

INTELLIGENTLY DISCUSSING CREATION AND EVOLUTION

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The presentation here is not for solving the creation-evolution problem, but for clarifying the issue and correcting inappropriate thinking patterns.

Identifying the Issue

Creationism as such vs. the Christian formulations of it. There is a difference between creation as a concept and the Judaeo-Christian—or even Islamic—formulation of it. The Christian formulation gets into additional matters, which vary according to the manner interpreters handle the relevant biblical materials.

Chronometry. Creationism vs. evolution does not particularly correspond with questions about the age of the universe. The latter point is also important, but a young universe does not necessarily parallel creationism. Evolution calls for an ancient universe, so any indication that the universe is young does argue against evolution and for creationism; but creationism can occur over a long time as well as take place in a relatively short time. It is a more flexible concept in regard to chronometry.

Process vs. origin. The controversy is not about the origin of base matter *per se*, but about how the base level came to its present state. The origination of matter could be called creation all right, which could then be followed by evolution. Evolution does not necessitate materialism or atheism even though it allows for such viewpoints.

How much intervention is also not the point in creationism. Whether frequently or infrequently, divine intervention as such is all that is required.

History vs. science. Even if macro-evolution is possible, that does not prove that is what happened. The essential issue is one of history rather than science. Science cannot deal with historical, universals, or supernatural matters as such.

Definition of Terms

To think intelligently about creation-evolution, the terms “evolution” and “creation” need to correspond to the natural contrasts in the realities involved. The distinctive difference between the two approaches is that creation appeals to agency outside the natural order; evolution does not. Evolution envisions the development from beginning to present as a process that can be carried forward solely by laws internal to the natural order.

As a result, “creation” should not, for example, be used to mean simply bringing things to present conditions, but as referring more specifically to bringing things to present conditions by exogenous causation. In this light, “creating by evolution” is a nonsensical expression. Likewise, “evolution” should not be used to designate a process like the evolution of the Corvette. The process of change in such a case, appeals to external causation—the designers of the vehicle.

Neither should “creation” mean the origination of mass-energy *per se*. That would allow for evolution as the means for carrying the process forward to current levels. However, the precise point in creationism is that mechanisms internal to the natural order

are insufficient for doing that very thing. Both above concepts could fall within the meaning of “theistic evolution.”

A distinction is needed between micro- and macro-evolution. Micro-evolution refers to observable change; macro-evolution proposes to extrapolate changes of degree into changes of kind.

Law of Parsimony

The simpler explanation must also be a sufficient explanation. If simpler means fewer elements involved harmoniously in the process, evolution is simpler causation.

Burden of Proof

The task is not to disprove evolution, but to discover which explanation is more likely.

Certainty

As with all real-world matters, the quest is not for absolute certainty, but greater likelihood.

The crucial issue in evolution is the source of the truly new. Creationism has mind and power to penetrate the future and provide the new; evolution has to provide an alternative, endogenous origin of the new.

Gestalt

Can we seriate the origin of interdependent parts? Can a mechanic change a Harley-Davidson into a Lincoln Continental and keep it running the whole time? Even if that could be done, it would be illustrating creationism rather than evolution.

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