

THE INTELLIGENT DESIGN MOVEMENT [PART I]

Trevor Major

Over the last decade or so, a new way of framing the origins debate has emerged. This approach puts the issue in terms of “Intelligent Design versus Naturalism” rather than “Creation versus Evolution.” Scientists, lawyers, philosophers, theologians, teachers, and other supporters of this approach have banded together in a loose confederation known as the “intelligent design movement.” Berkeley law professor Phillip E. Johnson acts as a fatherly leader to the movement. Other key figures include Michael Behe, David Berlinski, William Dembski, David K. DeWolf, Stephen C. Meyer, Paul Nelson, Nancy Pearcey, Jay Wesley Richards, and Jonathan Wells.

On first hearing, regular readers of *Reason & Revelation* might become suspicious of the intelligent design (ID) approach. Why would anyone want to stop talking about creation? After all, “creation” usually implies the existence of a Creator-God Who, typically, is associated with the God of the Bible. Furthermore, why would anyone want to take “evolution” out of the debate? Are these people trying to sneak evolutionary theory past conservative Bible believers?

These suspicions are not without merit. Ever since Darwin, Christians have struggled with issues of science and faith. Some among them have felt somewhat embarrassed by the Scopes Trial of the 1920s, the failed litigation of the 1970s and '80s, and the recent political controversies in places like Kansas. An all-too-frequent response, even by believers who express a commitment to the in-

spired biblical text, has been to cede victory to Darwinian evolution. To uphold design without insisting on the Creator-God of the Bible has the appearance of making still more concessions.

However, the ID movement makes a critical departure by not getting into the biblical interpretation business, nor taking any theological stance whatsoever. In attempting to make their case, ID advocates have focused on two critical questions: (1) Is science, in principle, able to detect evidence of design in nature?; and (2) Is there, in fact, any such evidence of genuine design in nature (and in the biological world in particular)? Someone who is intent on pressing these questions does not wish to be distracted by arguments on radiometric dating, or how many animals could fit into the ark. So, for the sake of argument, those in the ID movement want to set aside (temporarily) questions about, say, Genesis and the age of the Earth. It is not that such questions are deemed as being either irrelevant or unimportant; it is just that they are being saved for another place and time.

At the same time, leaders of the ID movement do not attempt to hide their religious commitments. They see evidence of design in nature, and believe that this is consistent with their belief in a Creator-God. They would insist, however, that the evidence in any particular case be weighed on its scientific merits. If the evidence favors design over chance and natural law, then this conclusion should be accepted, regardless of any religious implications. Experience has shown, however,

that doctrinaire evolutionists are loath to play this game. They are more than willing to offer instances of alleged “poor design” as evidence against the God of theism, but refuse to entertain the possibility of genuine design on the grounds that it might open the door to divine intervention in the natural world. That is to say, they cannot seem to make up their minds as to whether God is the wrong choice, or no choice at all.

Exposing such inconsistencies and creating a level playing field are critical first steps in the current ID strategy. The same approach stiffens ID resolve against couching the debate in terms of “creation vs. evolution” because, as we will see, these words are shrouded in a fog of equivocations that hides the real issues. There is an emotional component, too. For instance, when a science teacher presumes to speak sympathetically about “creation,” the mainstream media ask us to associate that concept with a view held by supposedly anti-intellectual, anti-scientific, unthinking, bigoted, narrow-minded, uneducated fundamentalists who still believe the world is flat and the Earth is at the center of the Universe. Yet, when a science professor from the local state university comes to the defense of “evolution,” we are encouraged to think of a view endorsed by “all reputable scientists” and “thinking people everywhere.” Indeed, newspaper stories frequently talk about “creationism” versus “evolution” as if belief in a creation were exactly that—an “ism”—whereas evolution is an established fact. The ID movement can do nothing to

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prevent such abusive tactics. Indeed, critics have come up with the term “intelligent design creationism” (e.g., Pennock, 1999, pp. 28ff.), hoping that the media will portray ID as nothing more than biblical literalism in disguise. Once again, ID advocates wish to expose such a rhetorical ploy and force the issue by insisting on definitions. This marks a good starting point for us, as we seek to understand some of the chief concerns of the intelligent design movement.

