

Answers for Skeptics



Answers for Skeptics

Dr. Patrick R. Briney

*Mission Boulevard Baptist Church
Fayetteville, Arkansas*

Published in the United States of America in 1999
Mission Boulevard Baptist Church
2006 Mission Boulevard
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72703
(501)442-2565
bapcoll@comp.uark.edu
<http://www.uark.edu/~bapcoll/>

Copyright © 1999 Patrick Robert Briney

Readers are encouraged to study and share this booklet with others for the purpose of promoting the ministry of Jesus Christ. When making copies, please duplicate in its entirety.

Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Briney, Patrick R.

Answers for Skeptics

1. Apologetics 2. God 3. Resurrection 4. Creation

I. Title

Printed in the United States of America

Contents

Evidence for the Existence of God -----	9
Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ -----	13
Evidence for Inspiration of the Bible -----	15
Compelling Evidence for Salvation -----	19
Evidence for Creation -----	21
The Philosophy of God's Existence -----	25

***Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD:
though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as
snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as
wool. -Isaiah 1:18***

Evidence for the Existence of God

Is it possible to know that there is a God? Is it possible to prove that God exists? The answer to both questions is “yes.” It is possible not only to know that God exists, it is possible to know God.

There are three laws of science to consider as evidence for the existence of God. What is special about a scientific law? A law is a model of science that has been tested thousands of times with the same results and no exceptions. Credible conclusions and interpretations of science are constrained to conform to laws of science. Explanations that contradict laws of science lack credibility.

The First Law of Thermodynamics is a scientific law that leads to the conclusion that the origin of the universe is best explained by supernatural creation. Following is a four point argument for the supernatural creation of the universe.

1. The First Law of Thermodynamics states that energy cannot be created by natural means. As of today, no exceptions to the law have been observed.
2. The universe exists as energy in a variety of forms such as matter, light, heat, and sound.
3. The logical conclusion for the origin of the universe is that it was created supernaturally.
4. There must be a God.

A typical rebuttal is that supernatural creation is really an undiscovered natural law. First, this is an admission that the conclusion is logically derived whether it is supernatural or undiscovered. Second, to propose a hypothetical natural law that contradicts an empirically derived natural law is irrational. Third, a supernatural conclusion is the most plausible because it does not contradict a law.

Another typical rebuttal is that energy always existed. This brings us to the next law, the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

1. The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that entropy

Answers for Skeptics

irreversibly increases in a closed system. This means that usable energy decreases and cannot be increased in a closed system. Because of this law, perpetual machines are not possible.

2. The universe is experiencing “heat death,” which means it is a closed system that is winding down like a clock inside of a box. Once it unwinds it cannot be rewound. Heat death points to an end point, which means there was a beginning.

3. If the universe is winding down and cannot be wound up, how did the universe originate with energy in order to start unwinding? The most logical conclusion is that it originated supernaturally.

4. There must be a God!

A typical, mistaken rebuttal to this is that the second law only applies to closed systems, and living organisms are open systems. That is correct! Therefore, the above argument is presented for the origin of the universe not for life or species.

The third point of evidence for the existence of God is the Law of Biogenesis.

1. The Law of Biogenesis states that all cells come from pre-existing cells. No exceptions in nature or in the laboratories have been observed.

2. All living entities exist as single or multicellular organisms.

3. The logical conclusion is that cellular life originated supernaturally.

4. There must be a God!

To insist on natural origins is irrational and inconsistent with scientific laws of today. Credible conclusions must conform to the laws and knowledge of today. To conclude that there is no God is illogical and contradictory to scientific observation.

Biochemist, H.P. Yockey, reported in the *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, “With regard to the appearance of a single molecule of the cytochrome c family, even the *deus ex machina* needs 10^{36} [chances] with just the right conditions [and] 1 billion years... One who finds the chance appearance of cytochrome c a credible event must have the faith of Job.” In light of the mathematical calculation for impossibility being 10^{30} , it is rational to conclude that the natural origin of proteins necessary for life is impossible.

