

EVIDENCE  
*for*  
HOPE



EVIDENCE  
*for*  
HOPE

*Answers to  
Challenging  
Questions About  
the Christian Faith*

ROBERT  
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## INTRODUCTION



As I was growing up, in my teen years and early twenties, I had a basic belief in Christianity, but life was too busy to take time to think about whether it was all that important to live a serious Christian life. In my later twenties I became more serious about my faith, and I wanted to know more about the evidence behind it. I was hungry for more than just believing what I had been taught.

I began studying numerous books about the truth of Christianity. All were lengthy, because they went into great detail and covered many areas. It wasn't long before I realized just how much evidence there was, which greatly strengthened my faith by giving me confidence that what I believed was really the truth.

A result of this faith building process was a desire to boil all the information down and write a condensed book that would present highlights of the “evidence for hope” quickly and logically. Because of my analytical thinking style, I wanted to limit the content to the scientific, historical, and eyewitness evidence that what the Bible teaches is true. This is the type of evidence that you can take to court with you and argue before a judge and jury.

I wanted my book to be quick and easy to read, so I thought humorously about naming it like the “for Dummies” books and titling

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it *Christianity for Dummies*. Seriously though, *Evidence for Hope* is the exact opposite of that. This book is really an overview of Christianity for those who want to objectively study the evidence and think it through to a conclusion.

I hope that the evidence presented here will either begin or continue a process of faith building for you, as it did for me.

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### THE UNIVERSE: CHANCE OR DESIGN?

To the casual observer of the earth, solar system, and universe, it might seem plausible that it all came about by chance. In recent years however, scientists have discovered dozens of examples, which together produce an amazing amount of evidence that our universe was intricately designed. It is possible that one of these could have occurred by chance, but when all of them are considered together, the evidence of a Designer is obvious. Here are just some of these examples:

1. The ratio of electron to proton mass: If it were smaller or larger, there would be insufficient chemical bonding.<sup>1</sup>
2. The rate of expansion of the universe: If the rate were greater, there would have been no galaxy formation. If the rate were less, the universe would have collapsed after the Big Bang, before stars were able to form.<sup>2</sup> (The Big Bang is a popular theory of how the universe began.)
3. The amount of earth's gravity: If gravity were stronger, our atmosphere would retain too much ammonia and methane.

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If gravity were weaker, our atmosphere would lose too much water.<sup>3</sup>

4. The tilt of earth's axis: It is tilted at twenty-three degrees. If it were tilted any more or less, life could not exist, because surface temperatures would be too high.<sup>4</sup>
5. The moon's size and distance from earth: The moon's gravitational pull creates our ocean's tides, providing oxygen to the water and a daily cleansing of our harbors and shores. If gravitational effects from the moon were greater, these tidal effects would be too severe. In addition, its effects on our atmosphere and rotational period would be too severe. If gravitational forces were less, the earth's climate would be less stable. Plus, without the moon's gravitational pull, tides would not exist, and there would be less movement of nutrients between oceans and land.<sup>5</sup>
6. The level of water vapor in the atmosphere: If there were more, we'd have a runaway greenhouse effect. If there were less, there wouldn't be enough rainfall to support life.<sup>6</sup>
7. The ozone level in the atmosphere: If it were greater, there would be reduced plant growth and vitamin production in animals, and the quantity of life-essential gases in the lower atmosphere would be upset. If there were less ozone, temperatures would be too high, and there would be too much ultraviolet radiation.<sup>7</sup>
8. The size of Jupiter: If it were larger, Earth's orbit would become unstable. If it were smaller, there would be too many asteroid and comet collisions here on earth.<sup>8</sup>

These are just a few samples of the evidence that there is a Designer who finely-tuned our planet, solar system, and universe. There are many similar examples that can be studied in a number of books, some of which are listed in the Resources section.

## EVOLUTION OR CREATION?

Did life on earth evolve by chance, or was it created? Supporters of the theory of evolution say that life on earth happened without the

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assistance of a god. Supporters of the creation theory assert that God created all life on earth, and evolution from one species to another did not occur.

It is important to note that the theory of evolution is exactly that: *a theory*. It is not a law, contrary to what some are saying. Laws of nature are reproducible. For instance, you can demonstrate the law of gravity by dropping something, and it will fall. As you hear arguments on both sides of the creation vs. evolution debate, keep in mind that they are both theories, and they each need evidence for support.

