

Dazzling Discoveries in Cell Biology Demolish Darwinism

There's No Reason Now to Impugn God as Creator

ABSTRACT

Theistic evolutionists give priority to evolution as the explanation of origins because evolution supposedly is based on empirical evidence; it's thought to be a scientifically demonstrated fact. But attempting to harmonize the Bible's narrative of origins with that of science disparages our Creator God. Recently, discoveries in the field of molecular genetics have shown unexpected, vast complexity in the genome of living organisms. Although not publicized, these discoveries render completely untenable the supposed mechanism of evolution, *viz*, randomly occurring mutations acted on by natural selection. Evolution is a failed scientific explanation of origins; if there's no sufficient causal mechanism, evolution as a scientific explanation is dead. This paper briefly reviews some of the astonishing results of recent cell biology research, and it demonstrates that the on-going commitment to evolution is because it's a necessary component of an anti-theistic belief system, one that prizes autonomy from God. Theistic evolution therefore is in essence a syncretistic endeavor. This paper's demonstration that evolution is a religious commitment and not valid science is applied to other concerns significant to the church.

Evolution as it has been known in the Western world the past century or more is dead. Its death has been an agonizingly slow one, associated with no lack of grief and anguish. Many of course refuse to accept its demise, and others eagerly await a dearly longed-for resuscitation. But dead it is, even if this writing is its only obituary.

The end of evolution as a scientific principle has been coming. Sixteen elite evolutionists gathered privately (by invitation only) in Altenberg, Austria, in July 2008 to discuss among themselves the absence of any

scientifically feasible mechanism by which evolution supposedly occurred.¹ They acknowledged that the theory of evolution that biologists accept and teach cannot explain the existence of living organisms. They realized that much of evolutionary thinking is posturing and bullying. “Basically I don’t think anybody knows how evolution works,” declared one well-known evolutionist. Another admitted that natural selection had nothing to do with it, and that “...there’s no adequate evidence in the literature that random mutations result in new species.” Another expert agreed. In their minds, as a result of advances in molecular genetics, neo-Darwinism is “dead.” The only mechanism that, in desperation, they could accept is “self-assembly and self-organization,” which of course don’t occur in the real world and is thus an admission that evolution is not science.² “Self-organization” is nothing more than a grasping at straws; it’s a clever dodge because no one can test it to prove it false. It’s a way to save the appearance of evolution being “scientific.”

More recently, a prominent evolutionist wrote, “...all the central assumptions of the Modern Synthesis (often called Neo-Darwinism) have been disproved.”³ This biologist is not trying to provoke conflict (science has very effective ways of maintaining orthodoxy within its ranks). He’s acknowledging that recent advances in science, mainly in molecular biology and genetics, have nullified science’s most treasured and central doctrine. They have stripped from evolution the very mechanisms that

¹See “The Altenberg 16: An Exposé of the Evolution Industry” by Suzan Mazur, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 2010. Among the experts attending this conference, whose comments are quoted, were Jerry Fodor, Lynn Margulis, and Francisco Ayala.

²The notion that organisms can spontaneously self-organize is akin to magic. Although the term sounds explanatory, in reality, it explains nothing. Viruses don’t “self-organize,” nor does any known organism. That complex life forms as we know them today, with interlocking systems of information, metabolism and energy use, could spontaneously self organize is laughable.

³Denis Noble, “Physiology is rocking the foundations of evolutionary biology.” *Experimental Physiology* 98(8):1235-43; 17 May 2013. Noble, Emeritus Professor of Physiology at the University of Oxford, U.K., writes this in the hope that a new synthesis eventually will emerge. He expresses what must be a religious commitment to evolution. A more rational understanding would be to jettison the concept and acknowledge the alternative explanation of origins, viz, biblical creation.

gave evolution its *raison d'être*. He wrote this in a technical journal, for the eyes of fellow evolutionists, to encourage them to dream up some new mechanism for evolution; he did not intend these remarks for the public.

Evolution can no longer be regarded as a scientific principle. Recent discoveries in genomics have forced the conclusion that there is nothing scientific about evolution. All scientific explanations of natural phenomena must be based, according to the law of cause and effect, on plausibly sufficient, already discovered scientific mechanisms. If there's no underlying scientific mechanism, the phenomenon is not scientific. Evolution is now in this category. It's an idea, a concept, a belief – widely believed, perhaps – but it's not science. And if it's not science, then what is it? It's primarily an expression of religious belief.⁴

Two concerns are particularly troubling about the above admissions by acknowledged experts in evolutionary biology. One is that the news that evolution is now in deep trouble has not reached the public. The lack of a mechanism for evolution's supposed progress is being kept a secret. It's for those who are “in the know” only. The general public must continue thinking that evolution is the modern, scientific explanation of origins. The other is that these supposedly rational scientists persist in holding to evolution despite its lack of scientific legitimacy. Science is supposed to be self-correcting, that is, as new evidence is discovered, explanations thereby refuted are abandoned. In the case of evolution, the deliberate refusal to discard it reflects a deep, anti-theistic religious commitment that this paper argues is the principal reason for evolution.

What is evidently occurring is that evolutionary scientists are adopting a new strategy, one that needs to be revealed for the sake of the church. To understand the evidence that evolution is dead requires a fairly

⁴ To be precise, evolution is a view of history as much as it's a biological concept. As history (or as science), it can neither be proved nor disproved. Although it's un-disprovable, we nevertheless can demonstrate that it's not science, and that an underlying religion demands belief in and commitment to it.

sophisticated knowledge of biology, in particular, of modern genetics. The lay public (including most theologians and church leaders) lack that background. So the science establishment apparently is going to pretend that nothing is wrong, that Darwinism still is the scientific explanation of existence.

Robust in its prime, Darwinism stoked the human imagination as few other ideas could. We were told that it was the “organizing principle of all life” and the “fundamental principle of the cosmos.” Darwinism spawned such grandiose theories as stellar evolution in astronomy and Marxism in economics and politics. It made necessary the idea of billions of years of geologic history, for without that there’s no time for evolution’s supposed progress. It also provoked, in the church, revisionist interpretations of the Bible’s creation narrative that, unwittingly, impugn our great Creator God.⁵ With Darwinism now defunct, these subsequent, derived notions are emptied of their imagined validity.

