with Theistic Evolution?

In Thompson and Jackson's book (see endnotes) they list a number of the things that are wrong with theistic evolution. In the introduction to this section, they write: "Is theistic evolution biblical, and therefore acceptable? It is not! It is one of the most dangerous compromises ever to befall the Bible-believer. To compromise on the matter of origins is certain to lead, at one point or another, to compromise in yet another area, and then another, and then another, ad infinitum. If the first chapters of the Bible are untrustworthy, why should we think that any of the other chapters are any different? ... Theistic evolution is false, and a compromise of what God said He did."⁸⁵



A. *No Theistic Statement Showing it to be True*

There is no theistic statement that shows theistic evolution to be true. God never said He used evolution to create man. In fact, He said just the opposite. His revelation declares creation, not evolution. Notice the following passages: Ex. 20:11; Ex. 31:17; Neh. 9:6; Psa. 33:6-9. Do they not claim **fiat creation**?

Is there any hint of a natural, gradualistic process in the Bible? Does the Bible speak of a process that took multiplied billions of years? "Any interpretation which attempts to 'stretch' the instantaneous, creative work of God over multiplied billions of years will quickly find itself speaking against the plain and simple statements of God Himself. God said He did it instantaneously – in six days."⁸⁶

B. *The Bible States Adam was the First Man*

"And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." (1 Cor. 15:45)

The Bible is clear; Adam was the first man. Paul and Moses (Gen. 1-2) plainly stated this to be the case. However, this is not the case with evolution. Evolution theory says that *Homo erectus* or *Homo habilis* or *Australopithecus afarensis* or ... was the first man. The Bible and evolutionary theory are diametrically opposed. Which will the theistic evolutionist believe?

⁸⁵ Thompson (1992), p. 92.

⁸⁶ Thompson (1992), pp. 92-93.

C. Theistic Evolution Cannot Explain Eve

The problem of Eve is one that theistic evolutionists also have difficulty with. The Bible teaches that God put Adam into a deep sleep and took a rib from his side to form a woman (Gen. 2:21-23). Paul also speaks of Eve as being a real, historical person (1 Tim. 2:13) created after Adam. “Yet evolution says that the sexes evolved, simultaneously, in the same geographical region, with one being male and one being female, and both being fertile and producing fertile offspring. To even the casual reader, it is plain that there is nothing similar in the two events. How will theistic evolutionists explain this ‘problem of Eve?’”⁸⁷ Some try to make the first eleven chapters of Genesis mythological or allegorical, but this presents other problems. If then the flood was mythological, how do they explain references to it by Jesus and Peter as being a real, historical event (Mt. 24:37-39; 1 Pet. 3:18-20; 2 Pet. 3:5-6).

D. Theistic Evolution Cannot Explain Where Man Acquired His Soul

As J.D. Bales wrote, “To be consistent evolutionists, theistic evolutionists must maintain that the image of God, in man, was evolved. If they call on God and a miracle to get the image of God in man, why so hesitant to call on God and a miracle for the giving of the life of the body to a physical body formed of the dust of the earth? Their non-theistic evolutionistic colleagues will not find the creation of the image of God in many any more acceptable than the creation of the body of man. What do theistic evolutionists affirm of the origin of the image of God?”⁸⁸ The Bible is quite clear on this point; God created man in His image (Gen. 1:26), not an ape or ape-like creature. Do they propose that the soul evolved along with all the other parts of man?

E. Theistic Evolution Logically Denies the Fall of Man



“The Bible makes it clear that man started on the Earth in a covenant relationship with God (Gen. 1-2). Genesis 3 then tells of the breaking, by man, of that covenant, and his need for a coming Redeemer to bring him back into the covenant relationship with the Creator. Evolution says that man did not start at the top and fall to the bottom, but instead started at the bottom as some primordial slime, and has ‘risen’ through eons of geological time. As Dr. Curtly Mather of Harvard once put it: ‘When a theologian

accepts evolution as the process used by the creator, he must be willing to go all the way with it. Not only is it an orderly process, it is a continuing one. Nothing was finished on any seventh day; the process of creation is still going on ... The spiritual aspects of the life of man are just as surely a product of the processes called evolution as are his brain and nervous system.’”
(Thompson and Jackson)⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Thompson (1992), p. 93.