Here are some of the reasons why the theory of evolution is weak:

### **Mutations are generally harmful**

Evolutionists say that over millions of years, all living things evolved to be what we see today. For any life form to change, there must be a genetic mutation that spreads throughout that life form. However, mutations are usually harmful, not helpful, to a species. For example, there are mutant flies with deformed wings and people with Down syndrome, albinism, and dwarfism. Also, the second law of thermodynamics says that in all processes, the disorder of a system and its surroundings increases over time. This law supports the creation theory.

### **Insufficient evidence to support macroevolution**

Macroevolution is defined as one species transitioning into another due to a series of genetic mutations. However, there are hundreds of millions of fossils in the world's museums today, and we still don't have the proof needed to support this theory. Displays in science museums and drawings in biology textbooks contain *assumptions* that species evolved into others, but when the evidence is examined in detail, it is found that there is no proof of transition in the fossil record—there is only supposition. As a result, considering the huge number of fossils in our museums, evolutionists should be disheartened by the lack of true transition fossils.

A major point to mention is that there's no dispute that we have many examples of *microevolution*, or changes *within* species. For example, dogs have many breeds, finches have various types of beaks, and humans have multiple races.

But why are there not any major mutations within even a small percentage of any species' populations today? There are no examples of partially evolved internal organs changing into completed ones. There are no animals halfway between one form and another or with an appendage hanging out that isn't used any longer. There are no fish starting to grow feet or feathers (an essential step in the theory of evolution). Where are the examples of species that are currently in the process of evolving into others?

Evolutionists, however, believe there are some examples. Below are a number of commonly cited examples of species-to-species transition and what they really seem to be:

The walking catfish is a popular example of a possible current-day transition species. It has spiny pectoral fins (not boned legs) that allow it to crawl out of the water. Another example is the northern snakehead, which can flop up on land for a short time. Neither of these fish have lungs—they must remain moist while on land and they must return to water after a short time. The evolutionary steps necessary for them to survive as land-based creatures would be to develop legs and lungs and to change their exterior body quality so they wouldn't need to keep moist. More importantly, *all this would need to happen at the same time* in order for them to survive on land.

Another popular example that evolutionists cite is the archaeopteryx fossil, thought to be the reptile to bird transition. However, fossils really show that this creature actually had all the characteristics of a bird and was not part bird and part reptile. Further, other birds' fossils have been found in the same and earlier strata, so it's clear that not all birds stem from this one—this was not the first bird.<sup>9</sup>

Then, there is the ambuloctetus fossil, often called the “whale with feet” by evolutionists who assert that whales evolved from a land mammal. However, as in so many other situations, when you dig for the whole story, you find that there are not enough bones of ambuloctetus fossils to really know how they moved about. In addition, evolutionists' dating methods have placed this creature in more recent times, so ambuloctetus is unlikely to be a walking ancestor of whales.<sup>10</sup>

There are two more examples that evolutionists often use. First, the human embryo is said to go through stages in which it has gill slits, a tail, and a yolk sac. It is true that at an early stage of development

the human fetus does have certain folds, which resemble those found in a fish embryo. As they develop, however, the resemblance stops. In the fish, the folds develop into gills, but in the human, they develop into the glands and structures in the ear and neck areas. If humans were related to fish, it would be expected that the human embryo's "gills" would instead grow into the lungs, trachea, and mouth. The embryonic human "tail" is really the developing coccyx, or tailbone, an important, fully human feature. Finally, what people call the yolk sac is not a source of nourishment as in a bird egg, but it is the source of the embryo's first blood cells. Therefore, all features in the human embryo are uniquely human.

Last in our list of evolutionists' commonly used examples is the horse. In many biology books the evolution of horses has been featured, because it seems to be one of the best examples to support evolutionary theory. In recent decades however, the theorized "tree of horse evolution" has been abandoned in many professional circles, due to a number of problems. First, the fossil record is quite incomplete, and full sets of bones are rare. In addition, many horse fossils are scattered throughout the world, so the varieties of horses wouldn't have been able to mingle, procreate, and evolve.<sup>11</sup> Similar to other macroevolution examples, when one examines horse evolution in textbooks and museums, then removes all the steps that are theorized, it is found that there are no known connecting links. Consider what these scientists have stated about horse evolution: Biologist Heribert-Nilsson said, "The family tree of the horse is beautiful and continuous only in textbooks." The famous paleontologist Niles Eldredge said the textbook depiction of horse evolution was "lamentable" and "a classic case of paleontologic museology." Walter Barnhart wrote that what's currently shown as the horse evolutionary line is an interpretation of data, and different evolutionists have come up with different evolutionary lines. Evolutionist Gerald Kerkut wrote that early evolutionists noted in their drawings where steps were missing, but more recent evolutionists have not been so careful, and they "filled in the blanks" when they didn't have data. Another important point to note is that according to evolutionists, the ancestor fossils should be separated from more current fossils by millions of years, but we find the ancestors in the same strata as modern horse fossils, so they really lived at the same time.<sup>12</sup>

In summary, you can see that there are many problems with the theory of horse evolution, and evidence is not nearly as conclusive as many evolution proponents are depicting.

