

Evolution vs. Creation

Lesson Nine

Biology: Irreducible Ignorance

April 30, 2006

- what is a black box? something that you can't see what's going on inside
- you cannot explain life on the macro level unless you can explain life on the micro level
- organism (person) – system (circulation) – organ (heart) – component (valve) – cell (heart muscle) – cell components (nucleus) – subcomponents () – molecules (DNA) – proteins (ribosomes)
- microscope invented in 17th century
- cellular theory of life proposed in early 19th century; the cell was believed to be a blob of protoplasm – it was the “black box” of Darwin's time
- electron microscope invented in 20th century – made visible the smaller structures of the cell
- in 1958, x-ray crystallography revealed the structure of myoglobin – proved to be far more complex than previously believed
- at the microscopic level, life becomes enormously complex
- every time our understanding lurches forward, we take another leap in terms of complexity
- in the nineteenth century, Darwin had no concept of the complexity of life at the molecular level
- Darwin's theory is an attempt to explain general observation (survival of the fittest) without getting bogged down in the details
- Darwin brushed aside difficulties, viz., “how a nerve comes to be sensitive to light hardly concerns us more than how life itself originated”
- the “problem” of microbiology: the most important parts of living things are too small to be seen; the more we learn about life at the microscopic level, the more it defies explanation
- you can't explain the origin of species unless you can deal with it at the molecular level – macroscopic life is determined by the processes occurring on the molecular level
- it's easy to assume that the processes taking place inside the black box are simple (e.g., Darwin's protoplasm)
- evolutionary theories are based on processes occurring above the molecular level and fail to explain the details of life (evolution then becomes the inscrutable black box – nobody can explain how it happened)
- why do most scientists believe in evolution? because most scientists believe in evolution! (most accept it based on the authority of someone else who believes it)
- the argument for intelligent design goes something like this: when we encounter a complex system that (1) serves a specific purpose and (2) cannot be explained by stepwise modification, the rational conclusion is that the system was designed by an intelligent being

- irreducible complexity means that if you take away one part of a complex system, the whole system ceases to function; because it serves no useful purpose in a simplified form, it could not have provided an adaptive advantage; if it provided no adaptive advantage, it could not have been advanced by natural selection
- Darwin: “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ [or animal] existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.”
- Behe: “The problem for evolutionists is to start with a less complex system and build a more complex system”
- Behe: “The ‘simplest’ self-sufficient, replicating cell has the capacity to produce thousands of different proteins and other molecules, at different times and under variable conditions. Synthesis, degradation, energy generation, replication, maintenance of cell architecture, mobility, regulation, repair, communication – all of these functions take place in virtually every cell, and each function itself requires the interaction of numerous parts.”
- Examples: bombardier beetle; bacterial flagellum; blood clotting; cilium; cellular transport; molecular synthesis
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- Job 9:8 – God alone made the heavens
- Ps 102:25 – of old you laid the foundations of the earth
- Ps 104:24 – in wisdom the Lord made His works
- Ps 136:5 – God made the heavens by understanding
- Pr 3:19 – by wisdom the Lord founded the earth
- Pr 8:22-31 – wisdom was present during the creation of the world
- Is 42:5 – the Lord created the heavens and spread out the earth
- Is 48:13 – my hand laid the foundations of the earth
- Jer 10:12 – God established the earth by wisdom
- Jer 51:15 – God established the world by wisdom
- Zec 12:1 – the Lord stretched out the heavens and founded the earth
- Heb 1:10 – you laid the foundations of the earth in the beginning