DEFINITIONS

“Evolution”

One of the problems in talking about the origins issue is that evolutionists of both religious and nonreligious stripes play a shell game with the word “evolution.” For those of you who never have seen a magic show, a shell game is an ancient trick in which a conjurer lays out three containers on a table. Traditionally, the containers have been shells (hence the name of the game). Under one of the shells the conjurer places a small object like a pea, and then shuffles the shells around. Your job is to pick the shell with the pea underneath. This seems simple enough, and therein lies the trap, for the conjurer can use sleight of hand to make the pea appear under any shell, or no shell at all.

I am not trying to suggest that most evolutionists practice this sort of deception deliberately, but the result is confusion nonetheless. In their version of the game, “evolution” starts under one of the following shells: a shell for change of any kind; a shell for small-scale change in living organisms (microevolution); or a shell for a naturalistic origin of anything that ever lived (macroevolution). No matter where it starts, it always ends up under the third shell. Here are some ways in which the game might be played:

Game #1. “‘Evolution’ simply means ‘change.’ And we know that things do change. After all, haven’t you changed since you were a baby? Isn’t an eight-week-old fetus different from an eight-week-old baby? So, there you go, evolution is a fact.”

Game #2. “Don’t you know that mosquitoes have evolved resistance to DDT, and that bacteria have become resistant to antibiotics? And look at sickle cell anemia: nature has selected a mutation that helps people in malaria-ridden regions of the world to survive. So, of course, evolution is a fact.”

Game #3. “How else do you explain the morphological and genetic similarities of life on Earth? Clearly, similarity implies common descent. Besides, saying ‘God just did it’ is not very helpful, scientifically speaking.”

Of the three games, the last variant is the only one that pulls no punches—at least, not with the term “evolution.” We watched the pea carefully, and it stayed under the shell for macroevolution the whole time. Here we all know what we are dealing with, but you will not see this game very often. The pros consider it a little bold and brassy for school textbooks and the mainstream media. An evolutionist often does not want to come right out and say, “Look, evolution is a fact. There is no God or, if there is, we don’t need Him. Deal with it!”

What about the other variants? In the first game, “evolution” was put under the shell for simple change, but by the end of the game it appeared under the shell for macroevolution. It might seem incredible that evolutionists would try to pull such a crude stunt, but it really happens. Indeed, a recent guidebook published by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) makes the argument that kids need to learn evolution because they need to appreciate change (1998, p. 6). Do kids really need to learn that sparrows evolved from dinosaurs, or that humans evolved from ape-like creatures, in order to appreciate the fact that things change? The NAS thinks so.

The second game is a favorite because it is so hard for the average observer to diagnose. The pea goes under the shell for microevolution but, once again, ends up under the shell for macroevolution. Here we are asked to believe something quite well understood and credible—that a population, or even a whole species, can undergo change on a small scale. We have become accustomed to hearing about kids with ear infections that no longer respond to standard antibiotics, or insects that have become resistant to common insecticides. By extrapolation, then, we are asked to believe that small changes could become big changes over time.

This was a move pioneered by Charles Darwin, although he started with changes wrought by selective breeding of domesticated plants and animals. He wrote in the *Origin*: “Slow though the process of selection may be, if feeble man can do much by his



powers of artificial selection, I can see no limit to the amount of change...which may be effected in the long course of time by nature's power of selection" (1859, p. 109). Thus, Darwin draws us in with the concept of tried-and-true, goal-directed selective breeding, but then turns and asks us to accept a controversial theory that credits unlimited change to the blind forces of natural selection.