⁸⁸ Thompson (1992), p. 94.

⁸⁹ Thompson (1992), p. 95.

F. Uniformitarianism Instead of Catastrophism

“Theistic evolution is wrong because the Bible teaches catastrophism; evolution teaches uniformitarianism. Over and over again the Bible speaks to us of catastrophic events (the Flood of Genesis 6-8; the plagues of Egypt in Exodus 7ff; etc.). The miraculous is an intrinsic part of the Bible. On the other hand, evolution **requires** uniformitarianism with its trite phrase, ‘the present is the key to the past,’ as its watchword. Evolution states emphatically that all things are going on today just like they always have, and always will. The Bible plainly denies this.”⁹⁰

IV. Compromise Theories

A. Day-Age Theory

The “Day-Age” theory basically says that the “days” of Genesis were not literal, 24-hour days, but lengthy periods or eons. What evidence do we have that substantiates the fact that these were literal, 24-hour days? First of all, the context demands it. The word “day” would have had no other meaning to Moses than that limited by reference to the sun. Note also the phrase that appears repeatedly in Gen. 1: “So the evening and the morning were the first day.” Secondly, the word translated “day” is the Hebrew word “yom” which refers to a period of both day and night. In non-prophetic, Old Testament literature, “yom” always refers to a normal day when preceded by a numeral as it does in Gen. 1. Thirdly, Moses had terminology available to express long periods; the word “dor”, for instance, means ages or vast periods. Additionally, consider the problems presented by the order of creation in Gen. 1. Sunlight was not created until the 4th day; so, how would plants (created on day 3) have survived without it for millions of years? Some plants depend on insects for pollination and reproduction, but the living creatures were not created until days 5 and 6. Also consider the instructions in Ex. 20:11; the Sabbath command can only be properly understood when these are literal, 24-hour days. When you look at these points (and many others that could be listed), this theory is really without basis. The plain descriptive language of Gen. 1 would not lead one to believe that these days were geologic ages; only a bias towards believing in the evolutionary timetable causes one to force such a meaning into the passage.

B. Gap Theory

The “Gap Theory” was first proposed by Thomas Chalmers in 1814 and has been modified over the years since. Today the view goes basically like this: “... the creation of the world by God, as recorded in Gen. 1:1, took place billions of years ago. The creation was then despoiled because of Satan’s disobedience, resulting in his being cast from heaven with his followers. A cataclysm occurred at the time of Satan’s rebellion and is said to have left the Earth in darkness (‘waste and void’) as a divine judgment because of the sin of Satan in rebelling against God. The world as God had created it, with all its inhabitants, was destroyed and left ‘waste and void,’ which, it is claimed, accounts for the myriad fossils present in the Earth. Then, God ‘re-created’ (or ‘restored’) the Earth in six literal, 24-hour days ... the Gap Theory is intended to harmonize



⁹⁰ Thompson (1992), p. 96.

Genesis and geology on the ground of allowing vast periods of time between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2, in order to account for the geologic ages.”⁹¹

A great deal could be said about how they try to justify this theory and why they are wrong, but here are a few points. First of all, mental gymnastics are required to reconcile this theory with the Biblical text. A lot is made of just a few words. For example, they try to make a difference between “bara” (to create) and “asah” (to make, or to re-make as they claim). These two words, however, are used interchangeably in scripture (e.g., compare the first verse, Gen. 1:1, where “bara” is used with Neh. 9:6 where “asah” is used). They try to translate “was” in verse 2 as “became,” but there is no justification for this. “Without form and void” is also mistranslated as “waste and void.” Furthermore, there is no evidence for Satan’s rebellion being on earth or for a great cataclysm. This theory also implies death among humankind before Adam, but the scriptures teach that Adam was the first man, and death entered the world through him (1 Cor. 15:21; Rom. 8:20-22; 5:12). In general, the theory corrupts the grandeur and splendor of the first chapter. How could you reconcile the following statement with this theory if it were true? “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.” (Gen. 1:31)

