



By Chi-Yu King

What is the origin of mankind; is it created by God as presented in the Bible or evolved from another animal as proposed by Darwin (1859) and others? This question has been hotly debated for over a century, but many involved in the debate have been inadequately educated in either science or the Bible. (Many relevant articles can be found on Internet with Google search by clicking Evolution vs. Creation.) This article presents my understanding of Biblical creation, which shows no contradiction to any known scientific evidence.

Some Preliminary Remarks

Similarities and Differences between Science and Christian Faith

As pointed at in a previous article¹, whether God exists has not, and cannot, be proven scientifically, due to limitation of human knowledge. Thus both possibilities should be considered without bias in the search of human origin, and the origin of the universe as a whole. It is also mentioned that both science and the Bible are concerned with facts and truth, though having different approaches. Science represents effort in searching for truth based on man's careful observation and analysis of facts, whereas the Bible claims to be inspired by an infinite, eternal, almighty God, who is the creator of all things. Because of the limitation of human capabilities in observing and reasoning, the scientific knowledge is always limited and continually evolving; and scientific theories are always tentative, subject to refinement and modification, pending new findings. On the other hand, the Biblical revelation is supposed to be certain and final, because the creator knows everything he has created. Although there are some historical cases of apparent contradictions between scientific

findings and Biblical statements, they are later found to be due to either misinterpretation of the Bible or a lag of scientific findings behind the Biblical statements.

Also, science and the Bible use different presumptions: Scientific studies usually presume atheism and materialism in search of natural laws, whereas the Bible presumes the existence of God, who has created the universe and ordained the laws (such as gravity, photosynthesis, etc.). God is, however, not limited by the laws; he can occasionally intervene by performing supernatural "miracles".

The matter of creation is touched on in Genesis and many other books in the Bible, written over a long span of about 1,500 years by authors of different backgrounds. These different accounts are nonetheless very coherent and self-consistent, and, when put together, are detailed enough to be examined rationally (unlike many other ancient legends).

Evolution and Big-Bang Theories

As shown in the many debates, the evolution theory can explain many observations, but not many others. Examples of the latter kind include some obvious differences between human beings and other animals: Why do only human beings wear clothes even when it is very hot, while no other animals do, even when it is very cold? Why a sick person may receive blood transfusion from another person having the same blood type, even of different race, but not from any animals? Why cannot man (or animals) interbreed normally with other evolution-related animals? Why only human beings worship God or engage in similar religious activities, while no other animals do or can do? Other well known differences include man's great superiority in art, language, civilization, science, and technology. Throughout the known history of several thousand years,

human beings have made tremendous progress in these **areas**, while other animals seem to have remained the same **without** any obvious changes.

Also, the evolution theory does not answer adequately the question of "first cause" (the ultimate origin of everything). As a matter of fact, no scientific or philosophical theory does. Evolution theory suggests that human ancestors evolved from some lower animals progressively over a long period (a hypothesis still not supported convincingly by fossil evidence as Darwin hoped for). It does not explain adequately where the first living animal or cell originated. The arguments that it evolved from certain organic materials, which in turn evolved from certain inorganic materials, all suffer the lack of definitive scientific evidences. Even if one accepting such arguments by faith, he still wonders: "Where did all the inorganic materials come from?"

To answer this question of the ultimate origin of everything, one needs to seek help from the Big-Bang theory currently accepted in astronomy. According to this theory, the universe is not eternal, but began with a big bang, or explosion, some billions of years ago (for some unknown reason). This theory, however, does not address adequately such questions as: What was there before the big bang? Why was there such a big bang? Why is the universe so orderly after the big bang (unlike the messy aftermath of a big explosion ordinarily seen)? Who has ordained and is still enforcing the various natural laws after the big bang?