In this paper, I present the evidence from recent investigation in the field of genetics that demand the conclusion that Darwinism is finished; it has come to an end. The discussion is necessarily technical and obviously cannot be here in other than précis form, but the reader should find it revealing. I also explain why evolution persists (although not as a scientific principle), and why its end has to be a secret. The paper

⁵ The God of the Bible, as Creator, is a brilliant designer who specializes in exquisite detail and integrated complexity. No matter how closely His handiwork is examined, there is evidence of the most skillful engineering, of intricacy, inventiveness, symmetry, variety and beauty. God produced this marvelous entity that we call life, which not only maintains itself but is able to reproduce and to adapt to changing surroundings. And God amazingly accomplished it all in the brief span of 6 days by the power and authority of his spoken word. And creation was recent because this world was the setting for an epic drama, to exalt the Son. Theistic evolution knows no such God, for a being that needs billions of years of gradual change to accomplish his work can neither be omniscient nor all-powerful. Nor could such a god have had any significant purpose for creating, taking billions of years to complete it. Moreover, the god of theistic evolution is deceptive, saying He did it in 6 days and only six thousand years ago, when it took eons of years to do it.

concludes by applying to the church the thesis that evolution is merely a religious belief.

I The Inadequacy of Darwinian and neo-Darwinian Evolution's Supposed Mechanisms

Antedating Mendel, Charles Darwin knew nothing of genetics. Darwin's contribution was that natural selection was the mechanism by which evolution proceeded.⁶ It was inadequate, but for that era it sounded scientific. And it supplied a rationale for abandoning biblical creation. The subsequent discovery of mutations in the genes led to what is known as the "modern synthesis."⁷ According to this synthesis, the mechanism by which evolution was supposed to have proceeded was that, over vast eons of time, spontaneous, random mutations were acted on by natural selection, leading to increasingly complex life forms.⁸ But towards the latter part of the 20th century, a shift in thinking was needed. A better

⁶ "Natural selection" is a collective term for a host of environmental factors such as predation, climate, disease, and the availability of food and biospace, that, evolutionists, believe favor some traits and weed out others.

⁷ It's supposedly "beneficial" (or advantageous) mutation that produces the necessary novelty in the organisms' genome, and natural selection then acts on the new phenotypes, culling the favorable genes and disposing of those unfit for the new environment. This was termed neo-Darwinism, for it linked to Darwinism what was known about genetics in the early decades of the 20th century. It's what most of us were taught in school as the mechanism of evolutionary progress. My overview of the history of evolutionary theory here is necessarily condensed. There was no dearth of controversy during the 20th century over the relative roles of selection and mutation. To review the controversies, see Douglas J. Futuyma's, *Can Modern Evolutionary Theory Explain Macroevolution?* In "Macroevolution, Explanation, Interpretation And Evidence," edited by E. Serrelli and N. Gontier, Springer, Switzerland, 2015, pp. 29-85. Futuyma, a renowned evolutionist at SUNY, persistently holds to the "modern synthesis" as the explanation of evolution.

⁸ A mutation can be a random single base substitution or an addition or a deletion in a gene, or even a gene duplication. They can be small scale (a point mutation) or large scale (altering entire chromosomes). But most are single base substitutions. ("Base" refers to a nucleotide. A nucleic acid, whether DNA or RNA, is a long chain made up of these nucleotide monomers.) In addition to mutations as the source of novelty driving evolution, other mechanisms have been suggested, such as horizontal gene transfer, which is the movement of genetic material from one organism to another (not from parent to offspring, which is vertical gene transfer). But HGT fails to explain the origin of the genetic material being transferred.

understanding of genetics required evolutionists to re-think evolution's supposed mechanism. This was primarily due to the need to resolve what was called "Haldane's dilemma."

J.B.S. Haldane was one of several evolutionist geneticists who founded the field of population genetics. In 1957 he published a paper presenting a serious problem with the evolutionary mechanism, one that had no evident solution. He realized that if a change in environment occurs, the species that is less adapted has increased number of deaths, so new genes that appear by mutation are unlikely to get fixed in the dying species before the species becomes extinct. When there are few copies of an allele (a hereditary trait) in a reproducing population, the frequency of that allele changes. It can even disappear completely. And if the population is small, that can occur rapidly. It takes so many generations for a new gene to become fixed (that is, a new allele substituting for another), that those without the new allele die off, making it even more difficult for the new allele – even if it is advantageous – to become incorporated in the species to permit increased survival.⁹ For a species with a slow rate of reproduction and a long generation time (for example, a supposed ancestor of apes and humans), evolution by the neo-Darwinian mechanism, despite millions of years, *cannot* occur.

Needless to say, the problem was unwelcome. Most evolutionists ignored it. A few alleged Haldane's math was flawed. Some would obfuscate in a variety of other ways ("it's not a problem in the real world, it's just a mathematical exercise"). Molecular biologists, however, relied on geneticist Motoo Kimura's solution, which was termed the Neutral Model.¹⁰ According to this idea, mutations either occurred in non-

⁹The topic is discussed in some detail in the entry, "Haldane's Dilemma," on the internet in Creationwiki.

¹⁰ PennState University evolutionist, Masatoshi Nei, is arguably today's most articulate proponent of Neutral Theory. See his articles, "The neutral theory of molecular evolution in the genomic era" (*Annual Review of Genomics and Human Genetics*, 11:265-289, 2010) and "Selectionism and Neutralism in Molecular Evolution (*Molecular Biological Evolution*,

functioning regions of the genome, in parts of the chromosome that didn't code for proteins, or they had no effect on the synthesis of proteins. Thus they escaped Haldane's dilemma. But over time, and as a result of genetic drift, these neutral (or "silent") mutations resulted in new phenotypes.¹¹ And those new features led to new species and increased complexity. What gave plausibility to the Neutral Model were the discoveries of what was called "degeneracy" in the genetic code, and that genomes consist largely of non-protein coding DNA.¹² It was assumed that both the degeneracy in the code and the non-coding regions of the genome had no function. This Neutral Model took priority as the supposed mechanism of evolution.

