**Is Belief In God Reasonable?**

**What The Fossil Record DOES NOT Show**

Is the winning of souls important to us? Is keeping our loved ones in the faith important to us. Undoubtedly! If you had the opportunity to eliminate the biggest catalyst for rebellion to God, would you? If you had to learn some things that challenged you, would it be worth it? What if I told you that learning about the fossil record and what it did and did not show could both help people overcome obstacles to becoming Christians and help prevent your loved ones from falling away? Michael Denton wrote: *“Chance and design are antithetical concepts and the decline in religious belief can probably be attributed more to the propagation and advocacy by the intellectual and scientific community of the Darwinian version of evolution than to any other single factor.”* (Michael Denton) Over the course of our next two lessons, I want to equip us with this knowledge. It will stretch us, but it will also make us incredibly better at our role as Christians.

We need to realize that evolution is not a benign theory and that engaging in this discussion is crucial for Christians. It is my intent, like Paul, to prevent Satan’s deception that it doesn’t matter (Col. 2:4, 8). We know that the Bible teaches mankind to use our senses to perceive and appreciate God through natural revelation. It stands to reason then that our study of the Earth (Geology) and its fossils (Paleontology & Archaeology) would lead us to acknowledge Him. Sadly, not all have drawn conclusions they should. So, let’s look in this first lesson at what the fossil record does not show. Knowing these things will help us provide an accurate and informed critique of this #1 decline in the belief of God.

**I. Definition Of A Few Important Terms In This Discussion (Prov. 26:5; 2Cor. 10:3-5)**

 A. The Geologic Column – A hypothetical and tentative construct in which the layers of rock found on the earth reveal an alleged old-age timeline or history of the Earth. It is often considered dogma. However, nowhere on earth is the geologic column found like it is portrayed in textbooks. In fact, there are hundreds of locations where the order is totally different in the strata!

 B. Cambrian Layer (And Cambrian Explosion) – One of the earliest layers in the geologic column. Since it is so early, if advanced life forms can be found in it (which they undoubtedly can), then it would suggest macroevolution does not explain the origin of life. The Cambrian explosion refers to the explosion of complex life that we see at this layer in the fossil record.

 C. Macroevolution vs. Microevolution –

1. Macroevolution believes in universal common descent (i.e. everything evolved from a single entity). Has NOT been observed and requires a timescale in which it could not ever be observed.

2. Microevolution, or adaptation, involves superficial changes within kinds based on environment and other influential factors. Superficial does not mean that they aren’t amazing, but that the fundamental body plan and genetics remain the same. This has been observed.

 D. Transitional Forms – Fossils that are believed to illustrate macroevolution

 E. Homology – Notion that similarity in different life forms proves macroevolution

**II. Does NOT Support Evolutionary Expectation & Timeline (2Pe. 2:17-19; Pro. 18:17)**

A. For gradual change through mutation (Darwinism/Neo-Darwinism), for Punctuated Equilibrium, and for other modern theories of evolution.

 1. Darwin believed evidence for his theory was forthcoming and would be found in the fossil record. He believed transitional forms would come.

2. *“He [Darwin] prophesied that future generations of paleontologists would fill in these gaps by diligent search….It has become abundantly clear that the fossil record will not confirm this part of Darwin’s predictions. Nor is the problem a miserably poor record. The fossil record simply shows that this prediction was wrong.”* (Eldridge, Niles, The Myths of Human Evolution, 1984, pp.45-46.)

3. Furthermore, it is not a matter of mere incompleteness; it is selective incompleteness, or the absence of the transitional forms necessary to justify Darwin’s theory. A peer of Darwin’s, Louis Agassiz presented this to him and Darwin admitted it was fatal to his theory.

 B. Evolutionists take numerous unjustified philosophical jumps including:

1. Extrapolating without basis from similarity to homology.

2. Taking highly imaginative leaps from a major lack of data that is only bridged by colossal speculations. 95% of the fossils we have are marine invertebrates. Vertebrates is a small fraction of 1%, and primates would be a tiny fraction of that.

**III. Does NOT Show Animal Transitional Forms (Is. 41:21-24; Ro. 1:25; 3:4; 2Ti. 2:23)**

 A. Foundational Tenet #1 – Reptile To Bird “Missing Links”

1. Archaeopteryx

 a. This fossil allegedly possesses “teeth” and “feathers”.

 b. Scientists have repeatedly drawn out clear anatomical & genetic differences between reptiles & birds that cannot be explained.

 c. *“Amongst evolutionists, Archaeopteryx is now felt to have evolved from a two-legged dinosaur, and as a result, paleontologists must now ‘rearrange’ the fossil’s evidence to accommodate this since animals cannot be older than their ancestor! Archaeopteryx was in actuality a flying dinosaur and not a missing link, even though this is still perpetuated not only in textbooks but even in museums such as the Smithsonian.”* (Dr. Bo Kirkwood, *Creation Versus Evolution*, 59)

2. Sinosauropteryx

a. After further inspection, revealed to be a Theropod, not a bird

b. The assumption that this was a bird resulted when they saw some filaments on/near a fossil and called them “protofeathers”. On further inspection, these were revealed to be collagen fibers.

c. Additionally, tons of birds were found in this area whose taxonomy is not undisputed so if “Sinosauropteryx” was a precursor of birds why are there actual birds at same time in fossil record?