If the natural origin of a single protein is impossible how much more

Answers for Skeptics

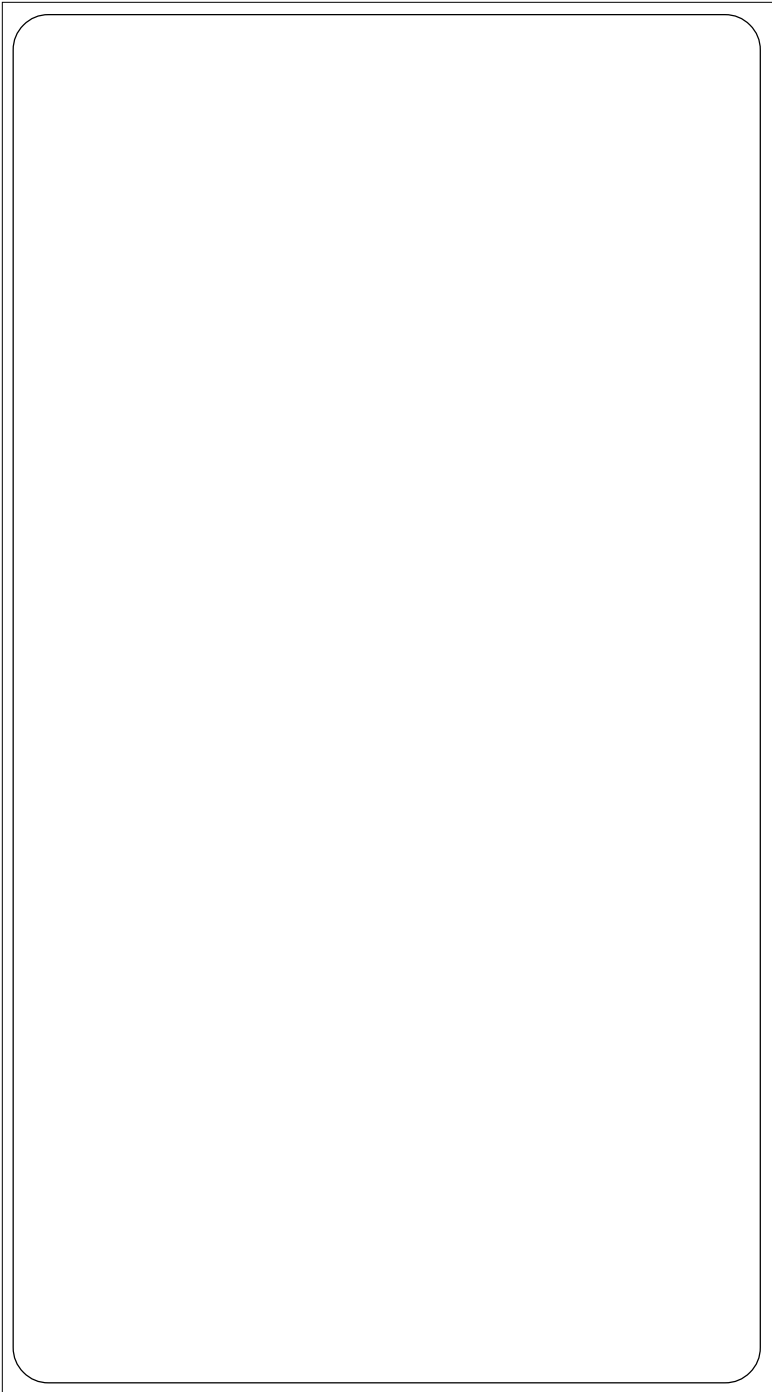
a whole cell! Biochemist Harold Morowitz wrote in his book *Energy Flow in Biology* that theoretically the simplest of cells would require a minimum of 124 proteins to function. Based on this imaginary, simple organism, he calculated that the probability of its natural evolution would be 1:10^{340,000,000}.

Scientists have spent years trying to create life in the laboratory with the most sophisticated equipment available in carefully controlled and intelligently designed experiments. If life cannot be artificially assembled under these conditions, how much more impossible it is for molecules to naturally assemble themselves into living cells! The best explanation for the origin of life is supernatural creation. There must be a God!

The only logical and rational conclusion consistent with the laws of science and knowledge of the day is that there must be a God. To deny Him is to deny the methodology, history, tradition, purpose, and knowledge of science. Denial of God is a rejection of rational thought and the power of human reasoning to enlighten mankind.