The tactic has not changed much in the last century-and-a-half. In the NAS teacher's guidebook mentioned earlier, the authors list the following as examples of evolution in action (1998, pp. 17-18):

- resistance of sexually transmitted diseases to antibiotics
- resistance of rats to the pesticide warfarin
- resistance of insects to insecticides and genetically engineered plant defenses
- tolerance of plants to toxic metals
- the recent split between two "genetically and morphologically very similar" species of lacewings
- changes in the beak size of Darwin's finches as a result of drought conditions (p. 19, sidebar)

The first thing you are likely to notice about this list is that every item represents a good example of **microevolution**. Yet the guide barely misses a beat as it segues into an extended discussion of how a hoofed, four-legged land animal changed into a whale-like creature. But how do you get from one to the other? When we ask for proof that these creatures are related, we are told to look for similarities. When we wonder why similarities should imply common descent, we are told to consider the sort of mechanisms that produce changes in finches' beaks. When we ask for proof that finch-beak evolution can produce large-scale change, we are asked once again to look at the similarities among several extinct creatures. Only by jumping off this merry-go-round can we see the philosophical commitment—the assumption—to which evolutionists are so strongly wedded. This, then, brings us to our next definition.

“Naturalism”

In the words of the NAS guidebook, “The statements of science must invoke only natural things and processes” (p. 42). The au-

thors go on to quote the following from distinguished zoologist, Ernst Mayr: “The demarcation between science and theology is perhaps easiest, because scientists do not invoke the supernatural to explain how the natural world works, and they do not rely on divine revelation to understand it” (p. 43).

What, exactly, is meant by the term “natural?” Most writers find it easier to say what the word does **not** mean. It excludes the artificial. It is set against the nonnatural. It is everything but the supernatural. In a broader sense, the term is synonymous with “material,” and thus precludes spirits, minds, and intelligences (see Aune, 1995, p. 350).

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—NAS

Still, these common definitions leave open the possibility that God could intervene in the natural course of events. The **effects** of these miracles might be open to scientific study, but the **Cause**, being supernatural, would lie beyond the immediate grasp of empirical science—the sort of workaday activity that scientists take themselves to be doing whenever they enter their laboratories and don their white coats. Take, for example, the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 7:38-44). The loaves and fish could undergo a battery of scientific tests, but the process by which they appeared would resist scrutiny. So to invoke the supernatural on this occasion is to admit that an effect involving entirely natural things (i.e., loaves and fish) defies understanding in terms of natural causes. It is only by detecting regularities between natural causes and their effects that scientists can formulate natural laws. Yet if God is able to

intervene at will, then ripened apples can float from a tree, and steam engines can run forever without refueling. In effect, scientists imagine the collapse of their entire enterprise.

Worse still, some scientists fear a pervasive God-of-the-gaps mentality—a disposition to call forth the supernatural whenever we fail to understand something in nature. If an aspiring researcher is willing to invoke God at the drop of a hat, they feel, then he should look for a career as a shaman or witch doctor, not a practitioner of modern science. Invoking the supernatural is plain “bad form.”

Making the Rules

The outcome of all these concerns is to insist that questions posed of nature must return **natural** answers. It cannot matter that some natural thing has the appearance of a nonnatural origin; the explanation for that natural thing must be, well...natural. With this condition in place, the term “natural” takes on the meaning of that which is “recognized” or “accessible to investigation” by the natural sciences (Schmitt, 1995, p. 343; Lacey, 1995, p. 603). God, being nonnatural, is ruled out of bounds *a priori* (i.e., prior to any consideration of the facts).

In the ID literature and elsewhere, this view is known as **methodological naturalism**. The point in using this jaw-breaker is to highlight the constraints that most scientists have placed on their methodology. It also serves to distinguish between a way of doing science and a belief that nature is all there is, which is **metaphysical naturalism** (“metaphysics” being a study of what exists). Conceivably, a theist could subscribe to the first view, but not the second. On Sunday she believes that God exists and raised a Man from the dead; on Monday she returns to work, confident that, over the weekend, God has not messed with the bacterial colonies growing in her petri dishes.

However, there is room to quibble with this terminology. It could be argued that, for all practical purposes, methodological naturalism **is** the way that scientists do their work on a daily basis, regardless of whether or not they are willing to admit that nature shows evidence of intelligent design. Testing new alloys, for instance, might not provide the most obvious place to look for design in nature, even if the scientist praises God for the ultimate origins of his subject matter.