3. Archaeoraptor

a. Hoax in National Geographic that proves evolutionists will pay to get what they want to see.

b. *“Though I do not want to believe it, Archaeoraptor appears to be composed of a dromaeosaur tail and a bird body.”* (Xu Xing, Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology & Paleoanthropology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Bijing, China, letter in National Geographic Forum, March 2000, Vol 197 No 3.)

 4. Sinornithosaurus

 a. Another “feathered dinosaur” based on Fossil NGMC 9 1

b. They found filamentous integumentary structures which were thought to be wings but have proven to be connective tissue.

5. *“The idea of feathered dinosaurs and the theropod origin of birds is being actively promoted by a cadre of zealous scientists acting in concert with certain editors at Nature and National geographic who themselves have become outspoken and highly biased proselytizers of the faith. Truth and careful scientific weighing of evidence have been among the first casualties in their program, which is now fast becoming one of the grander scientific hoaxes of our age. There is not one undisputed example of a dinosaur with feathers. None. The public deserves to know this.”* (Storrs Olson, Smithsonian Institute, in an open letter 11/1/99).

 B. Foundational Tenet #2 – The Horse (*Eohippus*) – Job 39:19-25

 1. The typical evolutionary model will suggest that a very small four-toed animal eventually changed into a much larger one-hoofed animal by a series of intermediates. Do fossils support this? No!

 2. Darwinian evolution requires slow, gradual change. If this had taken place we would expect one of the transitional forms to possess two toes, yet not one has ever been found!

 3. When we look at the fossil record and examine the so-called transitional forms of horses, we find one-hoofed horses in the same place as the three-hoofed. In fact, in South America, we find the one-hoofed in lower strata than the three-hoofed!

 4. Another clear issue in the evolutionary model is the presence of genetic variation within the horse kind. Different animals can range in size within a species. Horses can vastly range in size from the size of a dog (miniature horses) to Clydesdales.

 C. Each respective kind remains each respective kind in the fossil record. Examples include the cat kind (*Felids*), dog kind (*Canids*), bear kind (*Ursids*), and horse kind (*Eqquids*). There is variation (house cat – lion, Chihuahua – Great Dane, Black Bear – Polar Bear, Miniature Horse – Clydesdale), but not out of kinds.

**IV. Does NOT Show Transitional Forms From Ape To Man (Matt. 12:12)**

 A. Three ways to make “transitional forms” between apes and man:

 1. Upscale apes in the fossil record

 a. Lucy (*Australopithecus Afarensus; “southern ape”*) –

i. Nearly all experts now agree this was a 3-foot chimpanzee.

ii. Shown to be a chimpanzee based on thorough analysis of skull, hip, foot, and hand structures

iii. The Laetoli Footprints have also been indisputably shown to not have been created by Lucy.

iv. The St. Louis Zoo has an intentionally misrepresented facsimile of “Lucy” that they have admitted is an editorialized misrepresentation of the fossils.

 2. Downscale humans in the fossil record

 a. Neanderthal Man –

i. At the International Conference of Zoology (1958), Dr. A.J.E. Cave said that his examination revealed this was of an elderly modern man with arthritis.

ii. Dr. David Menton on his examination of the fossilized man noted numerous broken bones (suggesting a rough life which he postulates shows he existed briefly after the Flood) that had been set (indicating high intelligence!).

iii. It is also noteworthy that in the same area/layer were found formalized burials, jewelry, tools, and flutes.

 b. Cro-Magnon Man – One of the earliest and best-established fossils is equal in physique & brain capacity to modern man!

 c. Heidelberg Man – Built from a single jawbone of a modern human.

 3. Combine pieces of ape skeletons with other animal bones

 a. Nebraska Man – Built from a single tooth of an extinct pig.

 b. Piltdown Man – Built from the jawbone of a modern orangutan.

 4. *“Despite the excited and optimistic claims that have been made by some paleontologists, no fossil hominid species can be established as our direct ancestor.”* (Richard Lewontin, 1982 in Human Diversity, p. 163)

C. Psalm 8:4-5 and Genesis 1:26-28 call out man as superior to animals. Macroevolution fails to make that distinction. So what?

 1. That means that you are less than nothing in the macroevolutionary paradigm. There is no practical difference between you and bacteria, than a monkey flinging its own feces. Are you ready and willing to accept that? That your loved ones are no different than cockroaches?

 2. Macroevolution confers no value on people and denies any spiritual essence whatsoever. I know you don’t believe that.

 3. If you have accepted Darwinian Evolution, if mankind is merely a bacteria that just happened to spruce itself up over a couple billion years, then the Son of Man, Jesus Christ was at least for a time, nothing but painted-up bacteria. Are you willing to gamble that?

4. *“Theories about the evolution of man describe a history of development taking many millions of years. It is a history filled with slow progression and countless deaths of ape-like creatures trying to evolve into the first human. This is a completely different history than the one recorded in the Bible in which Adam is formed from the dust as a fully-grown man, then Eve is formed from Adam’s rib as a fully-grown woman. There is no way to reconcile these two histories.”* (*Is Genesis History: Bible Study,* “Man, Life, & Science”, 55)

The Lord God Almighty created the world and everything in it in six literal days (Genesis 1). He is incomprehensibly powerful and worthy of our highest adoration and worship (Rev. 4:11). It is important that we give a case for faith, even if that requires us to study areas beyond our normal scope. It is important because if we fail to do so, we have contributed to the loss of souls. How many of our children and loved ones have been taken captive by the blasphemous philosophy of Darwinian evolution? How often have we failed to engage in refuting this subject when our children have asked us for answers because we were too afraid or willfully ignorant to challenge ourselves to grow in our knowledge?