

Life . . . How Did It Begin?

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Science has developed seven theories regarding the origin of life on earth.
1. An electric spark. Scientists say an electric spark can generate amino acids and sugars from an atmosphere loaded with water, methane, ammonia and hydrogen. However, scientists now suggest that the early atmosphere of Earth was actually hydrogen-poor. (Evolutionists believe in a very old earth. It is the early atmosphere of a very old earth to which the former reference refers.)
 2. Clay Community. Chemist Alexander Graham Cairns-Smith suggests that mineral crystals in clay could have arranged organic molecules into organized patterns. After a while, organic molecules took over this job and organized themselves.
 3. Deep Sea Vents. The deep-sea vent theory suggests that life may have begun at submarine hydrothermal vents, spewing key hydrogen-rich molecules. Their rocky nooks could then have concentrated these molecules together and provided mineral catalysts for critical reactions.
 4. Chilly Start. According to this theory, ice may have covered the oceans 3 billion years ago, as the sun was about a third less luminous than it is now. This layer of ice, possibly hundreds of feet thick, might have protected fragile organic compounds in the water below from ultraviolet light and destruction from cosmic impacts. The cold might have also helped these molecules to survive longer, allowing key reactions to happen.
 5. RNA. RNA, which is simpler than DNA, helps to create DNA and proteins. Some people theorize that RNA helped to create the first DNA. Later DNA and proteins succeeded this "RNA world," because they are more efficient. The question still remains how RNA got here in the first place. And while some scientists think the molecule could have spontaneously arisen on Earth, others say that was very unlikely to have happened.
 6. Simple Start. Instead of developing from complex molecules such as RNA, life might have begun with smaller molecules interacting with each other in cycles of

reactions.

7. Panspermia. According to this theory, life did not begin on Earth at all. Instead, some believe life was brought here from elsewhere in space. However, even if this concept were true, the question of how life began on Earth would then only change to how life began elsewhere in space.
8. {The information regarding the seven theories regarding the origin of life came from the following website: <http://www.livescience.com/13363-7-theories-origin-life-1028.html>. }

B. From where did life come? There are only two possible choices:

1. Lifeless matter, known as abiogenesis or spontaneous generation.
 - a. Abiogenesis is defined, “the supposed spontaneous origination of living organisms directly from lifeless matter.” (www.m-w.com)
 - b. Abiogenesis or spontaneous generation was a common belief among scientist going back to the fourth century B.C.
 - c. People would draw conclusions based upon observations. Such as . . .
 1. Observation: Every year in the spring, the Nile River flooded areas of Egypt along the river, leaving behind nutrient-rich mud that enabled the people to grow that year’s crop of food. However, along with the muddy soil, large numbers of frogs appeared that weren’t around in drier times. Conclusion: It was perfectly obvious to people back then that muddy soil gave rise to the frogs.
 2. Observation: In many parts of Europe, medieval farmers stored grain in barns with thatched roofs (like Shakespeare’s house). As a roof aged, it was not uncommon for it to start leaking. This could lead to spoiled or moldy grain, and of course there were lots of mice around. Conclusion: It was obvious to them that the mice came from the moldy grain.
2. Pre-existing life, known as biogenesis.
 - a. Biogenesis means, “1. the development of life from preexisting life” (www.m-w.com)
 - b. This option says that only life can produce life. All living organisms,

including all plant life and all animal life, require something living in order to live.

1. A plant will not grow without a seed which comes from a pre-existing plant.
2. A chicken will not hatch out of an egg unless some pre-existing chicken lays the egg.
3. A person cannot obtain life without a pre-existing person to give birth.

B. Most people will admit that all seven possibilities are nothing more than theories, conjectures, and speculations. Man will never be able to prove these theories to be fact. These ideas have to begin with an “I believe...”

1. “I believe in the theory of the electric spark beginning life on earth.”
2. “I believe in the theory of the clay community causing life to begin.”
3. “I believe in the theory that life began at the deep sea vents.”
4. “I believe in the theory that life began in the oceans underneath a frozen ocean surface.”
5. “I believe in the theory that early RNA resulted in the development of DNA.”
6. “I believe in the theory that life had a simple start all by itself.”
7. “I believe in the theory that life came to this earth on the back of a meteorite.”

C. However, if a person is willing to say, “I believe in the theories of man,” then he must be willing to say, “I do not believe the Bible’s account of creation.”