Also, the idea of excluding intelligent causes, and divine agency in particular, has worked its way well beyond science into numerous other disciplines. For instance, modern theologians might seek to explain the resurrection of Jesus as something other than a direct intervention of God. For these reasons, Phillip Johnson recently has switched to another jawbreaker: epistemological naturalism (“epistemology” being the study of knowledge). The shift in terminology acknowledges the extent to which naturalistic thinking has strayed beyond the methods of science to become the only acceptable way of knowing in many fields of study. An alternative, more manageable version of the term is **epistemic naturalism**, which is the form I will employ from here on.

Defending the Rules

The important point to keep in mind is that epistemic naturalism is not a result of natural science, but an assumption imported into science. Now, on the face of it, there is nothing wrong with scientists making assumptions. For instance, scientists assume that the world is comprehensible—that we, as intelligent beings, are able to make sense of the world around us. Scientists assume that the laws of nature are uniform—that the laws of gravity work just as well here on Earth as they do on the Moon, or that they work just as well today as they did in the time of Aristotle.

The real question is this: **Do we need to have epistemic naturalism for science to work properly?** Is the assumption justified? As we have seen, defenders of scientific orthodoxy fear intrusion from God, either directly into nature itself via miracles, or into the equations and research journals of frustrated scientists who decide to invoke God when nature is less than forthcoming. So, with not a little irony, it turns out that the prime objections leveled against God as a possible explanation actually have theological roots—but roots in **bad** theology.

First, theists do not hold that God is a capricious meddler in the affairs of man. As C.S. Lewis has noted in his usual eloquent way, “God does not shake miracles into Nature at random as if from a pepper-caster” (1947, p. 174). For theists, miracles constitute signs from God, and as such they have meaning only in context. Stated more formally:

An extraordinary event qualifies as a miracle only when it has a clear, divine purpose that is consistent with God’s character, and when it is set in a proper theological context. These specific conditions will have to be met before a nonnatural answer, like “God did it,” is warranted. Theistic scientists through the ages have had no problem figuring out where to draw the line. They may have believed that Moses parted the Red Sea, yet had no problem doggedly pursuing a problem in chemistry or physics because, in effect, they could recognize a miracle when they saw one.

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And second, God is not a God of the gaps in our **knowledge**, but a God of the gaps in **purely natural explanations**. It is not that all natural explanations in a given case have been tried and found wanting, but that all explanations of that **kind** appear inadequate. Divine activity in nature does not become the *de facto* answer to ignorance, but rather an answer demanded by the evidence at hand (see Reynolds, 1998). If the evidence points toward intelligent design, say, then that is a conclusion that a scientist should be willing to accept (and to reject at a later time, were the evidence to demand it).

In addition to theological justifications, the defenders of epistemic naturalism offer a pragmatic justification: science works best with this assumption in place. So, in one sense, it might be true that epistemic naturalism is assumed *a priori*. But, in another sense,

they believe epistemic naturalism is justified *a posteriori* (after the facts). The “facts” in this case are drawn from 300-400 years of the history of science, or more accurately (as we will see), a certain **reading** of that history.

Two common arguments emerge. First, there is the claim that science has outmaneuvered the old world view, and who can argue with success? We see this kind of thinking in the NAS guide where the authors rehearse the Galileo controversy and the paradigm shift from geocentrism to heliocentrism (1998, pp. 27-30). We are supposed to praise “science,” with its assumption of epistemic naturalism, for our correct belief that the Earth orbits the Sun, not the other way around. We reached this truth, the authors would argue along with Mayr, only when we removed our dependence on superstition, divine revelation, and theology. Reason triumphed over religion; science won over faith.