I leave you with these thoughts to ponder. Is it more unscientific to believe in God or in evolution? Is it more unscientific to believe in supernatural or natural origins? Is it necessary to put God in a test tube or require that He demonstrate His creative methods in the laboratory before we can conclude that He exists? You have seen the evidence. Does God exist or not?

Answers for Skeptics



Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

God exists. The evidences of science, testimony, and rational thought lead honest people to this conclusion. But of the many gods to choose from, is it possible to determine which God is the real God? Yes it is.

Why consider Jesus Christ? Why not? He has had a greater impact on humanity than any other in history. He claimed to be God rather than just to know God. Millions of people testify that He is alive in their lives and attribute remarkable changes to Him. Most convincing is the evidence for the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Bible documents the events surrounding Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. However, many find the Biblical account compellingly true because it is corroborated with extra-Biblical documents. Consider the following documents.

Jesus was real.

Cornelius Tacitus, a Roman historian, Governor of Asia, and son in law to Julius Agricola wrote about Jesus saying, "Christus, the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate." Others such as Ignatius of Syria (A.D. 50-115) and Justin Martyr and Tertullian of Carthage also wrote of Jesus' trial and death.

Jesus was crucified.

Lucian of Samosa wrote in his book *The Passing of Peregrinus* that Jesus "was crucified in Palestine because he introduced this new cult into the world." Flavius Josephus reported in *The Antiquities of the Jews* in A.D. 37 that Jesus was seen by many after His resurrection. Writings of a debate between the Samaritan historian, Thallus and Julius Africanus in about A.D. 40 show that during the afternoon of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, the skies darkened. Julius argued that the darkening could not have been due to a solar eclipse because there was

a full moon in the evening. Notice that the crucifixion and the darkening of the sky was not in question.

Jesus' tomb was empty.

Interestingly, many critics of Jesus and His followers did not and do not argue that Jesus' tomb was empty. They debate why His tomb was empty. Tertullian wrote in his *De Spectac* that Jesus' disciples stole His body from the tomb. In A.D. 100, Justin Martyr also wrote in his *Dialogue Against Trypho*, that Jesus' body had been stolen by His disciples. Dr. Schofield, a Jewish historian, has continued this ancient theory in his book *The Passover Plot*.

Jesus was resurrected.

There are two possible explanations for the empty tomb. Either Jesus was resurrected from the grave, or His body was stolen. It is easy to determine which choice is correct. How many people do you know who would be willing to suffer torture and death for a lie? That would be insane. There is nothing to be gained. Such a theory would require believing that a large group of people chose pain and death over comfort, family, and life to protect a lie. This does not make any sense. People will lie, cheat, and steal to save their lives but not to give up their lives. If the disciples had stolen Jesus' body and others did not see Jesus alive, then why would they be willing to suffer torture and to be killed? The theory of Jesus' body being stolen is preposterous. On the other hand, if the disciples did see Jesus alive after His resurrection, then they had nothing to fear from torture or death. Seeing Jesus would explain why they were willing to die. It was torture and death for truth! This makes a lot more sense than dying for a lie. Jesus' resurrection is the most plausible and rational explanation for the disciples' martyrdom.

The evidence for Jesus' resurrection validates His claims to be God and the testimonies of thousands of believers who claim to know that He is alive. Jesus is God and, therefore, the One we should look to for answers about life, purpose, and truth. It is His teachings that will guide us into truth.

Evidence for Inspiration of the Bible

Having established that there is a God and that Jesus Christ is God, the next question to answer is, “how does God reveal truth?” Finding the answer to this question is simplified by the fact that Jesus is God. Therefore, we need only look to the teachings of Jesus. Jesus is God; therefore, it is logical to search the writings that represent His teachings. The Bible is a collection of writings about the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

What is meant by inspired writings? Inspiration refers to the method by which God communicates to us in writing. He gave the inspired prophets the words to record in Holy Scripture. Though over forty men were used to write the books of the Bible, God was the sole author. The differences between the writers show up in their writings like an author using different pens.