1. If a Christian denies the early accounts found in the book of Genesis, then he begins to fray his “rope of faith.” A rope should be solid and secure on both ends. However, when an end begins to fray, the rope begins the process of unraveling.
2. The more of Genesis we deny, then more our faith unravels.
3. At some point, our faith could completely unravel, leaving us denying the Bible altogether.

D. For Christians, for those who profess to believe the Bible is the inspired word of God, there is only one answer to the question, “How did life begin?” God made all life in the manner described in His holy word, the Bible

I. THE BIBLE’S ACCOUNT OF THE BEGINNING OF LIFE.

- A. *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* (Genesis 1:1)
1. **“In the beginning . . .”**
 - a. The beginning of time.
 - b. The passing of time is based upon matter.
 - 1) Time is established by the universe, our solar system, the orbit of the earth around the sun, and the rotation of the earth. This is how we measure our days and years which result in the measurement of time.
 - 2) It stands to reason that the beginning of time would correlate with the beginning of matter, with the universe as a whole.
 - c. Without the physical universe, there is no time; there is eternity and the spiritual realm.
 - 1) God is Spirit and dwells in heaven, in the spiritual world. (John 4:24; cf. Matthew 23:22)
 - 2) Jesus is immortal, dwelling in the spiritual realm. (1 Timothy 1:17; cf. 1 John 2:28 – 3:2)
 - 3) Our spirits will return to God after death. (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Hebrews 9:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
 2. **“ . . . God created . . .”**
 - a. The beginning of energy or force.
 - b. The active **force** of God is seen in His creation of all things.
 - 1) We see the introduction of **energy** when God created all things physical.
 - 2) God created energy related to our existence and He will destroy it in the end.
 - c. As far as mankind is concerned this energy can neither be created nor destroyed, it can only change form. This is what science calls the first law of thermodynamics
 3. **“ . . . heavens and the earth.”**
 - a. The beginning of matter.
 - b. With the heavens came all that we call the universe.

- c. When you look at the space between the stars, the seemingly unending expanse, you are looking at the physical container which God made when He made the heavens. The earth, and everything on it, exists within this physical container we call the universe.
- B. *“The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”* (Genesis 1:2)
- 1. **“The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.”**
 - a. When God initially made the earth, it was without design and was void of light and life.
 - b. However, the earth did not stay this way for long.
 - 2. **“And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”**
 - a. The Creator was directly involved in and watching over His creation. The Godhead was present.
 - 1) God (Elohim, Hebrew) is a plural term.
 - 2) The Spirit of God is likely a reference to the Holy Spirit.
 - 3) Jesus was also present at the creation. (John 1:1-5)
 - b. What was God doing as the “Spirit of God” was hovering or moving over the face of the waters? He was bringing the rest of creation into existence. Continue on to Genesis 1:3.
- C. *“Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.”* (Gen 1:3-5)
- 1. **“Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.”**
 - a. God made light.
 - b. At this point, God called forth light or illumination.
 - c. Some may say it is impossible for light to exist without the sun, without a source. However, if God can create the physical universe, then creating and controlling the laws that govern the universe is not impossible.
 - d. If we believe in the greatness of God, then we can believe God can create

illumination before creating the sun and moon. (cf. 2 Corinthians 4:6)

- e. The light, the illumination, is necessary for life on earth to exist.
 - 1) Light provides warmth.
 - a) Without the warmth from the light, life would not be able to survive on the surface of the earth.
 - b) Plants would die. Animals would die. Man would die.
 - 2) Light is necessary to the process of photosynthesis within plants.
 - a) Without photosynthesis, plants would die and the food source for many animals would be gone.
 - b) Animals would not be able to exist and neither would man.
- 2. **“God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.”**
 - a. Having created light or illumination, the Lord establishes the Day and the Night.
 - b. The Day and the Night are the result of the rotation of the earth beginning.
 - 1) As the earth rotates, there are parts of the earth bathed in light and other parts bathed in darkness.
 - 2) The Earth's axis of rotation is tilted 23.4° away from the perpendicular of its orbital plane, producing seasonal variations on the planet's surface.
 - 3) It must also be noted that the rotation of the earth produces gravity. The size and mass of the earth, along with the speed and angle of rotation makes a perfect environment for life on this earth.
 - c. The day and night cycle is very important to life on earth. It signals a time for rest and sleep. Consider even fish live and grow better when they have a light and dark cycle.
- 3. **“So the evening and the morning were the first day.”**
 - a. With this statement, Moses tells us the creation of the heaven and the earth took one day, ending with the separation of the light from the darkness, the day from the night.
 - b. In the first day, God created the physical universe, put the earth in its

place, called forth light, and began the rotation or spinning of the earth upon its axis.