The problem here is that, as usual, the victors get to write the history books. Characters at the end of the Victorian age, such as Andrew Dickson White, recast the story of Galileo to show science’s “rightful” place as the sole arbiter of truth. A hundred years later, White’s telling of the story still dominates the popular imagination, just as the *Inherit the Wind* movie dominates our impression of the Scopes Trial. Fortunately, professional historians of science have peeled back some of the accumulated dust and dirt and, not surprisingly, have uncovered a more complicated picture. For a start, there was more to this 17th-century controversy than merely “science versus the church” (the Roman Catholic Church, in this case). No one can say, examining the facts, that Galileo had an overwhelming scientific case (or that he presented it in the best way possible). As it happens, the most workable solution at the time came from Ptolemy, an Alexandrian astronomer of the 2nd century A.D. who was operating within a cosmology laid out by Aristotle, a Greek philosopher of the 4th century B.C. Neither of these men was a theist. Certainly, geocentrism was consistent with one way of reading selected biblical passages (the same understanding could be applied to modern almanacs with their references to “sunrise” and “sunset”), but Scripture alone did not provide the basis for rejecting Galileo’s claims. To overturn the entire package of Greek philosophy, ancient astronomy,

medieval theology, and Vatican politics in favor of the Copernican view required a compelling case—a case that Galileo could not, and did not, make. The Church's treatment of Galileo is a different matter. Even then, he was not exiled because of his search for "the Truth," but rather for his offenses against papal power of his day.

Another way to express the naturalistic read on history is to say that science has not produced any successful explanations that appeal to the supernatural. Every nonnatural answer has been trumped by a natural answer. A classic example would be the replacement of special creation with Darwin's theory of evolution as the dominant way of explaining the history of life. However, Darwin chose at the outset to operate under the rules of epistemic naturalism, and sought an answer that excluded supernatural intervention. Under these rules, "success" amounts to giving a purely naturalistic answer, which begs the question entirely. Once creation is eliminated *a priori*, the subsequent history of science will not, and cannot, produce a "successful" solution that appeals to the non-natural.

A closely related claim is that nonnaturalistic views, such as creation, obviously are not successful because they fail to appear in refereed science journals. However, if epistemic naturalism is the key, then opponents cannot get past the editors and reviewers who stand watch at the gates of orthodoxy. ID theorists, such as biochemist Michael Behe, face this challenge every day. Not only is it difficult for them to publish original contribu-

tions in science journals, but the same journals frequently will not allow a response to criticisms of ID proposals. In frustration, Dr. Behe has resorted to publishing on the Internet some of the correspondence he has received. Here is an excerpt from one letter:

This reviewer is no authority on the blood clotting cascade, but if a plausible model for its evolutionary development, compatible with all known facts, has indeed not been generated so far, the remaining question marks are not a threat to science—on the contrary, they are a challenge added to thousands of other challenges that science met and meets. In this instance, too, science will be successful (Behe, 2000).

By now the reader should recognize that here, "science" is being defined as "that which produces a naturalistic answer." Not only did the reviewer beg off any scientific analysis of Behe's argument (admitting that he was "no authority"), but he also mistook Behe to be making an old-fashioned God-of-the-gaps argument. In fact, Behe was arguing for much more—i.e., that naturalistic arguments, as a species of argument, fail to meet the sort of challenge presented by the blood clotting cascade (cf. Behe, 1996, pp. 77-97).

A second appeal to history charges that the greatest advances in modern science have come, not from theists, but from unbelievers. The willingness of theists to invoke the supernatural, and subsume science to revelation, takes them out of mainstream science.

This allegation merely echoes the gross theological naïveté discussed earlier. Armed with a misunderstanding of why God works,

and how God works, epistemic naturalists wrongly take faith to be a liability in science. Moreover, the historical facts are not on their side. Before Darwin, most of the leading naturalists, mathematicians, and experimenters were theists. It was only later on, with the efforts of people like Thomas H. Huxley (who referred to himself as "Darwin's bulldog") that science was wrested from the control of religious institutions and self-taught, financially independent naturalists.