Recent years have witnessed a blossoming of molecular biology. There's been a profusion of research in the field of cell biology disclosing previously unimagined complexity in the cell and especially a fresh understanding of how the genome works. It's this new knowledge, acquired only since approximately the onset of the 21st century, that has brought an end to evolution as a scientific principle. To substantiate this claim, I will review some of these extraordinary developments.

22:2318-2342, 2005) for greater depth. These articles are available on the internet. Nei clearly writes, "[M]utation...is the driving force of evolution."

¹¹Natural selection cannot act on a neutral mutation, so Kimura's model gave priority to genetic drift to account for fixation of a new allele. Genetic drift refers to random changes in the frequency of alleles in a reproducing population, leading either to full incorporation or to total loss of the trait.

¹²Degeneracy refers to the fact that for some amino acids, more than one codon can stipulate the same amino acid. Thus for many of the codons that determine which amino acid is to be joined next during protein synthesis, the 3rd base of the codon doesn't matter. So a mutation affecting that 3rd base would still result in the same protein when the gene is expressed.

Regarding the long sequences of non-protein coding DNA: In humans, only about 3—5 % of DNA codes for protein. It was assumed that the remainder of the genome was "junk" DNA, representing baggage left-over from a long evolutionary process, and that this intergenic DNA served as the substrate that resulted in the formation of new genes. Mutations, it was supposed, were most likely to occur in these regions of "junk" DNA and so would not cause the species harm.

II What's Now Known in Genomics Makes All Supposed Mechanisms for Evolution Inadequate

DNA doesn't just float around somewhere in the cell's nucleus as a linear molecule. It is now known that each chromosome has its defined three-dimensional location. The chromosomes all have a definite, fixed spatial localization within the nucleus. Each chromosome, in other words, occupies a pre-determined, specific site within the nucleus, specifically located adjacent to other chromosomes in a characteristic arrangement or pattern. It is further now thought that the genes for enzymes that function together in a metabolic process are clustered, located in close proximity to each other in the genome – either on the same chromosome or on immediately adjacent chromosomes. In other words, genes that are used together are clustered together in space – even if they're on different chromosomes. Moreover, the spatial localization of the chromosomes in the nucleus changes over time. The chromosomes are 3-dimensionally maneuvered into position for transcription to occur.¹³

It also is now known that genes interact with each other dynamically in “gene neighborhoods.” There's more interdependence of all parts of the DNA than was thought just a decade ago. Gene expression also is not as simple as it once was thought; there is now known to be extensive interaction in the cell's nucleus between genes. Most genes are pleiotropic, that is, they affect many characters, and most characters are determined by more than one gene. In the genome, in other words, genes operate as components of networks, with extensive gene interaction.

¹³ The term transcription is used in cell biology to refer to making an RNA copy of a sequence of DNA. Certain RNA transcripts take the information that was coded in DNA to use to synthesize proteins. And the proteins then constitute the structure of the cell and, if enzymes, determine the cell's function. Another term used routinely in biology for this process is “gene expression.” RNA is a nucleic acid, like DNA, except that it uses ribose as its sugar instead of deoxyribose (thus R instead of D). RNA is single-stranded, whereas DNA is double-stranded, and RNA is short-lived in contrast to DNA, which is extremely long-lived and stable. DNA is the cell's inherited, species-specific repository of information. RNA, a copy (or transcript) of a bit of that information, is how the cell uses its information, how that information is put to work.

Researchers have found to their surprise that most genes that are disrupted (by so-called “knock-out” techniques) result in no change in the experimental animal’s phenotype. The reason is thought to be genetic redundancy. Genes work together as networks in which there are alternate pathways to gene expression, like the structure of the internet in which many nodes can be disrupted without loss of signal transmission. The redundancy allows for gene interactions. Redundancy in the genome seems now to be the rule. A genome thus actually consists of networks of genes.

There also are what are termed “enhancer elements” in the genome that control gene expression, and these enhancer elements can be a million bases (or nucleotides, the units that comprise DNA) away from the gene they regulate. These distant enhancer elements, along with transcription factors, act by 3-dimensional looping of the chromosome so that they connect spatially in the genome. This newly discovered system is termed the “enhancer code.”

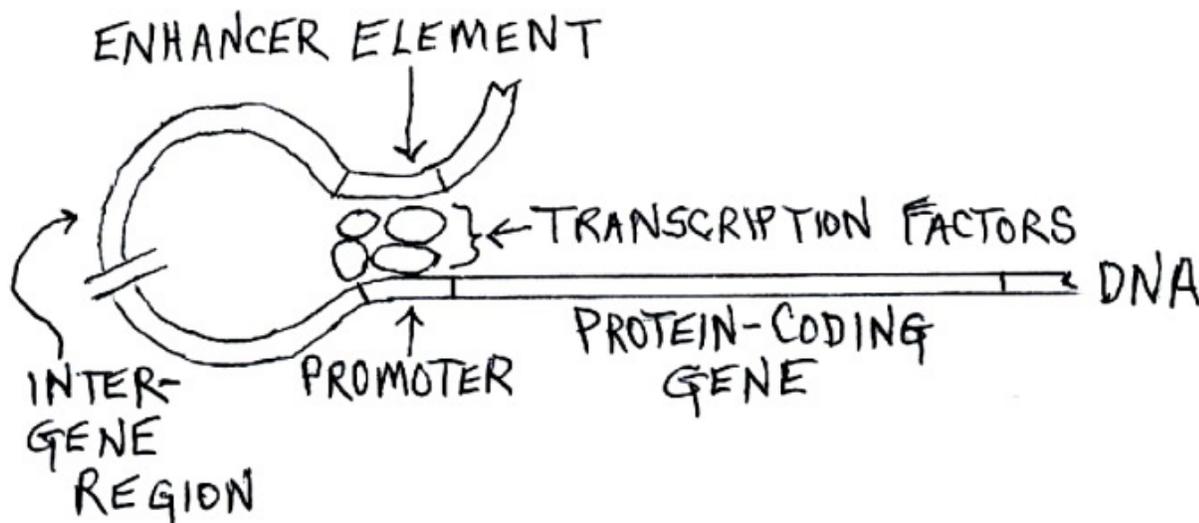


Figure 1. The sketch illustrates how the DNA of a chromosome can loop around so that an enhancer element, a DNA sequence at a distance from a protein-coding gene, can bind by means of transcription factors, to the promoter region of a gene. This linking by transcription factors enable genes to be switched on (“induced”), or switched off (“repressed”). Transcription factors are proteins that derive from genes elsewhere in the genome. In this illustration, the long inter-genic sequences serve as spacers to enable the DNA to make its loop.