The Bible claims to be inspired by God. This should not surprise us. Receiving an inspired text from God is reasonable. After all, Jesus is God, the Bible is a record of His life and teachings, and Jesus demonstrated by His life that He is interested in teaching us. It is logical to expect a preserved collection of Jesus’ writings.

The test of Biblical inspiration is finding evidence that suggests supernatural knowledge, prediction, and construction. There is evidence for all three tests.

Knowledge in the Bible transcends the time at which it was written. For example, Psalm 8:8 records that there are paths in the seas. These paths or river currents were not discovered until 2800 years after it was mentioned in the Bible. Ecclesiastes 1:6 describes the circuits of the winds from south to north and back again. Such knowledge was not known at the time of its writing. Psalm 102:26 describes the wearing away of the earth and skies. But this was contrary to the current thought at the time and up until 2500 years later. Genesis 15:5 mentions that the stars are innumerable, but until 3500 years later, it was thought that the

stars were countable. When concepts of the earth resting on pillars and foundations were in vogue, it was written in Job 26:7 that the earth was suspended on nothing. Four thousand years later, it was discovered that the Bible was right. The Bible contains information that was not known and even contrary to the popular opinion of the day. It is a book that was thousands of years ahead of its time. Such an attribute suggests supernatural authorship.

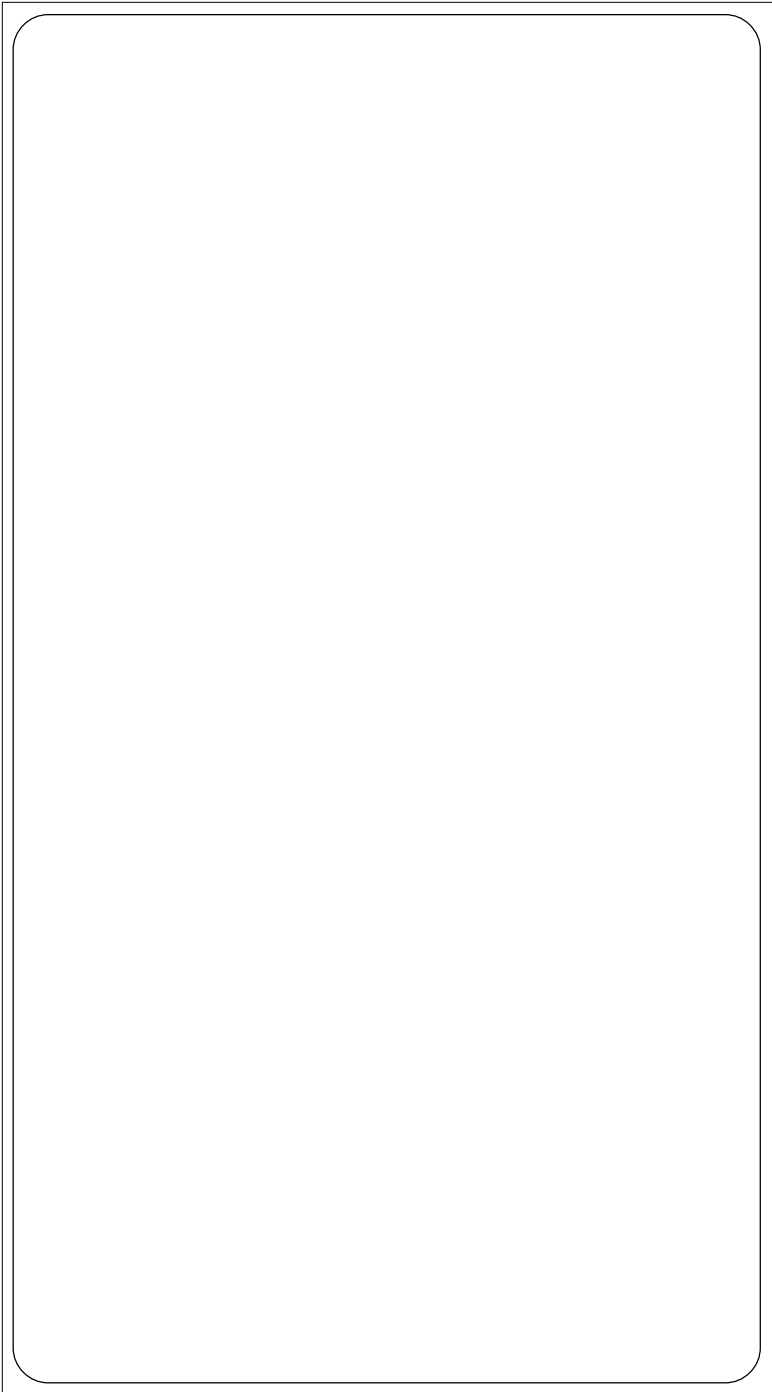
Another testimony to the divine authorship of the Bible are prophecies of the Messiah and future events. Mathematician and scientist Peter Stoner in his book *Science Speaks*, records over three hundred prophecies fulfilled by Jesus Christ including his birth place in Bethlehem; being a descendent of the Jewish patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; being a descendent of the Jewish King David; the killing of children after he was born; being a great teacher, healer, and showing signs of miracles; being tortured and killed; being pierced in His hands; being pierced in His side; darkness during His crucifixion; and His resurrection. Stoner calculated that fulfilling just eight of these prophecies would be a probability of one in 10^{17} . The probability of fulfilling forty-eight prophecies was calculated to be one in 10^{157} . These odds show that fulfilling the prophecies of the Bible requires supernatural knowledge and intervention. The American Scientific Affiliation commented on Stoner's calculations saying, "the mathematical analysis included is based upon principles of probability which are thoroughly sound and Professor Stoner has applied these principles in a proper and convincing way." Interestingly, the Bible prophesied over 2500 years ago that there would come a time when knowledge would be greatly increase, people would be traveling back and forth, and a world-wide government would be formed. Sounds a lot like the trend of today doesn't it?