What we face today is a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. The climate of academia, since the time of Huxley, has become increasingly hostile to theism. It has nothing to do with the tools or the actual techniques employed. Given the prevailing orthodoxy, it should come as no surprise that theists have avoided science or, perhaps, have had their careers stymied by the disapproval of senior scientists and academics. According to a survey of the National Academy of Sciences—yes, the very same institution that published the guidebook I mentioned earlier—only 7% of its members professed a "personal belief" in God; 20.8% were doubtful or agnostic, and nearly 72.2% expressed a "personal disbelief" in God (Larson and Witham, 1998). When broken down by discipline, the survey showed that biologists—those who work in the branch of science that arguably is vested most heavily in evolutionary theory—had the lowest rate of belief in God (5.5%). This put lie to the claim of NAS president Bruce Alberts, quoted in this same report, that "There are many very outstanding members of this academy who are very religious people, people who believe in evolution, many of them biologists." By comparison, Gallup polls show consistently that nine out of every ten Americans express an affiliation with one religious group or another.

Ideas Have Consequences

One final point of emphasis: many theists believe epistemic naturalism presents no problems for their faith. But such a commitment cannot be made without consequences. In particular, if a believing scientist must assume that God is absent from the causal history of nature, then his God becomes the God of deism, not the God of revealed theism.

The God of deism is an Absentee Landlord Who created the Universe and left it running. Such a God has had no interaction



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with mankind. He has not revealed Himself to us in signs or wonders, nor in the Incarnation of Christ. He did not reveal His will on Mount Sinai, nor through prophecies, visions, dreams, and direct communication with inspired men. Still, the Enlightenment deists made an exception: we could detect, they admitted, the signs of a Creator in the purpose and order of His creation.

Even this much is too much for dyed-in-the-wool Darwinists. No one has expressed this view with more clarity than Richard Dawkins. He will agree that living things exhibit the tell-tale signs of design and planning, but he then will insist that this is nothing more than an illusion (Dawkins, 1986, pp. 1,21). Being the true disciple of Darwin that he is, Dawkins credits all the work of creation to a blind, purposeless process called natural selection. It will do no good to say that God nudged the process along, creating an organ here, a mutation there, because that makes natural selection appear inadequate. As long as God is involved, there is some form of divine creation, which is what Darwin was (and Dawkins is) trying to avoid.

It likewise will do no good to push God farther back and allow Him to set the initial starting conditions—with natural selection bringing about His ends—because natural selection has no goal or purpose. In such a scenario, it would be impossible to know whether God was responsible—which is the whole point of epistemic naturalism.

If a scientist claims to be a theist, and clings to the orthodoxy promoted by Mayr and the NAS, then he cannot find a place for God in the historical events of this world. Not only has God failed to reveal Himself directly, but He also has left no indirect signs of His work that can be distinguished from the operations of nature. Without such signs, we can know nothing of His benevolence, His knowledge, or His power (cf. Romans 1: 20). We are left with something even less than deism which, on the spectrum of beliefs, basically amounts to outright atheism. Princeton theologian Charles Hodge recognized this fact over a hundred years ago:

The conclusion of the whole matter is that the denial of design in nature is virtually the denial of God. Mr. Darwin's theory does deny all design in nature; therefore, his theory is virtually atheistical—his theory, not himself. He believes in a Creator. But when that Cre-

ator, millions on millions of years ago, did something—called matter and a living germ into existence—and then abandoned the universe to itself to be controlled by chance and necessity, without any purpose on his part as to the result, or any intervention or guidance, then He is virtually consigned, so far as we are concerned, to nonexistence (1874, p. 155).

Logically, epistemic naturalism implies the absence of God from this world. For all **practical** purposes, it implies the absence of God from all reality. The step from epistemic naturalism to metaphysical naturalism is a very short one indeed. Now let us look at the other half of the debate.

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“Creation”

To believe in creation is to believe that the entire cosmos owes its existence to a purposeful, intelligent Creator. You can see how difficult it is to fit naturalistic evolution into this definition. Of course, just like “evolution,” the word is used in other ways.

In its broadest sense, “creation” refers to something's coming into being. Sometimes you will hear about scientists' “creation” of life in the laboratory, or even evolution's “creating” new species. It is important that we consider the context, and not think that the materialist is “giving away the store” every time he uses the word creation.

