



CREATION ^{In} THE CROSSFIRE

Published by the South Bay Creation Science Association

And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts....And the water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered. Gen 1:31-2:1; 7:19

The Next Meeting: October 25, 2008 at 7 PM: Dr. Thomas Kindell will speak: "Solving the Problem of Distant Stars and a Young Earth. His lecture will examine three independent lines of evidence: quantized redshifts, the "Pioneer space probe anomaly," and the Sloan Digital Sky Survey.

We will have a video at 6 PM.

Speaker for November 2008: Douglas Hamp, an assistant pastor at Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, will return to speak on "The Language of Creation." The Theory of Evolution has caused many Christians to reinterpret the meaning of the biblical text. Douglas Hamp's detailed analysis of the Hebrew will show that we can confidently assert that God created the earth in six literal days.

Design Arguments 600 BCE-2008 CE

Our last speaker, Dr. Timothy Standish, reviewed the historical and philosophical background of arguments against intelligent design beginning with Parmenides around 600 BCE. This article gives the highlights of his presentation for those who missed it.

Parmenides claimed that it is impossible for something to come from nothing. He argued that change must be an illusion and reality is an unchanging whole.

Leuceppius was the founder of Atomism in the 5th century BCE, followed by his disciple Democritus. Democritus expanded atomic theory and posited the eternity of nature, space, and motion.

Standish said that ultimately, the philosophy of the Atomists collapsed into today's extreme scientific reductionism and empiricism.

Epicurus, 341-271 BCE, and the atomists argued that reality was composed of unchanging entities, the atoms, that could be rearranged to create genuine change without getting something from nothing. Epicurus was a materialist, espousing empiricism and hedonism. He assumed there is no divine judgment to face after death. no immortal soul, and that the only

reality is what our five senses tell us. Never mind that many animals have senses that render ours puny by comparison. We have built instruments that can detect things we cannot, e.g., ultraviolet light. We can't see it but we can appreciate its effect. Many scientists say that dark matter exists although we have no way of detecting it now. Is dark matter reality? Some think its gravitational influence holds galaxy clusters together and maintains the spiral arms of galaxies.

A student of Epicurus, Cicero (106-43 BCE) wrote in *De Natura Deorum* (On the Nature of the Gods):

"For he [Epicurus] who taught us all the rest has also taught us that the world was made by nature, without needing an artificer to construct it, and that the act of creation, which according to you cannot be performed without divine skill, is so easy, that nature will create, is creating, and has created worlds without number. You, on the contrary, cannot see how nature can achieve all this without the aid of some intelligence.."

Cicero and modern scientists have assumed natural processes formed galaxies, stars, and planets. While there is some merit for this assumption, it was not based on anyone's actual observations. How could Cicero have done so? It would seem that Cicero doesn't believe in the gods or a god, so his basic assumption that the world is made by natural processes excludes divine acts. His and Epicurus' assumption has carried over into modern naturalistic science. Modern science excludes any supernatural acts. Ancient ideas and assumptions have managed to insinuate themselves into some modern sciences without ever being verified by observation.

Until recently, no one has viewed a star forming by natural processes. Today there are some interesting possibilities, however dubious. In order to observe

that star formation, it would take many generations of observers since it would take around a million years for a gas cloud to coalesce into a star, if it happens at all. Other than the planets in our solar system, we still haven't directly observed planets elsewhere, much less the natural formation of planets.

The Hubble telescope was to be upgraded this month, to improve its ability to observe neighboring solar systems, but due to further mechanical failures, the project is temporarily on hold. Some assume the asteroids represent the breakup of a former planet and that the moon is the product of a partial breakup of earth. If these things are true, maybe we should assume breakups are more likely than planet formation.

Internal God or Eternal Atoms?

Lucretius Carus (circa 94-55 BCE) made a familiar series of assumptions because modern evolutionists promulgate them in much the same form. In *De Rerum Natura* 5:149-431 (*On the Nature of Things*) Lucretius wrote,

"Certainly it was no design of the atoms to place themselves in a particular order, nor did they decide what motions each should have. But atoms were struck with blows in many ways and carried along by their own weight from infinite times up to the present. They have been accustomed to move and to meet in all manner of ways. For this reason, it came to pass that being spread abroad through vast space in trying every sort of combination and motion, at length those come together to produce great things. like earth and sea and sky and the generation of living creatures."

Lucretius assumed atoms would form life given infinite time. He understood an atom to be the smallest bit of a pure element that could not be divided. Dr. Standish agreed that if the material universe has existed for infinite time, then the spontaneous formation of life has some merit. We say that God has always existed.