The construction of the Bible also shows supernatural involvement. In 1994, three mathematicians from Hebrew University reported in *Statistical Science* a mathematical improbability in the book of Genesis dubbed equidistant-letter-sequencing or the Bible code. This is not to be confused with the hyped book written by journalist Michael Drosnin. Applying a technique similar to deciphering encrypted codes, the mathematicians demonstrated that the Hebrew text manifested code-like properties. The probability of finding three hundred word pairs was calculated to be one in fifty quadrillion chances. However, this was just the beginning of the discoveries. Sixty-six prominent Jewish rabbis were also found associated in code with their

birth dates and birth cities. When U.S. government cryptologist Harold Gans heard about the phenomenon, he was skeptical and tested the code for himself only to discover that the sixty-six names were also associated with their death dates. The odds of such findings is beyond chance occurrence but undeniable. Dr. David Kaxhdan, chairman of the Harvard University mathematics department, stated, “The phenomenon is real. What conclusion you reach from this is up to the individual.” Robert Kass, the editor of the *Statistical Science* Journal, wrote, “Our referees were baffled: their prior beliefs made them think the Book of Genesis could not possibly contain meaningful references to modern day individuals, yet when the authors carried out additional analysis and checks, the effect persisted. The paper is thus offered to Statistical Science readers as a challenging puzzle.” Other writings such as Tolstoy’s *War & Peace* and the Samaritan Hebrew Bible do not show the phenomenon. It is a unique, probability-defying phenomenon of the Jewish Bible.

As a whole, the Bible is a harmonious collection of sixty-six writings, involving over forty writers from all different walks of life, social positions, times in history, and geographical locations. Such difference among writers on such controversial topics is a remarkable demonstration of divine authorship. Finding forty people in similar living conditions rarely finds them in agreement. However, by inspiration, God guided the pens of the writers and produced a unique, harmonious, and phenomenal testimony of Holy Script. The evidence compels many to believe that the Bible is indeed, the Word of God. Do you believe that Jesus has preserved His teachings of truth in the Bible?

Answers for Skeptics



Compelling Evidence for Salvation

Having established that Jesus is God and that the Bible is His inspired teachings, it can be concluded that the Bible is the revelation of truth. It is the standard by which all things can be tested as true or false. It is also a source of insight that is not otherwise determinable by science or physical means. Most importantly, the Bible explains the need for and how to establish a relationship with God.