In a narrower sense, the term “creation” is used by theists to mean divine creation or, as it is known in theological circles, *creatio ex nihilo* (“creation from nothing”). Typically it is linked to the doctrine of creation that is derived from the first verse of Genesis: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Opinions diverge, unfortunately, on how to understand the subsequent verses (see, for example, Thompson, 2000). Liberal scholarship tends to dismiss the Creation account as allegorical or mythological. However, the same scholars quite often are committed to epistemic naturalism, and would not insist on a supernatural origin for the Universe and life in any case.

Many believers accept the reality of a divine creation, but are of the opinion that the timing and method must be accommodated to the claims of orthodox science. In other words, the classic amoeba-to-man story of evolution is correct in its overall picture, but God intervened at one or more points. Someone who holds this view may wish to take Genesis seriously (albeit not at face value), yet propose some sort of concordance theory to bring the biblical text in line with the evolutionary picture just mentioned. They might suggest, for instance, that God really did create light on the first day, but the word “day” means something other than a 24-hour period. Another popular view imagines an initial creation represented by verse 1, followed by an undocumented period of geological time, and a divinely wrought make-over in the remainder of the chapter.

Despite these concessions, none satisfies the requirement of evolutionary naturalism, namely, that all natural things should have naturalistic explanations. This would apply to **any** supernatural intervention, whether it came in one grand, creative moment, or was spread over time.

By far the most common use of “creation” ties the word to the modern creation science movement. Other labels include young-Earth creation and, as it normally is tagged by the media and other opponents, creationism. This position takes the traditional, historical view of the Genesis text as detailing the creation of all the Universe in six literal days.

Given that “creation” encompasses a diversity of views within theism, it might seem to present a broad-based resistance to mate-

rialistic evolution. In reality, because many theists believe they can keep their cake and eat it too (by appearing to affirm a Creator-God while adhering to the principle of epistemic naturalism), young-Earth creationists typically are singled out for opposition. This is not so much because they have rejected naturalism, but because they have rejected the overall evolutionary picture while maintaining that Holy Scripture provides an interpretive check on answers coming out of science. Darwinists have been willing to allow theists on their side only so long as they were willing to acknowledge that evolution, broadly speaking, was a correct description of the history of life on Earth. Confessions of faith or discussions of biblical texts might be accepted in this context, but only to assure naturalists that theistic religion could accommodate any theory they had to offer.

“Creation versus evolution,” therefore, does not divide along the lines that the two key words, taken at face value, might seem to imply. In the public arena, young-Earth creationists must take on the whole gamut of naturalists, from outright atheists to anyone who would carve out a space for God in an otherwise unbroken series of natural causes and events. On one front, young-Earth cre-

ationists must weather attacks from fellow theists on the issue of biblical interpretation. On another front, their strong commitment to the biblical text raises fears of state/church conflicts, to say nothing of the perceived conflict between reason and revelation expressed by Mayr. Unfortunately, epistemic naturalism (a core concern of young-Earth creationists, and something that should concern all theists) gets lost in the fray—hence the reason for reframing the public debate in terms of intelligent design.

[to be continued]

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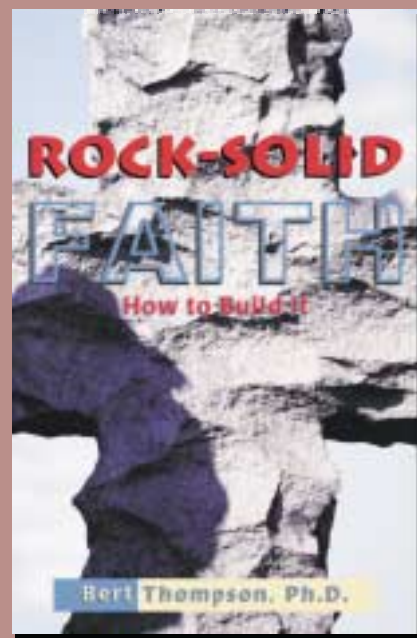
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A REMINDER ABOUT ROCK-SOLID FAITH: HOW TO BUILD IT