Let's look now at some species that were around during earth's early history and are still around today. The first example is the coelacanth: Based on fossil evidence, this ancient fish has survived with no known evolutionary changes for what some have estimated to be four hundred million years. Similarly, there's the nautilus, another ocean creature; estimates are that its DNA hasn't changed in six hundred million years. Other examples of extremely old fossils that have been found are the opossum and horseshoe crab, which have survived to current times and, as far as we can tell, have not undergone any evolutionary changes.<sup>13</sup> Why haven't these species undergone evolution? When we can take modern day examples and trace them back to ancient times with no major changes, this is yet another piece of evidence that macroevolution didn't take place.

Have these species really been around for hundreds of millions of years? Exactly how old is the earth? One of the prerequisites of the theory of evolution is that the earth must be a few billion years old for all of the mutations to take place to form all the kingdoms and species. There is another theory about the age of the earth that says the earth is only about six thousand or ten thousand years old. The "old earth–new earth" debate is not a subject for this book, but under the new earth theory, evolution from primordial soup to what we see today cannot even be considered, due to a lack of time. The point here is that we are not even certain of the age of the earth. There are many arguments for each theory, and again, it's not the intention of this book to argue either side. If you are interested in further study, there is a lot of material about this debate in other books and on the Internet.

This section has argued that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that macroevolution happens. No matter how evolution's proponents have presented their arguments, current knowledge about the walking catfish, the snakehead, the archaeopteryx, the ambulocetus, and the horse does not support macroevolution. Instead, they are simply some of the many examples of the tremendous variety and complexity that God has created, as further evidence of His existence.

## Different kingdoms and species

Another argument against evolution asks these questions: If all organisms came from one common ancestor, why is there not just one chain of life? Why are there different kingdoms and species that cannot reproduce with one another? Reproduction between species is not possible, as far as we know.

## Sudden appearance of fossils

How do evolutionists explain the sudden appearance in the fossil record of so many varied species in the “Cambrian Explosion” period of earth’s history? No fossils are found to predate them—their supposed ancestors cannot be found. Could this sudden variety of life have been a creation event?

## Ape-men, and what they really were

Another major claim of the theory of evolution is that monkeys evolved into humans. When further investigated, each example of this theory developed problems. Below are some famous ape-to-human examples, and what they later turned out to be:

1. Nebraska man, found in 1922: The discovery of just one tooth generated much excitement among evolutionists, who jumped to the conclusion that they had found one of our ancestors. In 1928, the tooth was proven to be a pig’s.<sup>14</sup>
2. Java man was later proven by his own discoverer not to be a pre-human, but a giant gibbon (an ape). There was a lot of hype for some time over a skull cap, three teeth, and a single leg bone!<sup>15</sup>
3. Piltdown man, discovered in 1912, was proven to be a hoax in 1953.<sup>16</sup>
4. Peking man was later proven to be a monkey.<sup>17</sup>
5. In 1848, Neanderthal man was discovered. He generated lots of excitement among evolutionists, as he was thought to be our ancestor. Then, in 1947, it was proven that he was not man’s ancestor, but was *Homo sapiens*—a man.<sup>18</sup>

6. Those of us who grew up in the 1960s and 1970s were taught that our common ancestor was *Australopithecus africanus*. “Lucy” was a famous example. Today, this ape is no longer considered to be an ancestor of man.<sup>19</sup>

All of these examples follow a familiar pattern: First there is the discovery of a little bit of evidence, followed by a leap to an exciting conclusion, followed by the conclusion being disproved upon further study.

Finally, there is another argument against the alleged monkey to human link: Why doesn't human blood resemble monkey blood? In fact, our blood more closely resembles pig blood.

## Life is too complex

1. Is it possible that cells evolved?

Cells can be described as one of the building blocks of life. When Charles Darwin wrote about cells, he called them “simple.”<sup>20</sup> The science of that day could not tell him how incorrect he was. When studied with today's technology, it becomes clear that cells are extremely complex, full of chemical reactions and activity. Each cell has so much activity going on inside that it resembles a small city.