So the DNA in a cell is vastly more complex in its structure and function than anyone ever imagined. But there's even greater complexity.

“Genes” are known now to be mixtures of genes within genes. A gene within a gene is termed a “nested” gene, and the larger gene containing it is the “host” gene. Some genes even overlap other genes. When genes overlap, they can be in the same or opposite orientations. That is, different information is encoded on both strands of DNA, running in opposite directions.¹⁴ Geneticists today stare in open-mouthed awe at the complexity of an organism's genome.

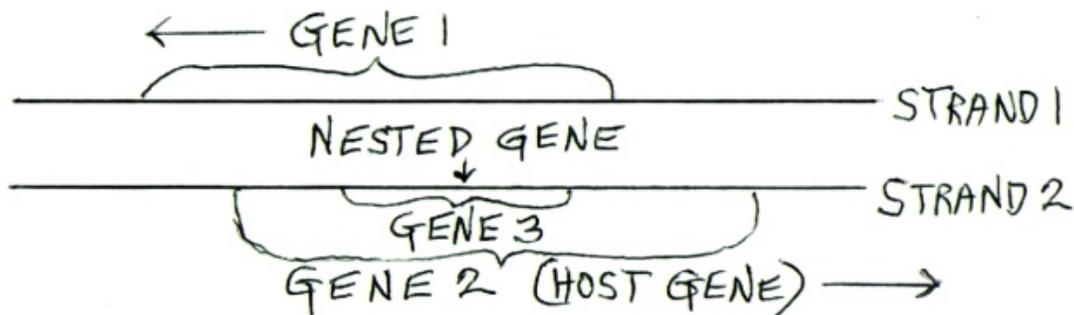


Figure 2. A segment of DNA is sketched showing its two strands. (DNA is an exceedingly long, un-branched, double-stranded molecule. Its helical shape is here omitted.) There are different protein-coding genes on each strand, running in opposite directions. Not only do the genes overlap, in this instance the gene on one strand serves as a “host” gene harboring “nested” genes. These are “genes within a gene,” in which each gene serves a different function.

¹⁴The definition of a gene as a unit of heredity is currently being re-examined for a number of reasons germane to the theme of this paper: (1) Genes exist connected to other genes in “genomic neighborhoods;” (2) genes exist within complex control or regulatory networks; (3) protein-coding sequences don't constitute a gene but rather consist of a number of modules (called “exons”) that can be combined in a host of ways to result in different proteins (termed “alternate splicing”); (4) any given DNA sequence can host multiple, overlapping genes; and (5) a host of other factors besides heredity affect gene expression, including epigenetic mechanisms and environmental stimuli. Alternate splicing means that different proteins with totally different functions can be produced by how exons from the same gene or from different genes (even genes on different chromosomes!) are spliced together. It should be evident that no naturalistic mechanism can even begin to explain the origin and/or the development of such surpassing, sophisticated complexity as exists in a genome.

As a result of the recently published ENCODE project, a chromosome's inter-genic DNA is now known to have a host of essential functions.¹⁵ It's anything but "junk." The ENCODE project results have dramatically changed cell biology and genetics. For example, almost all the DNA in the genome is now known to be actively transcribed, not only the small percent that codes for protein as was previously thought. And the RNA that results is used as RNA to regulate gene function. To allege that only a small percentage of the human genome directly codes for proteins is grossly misleading because it overlooks all the necessary regulatory sequences. It's not just the 25,000 or so protein-coding genes that are transcribed, but almost all of the genome. Almost every nucleotide making up DNA, it is now believed, has some function. There are billions of them.

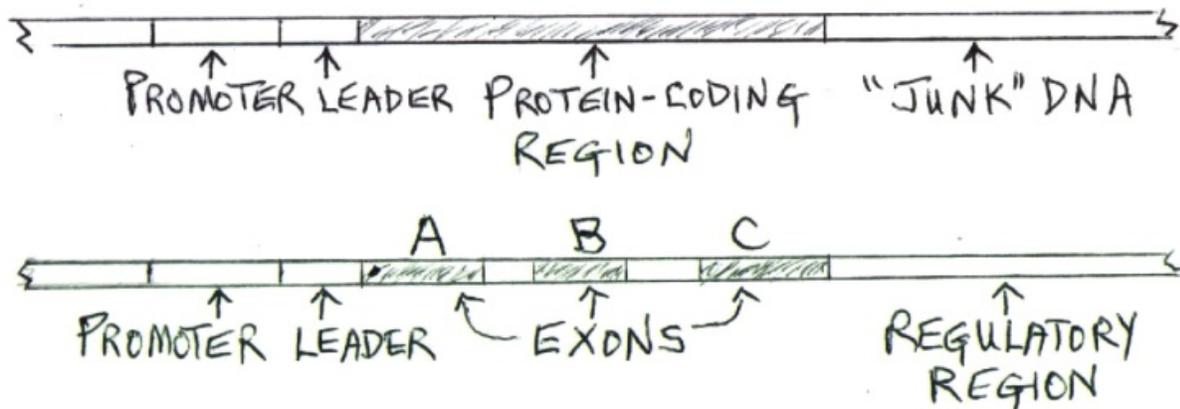


Figure 3. The TOP sketch depicts a segment of DNA as it was thought to be configured until the late 20th century. There is a protein-coding gene with its upstream leader and promoter sequences. The long, inter-genic regions were assumed to be baggage left over from eons of evolutionary development ("junk" DNA). The BOTTOM sketch illustrates the current understanding of DNA's architecture. The protein-coding region consists of discrete segments of sequences or modules that, when transcribed, result in RNA segments called "exons." Each exon bears the code for a segment of a protein or a protein subunit. These exons are spliced together in various ways to result in different proteins with different functions. Thus about 25,000 protein-coding genes in the genome bear the information to synthesize perhaps 200,000 or more different proteins. The inter-genic regions produce RNA transcripts that regulate the use of the protein-coding genes.