C. Progressive Creationism (Threshold Evolution)

This theory says that God directly created the first life and also the major stages of life as evolution occurred. Supposedly at these stages, God had to “lift” animals over a threshold so that they could start evolving again. This theory is really not much different from the Day-Age Theory. Those who adopt it usually are quick to say it is not the same as Theistic Evolution because of the bad connotation that term sometimes takes on. As Thompson writes, “Is progressive creationism theistic evolution? Both call in God to start creation. Both accept evolution (in varying amounts). Both accept the validity of the geologic age system. Both postulate an old Earth. Where is the difference, except that progressive creationism allows God ‘a little more to do in the system’? Both systems put God (theos) and evolution together. By any other standard that’s *theistic evolution*.”⁹²

D. Other Compromise Theories

Other theories have been concocted and proposed over the years to try to come up with the compromise so many feel they have to make. These include: the **Modified Gap Theory** – no ruination and re-creation, but still a long period in Gen. 1:1; the **Non-World View of Origins** – “Genesis 1 is too sublime and spiritual to presume it teaches anything about any particular world view”; and the **Multiple Gap Theory** – each of the six literal days was followed by long ages of slow development. If we were to examine each of these in detail, you would see that they too do not hold up under examination. Bert Thompson’s book, *Creation Compromises*, deals effectively with these and is an excellent resource on the whole topic of Theistic Evolution.

⁹¹ Thompson (1995), pp. 159-160.

⁹² Thompson (1995), p. 193.



You've probably heard it said before, "If you start wrong, you're sure to end up wrong." This is certainly the case with Theistic Evolution. If you start with the presupposition that evolutionary concepts and its geologic timetable are true, then you will end up with a corrupted view of the Biblical account of creation. If more people would honestly examine the evidence for evolution vs. creation, I believe they would abandon these compromise theories and accept God's plain revelation describing the true origin of all things. In the beginning, God created!

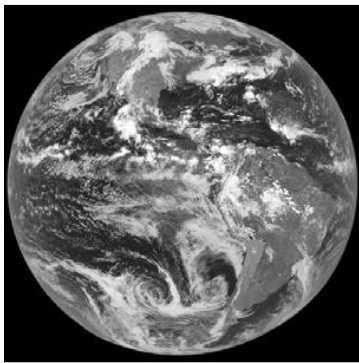
Christian Evidences



Lesson 13 – The Age of the Earth, the Global Flood, & Dinosaurs

As you study Christian Evidences, some questions will naturally come up. In this lesson we will deal with a few of the more common questions that arise, especially in relation to the discussion of origins.

I. How Old is the Earth?



Probably the most typical question that people struggle with is the age of the earth. How old is the earth? Evolutionists claim that it is billions of years old; they use their supposedly accurate dating methods to come up with such large estimates. The Bible record, on the other hand, reveals that the earth is much younger; in fact, we can deduce that it is between 6000 and 8000 years old.

“If the Earth is really as young as the Bible implies, why does it look so old? Why do evolutionary scientists assign such an astonishingly ancient age to our planet? There can be no doubt that some of their dating methods point to an age that is measured in billions of years. But if, from the biblical standpoint, the Universe is the result of a very recent creation, how do we deal with the contradictions posed by the scientists’ research? These are fair questions.”⁹³

All dating methods are based on certain assumptions. Depending on the assumptions made, a very large variation in estimated ages can be produced. If you start with the assumption that evolution is true and that the earth must be billions of years old, then other assumptions will be made along those lines.

A. Geologic Dating

One method commonly employed is geologic dating. As one paleontologist (O.H. Schindewolf) said, “the only chronometric scale applicable in geologic history for the stratigraphic classification of rocks and for dating geologic events exactly is furnished by the fossils. Owing to the irreversibility of evolution, they offer an unambiguous timescale for relative age determinations and for worldwide correlations of rocks.” As Henry Morris summarizes, “That is, since evolution takes place worldwide, rocks containing fossils representing a certain stage of evolution are assumed to have been formed during the age when that evolutionary stage was attained. This would certainly be the best way of dating rocks, if we knew for certain that evolution was true. But this is the very question. If the Creation Model is a better model than the

⁹³ Bromling, Brad T. (1995), *Be Sure! A Study in Christian Evidences*, [Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press], p. 59.

