

Adam, Evolution and Intelligent Design – brief summary of main points

Purpose: Engage Catholics in the “Great Debate” over creation and the origin of man. Strengthen faith in the process.

1. The Church teaches in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) that Adam and Eve were real parents of all mankind who were created with the preternatural gifts until they committed the original sin which brought punishment on mankind. The CCC also affirms the historical value of Genesis though with figurative language.
2. Yet it is quite common for the reality of Adam and the creation doctrines to be denied in Catholic settings.
3. Though Catholics often hear that evolution is “not a problem for Catholics”, loss of faith in the authority of scripture and the attacks of the “new atheists” show that it clearly is.
4. The Catholic Church rejects the Darwinian principle that man is the result of an unguided random process saying that kind of an evolutionary mechanism “simply cannot exist”.
5. Scientific insiders admit that the small steps of the Darwinian mechanism (mutation) cannot add up to the change we see in nature. Yet this is not the story presented in textbooks.
6. Darwin said in the *Origin of the Species* (p.158) that: “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down. But I can find out no such case.” This is where evolution is today – broken.
7. Microevolution is adaptation where the genetic information already exists and natural selection is observed in nature. Macroevolution however, has never been observed and the evidence is mounting that evolution does not have the power to create new creatures while even Richard Dawkins admits no one knows how life began.
8. Intelligent Design (ID) theory – when we look at the evidence in nature, the existence of an intelligent designer is the best scientific theory for the origin of the specified information we see there. Atheists cannot accept ID as the designer it affirms is obviously the God they deny.
9. Many books and other publications have developed the intelligent design thesis. Four books were discussed.
10. Dr. Michael Behe from Lehigh University uses the mouse trap to develop the concept of irreducible complexity. This means that all the parts need to be present in order for the mechanism to work. They all had to be there from the beginning. Bacterial flagellum, the eye and blood clotting are common examples.
11. The majority of Americans always reject evolution as the explanation for the origin of life – unique in the west.
12. This may be because they see design in nature everywhere. From the metamorphosis of butterflies to the lung fish, people see that random chance could not begin to explain what we see.
13. The genome (DNA) is large and packed with information and the workings of the cell have breathtaking complexity. There are 3 billion nucleotide pairs and the information would fill 2000 large phone books.
14. The molecular machinery in the cell is simply amazing. The transcription process to copy DNA to RNA is beyond what evolution has the power to “create” – this is designed machinery.
15. We have a chicken and egg problem with proteins – DNA transcribes RNA which builds the proteins but proteins are needed to start the transcription process. Which came first and how?
16. There are over a hundred thousand proteins (textbooks say 20,000) and they need to be folded perfectly to work with other proteins - highly improbable. The cell provides a quality control system to test for proper folding.
17. The DNA is similar to computer code. Where does the specified information in the genome come from? Evolution if true has to demonstrate a mechanism to add information to the genome. It has failed to do so.
18. Two strong arguments for the theory of intelligent design are irreducible complexity of biological functions and structures and secondly the idea that complex specified information can only come from an intelligence.
19. Something like a minimum of 1000 genes are necessary for life to exist but likely more, therefore, how could life have begun? No one knows!
20. Dog breeds are an example of microevolution from information that already exists. We want to know where new information comes from if evolution is true. The mutation small-change mechanism does not work.
21. Many point mutations (individual nucleotide changes) are needed to give new functionality to a creature.
22. *The Edge of Evolution*, Dr. Michael Behe, 2007.
 - a. The malaria parasite is a great example of natural selection and microevolution operative in nature.

- b. Sickle cell disease is common where malaria thrives.
 - c. This genetic mutation allows humans to fight off malaria due to the deformity it causes in the red blood cells.
 - d. The drug chloroquine was effective against malaria for 40 years, all other drugs worked only one year.
 - e. The malaria parasite needed two mutations in its genome at the right place at the right time to fend off chloroquine. All the other drugs only needed 1 mutation which is made possible due to the fast production of new generations of parasites, “errors” in each transcription and the trillions produced in each person affected.
 - f. Both the malaria parasite mutations and sickle cell in humans are loss of information mutations. In these cases, breaking genes had a positive effect. This is how evolution works in nature – breaking things, not making things.
 - g. For humans to produce a double mutation in the right place at the right time, there is a miniscule probability that man could do this one time in 10 million years due to the low reproduction rate of man compared to microbes.
23. It is not possible for a chimp to mutate into a man in 6 million years as evolutionists tell us today. Millions and millions of point mutations would have to be beneficial and selected into the genome. The commonly heard statement that the genome of chimps and man are only 1% different is not true. It is less than 70% in the Y-chromosome alone. The 1% myth came from studying only selected and “conserved” protein coding genes.
24. *Genetic Entropy* – Dr. John Sanford, 2008, 3rd edition.
- a. Evidence for genetic degeneration is overwhelming.
 - b. Primary axiom of biology does not work – mutations are bad, selection fails systematically and adaptations are superficial.
 - c. There are now over 6000 known genetic diseases in humans.
 - d. Neutral and positive mutations are invisible and not selectable – can’t be added to all genomes.
 - e. On average, it takes 12 million years to fix just one beneficial mutation if the total population is only 10,000 people. This is a huge problem where millions of complex mutations are required.
 - f. Computer simulation by Mendel’s Accountant software shows the accumulation of negative mutations and loss of fitness quickly - in short, genetic entropy or chaos in the genome.
 - g. Darwin’s power to explain the origin of our exploding knowledge of biological systems has collapsed.
25. We see design in nature everywhere. Science has no consensus on a new mechanism for evolution as the Darwinian mechanism fades. Special creation of humans and all life is the only alternative to macroevolution.
26. The majority of Americans reject evolution as the best explanation for the origin of life but the majority of Catholics (58%) accept it and young Catholics (18 to 29) even more so (68%). Mass attendance of Catholics follows this trend – the more that believe the claims of evolution theory, the fewer who go to weekly Mass.
27. What should we do? Teach the controversy in science class and Catholic creation theology in theology class. Benedict XVI agrees and so do 78% of the American people. In Catholic schools, teach ID itself as a theory.

Books: For a complete picture of ID, read *Discovering Intelligent Design* by Casey Luskin, 2013. (There are many others) *Darwin’s Black Box*, 1996, & *The Edge of Evolution*, 2007, Michael Behe. *Genetic Entropy*, John Sanford, 2008. *Signature in the Cell*, 2009 – excellent summary of all the issues around intelligent design; and *Darwin’s Doubt*, Stephen Meyer, 2013 – Neo-Darwinian evolution has been found untenable by evolutionary biologists themselves. *Icons of Evolution*, Jonathan Wells, 2000. Discusses and debunks 10 of the most common arguments for evolution. *God and Evolution*, Jay Richards editor, 2010. Addresses objections to ID in Christian circles – excellent - a favorite. *The Myth of Junk DNA*, Jonathan Wells, 2011. A rebuttal to the thinking that excess DNA is leftover from evolution. *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?* C. John Collins, 2011. Biblical scholarship showing that Jesus and Paul believed Adam to be historical. Uncertainties do not undermine our right to hold fast to the Biblical story line with full confidence

Magazines

Salvo, The Fellowship of St. James, a punchy magazine for young adults with a section on ID in each issue.

Websites

Intelligent Design can be found at the Discovery Institute <http://discovery.org/csc/> and their satellite http://www.evolutionnews.org/intelligent_design/ Note especially their DVD videos.

And there are many other books, articles and web based resources.