¹⁵The acronym stands for The Encyclopedia of DNA Elements, a world-wide research project begun in 2003 to identify all functional elements in the human genome. For a summary of the work, see I. Dunham, *et al* (594 collaborators), "An integrated encyclopedia of DNA elements in the human genome" (*Nature*, 489:57-74, Sept 6, 2012), available on the internet.

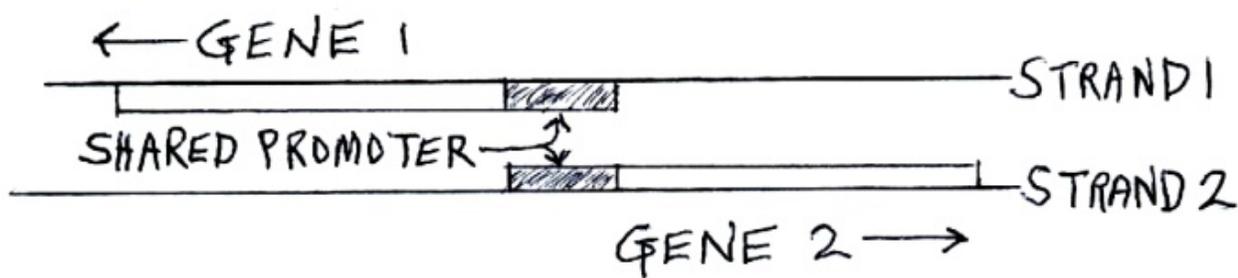


Figure 4. A segment of DNA is sketched showing its two strands. Here, there are different protein-coding genes on each strand, running in opposite directions. In this depiction, they share the same bidirectional promoter region. Until recently, no one suspected genes overlap on the same region of a chromosome.

The long, non-protein coding regions of DNA that are transcribed into RNA have multiple essential functions.¹⁶ It is thought, for example, that some of these RNA's stabilize the chromosomes. Some of the DNA between genes serves as spacers, because enhancer elements are at a distance from the gene (or genes) they regulate, so that the DNA has to loop around on itself to bring the enhancer element to where it can interact with the gene it's regulating. So "spacers" are essential to allow the three-dimensional interaction of genes and transcription factors. Gene activators, repressors, enhancers, and the code for alternate splicing also reside in the inter-genic DNA. The non-protein coding RNA transcripts, by regulating the protein-coding genes, control cell differentiation as well as almost all other cellular functions. They serve as "gene switches" that turn on and off the protein-coding genes. They also appear to have a role in intra-cellular signaling.

Also in the non-protein coding regions are the sequences that transcribe microRNA's. These are very short RNA transcripts that, along with their own binding code, constitute another language system in the cell. There

¹⁶ One technical paper for further study is, "lincRNAs: Genomics, Evolution, and Mechanisms," by Igor Ulitsky and David Bartel (*Cell*, 154:26-46, July 2013). The authors write, "[T]he roster of biological processes in which long noncoding RNAs are reported to play key roles is rapidly growing...."

are miRNA genes all over the human genome, some nested inside protein-coding genes. These miRNA's also serve to control gene expression. They are, in one way or another, involved in almost every process going on in the cell.

Furthermore, what Kimura and others in his day termed “degeneracy” is now known to be a multi-functional system. The genetic code is anything but degenerate. It helps control the folding of a protein into its essential three-dimensional configuration as it's being synthesized. It also makes more efficient the use of tRNA's in the assembly of proteins. And it serves another purpose: it specifies binding sites for transcription factors. So specific codons not only code for amino acids, they have these additional roles as well.¹⁷

The genome also can change over time. It's dynamic. It has plasticity. Transposable elements result in rearrangements of genes, duplications of genes, and silencing of genes. Genomes of organisms not only are front-loaded with genes that can be called on to enable adaptation to a changing environment, genomes evidently also are able to change in response to the environment by means of built-in, tightly regulated mechanisms that currently are being investigated.

What is evident from the above discussion is that there's so much complexity embedded in an organism's genome that there's no way an explanation as simplistic as “random mutations acted on by natural selection” is even plausible. The discoveries, for example, include: (a) That genes function together in networks, that there are multiple, overlapping genes, and that there is extensive, layer-upon-layer regulation of genes, mean that mutations could not possibly serve as the necessary engine to produce variety. In view of multiple overlapping codes, any

¹⁷Transcription can occur using either strand of DNA, that is, it can go in opposite directions. It possibly is because there are multiple overlapping codes in DNA that there are 64 codons for only 20 amino acids. Some codons are rarely used, and other codons are very frequently used. The use of specific codons, in other words, is purposeful.

mutation that is beneficial would *also*, with far greater likelihood, at another level be deleterious. (b) Protein-coding genes don't function without their interacting regulatory genes. If there's a mutation in a protein-coding gene that changes the phenotype, that is, resulting in a new feature, there must also be a simultaneous mutation in its regulatory gene so that the new gene functions in its new context or environment. As mutations occur randomly, such coordinated change is impossible, and thus the mechanism by which evolution supposedly progressed is refuted. (c) The Neutral model, introduced to overcome Haldane's dilemma, has been voided by the discoveries that there's no "junk" DNA nor is there "degeneracy."

No known physiologic process can create novel traits. Both the "modern synthesis" and the "Neutral model," as explanations for evolutionary progress, are fatally flawed. Evolution is a concept bereft of a mechanism.