Evolution Model, as creationists believe, then evolution is *not* true, and there is no way to distinguish one geologic age from another. In fact, they may all be essentially the *same* age! How can the fossil sequence prove evolution if the rocks containing the fossils have been dated by those fossils on the basis of the assumed stage of evolution of those same fossils? This is pure circular reasoning, based on the arbitrary assumption that the Evolution Model is true.”⁹⁴

As Ronald West candidly admits, “Contrary to what most scientists write, the fossil record does not support the Darwinian theory of evolution because it is this theory which we use to interpret the fossil record. By doing so, we are guilty of circular reasoning if we then say the fossil record supports this theory.”⁹⁵

B. Invalid Assumptions

“... all dating methods are based on certain assumptions (that is, upon certain beliefs that cannot be proven). Because long-term, full-scale evolution is assumed by the dating methods commonly employed, contradictions between the results of these methods and the testimony of Scripture are to be expected. Any calculations based on the assumption that current processes (such as erosion from wind and rain) have remained constant throughout the Earth’s entire history would naturally yield much older dates than would calculations that admit the possibility of various catastrophes. A global Flood could obviously accomplish more in one year than could countless seasons of wind and rain. Hence, if one accepts that there was a global Flood, one would have to make allowances for its effects in order to achieve a valid figure for the Earth’s age.”⁹⁶

“In accordance with the Second Law of Thermodynamics, all systems are decaying. The decay rate for each physical quantity varies, of course, with the specific process and with all the different factors that affect the process.” There are many chronometric dating methods based on such processes. Of course, evolutionists tend to use only the three or four that yield ages in billions of years. “As a matter of fact, it is very interesting that even on the basis of the usual uniformitarian-evolutionary assumptions, there are far more chronometers that yield a young age for the earth than yield an old age. That is, if one analyzes any process of worldwide change (e.g., fall of extraterrestrial material on the earth, erosion of lands, influx of chemicals into the ocean, etc.) and then makes the standard evolutionary assumptions (initial boundary values of zero, uniformity of process rates, closed system), he will find that practically all such calculations yield a terrestrial age of far less than a billion years.”⁹⁷ See the attached table for numerous examples of dating methods and the wide variation in ages for the Earth that they yield.

⁹⁴ Morris, Henry M. and Parker, Gary E (1982), *What is Creation Science?*, [El Cajon, CA : Master Books], p. 240.

⁹⁵ Morris, p. 242.

⁹⁶ Bromling, p. 59-60.

⁹⁷ Morris, p. 281.

C. The Miracle of Creation

It should go without saying, creation is a miraculous event. The fact that it is miraculous means that the Earth should look older than it is. For example, consider the following:

- The feeding of the five thousand (Mk. 6:35-44). How does this event differ from the natural process by which such a crowd would be fed? What was the “apparent age” of the bread they ate?

When something is made by miracle, its apparent age is always going to be different than its actual age.

D. The Mature Creation

It is also important to note that the Universe was created in a mature state. Therefore, the Earth’s apparent age would be different from its actual age. “All of Earth’s creatures were brought into existence mature, and capable of performing their intended functions. Even a child knows that birds normally do not fly immediately upon hatching; and yet, Moses indicates that God created birds flying, fish swimming, and animals roaming (Gen. 1:20-25). Suppose God told Adam that the Earth was but a few days old, and Adam set out to determine, by scientific inquiry, the truthfulness of the Lord’s claim. After careful examination of his own body, the vegetation, animal life, and geologic formations surrounding him, what would he have concluded? Frank Marsh suggests: ‘After all this careful open-minded study of the Edenic world, Adam could have returned to the Creator and with great sincerity said, ‘Lord, I’m sorry to have to say this, but this landscape is much older than you think!’”⁹⁸

II. Did a Flood Cover the Entire Earth?

To the unbeliever, the Biblical account of the Flood is preposterous; they scoff at the idea. This is somewhat understandable since they don’t believe in anything greater than themselves. For those who do believe in God, however, all things are possible. The Christian’s viewpoint is quite simply, “if the Bible says it, it happened.” As we have seen in previous lessons, the Bible is accurate and reliable in all areas. It is the inspired word of God. So if the Bible says the whole Earth was flooded with water, it was.



“It is surprising, therefore, that a large number of people who claim belief in Scripture deny the global extent of the Flood. They suggest that such is too incredible to conceive. For them, a local flood makes more sense. Which is it: local or global? Is there any way to be sure?”

⁹⁸ Bromling, p. 61.