Skeptics ask, "Who created God?" They think it's ridiculous for us to believe God has always existed, yet they think it's perfectly sensible to believe matter has always existed—nothing had to create matter because God has always existed. If it didn't exist eternally, then nothing would exist now. Ergo, matter has always existed. I guess so! It's impossible that an uncreated thing has always existed, but it is obvious uncreated matter has. How else could we be here now? Or so

their thinking goes. The trouble with anything infinite, remarked Dr. Standish, is that infinities don't exist. The universe is not infinite. If we discover that the universe is much bigger than what we have detected, it would put the big bang theory into grave doubt.

Intelligent Design refutes Lucretius' "no design of the atoms." It would seem Lucretius was off target in his remarks, referring to the inability of atoms to direct themselves to take on specified complexity given infinite time and infinite arrangements. When you study the remainder of his comment, it's clear he's arguing that purely random naturalistic processes that produced life and the universe. This was refuted in my *Crossfire* series "Chemistry Refutes Chance Origin of Life" (May-Jul '92 available online) and more importantly in works by scientists such as Dean Kenyon (one of the original origin-of-life researchers), Charles Thaxton, Michael Behe, and others who have addressed and refuted the idea that given enough time, random natural, material processes produce life.

Standish gave this formula of Evolutionism:



Lots of Time + A very big Universe = Life as we know it

Given infinite time, the universe, by completely random events, can develop the needed conditions to produce and sustain life. Darwin said nothing new in this respect. It has been around for thousands of years.

Lucretius explained that time plus randomness, that is "atoms struck blows in many ways, over infinite time," is the key to the abiotic origin of life, the universe, and everything.

Modern evolutionists say essentially the same thing. Darwin managed to say it in a way that made it palatable to enough people to make the concept popular.

For evolutionists, time is the key for the origin and evolution of life. Richard Dawkins recognized the clear design elements in organisms, but relegated them to only the appearance of design. He wrote,

"Given infinite time, or infinite opportunities, anything is possible. The large numbers proverbially furnished by astronomy, and the large time spans characteristic of geology, combine to turn topsy-turvy our everyday estimates of what is expected and what is miraculous."

The seeming miraculous was just a function of extremely long periods of time that would allow inute, stepwise progress to complex organisms.

There is no design in biology. Francis Crick said,

"Biologists must constantly keep in mind that what they see was not designed, but rather evolved."

George Gaylord Simpson said,

"Man is the result of a purposeless and natural process that did not have him in mind."

Charles Darwin:

"Nature acts uniformly and slowly during vast periods of time on the whole organisation, in any way which may be for each creature's own good."

Of course, this has not and cannot be observed. Only most trivial directionless changes have ever been served, such as the changes in the peppered moth, beaks in finches, and the weird monstrosities duced in irradiated fruit flies.

storic responses to the material Atomists

Although Parmenides influenced Plato, he responded the materialists. Plato's most challenging dialog is nerally referred to as "Parmenides". He argues for existence of the gods on the basis of the design, rich is self-evident in nature. He says, "In the first ice, the earth and the sun, and the stars and the iverse, and the fair order of the seasons, and the /ision of them into years and months, furnish proofs their existence...."

This might seem to have been refuted by Epicurus, t Plato was referring to the orderly design of the iverse that resulted in "the fair order" he observed. icurus stacked the deck in his favor by presenting straw argument that perfect gods were not needed maintain the "revolutions, solstices, eclipses, rings d settings. and the like, take place without the nistration or command, either now or in the future,

Or any being.... That's a safe bet, but it has no bearing on the origin of order in the universe. *Who put the bop in the bop-she-bop* in the first place?

Aristotle carried Plato's torch further. He argued that atoms alone cannot achieve what the Epicureans claimed because atoms do not move by themselves. He responds to the philosophical claim of the Atomists with an empirical observation. To arrange themselves in different ways, atoms require an unmoved mover—God. Because material movers must react to the motion they cause, God must be immaterial and the cause of the motion must be an immaterial cause. This immaterial cause, Aristotle deduced, was thought, *logos*.

The Apostle John identified the *logos* as the ultimate Logos that was with God and was God. The Apostle Paul addressed Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens and brought up their nodding approval of the "unknown god." Paul said this unknown god was the creator of the world, the ultimate cause of the universe. He said the design in nature showed that the invisible things of God are clearly evident, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.

Standish remarked that the power of the apostles' arguments rested on direct testimony of their empirical experience, not on complex philosophical arguments.

The Apostle John wrote, "That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen** with our eyes, which we have **looked** upon, and our hands have **handled**, of the Word of life: (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and **show** to you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was **manifested** to us;) That which we have **seen** and **heard** we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ."

It isn't possible to cover Dr. Standish's entire presentation. Tom Canfield is very faithful in videotaping all lectures. Anyone who is interested can get a copy of the lecture.

Nearly all these philosophical arguments had very little in the way of empirical evidence, even though the Epicurean empiricists thought they made a successful case for their beliefs. What was missing was a lack of knowledge. Over the next few months, I'll incorporate some of Dr. Standish's additional points in this series