III Mis-interpretations of Nature by Evolutionists

What went wrong? How did successive generations of highly-trained and intelligent scientists get their science so wrong? It's not just that recent advances in cell biology have shown prior knowledge of the cell to be inadequate, although, as argued above, that's what's currently salient. The answer has to do not with science, but with religion!¹⁸ And it involves epistemology.¹⁹

¹⁸ Roy A. Clouser, now retired professor of philosophy and religion, in his book, "The Myth of Religious Neutrality – An Essay on the Hidden Role of Religious Belief in Theories" (The University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, IL, 2005), argues (for example on p. 78) that all persons are religious even if they don't explicitly follow an organized religion. That's because everyone has an awareness of some self-existent reality that's the source or cause of everything else. That first cause is their deity, whether recognized as divine or not. Thus atheists, who posit nature – that is, matter and the energy or laws that act on it – to be self-existent, are religious. Clouser rightly says (p. 94), "[T]here is no knowledge or truth that is neutral with respect to belief in God." The world is divided into but two classes of people, believers in Christ and anti-theists, according to Romans 1:18-25, Matthew 7:13-14, Ephesians 2:1-7, and elsewhere. That there is no transcendent Creator God, and that matter created instead of the God of the Bible, is a religious belief. The term that defines this anti-theistic religion is pantheism.

¹⁹ Most scientists are not trained in philosophy, so it's expected that the problem of how to know truth would escape them. But there are limits to knowledge, for we are finite beings. So

Evolutionists use only naturalistic mechanisms to explain evolution, and naturalism is based on anti-theistic presuppositions.²⁰ Almost all evolutionists are religiously motivated.²¹ And because religion thoroughly pervades and controls our thinking, it affects our ability to reason. Evolutionists therefore routinely employ faulty reasoning. “*For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened*” (Romans 1:21). Thus instead of seeing common features among different organisms as reflecting a Creator’s use of common design, evolutionists allege common descent. Similarly, evolutionists have misinterpreted the role of mutations, natural selection, and other supposed evidence. So a discussion here of the refusal to think clearly about these natural processes is needed.

- Mutations, that is, unrepaired errors made when DNA replicates, *cannot* give rise to new, functioning phenotypes. That’s because mutations result in loss of order, loss of organization, loss of function.²² Picture someone trying to climb a hill of sand. For every

how we acquire knowledge and demonstrate its truthfulness is crucially important. Speculation does not substitute for truth. Models are only analogies. Extrapolations are tentative at best. Technologically advanced methodology and use of highly technical vocabulary don’t establish truth either. Any human’s ability to reason thru any issue is necessarily flawed by our finitude as well as a host of other factors. If there’s no empirical, repeatedly demonstrable physical evidence that can be observed and measured, then any suggested explanation for an event or process must be merely hypothetical. So the prevalent certainty that evolution explains origins has to be understood as no more than a religious belief.

²⁰ Naturalism – the notion that reality consists only of matter and the energy that acts on matter – is patently absurd. Naturalism cannot account for the origin of space, nor time, nor matter or energy. And it’s based (irrationally) on an unprovable negative assertion, *viz.* that there exists no spiritual dimension to reality, that there’s nothing transcendent. Yet naturalism today pervades science, reflecting the will of unbelievers to rebel against our Creator.

²¹ Some scientists hold to evolution because otherwise dire consequences await them. They fear for their careers, for example. See “Silencing the Darwin Skeptics, by Jerry Bergman, Leafcutter Press, 2016, for detailed discussion of the animosity directed at anyone in science who denies Darwinism.

²² That random mutations could be the source of novelty and thus the engine of evolutionary progress is nonsense. A butterfly on an island that was born with a mutation so it has no wings

one foot of ascent, there's 10 feet of sliding down. The negative completely overwhelms any positive progress. Geneticist John Sanford refers to this process as "genetic entropy."²³ As Sanford shows, beneficial mutations are exceedingly rare (and almost all geneticists agree to this), whereas deleterious mutations, disrupting the flow of information in the cell, are common. So any putative beneficial mutation *has* to be lost.²⁴ The problem Haldane identified is insurmountable. Beneficial mutations cannot be the source of novelty that adds complexity to genomes. Genomes, over time, are decaying; they certainly are not gaining new information. But evolutionists are committed to beneficial mutations as the source of genomic novelty because of the anti-theistic presuppositions they harbor.

- Evolutionists' obsession with chance likewise is misplaced. Chance is not a thing, it's not a physical law. It's not an explanation of any thing. Randomness *cannot* lead to increased order and complexity. But anti-theistic presuppositions require evolutionists to reject any supernatural purpose for, or control over, any aspect of the evolutionary process. So they are forced to embrace randomly occurring natural events. Their anti-theistic religion obliges them to take a philosophically nonsensical stance.

is less likely to be blown out to sea when the wind blows, so of course that's advantageous – when the wind blows. But when there's no wind, the butterfly dies! The butterfly has not gained any new function, there's no new information in its genome. In the controlled, artificial environment of the laboratory, certain mutations may appear advantageous, but some function is lost.

²³See John C. Sanford's, *Genetic Entropy*, FMS Publications, 4th edition, 2014. Sanford is a now-retired professor of genetics at Cornell University. His book argues that mutations not only cannot create complex genomes, they cannot even maintain them; and that necessarily invalidates biologic evolution.

²⁴Regarding the Neutral model, Sanford demonstrated that genetic drift would cause mutants to disappear, not become fixed in a population. For over a century, there has been no consensus in biology as to the adequacy of the purported mechanisms of evolution, nevertheless evolution is almost universally believed to have occurred.