D. *“Then God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.”* (Genesis 1:6-8)

1. On the second day, the Lord created the firmament.
 - a. By creating the firmament, the Lord prepared a living space for all man and animals.
 - b. This firmament was filled with the gases necessary to sustain life, both plant life as well as animal life.
 - 1) Dry air contains roughly (by volume) 78.09% nitrogen, 20.95% oxygen, 0.93% argon, 0.039% carbon dioxide, and small amounts of other gases. Air also contains a variable amount of water vapor, on average around 1%. (en.wikipedia.org, “Atmosphere of Earth”)
 - 2) Without this mixture of gases, life as we know it would not be possible. For instance, without the carbon dioxide, plants could not survive.
 - 3) Man and animals contribute to the carbon dioxide make up when they exhale. The plants survive off the carbon dioxide and produce oxygen as their by-product.
 - 4) The oxygen of the atmosphere also aids in the oxygenation of the oceans and lakes. Air dissolves in the water, giving aquatic animals the necessary oxygen. This dissolving of air in the water is called aeration and takes place any time type water is stirred or disturbed, such as waves, rivers, streams, etc.
 - c. See chart showing the atmosphere illustration on chart 30 to show the vastness of the atmosphere.
2. **“So the evening and the morning were the second day.”**
 - a. Just as with the first day, Moses identifies the creation of day two.

- b. The day closes in the same way as the first.
- E. *“Then God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear’; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:9-10)*
- 1. With the firmament in place, the Lord calls forth the dry land.
 - a. The dry land would sustain the life of all the land animals as well as man.
 - b. The land would provide food, safety, work, places to live. All of man’s life and death would take place upon the dry ground of the earth.
 - 2. The waters below the firmament became seas.
 - a. These bodies of water would provide a dwelling place for sea animals.
 - b. The water would also provide rain for the earth and water for the animals.
- F. *“Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth’; and it was so.” (Genesis 1:11)*
- 1. As if in preparation for life, the Lord calls forth the plants and vegetation.
 - a. The plant life was the first life placed on earth. The plant cells were living.
 - b. The plants would provide food for the animals and man. (Genesis 1:29-30)
 - c. The plants would also aid in replenishing the oxygen within the atmosphere.
- G. *“And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the third day.” (Genesis 1:12-13)*
- 1. With the first sign of life, we see God’s plan for the reproduction of life.
 - a. All plants would reproduce by the seeds contained within each plant.
 - b. God, who gave life, designed the reproduction of life
 - 2. After calling forth the dry land and the plants, God ended His third day of work.
- H. *“Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let*

them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth'; and it was so." (Genesis 1:14-15)

1. Having created the light and established the Day and Night with the rotation of the earth, the Lord now places "lights in the firmament of the heavens."
 - a. God creates the planets in the solar system along with all the other celestial bodies.
 - b. Along with the rotation of the earth upon its axis, the earth began rotating around, or orbiting, this newly created light. We can identify this rotation around the light because of the phrase "let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years."
 - c. Because the earth orbits the sun, the stars in the night sky appear to move across the sky. This movement of the stars has been used to measure the passing of a year by ancient cultures.

I. *"Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the fourth day."* (Genesis 1:16-19)

1. Of the many lights placed within the sky, God created two man lights to shine on the earth.
 - a. The greater light is the sun. The sun's light shines without fail upon the earth.
 - b. The lesser light is the moon. While the moon does not emit light, it does greatly reflect the light of the sun upon the dark side of the earth. A full moon reflects a great amount of light upon the earth.
2. Show chart with illustration of solar system on chart 35.
3. The fourth day ends with the completion of the evening and the morning.

J. *"Then God said, 'Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.' So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it*

was good.” (Genesis 1:20-21)

1. On the fifth day, the Lord created life within the water and within the sky.
2. Take notice of God’s design for each living creature to reproduce after its kind.