In April of this year, we released the first of a trilogy of books that we are publishing under the general theme of *Rock-Solid Faith*. In its 350 pages, volume one—*Rock-Solid Faith: How to Build It*—contains thirteen chapters that make it ideal for use in quarterly Bible class studies. Its four initial chapters investigate the many faces and causes of unbelief. Three chapters are devoted to the cosmological, teleological, and moral arguments for the existence of God. Two chapters examine the compilation, content, and inspiration of the Bible (including an in-depth discussion of the evidence that documents the Good Book’s claim of being an inspired revelation from God—e.g., its unity, factual accuracy, fulfilled prophecy, scientific foreknowledge, etc.). The last four chapters discuss the deity of Christ, God’s plan for man’s salvation, the essentiality, singularity, and uniqueness of Christ’s church, and the mercy and grace of a sovereign God.

Also, as of July 2000 we released a 13-lesson video series that accompanies the book lesson-by-lesson. There are five tapes in the series, with each lecture being approximately 38 minutes long (so that the video presentations may be used in Bible class settings along with the book). The videos are sold only in sets, which sell for \$85 (\$5 s/h). Cost for the book is \$10/copy, with a 15% discount for 10 or more copies (postage is \$2 per single copy or 10% for multiple copies). For credit card orders or orders to be billed to churches, call us toll-free at 800/234-8558. [Dr. Thompson has just completed volume two in the trilogy. It is being typeset at this time and is planned for release early in 2001.]



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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

“SO YOU BELIEVE IN INTELLIGENT DESIGN—BUT WHY?”

In this month’s issue of *Reason & Revelation*, Trevor Major, our Director of Scientific Information, has authored the first of a two-part series explaining and discussing one of the hottest topics going in the current controversy over creation and evolution—the intelligent design movement. It is a concept worth knowing about, because those involved in the movement are having a very real impact as a result of their emphasis on the idea that you do not get a poem without a poet, a law without a lawgiver, a painting without a painter, or design without a...designer.

This point has not been lost on evolutionists. In the preface to his 1986 book, *The Blind Watchmaker*, British evolutionist Richard Dawkins wrote:

“The complexity of living organisms is matched by the elegant efficiency of their apparent design. If anyone doesn’t agree that this amount of complex design cries out for an explanation, I give up!” Dr. Dawkins then spent more than 300 pages struggling to provide an explanation that would convince people that design does not necessarily require a designer (or that the “apparent” design we see in

nature is just that—apparent, not real). Impossible task, that. Why so? As another evolutionist, physicist Paul Ricci, put it: “It is true that everything designed has a designer.” In fact, Mr. Ricci called such a statement “analytically true”—meaning that it is so obvious as to require no formal proof.

Truth be told, those of us associated with the work of Apologetics Press have been stressing these two points for more than twenty years. The “apparent design” in nature does indeed “cry out for an explanation” because such design “has a designer.” When we began this work late in 1979, one of our goals was to make available biblically sound, scientifically accurate, affordable materials that would help people come to acknowledge such design—and get to know the Designer! To that end, in 1981 we began producing *Reason & Revelation*, which has been published without interruption ever since. Over the past two decades, we have authored hundreds of articles that document not only the design inherent in various aspects of the Universe, but also how to recognize the signature of God appended to each of these masterpieces.

Many of those articles still are available via bound volumes of *Reason & Revelation*. We recognized as we wrote the articles that many of them would have an appeal long after their original publication date. Topics include (but are not limited to) evolution versus God’s design, the evidence of the fossil record, the good science of creationism, molecular/genetic studies of humans, the origin of races, and many others.

We still have in stock bound volumes for the years 1994-1999, each of which contains all twelve issues for that year, as well as an extensive index and comb binding imprinted with the year of publication. Individual volumes are \$8.00 each. Or, you may order the complete set of six volumes at a special price of \$45. To order with a credit card, call us toll-free at 800/234-8558. To order by mail, calculate shipping at \$1.50 for the first volume, plus \$0.50 for each additional volume. You can obtain a wealth of material—without having to be wealthy! Don’t miss out on these valuable articles. Order yours today! (They make great gifts for friends and relatives, too.)

— Bert Thompson