The first thing to understand about salvation is that God is righteous. The Bible says that God cannot tolerate sin, and He will not allow sin in heaven. This is why Revelation 21:27 says there will be no sin in heaven. But if there is no sin in heaven, how good do you have to be to live there? You would have to be as good as God! I do not know anyone that good, do you? Of course you do not, and for good reason.

The Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It also says that there is no one good or righteous. Everyone sins. You may have heard that if you do your best and are sincere in trying to do good, God will reward you. But the Bible says that all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in God's eyes. The standard of good works and sincere efforts is a lot different for us than for God. He uses a standard of perfection. By this standard, you are not qualified to go to heaven, no matter how hard you try. Considering the options, if you do not go to heaven, you will go to hell. This is a heavy and depressing thought, but it is Biblical teaching.

What is hell? The Bible says that it is a place reserved for those who reject God, deny His existence, and deny Jesus Christ as God the Savior. It is a place separated from heaven. It is a place where sinners are condemned forever. Romans 6:23 says, the wages of sin is death, and going to hell is spiritual death. It is a separation from God. You will still exist, but you will exist in the fires of hell. This is no place for you. But there is nothing you can do about. You need help!

Answers for Skeptics

God knows your dilemma and offers help. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Remember the wages of sin? It is death. What did Jesus do? He died. Not for Himself, but for you. By dying for you, he paid for your crimes (your sins). Why would He do that? For no other reason but love. He loves you, you needed help, and He was willing to help you. Does that make you feel thankful?

Jesus helps you by doing two things for you. First, He died to pay for sins making it possible for you to be forgiven. Second, He changes your nature (spiritually). The Bible calls this the born again experience. Physically you remain unchanged, but spiritually God changes you so that you can enter into heaven. This is a miracle birth that only God can do. No wonder it is impossible to get to heaven by trying to do your best. Your best could never be as good as God's best. This is why Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace are ye saved...."

What must you do to be saved? Accept His invitation to save you. He has done the work and is now offering you a gift of eternal life in heaven. Do you want it? Confess your sin and need for Him, and accept His invitation into heaven. By letting God save you, your salvation is guaranteed. This is why First John 5:13 says, "that you may know that you have eternal life."

For more information about being saved, about questions you have about the Bible, or about how to make the most of your Christian life, contact us. We offer personal training, small group Bible studies, and leadership training, church services.

Evidence for Creation

Many refuse to believe in God because they are convinced that evolution is a fact. What they do not realize is the claim that “evolution is a fact” refers to the mechanisms of change: mutation and natural selection. Because the word *evolution* means change, it is deceptively applied to include the General Theory of Evolution (origin of all things by natural properties from the universe to man), which is not a fact. What is the difference?

Evolutionists believe that change (mutation) is **unlimited** and that over long periods of time, many small changes result in significant differences among organisms. However, this prediction and interpretation of **unlimited** change fails under scientific scrutiny.

In laboratories, both industrial and academic, organisms have been subjected to accelerated mutational conditions. Without exception, generations after generations show that change is limited. How? No new kinds of organisms have been produced. The fruit fly is one of the most celebrated organisms in genetic studies and has been subjected to intense studies of mutation for decades. To date, fruit flies are still fruit flies. Recently, disappointed evolutionists have stated that the fruit fly has not and will not evolve into another kind of organism because it has reached a dead end in its phylogeny. In other words, the changes produced in the fruit fly are limited and will not produce new kinds of organisms. There are no examples of unlimited change in the laboratory. In place of evidence, evolutionists have only excuses to offer for the lack of evidence of unlimited change. For example, evolutionists argue that even under accelerated conditions of mutation, it is difficult to simulate thousands of years of change. This assertion cannot be demonstrated one way or another, and it is certainly not evidence, so it remains an excuse for the lack of evidence.

On the other hand, these results confirm the predictions of the creation science model for **limited** change within given populations of

organisms. The limitations of mutation and natural selection thus far demonstrated in the laboratories favor the creation science model. It is important to note that the creation model includes the facts of mutation and natural selection. It differs from the evolution model as to the degree of change that is possible: limited v. unlimited.