K. *“And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’ So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.”* (Genesis 1:22-23)

1. God commanded the water animals and the flying animals to “be fruitful and multiply” They were to fill the seas and the earth.
 - a. The command to “multiply” was according to the principle of kind after kind.
 - 1) The various species of fish would reproduce after its kind.
 - 2) The various species of fowl would reproduce after its kind.
 - b. The command of the Lord leaves no room for believing in macroevolution or evolving from one species into another species.
2. As with the previous four days, day five is defined by *“the evening and the morning.”*

L. *“Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind’; and it was so.”* (Genesis 1:24)

1. Now that the waters and the firmament were teeming with animal life, the Lord now places animals upon the land.
2. The Lord does not reveal the specific names of species. This is a general statement of God creating all life that would live on land.

M. *“And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.”* (Genesis 1:25)

1. Each animal was a part of a specific kind or species.
 - a. Extinct Animals.
 - 1) We cannot know how many species of animals God created, especially species that are no longer living. Although God gave life to the animals, He does not prevent their extinction.

- 2) Consider the big question of dinosaurs. We know for certain that dinosaurs walked upon the earth. Skeletal remains prove the existence of dinosaurs. Therefore, dinosaurs were among the many species of animals which God created.
 - 3) However, at some point in the past dinosaurs became extinct. When did dinosaurs live upon the earth? In the beginning. The unknown question is, "When did dinosaurs become extinct?" The answer: We will never know.
- b. Variations.
- 1) All species living today had their origins, in the beginning, at the hand of God.
 - 2) However, in God's create design, He allows for variations within species families to develop over the course of time. Consider the wide varieties of the canine (dog) family or the feline (cat) family.
 - 3) We will talk more about this in future studies.
- c. Each animal reproduced after its kind or species.
2. God did not create one species and command the one species to evolve into thousands of various species and kinds of animals.
 3. God observed that His creation was good.
- N. *"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' "* (Genesis 1:26)
1. Up to this point, God had created life within plants and animals. However, the plants were to be for food and no one species of animal had been given domination of the others.
 2. At this point, God determined to create man.
 - a. Unlike the rest of creation, God said, *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness."* This likeness was not a fleshly or physical likeness for God was spiritual in eternal form and appearance.
 - b. Let us recall the following points from earlier in our study.
 - 1) God is Spirit and dwells in heaven, in the spiritual world.

- a) *“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* (John 4:24)
 - b) *“And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.”* (Matthew 23:22)
 - 2) Jesus is immortal, dwelling in the spiritual realm.
 - a) *“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”* (1 Timothy 1:17)
 - b) *“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”* (1 John 3:2)
 - 3) Since God is spiritual, the likeness would have been the spiritual likeness of God.
3. God gave man dominion over all the animals.
- O. *“So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”* (Genesis 1:27)
1. This statement is a general reference to the creation of man and woman, Adam and Eve. Chapter two elaborates with greater detail on how God made man and woman.
 2. God created both man and woman in His spiritual image.
- P. *“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ ”* (Genesis 1:28)
1. God gave man two simple instructions.
 - a. The man and woman were to “be fruitful and multiply” and fill the earth.
 - b. The man and woman were to subdue the earth and have dominion over the animals of the earth.
 2. With this, we see the beginning of the human race and its dominion over the earth.
- Q. *“And God said, ‘See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to*

every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air; and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food'; and it was so."

(Genesis 1:29-30)

1. On day three, God brought forth the dry land and filled the land with plant life.
(Genesis 1:12-13)
 2. God gave the plant life to man and animal for food, in addition to many other benefits.
- R. *"Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day."* (Genesis 1:31)
1. God observed all of His creation that it was good. He looked upon the newly created physical universe and saw that all of it was good.
 2. Review of Creation
 - a. Day One: Light. Day Four: Sun, moon, and stars
 - b. Day Two: Atmosphere. Day Five: Birds and fish
 - c. Day Three: Land & Seas. Day Six: Land animals & man.

CONCLUSION.

- A. How did life begin?
 1. The answer to this question is truly a matter of faith.
 2. For the Christian, the one who was convicted by the pages of the Bible to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, the record found in Genesis provides the answer.
 3. God created life.
- B. In our current generation, science has developed theories. In generations to come, those theories will change just as they have always changed.
- C. Make the decision to respect and believe in the record contained in God's holy word.