A. Arguments Against a Global Flood

“Several arguments have been made against the concept of a global Flood. First, the word ‘earth’ used in the Flood account may also be translated ‘land (see Gen. 7:4,6,8, etc.). Hence, when Moses says the whole earth, he may have had reference simply to all of the land in a particular location. Second, there is not enough water on the Earth to cover the highest mountains. So if the Flood were global, where did the water go? Third, it is claimed that the distribution of unusual animals (such as those found only in Australia) cannot be reconciled with a global Flood. Fourth, since the Flood was designed to destroy sinful people, it needed to reach only the extent of human habitation. The common assumption is that people dwelt only in the area of Mesopotamia. Thus, those who do not believe the Flood was global suggest that the water reached only from the Persian Gulf to the mountains of Ararat.”⁹⁹

B. Weakness of These Arguments

Let’s examine each of these arguments and see if they hold up under examination.

1. Use of the word “earth” in Gen. 7

While it is true that the word “earth” can be used in a limited sense, the context must determine its meaning. What type of event did Moses describe? It was undoubtedly global. Notice the following passages:

- Gen. 6:17 – How extensive was the destruction to be?
- Gen. 6:19-20 – Were the animals taken into the ark from just one region?
- Gen. 7:21-23 – What were the effects of the flood?

It is clear that Moses was describing more than a local event. The Flood and its effects extended to all parts of the earth. This word, “earth,” must be understood in its context here.

2. Not enough water?

“That the Earth’s current water supply is incapable of covering the high mountains is unimportant. It is reasonable to believe that the mountains were raised, and the ocean basins were lowered to accommodate the Flood’s receding waters. (Read Psa. 104:6-10 for a possible commentary on this.) Mountains show evidence of having been submerged at some point in the past. The water did not ‘go’ anywhere – it is all around us. Remember, two-thirds of our planet is under water.”¹⁰⁰

3. The distribution of animals

Is the distribution of unusual animals really an issue? How did the animals get on the ark to begin with? Gen. 6:20 – “... two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive.” If God could cause all these animals to come to Noah, could He not just have easily dispersed them to the areas He chose afterward? Which is the greater miracle?

4. The extent of human habitation

Even though the Flood was sent to punish human sinfulness, its extent was not limited by human habitation. What did God decree? Gen. 7:4 – all living things would be destroyed. Even if people only lived in one small area (which cannot be proved to begin with) the world’s animal population was not so limited. Fossils around the globe testify to this fact. Also, do we even know where Noah’s original home was? Some just assume that it was in Mesopotamia, but this is not revealed in Scripture.

⁹⁹ Bromling, pp. 65-66.

¹⁰⁰ Bromling, p. 67.

C. Support for a Global Flood

What additional reasons are there to believe the event was global?

- Notice the following passages: Mt. 24:37-39; 2 Pet. 3:1-13. The Flood is used as a symbol of coming judgment. That judgment will be universal; a local flood is hardly an adequate foreshadow of such judgment.
- Water seeks its only level. How could the water possibly have heaped above Mt. Ararat and stayed only in that region? This would take just as much a miracle as it would to flood the entire globe.
- The size of the ark (450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet tall) is much larger than would have been necessary if it were merely a local flood. If it were needed to carry animals only from one area, it could have been much smaller.
- If the Flood was in fact local, would the ark have even been necessary? God could have easily instructed Noah and his family to move away if only a small region was to be destroyed. He could have caused the animals and birds to migrate as well.
- What about God's covenant? (Gen. 9:8-17) What did God promise? Never again would the earth be destroyed by a flood. Local floods occur frequently around the globe. If the Flood of Noah's day was merely local, God routinely breaks this covenant. But we know God's promises are sure.
- The fossil graveyards that can be found around the world are testimony to a global Flood. The process of fossilization requires rapid burial, and a global Flood provides an easy explanation for the Earth's extensive fossil deposits.