Here are a few examples of how complex cells really are:

Some probability experts estimated the length of time it would take for the smallest living cell to evolve. They said that even if you accelerated the rate of binding together of all of earth's amino acids, it would take an estimated  $1 \times 10^{19,000}$  years. The paper needed to write that number would fill the universe!<sup>21</sup> Similarly, molecular biophysicist Harold Morowitz calculated the chances of a soup of amino acids becoming even the simplest living cell. He said that if you took the simplest cell and broke every chemical bond, the odds that it would reassemble are around 1 in  $10^{100,000,000,000}$ .<sup>22</sup>

For amino acids to be arranged correctly in one of the most simple proteins (the hormone vasopressin) is a one in forty thousand chance.<sup>23</sup> Again, that was a simple protein. Insulin is a somewhat more complex protein. Isaac Asimov estimated that there are 8,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 (that's twenty-seven zeroes)

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different possible amino acid combinations that could make up an insulin-like protein. In order to get just the one that the human body needs, if all these combinations were tried one per second, you'd need to wait ten billion times the currently supposed age of the universe before trying them all!<sup>24</sup> Asimov also estimated that for another more complex protein, hemoglobin, the chances of getting all the amino acids in their correct places are one in 135 followed by 165 zeros. That's a larger number than an estimate of all the atoms in the universe!<sup>25</sup> Isaac Asimov was an atheist, so he most certainly didn't have any incentive to inflate these figures in order to support creation theory.

Another example of complexity is the DNA molecule, found within each cell. The space needed to write down the *billions* of codes in DNA would fill many books. It is important to know that *every code needs to be correct, and in its proper place, in order to facilitate life*. There is also a fascinating relationship between DNA and protein molecules: Proteins are designed and coded by DNA. However, DNA molecules depend on those same protein molecules *for* their production. Given this "mutual" relationship, how could one originate without the other?

All of the above is going on within cells that Darwin called "simple." For life to continue, each level of the structure of a cell is dependent on the level it's comprised of. A study of all the levels combined reveals such complexity that the chance that we evolved is simply too remote to consider seriously.

### 2. Complexity in life's processes:

As the science of molecular biology has grown, it has greatly increased the evidence for an intelligent Designer. Here's one example, the complex molecular process for vision:

When light first strikes the retina, a photon interacts with a molecule called 11-cis retinal, which rearranges within picoseconds to trans-retinal. (A picosecond is about the time it takes light to travel the breadth of a single human hair.) The change in the shape of the retinal molecule forces a change in the shape of the protein, rhodopsin, to which the retinal is tightly bound. The protein's metamorphosis alters its behavior. Now called metarhodopsin II, the protein sticks to another protein, called transducin. Before bumping into

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metarhodopsin II, transducin had tightly bound a small molecule called GDP. But when transducin interacts with metarhodopsin II, the GDP falls off, and a molecule called GTP binds to transducin.<sup>26</sup>

You probably will not understand all of this unless you are a molecular biologist, but the point here is that these processes are *irreducibly complex*. That means that they are made up of many parts, interacting in complex ways, and in order to function, *all* the parts need to work together properly. Any single part has no useful function unless all other parts are present.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, I believe there is no way that evolution could build such a process one step at a time.

Next, think for a moment about how the eye came into existence. How did evolution “know” there was something to see? And why don’t we just have one eye? Instead, we have two eyes on a horizontal plane, for distance determination. Even more amazing, in the dark, the eye can increase its ability to see by one hundred thousand times,<sup>28</sup> and it has automatic aiming, focus, and aperture adjustment. There are 124 million rod-shaped cells to determine light and dark, and 6 million cone-shaped cells to determine millions of different colors.

Another great example of complexity of design is the process of wound healing. After you cut yourself, there are four general responses of the body that take place: coagulation, inflammation, regeneration, and maturation. Each step below has been simplified to keep this fairly brief, but as you read it, keep in mind how incredibly well designed this process is:

- a) When you bleed, platelets gather to form a clot, which is reinforced by red blood cells and fibrin. The clot then dehydrates and forms a crust that serves as a protective seal over the wound.
- b) Next, there is an inflammation of the area, which raises the temperature and kills bacteria. The injured tissue releases histamine, serotonin, and bradykinin, which causes expansion of the size of local blood vessels (vasodilation), the result of which is extra heat to the area. Capillary fluids flow into the tissue area, causing swelling, pain, and possible impairment of the area. Finally, neutrofilis and monocytes migrate to the

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- area to ingest bacteria and debris and release enzymes, which causes drainage.
- c) In the next step, new tissue is generated and reconstruction begins. Endothelial cells at the wound edges *form new capillaries, which migrate across the dermis and connect with other capillaries* (author's note: That is amazing!). Blood flow is reestablished to the area, providing nutrients for the healing process and the formation of granulation tissue.
  - d) In the maturation phase, the scar area is structurally reorganized several times, which maximizes its strength.<sup>29</sup>

Can you imagine how all of this could evolve? The processes of vision and wound healing are amazingly well designed and incredibly complex.