That brings us to the fossil record. Evolutionists parade in front of students choice fossils that supposedly document the evolution of one kind of organism into another. However, at best, these fossils are transitions within the limitations of a defined population (like the fruit fly) or, at worst, are *questionable* findings of missing links between major groups of organisms that even evolutionists debate. Harvard paleontologist Stephen Gould wrote,

“The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology. The evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches; the rest is inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils. All paleontologists know that the fossil record contains precious little in the way of intermediate forms; transitions between major groups are characteristically abrupt.” (Gould, Stephen, *The Panda’s Thumb*, New York: Norton, 1980, pp 181, 189).

Dr. Colin Patterson, senior paleontologist at the British Museum of Natural History, wrote, “I fully agree with your comments on the lack of direct illustration of evolutionary transitions in my book. If I knew of any, fossil or living, I would certainly have included them.... I will lay it on the line, there is not one such fossil for which one might make a watertight argument.” (Personal letter dated 10th April 1979 from Dr. Patterson to creationist Luther D. Sunderland.)

In other words, the fossil record shows nothing more than what can be demonstrated in the laboratory, namely that change is limited to a defined population. It is important that students be encouraged to question the fossil record and the claims that evolution is a fact rather than blindly and unquestioningly swallow whatever is fed to them in the classroom.

It is no wonder then that Mark Ridley of Oxford University wrote, “...no real evolutionist, whether gradualist or punctuationist, uses the fossil record as evidence in favor of the theory of evolution as opposed to special creation.” (Mark Ridley, “Who Doubts Evolution?” *NEW SCIENTIST*, 6/25/81, p.831).

There are evolutionists who dogmatically contend for the “obvious” observation of evolution in the fossil record; however, these are

fanatics blinded by emotion and irrational belief in evolution. When other evolutionists question the “obvious” observations of these fanatics, one is compelled to suspect the motives of the fanatics. Certainly this shows that they lack objectivity and that the “obvious” is in their mind and not in the fossil record. This is called delusion.

Delusion in evolution is prevalent. With regard to the evolution of life from molecules, almost every biology textbook I have seen includes the experiments of Stanley Miller and Sidney Fox. The experiments of these two men have been touted as the beginnings of creating life in the laboratory. Have you ever read the original publications? If you read it carefully, you will notice that the experiments demonstrate that cells cannot evolve from an ocean of molecules. I know this sounds radical to say because it is just the opposite of what the books claim, but this is an example of how delusion and fanaticism for evolution has crept into education. Miller designed an experiment to test the formation of amino acids in a simulation of early earth’s atmosphere. Following are the problems with this landmark experiment for evolution that are not mentioned in these “books of education.” First, both evolutionists and creationists reject the atmosphere Miller chose as representative of the early earth. Second, the experiment demonstrated that both right and left handed amino acids naturally formed. Yet living cells have only left handed amino acids. Third, the experiment produced formaldehyde. Formaldehyde reacts with amino acids and prevents the formation of protein chains. No protein chains means no evolution. Fourth, Miller built a cold trap into the experiment to prevent the destruction of the molecules that were formed. Does such an intelligently designed experiment simulate natural, haphazard conditions of early earth? Miller’s experiment shows that the evolution of cells cannot even get past the first step. Read Miller’s reports for yourself rather than accept your book’s fanatical conclusions. Miller’s report on his original experiment is in any University library. Ask your teacher questions about the validity of the interpretations and conclusions of the experiment and see for yourself if your teacher is a fanatic or perhaps just as ignorant as most about Miller’s original experiment.

Likewise, Sidney Fox supposedly showed the feasibility of the evolution of cells from molecules. However, just the opposite was shown. Read Fox’s publication, and you discover that he did not start with the products formed in the simulated early earth conditions of Miller’s experiment. Why? Because the chemistry of the products would not produce proteins. Instead, Fox began with a pure mixture of

Answers for Skeptics

left-handed amino acids. In addition, he discovered that the conditions to produce proteins required dry heat for not less than four hours and not more than six hours, followed by immediate immersion into hot water, and then immersion into cold water to preserve the proteins that formed. Does this sound like natural, haphazard conditions? Students who accept their books' conclusions of Miller's and Fox's experiments that evolution was demonstrated in the lab have been duped. Instead of following the gullible crowd, you should ask questions and think about what you are reading. Any teacher who says that evolution is a fact is a fanatical extremist and untrustworthy with information.