III. What About Dinosaurs?

Bible-believers sometimes feel threatened by any discussion of dinosaurs. They may think that you can't believe in both the Bible and in dinosaurs. Why do some feel this way? "There are at least two reasons for this anxiety. One relates to the question over the age of the Earth. Scientists who believe in evolution suggest that dinosaurs became extinct 70 million years before humans arrived on the scene. If they are right, the Bible is wrong about Earth's history. Another reason is that dinosaurs are used to popularize the theory of evolution. The study of dinosaurs is the first exposure to evolution many of us receive. Christians who lack information from geology and paleontology may feel intimidated by arguments presented from such fields of science. This concern over dinosaurs is unnecessary. These creatures, when placed in a proper biblical perspective, pose no threat to the Christian Faith."¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Bromling, p. 74.

A. Did Dinosaurs Really Exist?

Some people have tried to answer the dinosaur challenge by saying that they did not exist. They have contended that dinosaurs are part of a big hoax to try to prove evolution. This view is unnecessary and certainly unfortunate. There is ample evidence to prove that they existed. Too many fossils were left by the global Flood to ignore. Fossilized bones, dinosaur eggs, imprints of their skin, and even footprints have all been observed. We should not deny that dinosaurs lived, nor is there any reason to.



An apparent Stegosaurus carving found on a Khmer temple built about 1100 years ago.

B. When Did Dinosaurs Live?

Dinosaurs lived at the same time as humans and became extinct several thousand years ago. Everything God created to inhabit the Earth was made in six days (Ex. 20:11). Land-dwelling creatures were made on Day 6 which would have included the dinosaurs. The Bible chronology leads us to conclude that Creation occurred 6000 to 8000 thousand years ago. The millions of years discussed by scientists don't fit the Bible account.

C. Dinosaurs Too Dangerous?



A fossilized human footprint intruded by a dinosaur footprint found near Glen Rose, Texas.

Some contend that God would not have allowed dinosaurs and mankind to live together on the Earth at the same time. They argue that dinosaurs would have been far too dangerous for man. Of course, creatures exist today that are very dangerous; people have learned how to avoid or deal with them just fine. In fact, human populations have been far more threatened by microscopic threats (diseases) than by any large creature. Also note that many of the largest dinosaurs were actually herbivores not carnivores.

D. Are Dinosaurs in the Bible?

Another problem that some suggest is that there is no mention of dinosaurs in the Bible. They argue that if dinosaurs were created on Day 6, why is there no mention of them? Of course, there are a great many animals not specifically mentioned in the Bible, but we do not doubt their existence and the fact that they were created. “The Bible is not a zoology textbook.” With that said, however, the Bible does refer to all types of animals that ever existed in Ex. 20:11. Furthermore, the “behemoth” described in Job 40:15-24 was very likely a dinosaur (probably one of the diplodocids or brachiosaurids).

E. Dinosaurs on the Ark?

“If Job makes reference to a dinosaur, then he must have seen one. Since Job probably lived after the Flood, some dinosaurs must have been present in the ark in order to still be around in his day. Thus, the question is raised, ‘How could dinosaurs have fit on the ark?’ Some people laugh at the idea. But such laughter is not justified by the facts. Noah’s ark was a barge-like structure 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high (Gen. 6:15). Calculations show that the ark easily could have carried representatives of all creatures, living and extinct (yes, even dinosaurs), with room to spare; the ark was probably only about half-full. Further, it is logical to assume that large dinosaurs were represented by younger (hence smaller) samples of their kind.”¹⁰²

F. Where Did the Dinosaurs Go?

“Why are there no dinosaurs living today? Why did they become extinct? These questions have created a lot of disagreement. In the past, many theories were proposed to explain their disappearance. Now, however, scientists have settled fairly comfortably upon the idea that some object from space (a huge comet or asteroid) was responsible for the demise of the dinosaurs... Although the Bible says nothing about an asteroid impact, it does mention a global event that best explains dinosaur extinctions. Most of the mighty creatures probably were killed in the Flood. The few that may have been taken on the ark were unable to reestablish long-lasting populations and died-off soon after. What was so different after the Flood? We can’t be sure, but it is obvious that the Flood brought important changes to the environment. For example, before the Flood people lived hundreds of years (see Gen. 5), but afterwards, it was unusual to live much beyond one hundred years. Likely, the post-Flood climate was hostile to the dinosaurs. They may have stepped from the ark into a climate with which they eventually could not cope. Regardless of the reason for their demise, the fact remains that they did live and become extinct within human history.”¹⁰³

¹⁰² Bromling, p. 76.

¹⁰³ Bromling, pp. 76-77.