- However plausible its supposed role, natural selection is a process of quite limited scope. Even bacteria are endowed with sensors and intra-cellular signaling and response pathways by which to adapt to their environments. All life forms have an inherent or pre-programmed ability to respond to a changing environment.²⁵ They can adapt to predators as well as to changes in the physical features of their environment. There is no rationale for supposing that natural selection, a non-volitional, non-sentient process, should (or could) result in increasing complexity of life forms. What evolutionists do is commit the logical error of identifying an example in nature of adaptation and then extrapolating that as a mechanism that causes transformations of epic dimension.²⁶ Rejecting a Creator, evolutionists foolishly confer on natural selection the attribute of creating.²⁷

It should be obvious to every thinking person that a supposed mechanism (that is, randomly occurring mutations acted on by natural selection) that attempts to explain origins yet utterly fails in so many ways *cannot* be the “underlying principle of all life,” as evolution is claimed to be. For

²⁵Antibiotic resistance in response to antibiotic-induced selection pressure is not an example of evolution, as evolutionists routinely allege. Microbes had the genes by which to resist the effect of these antibiotics long before antibiotics even were discovered.

²⁶ Diversification and speciation certainly occur in nature. That’s because the genome of organisms is supple, it’s plastic, it can be modified. But these changes are limited in scope and highly regulated. They occur because genomes are pre-programmed with mechanisms that permit modification. What evolutionists do, without warrant whatsoever, is extrapolate these genetic adaptations to explain the existence of all life. And they call that “empirical science”!

²⁷Since Darwin first expressed the notion, evolutionists have been fixated on “externalism” (natural selection), the idea that the stresses and pressures of the environment instruct the organism how to vary, causing new traits to form and resulting in speciation. For Darwin (and for some who hold to evolution today), nature autonomously acted on organisms, creating new traits. A century ago, what was going on at a molecular level was unknown. All they could see was a changing environment. Thanks to electron microscopy, we know differently today. So Darwin and his followers had a totally flawed understanding of causation. They developed a faulty explanation and then trained generations to follow to see only passive organisms being acted on by environmental change. Natural selection contributes nothing in explaining how evolution supposedly proceeds.

example: (a) Evolution cannot explain sexuality, language, consciousness, morality, and free will. (b) Evolutionary processes cannot account for the existence of the information systems in the cell. (c) Evolution cannot even explain the origin of life.²⁸ (d) Evolution deliberately ignores the overwhelming evidence of design in nature, the perfect correspondences between form and function that pervade nature, and the integrated complexity that's evident at every level of life. (e) And now, there is no mechanism by which it could have worked, certainly not mutations acted on by the environment. Therefore evolution is not scientific, for scientific explanations must be causally based on known natural processes. Evolutionists are simply not thinking clearly.

Two epistemic errors explain what went wrong. 1. Scientists cannot observe or study evolution. So instead they speculate, they make imaginative guesses. And in time, those speculations and hypothetical scenarios substitute for reality. There's a veneer of scientific technology and scientific verbiage, but beneath the surface there's nothing there! Evolution is a huge mental construct and nothing more than that. 2. The misinterpretations of nature discussed above lie at the core of evolutionary theory. They are not simply errors in logic, but are deliberate and intentional, for they reflect an underlying religion. Scientists and science popularizers who suppose that they are using reason and objectivity in pursuit of truth are self-deceived. Their ability to understand nature is grossly distorted by rebellion against God. Evolution is how, in the West, the anti-theistic religion of those in rebellion against God is expressed. Scientific discoveries such as discussed here notwithstanding, evolution persists as a religious belief.

²⁸ Two non-negotiable, absolutely essential features of evolution are abiogenesis (the idea that life, or cells, spontaneously came into existence from non-living substances) and common ancestry. Both are required. There cannot be one without the other. Evolutionists do not have abiogenesis, and they know it. Decades of concerted research has only established the absolute impossibility of it. To produce the most minimal organism able to survive and reproduce is an utterly insurmountable barrier for naturalism. And no one has ever directly observed common ancestry. It's just a huge mental construct, an imagined scenario.

The religion that underlies evolution isn't merely non-theism, it's *anti*-theism. God has clearly revealed standards by which we are to live in this world of His making. Unbelievers cannot abide Christian religion dogmatically stating that God holds us accountable as a component of its gospel. They demand autonomy.²⁹ They therefore seek to extinguish (or at least “neutralize”) Christianity. Thus they have turned science into a weapon by which to bully the church into silence.³⁰ The appearance that evolution is scientific must therefore be maintained, regardless what genetic research discovers.

IV What It Means, Especially for the Church

I draw from the preceding discussion three major conclusions: 1. There exists no mechanism by which evolution has occurred or can occur. Darwin's model was inadequate. So is the neo-Darwinian model and the Neutral model as well. In science, explanations of how nature works must have a scientifically sufficient, causal mechanism for them to be valid. If there's no mechanism employing accepted physical processes, the explanation is dead, useless; it's not scientific. Evolution's supposed mechanisms are wholly inadequate for what is required, which is the creation of new features.

2. The sheer complexity, the massive, layer-upon-layer, functioning complexity of an organism's genome makes *any* putative mechanism of

²⁹ Patrick J. Deneen, Professor of political science at University of Notre Dame, insightfully observes in a series of essays, “Why Liberalism Failed” (Yale U. Press, 2018) that modernity is essentially the effort to be free to indulge our passions and desires (“self-actualization”); societal breakdown and endemic pathologies, he argues, are because the unrestrained human appetite is insatiable. Clearly, if we got here by a slow and gradual process involving impersonal natural forces, then the Christian religion is an unnecessary or illegitimate restraint on our passions. But we're here because God lovingly fashioned us as a potter shapes his handiwork, and therefore we belong to Him. And we're accountable to Him. Evolution is as illusory as the liberty it (falsely) engenders.

³⁰ Steven Weinberg, Nobel laureate in physics, said, “Anything that we scientists can do to weaken the hold of religion [i.e., Christianity] should be done and may in the end be our greatest contribution to civilization.” This and other revealing quotes by Steven Weinberg are at http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Steven_Weinberg.

increasing complexity of life forms totally preposterous. Random mutations acted on either by natural selection or genetic drift is simplistic in the extreme. There is no possibility whatsoever that such a magnificent thing as a functioning genome could have arisen by any process other than brilliant and deliberate design. The notion that something as complex as a genome can be built up from precursor substances to a simple cell and on to man – by random errors, no less! – is not worthy of serious consideration. It belongs in the genre of magic, or fantasy.