Now, what about the human brain? All the modern computers in the world can't match the computing power of the human brain, with its ten thousand miles of fibers and trillions of cells. An expanded study of the entire central nervous system would reveal so much more fascinating evidence that we were fashioned by a higher power: God.

To conclude this section on life processes, consider what goes on during reproduction. There's the monthly egg migration. (How did eggs "learn" just where to stop?) Then, as soon as a sperm penetrates the egg, the egg's exterior changes to prevent other sperm from following. There are many other incredible steps to reproduction that you can read about in any biology book—it's an extremely complex and interesting process. Keep in mind that throughout all life on earth, *innumerable* things must go correctly in order for life to continue.

### 3. Complexity in the animal kingdom:

Every creature, from insects to man, exhibits clear evidence of our creative Designer. Here are just a few examples of insects and animals whose designs point to the existence of God:

The bombardier beetle—when this little insect is threatened or attacked, it fires a mixture of boiling hot toxic chemicals from its posterior, towards its attacker. Similarly, the millipede, when attacked, mixes the contents of two glands, which creates hydrogen cyanide gas, and the mixture is excreted against the attacker.

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The giraffe's heart is one of the most powerful in the animal kingdom, because it requires twice the normal pressure to get blood up to the brain. The jugular vein, carrying blood away from the brain, has a one-way check valve, which closes as the head is lowered to take a drink. Without this valve, the back pressure would be too much for the brain. The carotid artery, which carries blood to the brain, ends at the brain at a spongy network, which absorbs the extra pressure from the heart when the head is down.

The echolocation (sonar) of bats, dolphins, and whales is better than anything that has been developed to-date by man. Scientists still don't understand it fully.

Yellow-tailed goat fish are often bothered by infestations of parasites in their scales and gills. To get a cleaning, they go to a coral reef, blush a bright red, and angel fish come out to eat the parasites. When not blushing red, yellow-tailed goat fish will eat angel fish.

I could go on and on; nature around us is *filled* with examples like this. The amazing life processes, from DNA molecules, to proteins, to cells, and up through the animal kingdom, provide so much evidence of a Creator who designed life with beautiful and incredible complexity and variation. Add to this all the scientific knowledge about fossils and the fossil evidence that's missing, and I seriously think it takes much more "faith" to be an evolutionist than a creationist!

### A HIDDEN RELIGION?

Given all the evidence for creation, what is driving evolution's popularity? I believe it is partly due to man's desire to prove that he can know everything and have no god to be accountable to. Today's modern, intellectual society wants to be self-sufficient and all knowledgeable, and evolution provides one way to get there. If you can remove God, you remove accountability.

There are other areas of society where we see a movement away from God, towards the belief that we know everything. For example, in the United States, (founded by Christians) atheist organizations are constantly filing lawsuits to remove references to God in buildings and in public areas. The United States' Christmas and Thanksgiving holidays ("holiday" comes from the original term "holy day") are nearly

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cleansed of all mention of God and Jesus. Universities worldwide have far too many professors who will ridicule and penalize students for expressing faith in God or in creation.

These actions are at least partly due to the influence of evolution's proponents who have made great strides toward removing God from the equation. Considering that 1) the lack of evidence for macroevolution calls for a need for a tremendous amount of faith among its followers to "connect the dots," and 2) evolution's driving force is to be independent of God, one can argue that *evolution is actually a religion unto itself*.

The major religions of the world have one thing in common: They all believe they are the only correct religion. As a hidden religion, evolution is similar because it is intolerant of other beliefs. For instance, a common evolutionist's argument is that if you're a scientist, then you have to be an evolutionist, and if you favor the creation theory, you must be illogical, ignorant, or unscientific. This is far from true, however. As knowledge has increased about biology, molecular biology, astronomy, and others, many scientists have become convinced that we're not here by chance. Well-known scientists who were also creationists include Leonardo da Vinci, Robert Boyle (the father of modern chemistry), Isaac Newton, Johannes Kepler (scientific astronomy), Francis Bacon (scientific method), Blaise Pascal (mathematics), Gregor Mendel (genetics), Michael Faraday (electromagnetics), Joseph Lister (antiseptic surgery), and finally, Albert Einstein, who said, "God did not create by chance, but rather he worked according to planned, mathematical, teleonomic and therefore—to him—rational guidelines."<sup>30</sup>

What's next? If there is a Creator, then is he a personal God? Or is He someone who just made everything, then sat back to watch?