As mentioned above, evolution as a scientific theory is based on the un-proven presuppositions of atheism and materialism. By assuming that there is no God (atheism) and thus no creator, one is forced to accept the concept of evolution of one species from another. For example, if one assumes (ridiculously) that there is no manufacturer of robots, then to explain the origin of all kinds of robots one is forced to accept the assertion that newer and more sophisticated robots evolved from older, simpler ones. Likewise, by assuming that there are only materials (and energy), the evolution theory compares only the physical parts of human and animal beings, not their spiritual or soulish parts as the Bible does. The situation is somewhat like dealing only the hardware of computers without considering their software that controls the hardware. As we all know, if considering only partial evidences, one is very likely to reach wrong conclusions, no matter how rigorous his logic is.

Age Calculation by Biblical Genealogy

Many people, including Christians, think the Bible to have said that the human ancestors and the whole universe

were created about six thousand years ago. Actually, this date is not stated in the Bible, but was estimated in 1664 by Bishop Ussher of Ireland, among others, on the basis of certain genealogies given in the Bible. However, Bishop Ussher did not realize that the words "begot" and "son" in the original languages of the Bible, Hebrew and Greek, might be used for not only the father-son relationship, but also ancestor-descendent relationships in general. For example, Jesus is called the son of David and son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1)**, even though they were separated by many generations. Thus Ussher's estimation of six-thousand years may be significantly shorter than the actual length of Biblical human history. In other words, the Bible does not preclude the possibility that the creation process described in Chapter 1 of Genesis took place at a significantly earlier time.

God Created, Made, Formed, and Established the Worlds

Even with the above consideration, one may not reasonably extend the six thousand year period to millions and billions of years, as suggested by geological and astronomical evidences. However, there is another important point mentioned in the Bible that has been commonly ignored: God created and made not just one world, but also multiple worlds. For example, Hebrews 1:2 says, "...through whom (the Son) also He made the worlds". The word "worlds" in the original Greek language implies worlds that are different in time (on the same earth), not different in space (on different planets at the same time). This point is clearly stated in Second Peter 3:5-7: "...the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word..." The Bible does not provide detailed information about the previous world(s), perhaps because that information is not directly relevant to the main purpose of the Bible, which is the salvation of the present world. The destruction of previous world(s) may explain extinction(s) of many species millions of years ago, as evidenced by fossil records.

The Bible also mentioned how God created and made the material worlds, namely, out of something invisible (non-material) merely by speaking his word: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." (Hebrews 11:3; see also Ps. 33:9; Ps. 148:5; John 1:1-3). How can God "create" the material worlds out of nothing by merely speaking remained mysterious for thousands of years until Einstein's discovery of mass-energy convertibility in his Special Relativity Theory published one hundred years ago. Since, accord-

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ing to the Bible, God's word is powerful (full of energy, unlike man's word) and is living and full of intelligence (Hebrews 4:12; Jeremiah 10:12; Proverbs 3:19), it is reasonable that He could create the orderly physical worlds full of living beings by merely speaking.

Another point commonly ignored by many people is that the Bible uses several different verbs in describing God's working: To "create" something out of nothing; to "make", "form", and "establish" things out of other things already in existence. For example, Isaiah 43:7 used three of these verbs in the case of man: "Every one who is called by my name, whom I have created for my glory; I have formed him, yes I have made him." Isaiah 45:18 used all four of them, "For thus says the Lord who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it..." Other scripture verses, however, often use only one of these verbs, even when God's action involved more than one, for the sake simplicity. In such cases, they should not be construed as excluding God's other doings. Man can make, form, and establish things, but

cannot create things in the Biblical sense (out of nothing).

Points of View in the Bible

Although all Scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16), the readers of its message are mankind, both ancient and modern. Thus in studying science-related Bible verses, we need to keep in mind that they are sometimes written from the view point of man on earth before advancement of modern science, whereas at other times from the view point of God.

(To be continued in next issue)

Note:

1. Chi-Yu King, "Science and Christian Faith, are they mutually exclusive or contradictory?" *Great Commission Bi-monthly*, No. 62, p. 39-40, June 2006.

***All quoted Scriptures are from New King James Version of the Bible.*

(The author has been a Christian and a research scientist for over 40 years. Some of the materials used here were published in an earlier article in Challenger 43, Jan 2004).