If you read the previous chapter on the evidence for the existence of God, you will notice that the creation model has a solid foundation to establish itself. The evidence leads to the conclusion that God created the universe. It is not surprising, then, that evidence supports the creation origins of life as well. For example, biochemist Harold Morowitz wrote in his book *Energy Flow in Biology* that the probability of even the smallest theoretical cell evolving is 1:10 to the 340,000,000 power. This number shows that evolution of life from molecules is impossible. The mathematical number for impossibility is 10^{30} . No wonder evolutionists cannot demonstrate evolution of molecules into cells even with the most sophisticated equipment and intelligently controlled experiments. It is impossible. The necessity for the creation of the universe and the creation of life leads one to logically conclude and predict that organisms were created as defined populations. The gaps in the fossil record and the general isolation of organism kinds support this prediction. The creation model is, indeed, a model of scientific credibility.

The Philosophy of God's Existence

It is impossible to prove that God does not exist. Thus, one is forced to concede, at least, that there may be a God. Atheism is intellectually void of reason and thus dishonest. Nonetheless, there are many attempts to disprove God's existence, and many simple-minded people have been duped into rejecting God. However, there are answers to atheistic arguments.

Consider the following common questions that puzzle people. A common, silly argument asks, "If God can do anything, can He create a rock that He cannot lift?" This question is designed to play, not to engage the serious mind in a search for truth. Such questions are designed to define God into logically impossible conditions, and are nothing more than toys for the mind. Is there anything God cannot do? Yes. There are many things God cannot do. The Bible says that it is impossible for God to lie. God does not have to do "everything" to be God. He is not defined by humans. Instead, He defines the human mind.

The following questions are often used as reasons to question God's existence. However, such questions have nothing to do with God's existence. These are questions about God's motives, about why God does things the way He does. Agreeing or disagreeing with why or how God does things has no more affect on His existence than does your agreeing or disagreeing with me affect my existence. To the contrary, the following questions presuppose His existence.

How can a loving God allow pain and misery in the world? Pain and misery are the consequences of sin. God allows us to experience the consequences of sin to show us how bad it is. Out of love, He reaches out to us to deliver us from our sin. Out of mercy, He offers forgiveness in spite of our rebellion and rejection of Him. It would be unloving and unmerciful of God to deny us the experience of the horrors of sin. If in the midst of sin and suffering, we deny God and blame Him for our troubles, how much more we would use the excuse that we do not need God because there are no problems and no pain associated with our sins. In fact, most people would deny that there is sin if there were no pain.

Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people? There are no good people in the world. Some are better and kinder than others. But the Bible says that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23). For this reason, every person regardless of age, religion, sex, etc., are subjected to the same hardships that are common to everyone (First Corinthians 10:13).

Why does God allow innocent victims and babies to suffer at the hands of bad people? Such inflicted misery is the result of sin. God allows such events to occur to demonstrate to us that sin touches every life, shows no mercy, and has no favorites. The blame for such misery belongs to criminals, but the responsibility for suffering belongs to all of us because we are all guilty of sin. Every time we sin, we are accepting the guilt and the consequences of sin. Sin is horrible and atrocious.

If God is just and omnipotent, why does He allow injustice to occur? God allows injustice and all sins to happen to teach us to be outraged by sin. We are wrong to blame God for our suffering, outrage, and injustice. Every time we choose to sin, we are rejecting the kind of world God wants to give us. We have no one to blame but ourselves. Next time you sin, remember that you have chosen not to live by God’s laws and therefore have forsaken the peace and security of life He offers. You have chosen to live in a world where everyone else chooses to live by their own rules—a world of rebellion, pain, and sorrow.

There are many more questions that could be answered; however, these are sufficient to make the point that you can find reasonable answers and truth if you are honest and diligent enough to seek answers. God invites you to consider His message saying, “Come let us reason together.” If this invitation surprises, you should reconsider your conclusions about Him. God is not afraid of reason. It is a part of good religion. He is the one who created the ability to reason, because it will lead to Him.

Answers for Skeptics

Patrick R. Briney, Ph.D.
prbriney@altavista.net
<http://www.uark.edu/~bapcoll>

Mission Boulevard Baptist Church
2006 Mission Boulevard
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701
501-442-2565