



SHORT ANSWERS TO BIG QUESTIONS

EVOLUTION



The Theory of Evolution can be divided into two parts; micro-evolution and macro-evolution. Micro-evolution deals with small changes within a species adapting it to be better suited to its environment. This process is well supported with evidence and doesn't conflict with a Christian understanding of reality. Macro-evolution claims that through major genetic mutations one species can evolve into another, so over a long period of time fish could evolve into insects, birds and mammals. From this concept it's suggested that all life could have evolved from simple chemical structures, thus life could have resulted from natural processes without the need for a creator.

Macro-evolution is highly contentious and its more extreme interpretations challenge conventional Christian thinking. It's sometimes suggested that God chose to create life through evolution and some Christians take this view. However, there's a growing body of both scientific and philosophical evidence that challenges macro-evolution. This article very briefly surveys that evidence.

ORIGIN OF LIFE

Firstly, there's the question of how life itself originally got started. The theory of macro-evolution suggests how to develop from one species to another, but it can't explain how to jump from no life to life or from unconsciousness to consciousness. Some scientists use the expression 'primordial soup'. Roughly translated this means we haven't got a clue!

There are two questions in this area that macro-evolution can't answer. Firstly, the DNA strands which store the genetic code for living beings are extremely complex even for the most basic forms of life. Where did the original injection of the genetic information for life come from?

The second question centres around an issue termed irreducible complexity. Even in the simplest life forms there are a number of different and complex components which must all be in place for life to occur. Take any of the components away and you no longer have life. The building blocks of living beings are complex and are not independent. How can these components have been assembled separately apart from pre-existent life?

THE MISSING LINK

A second serious challenge to macro-evolution is the fossil record. The theory suggests that through genetic mutations over a long period of time, species gradually evolve into new species. If this were the case, you'd expect to find a spectrum of species within the fossil record at different stages of evolution. However, the fossil records do not show life evolving from one species to another.





On the contrary, there's a notable absence of fossils of species at intermediate stages of evolution. Further, there aren't obvious intermediate species around today. The lack of evidence for transition between species is known as the Missing Links.

POSITIVE MUTATIONS

In macro-evolution species are transformed by 'positive mutations' which benefit the species. In reality, 98% of mutations are fatal. This greatly increases the length of time required for macro-evolution to take place and in itself makes macro-evolution highly improbable.

GEOLOGY AND THE AGE OF THE EARTH

Macro-evolution is a very slow process with random mutations taking place and becoming established over long periods of time. From developments in Geology and Earth Sciences, the window of history where conditions suitable for evolution have existed has become shorter and shorter. Many interpretations of macro-evolution have been abandoned as the time available for species to evolve was not long enough to account for the diversity of life we see.

CONCLUSION

Whilst micro-evolution is widely accepted, the question of macro-evolution continues to be hotly debated. Over the last fifteen years the tide of scientific opinion has been turning against the evolutionists. The complexity and apparent design of life has defied a purely naturalistic explanation and the problem of how life started remains unanswered by the evolutionists.

In addition to the huge practical and theoretical difficulties associated with macro-evolution, the physical evidence presented by DNA code and the fossil record has not supported the theory. The available evidence seems to be pointing to the separateness of different species.

As the case for all life evolving from simple cell structures is looking less and less convincing, alternative explanations are needed. Science rests heavily on the principle of cause and effect. To account for the diversity of life on Earth, an adequate cause is required. Many in the scientific world are beginning to seriously consider the case for intelligent design in the universe. The consistent Christian claim of history is that the intelligent designer and sustainer of the universe is the God of the Bible.

