

## Article: Creation (concluded)

Evolution must be rejected as an explanation of the origin of the world and its inhabitants. Evolution was popularised by Charles Darwin (d. 1882), but was not something new. The Greeks had speculated about it before the birth of Christ. Darwin popularised it for the modern age. In 1859 he published *On the Origin of Species*. In 1871 he published *The Descent of Man*. In these works he rejected the biblical account of creation and preservation in favour of the theory of natural selection and survival of the fittest (death is a natural tool in the process of evolution for weeding out the weak).

Liberalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century conformed its religious outlook to the ever-upward progression of humanity taught by Darwin. In our day, evolution has permeated most segments of society with its beliefs, from science to anthropology, from psychiatry to education. Many church bodies unashamedly teach that evolution is the explanation for the origin of the universe. Even in some Lutheran churches evolution is openly taught and espoused. Churches usually say they believe in theistic evolution, where God is viewed as the prime mover of the universe and evolution as the tool by which it developed. This is to be distinguished from atheistic evolution, which replaces God with chance and does not believe in the existence of a god.

Does it make any difference as to whether we accept evolution or not? A brief study of how evolution affects some doctrines of the Bible will show that evolution is not a harmless theory that we can tolerate in the name of being scientifically up to date. If you embrace evolution, even theistic evolution, you may also end up losing the gospel itself.

The Bible teaches that God created man and woman, that He made them distinct from the animals, and that He made them to rule over the world He created. God made Adam and Eve in His own image. He gave human beings an immortal soul. God made man and woman to be moral creatures from whom God expects conscious and intelligent obedience. God gave man and woman language by which they could speak with Him and with each other. The life God gives people is a precious time of grace in which the image of God, lost through sin, is to be renewed. After this life, all people must appear before God for the final judgment. Believers will enter into eternal life, and unbelievers will suffer eternal damnation.

Evolution has a totally different picture of a human. It believes that people descended from animals, that life is cheap, that death is a natural tool to get rid of the weak, that people for long periods of time were low in intelligence, unskilled in language, knowing nothing of right or wrong. It believes that when a person dies, that is it. There is no heaven; there is no hell. You just cease to exist. From evolution's perspective, the biblical account of Genesis 1 and 2 is myth and folklore. Those who accept evolution must reject the biblical account of creation.

The Bible tells us that Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating of the fruit of the tree from which He had commanded them not to eat. Adam and Eve lost the image of God. Their relationship with their Creator was severed by their disobedience. They no longer loved God the way they should. They no longer loved each other the way they should. Adam blamed his sin on God and on his wife. Eve blamed the serpent. They each refused to accept accountability for their own actions. They lost their pristine peace. It was replaced by feelings of guilt. Their wills were corrupted. The Bible teaches that humans fell from their high state to a state of being corrupted by sin.

Evolution has a different picture of things. The account of the fall into sin is said to be a story early people told about how manlike beasts began to feel a moral responsibility for their course of action. The feelings of guilt are said to be a step upward from the beastlike state in which creatures felt no responsibility for their actions toward others. Rather than being mourned, the fall into sin is applauded as a step forward for early humans.

The Bible tells us that original sin is both a hereditary guilt and a hereditary corruption. It is a hereditary guilt in that the condemnation Adam brought upon himself by his disobedience is passed on to us (Rom. 5:12). Because of it, we are born into this world under the wrath and judgment of God (Eph. 2:3). Original sin is a hereditary corruption in that our nature lacks what it ought to have - righteousness and holiness - and has what it should not have - a lust for sin. It is passed on from parents to children (Ps. 51:5; John 3:5). Therefore, we cannot carry out God's will because of our corrupt nature (Rom. 8:7).

Evolution, however, does not believe this teaching of the Bible. It believes that people are getting better and better. It says that long ago people were animals and acted like animals. Evolutionists say that we are much better today and will be much better as time goes on. If there is any inclination to bad behaviour, evolution says it is simply a remnant of the beast within. In this way, people's evil actions are excused; and the original sin, for which we deserve God's judgment, is ignored.

The Bible tells us that any thought, word, or deed that deviates from God's will is an actual sin. There are absolute laws that God commands us to obey. God's commandments are not determined by popular opinion, nor do they change from generation to generation. Anytime we say, think, or do something God forbids or do not do something He commands, we have sinned. Sin has consequences. The Bible tells us that the "*wages of sin is death*" (Rom. 6:23). Sin separates us from God. It brings about death in this world. It leads to eternal condemnation. Sins are not merely mistakes of judgment. Sin is an affront to a holy God.

Evolution does not acknowledge any absolutes. Everything is said to be determined by culture and experience. The evolutionist tells us that animals do not always have the same mate for a lifetime. If we are merely animals, then why should humans be faithful to their spouses for a lifetime? These marriage rules were developed, they say, by a society that was prudish. Today we have passed beyond this and have developed a more enlightened attitude toward relationships. This is merely one example of how evolution does away with sin and, ultimately, with the need for a Saviour.

The Bible tells us that sin brought death into this world (Gen. 2:17; 3:19; 5:1-26; Rom. 5:12; 6:23). Death is a judgment of God on sinners. That is why Paul tells us, “*The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law*” (1 Cor. 15:56). We die because we are sinners. Death is universal because all have sinned (exceptions were Enoch and Elijah, who went to heaven without dying). The only people who will escape death are those who are living at the time of Christ’s coming. Death is feared because of its connection with sin (Heb. 2:14-15).

Evolution tells us that death is not the penalty for sin but rather a necessary process of evolution. In fact, evolution could not take place without it. Therefore, the evolutionist denies the penalty for his sins and thinks of death as simply part of the process of the ‘survival of the fittest.’ Thus, the evolutionist faces death without a realisation that sin brings about eternal death as well as temporal death.

Our sins condemn us before God. Yet God loves us and sent Jesus to save us from our sins. He kept the Law of God for us. He suffered the punishment for our sins. God raised Him from the dead to show us that our salvation was secured. Through faith in Jesus, the forgiveness He won for all becomes our very own. Clothed in Christ’s righteousness, we are assured of eternal life with the Lord in heaven.

If, however, there is no sin, then why do we need a Saviour? From the perspective of evolution, Jesus was not God, Jesus was not born of a virgin, and He was merely a good example of what people should be. He died, was buried, and that was it. If that is what a person believes, he is not a Christian and has no hope of eternal life.

In conclusion, we reiterate our faith in the creation of the world as related by the Bible. With the church of all ages, we confess: “*I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.*”