3. There has been a glaring refusal by those who hold to and promote evolution to think clearly about nature. This must be due to anti-theistic religious presuppositions. (The only alternative reason is, it's deliberate deception.) So evolution was a fatally flawed concept from the outset, and there is no justification for it being other than dead.

Evolution's committed adherents will nevertheless cling to it regardless what geneticists and cell biologists discover. Evolution is, in essence, just another pre-scientific notion that, like phlogiston theory and the theory of humors, has been disproven by the advance of science. But evolution persists as the cardinal or central doctrine of an anti-theistic religion that I identify as pantheism.³¹ It's a religion that requires evolution to confirm its anti-theistic presuppositions, so it's utterly irrelevant that its scientific basis has been demolished.³² People prefer fantasy to truth because their hearts are evil.

³¹Pantheism *must* be the religion of non-Christians in the West. According to Paul in Romans 1:18-25, all people are religious, and their religion, according to verse 25, is the worship either of the creator God of the Bible or of a god that is located in nature. The deity evolutionists worship is not a transcendent personal being. They worship (not consciously) either nature itself, or a deity that, in some way, is in nature. Their deity is infinite and eternal (the material universe with its physical laws). Their deity has creative abilities (thus evolution), pervades the cosmos (thus naturalism or physicalism in philosophy), guides history (thus dialectic and progressivism in politics), and is a jealous god (thus modern aggressive atheism). Whether they realize it or not (Einstein and Carl Sagan are two notable examples of some who did), they are pantheists. Colossians 1:15-17 states that *all* things were created by God; therefore, matter and energy *cannot* create life.

³² Religion so pervasively controls and commands our thinking that matters such as I discuss here, that evolution has no driving mechanism and is thus not scientific, will predictably be

Far more important is the significance of this discussion to the church. A subtle but insidious theocracy pervades the West. America is not a secular nation; that's camouflage. Anti-theistic religion controls American values and beliefs, and evolution is its sacred myth. And this aggressively antagonistic belief system refuses to stop at church doors. It demands in because the church is one of its principal targets. Sadly, it has already gained entrance, due to the imprudence and thoughtlessness of too many church leaders.

So I ask, because the issue is one the Church has been struggling with, What will the many theologians, bible scholars, pastors and teachers who have compromised with evolutionary ideas do now that Darwinism is no longer scientific? After all, supposing that evolution had been proved by science, they came up with a host of imaginative re-interpretations of Genesis in an attempt to harmonize Scripture with science. Will they, along with the mass of anti-theists religiously glued to evolution, persist in their syncretistic stance because evolution and billions of years is what intellectuals are expected to believe? Or, to avoid being in thrall to a false or alien religion, will these church leaders now retract those revisionist interpretations and commit to a literal reading of Genesis One and Two? Surely, "put on the new man" (Ephesians 4:24) includes eschewing the religious beliefs of the old, rebellious man.

Theistic evolutionists argue that if Christians, especially Christian youth, adopt evolution, they will have credibility among their peers on college campuses. More likely, young people in the church will wonder why, if they're told in the church that science is correct on the matter of origins, their secular professors aren't also correct in repudiating the resurrection, miracles, and a future judgment. Christian youth aren't stupid. Church leaders may be able to believe in and promote "directed" evolution without serious challenge in the church, but on university campuses, where evolution is, by definition, undirected, an oxymoron such as theistic

inconsequential to the unbelieving world. Anti-theists will not be deterred from their rebellion against God by the facts and argument herein presented.

evolution is met with scorn. The church needs to reject compromises and remain courageously anchored on the authority of Scripture. The hegemony of science over religion is no more. It's broken.

Nowadays, populism is on the rise. It's why Donald Trump is President. People deeply resent the arrogance of elites telling them what to believe and imposing their elitist values and worldview on them. Grass-roots Bible believers, those in the pews who put money in the plate, overwhelmingly want biblical creation taught from the pulpit and in Sunday school. If church leaders who have filled their minds with Reasons to Believe and BioLogos refuse them, an ugly backlash may result.

What has been presented in this paper can be understood by church-goers. Church leaders can extract the essence of my argument and present it to their assemblies. The youth in our churches need to be instructed that the Bible is authoritative because its narratives from page one on are literally true. Before young people go off to secular colleges, they should be taught that they're entering a world in rebellion to Christ, and that evolution and higher criticism of the Bible are to be expected. If they don't understand this, if they lack a fully formed worldview, their faith will collapse. All those in the church who are conflicted about the claims of science need a clear presentation of the spiritual warfare enveloping us.

There's also the problem of teaching evolution in public schools. The central argument at the Kitzmiller vs Dover School District court trial, as well as at the court trials before it, was that evolution is science but creation is religion, and that the public schools must teach science and not religion. Now that argument has collapsed. Both evolution and creation are religious narratives, contradictory ones to be sure, but they both are components of a belief system. These court decisions should be revisited for the sake of the youth of the church who are being hammered with evolution in their schools.

Creation is one of the most important reasons we love God. A purpose of the Christian life is to love and worship God with all our heart, soul and mind. Evolution declares that God is not a brilliant Designer, but a cruel,

bungling monster who had to experiment with struggle, death and predation for billions of years to arrive at the intended goal. Who could love such a being? Evolution steals from God the surpassing glory that's due Him as Creator. And it seduces people into believing the lie that there's no God to whom we are responsible.

In summary, this paper discloses a secret tightly held by elite scientists, but one that should be evident to any who understand the basics of cell biology. Recent advances in genomics show that evolution is non-viable as a scientific concept. It's a failed scientific explanation. It persists, but as a religious belief, as the sacred myth of a widely held anti-theistic religion. The church, to defend itself against the onslaught of this increasingly aggressive religion, needs first to cease making compromises and attempting to harmonize Scripture with science. Holding to both Christianity and to evolution is revealed now to be, in essence, crass syncretism. And church leaders need to teach that we are necessarily immersed in spiritual warfare, so that believers can respond accordingly.