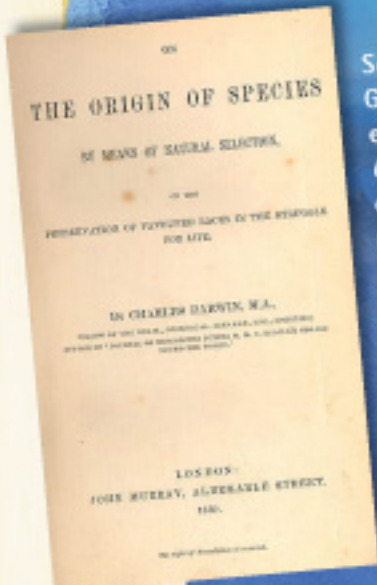


DARWIN'S BOOK ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES

A step too far



Scientists credit Charles Darwin's historic voyage to the Galápagos Islands as the inspiration for his ideas about evolution. Darwin later laid out his world-shaking views in *On the Origin of Species* (1859). Surprisingly, many of Darwin's observations were scientifically accurate, at least in their narrow scope and apart from their wider implications.

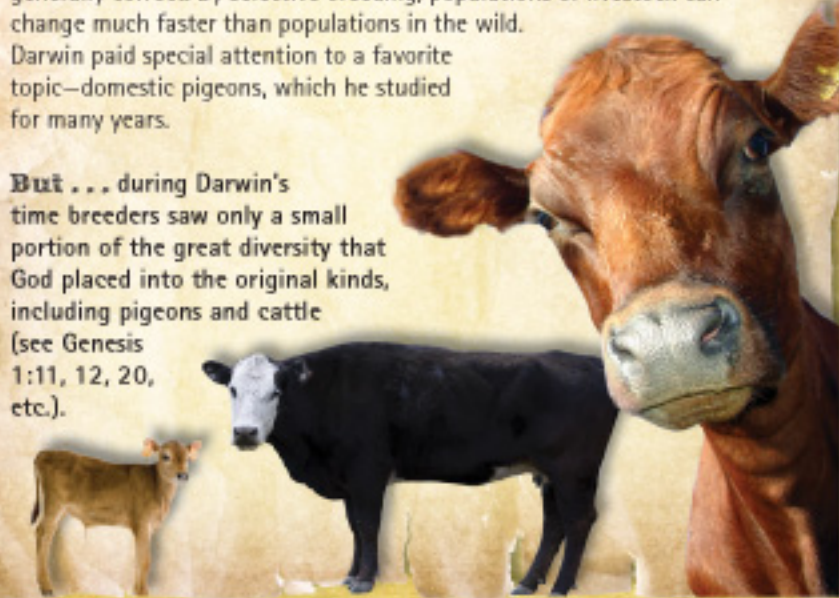
His biggest problem was that he took his observations a step too far, setting aside God's revealed truth and embracing the false assumption that change has occurred slowly over millions of years. As a result of this blunder, Darwin attributed displays of the Creator's design to purely natural progressive changes.

A new community of Bible-based scientists has begun exploring how best to understand the wonderful designs for adaptation that God placed within His original created "kinds," which enabled them to refill the world quickly after the devastation of the Flood.

Variation

Darwin's initial observations about variations in both domestic and wild animals, laid out in the first two chapters of *Origin of Species*, were generally correct. By selective breeding, populations of livestock can change much faster than populations in the wild. Darwin paid special attention to a favorite topic—domestic pigeons, which he studied for many years.

But . . . during Darwin's time breeders saw only a small portion of the great diversity that God placed into the original kinds, including pigeons and cattle (see Genesis 1:11, 12, 20, etc.).



Struggle for Survival

Darwin noted in chapter three of *Origin of Species* that, with so many varieties of animals and plants competing for limited space in our world, a struggle for survival ensues. This struggle eliminates the species with characteristics least helpful to the population. Darwin's observations about this struggle were generally correct.

But . . . what Darwin witnessed was, in large part, the effects of God's Curse after Adam's sin (Genesis 3:17–19).



"Law of Variation"

In chapter five of *Origin of Species*, Darwin attempted to explain how offspring vary from their parents. He admitted outright that scientists of his day lacked understanding of the "laws of variation," but he speculated that because of the great potential for variation (evident, for example, in breeding), such changes did and can lead to new species.

But . . . Darwin's so-called "laws of variation" have eluded scientists to this day. Gregor Mendel, the father of genetics, provided insight into only a small portion of the vast variation we find within each of God's created "kinds." For example, how can creatures as different as camels and llamas belong to the same family . . . or zebras and horses, or tomatoes and potatoes?



Natural Selection

The term *natural selection* is not a strictly evolutionary term and should not cause Bible-believing Christians to question God's role as Creator. While Darwin uses this concept throughout *On the Origin of Species*, he specifically defines it in chapter four. Natural selection is the idea that hostile environments will take out species that are less fit for their environment.

But . . . although it is fairly well established that natural selection makes populations as healthy as they can be in a fallen world, Darwin believed that natural selection could do something it has never been observed to do—cause one kind of creature to change into a completely different one.

