

*Made Simple*



# REPLACING DARWIN

*Made Simple*

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ISBN: 978-1-9844-0265-3

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# *Introduction*

# Chapter 1:

## *Forty Years of Progress*

The creation/evolution debate has changed. I've watched it change from various distances throughout my life. Growing up in the 1980s, I felt it hover at a close—but comfortable—distance. My parents saw to this. Dad was a dentist, and Mom was a nurse, and they both were concerned that their children be well educated in the debate.

I grew up in the early days of the homeschool movement when young-earth creationism was in some of its headiest days. Our family attended creationist lectures, watched creation/evolution debates on VHS tapes, and generally purchased whatever creationist literature we could find. Nevertheless, my education was far from one-sided. Each of these instructional tools taught me both sides of the origins debate.

Yet I rarely, if ever, had to personally defend my views in the face of opposition.

This changed when I attended the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. The fall semester opened with a freshman orientation course in which students were required to give a presentation on the topic of their choice. Given my upbringing, I chose to present the evolutionary problems with the origin of life—a thesis that aroused the creationist leanings of some of my fellow classmates. Surprisingly, the professor also intimated sympathy for my conclusions.

However, the rest of my time at UW-Parkside followed the typical didactic formula, with evolution being taught or assumed as the foundation for each biology subject we engaged. Where appropriate, I raised objections in class or on assignments. Both pursuits led to long conversations with the professors.

At UW-Parkside, guest lectures were a regular feature, and evolution was a regular topic. I remember one especially contentious presentation. The speaker was a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and his focus was the problems with creationism. He began by reviewing two of the most popular arguments against creationism—that it had been scientifically tested and rejected, and that creationism wasn't science at all. Over the course of the next hour, he developed the obvious problem with these approaches: they contradicted each other. For example, if creationism has been scientifically tested and rejected, then it must be scientific. In contrast, if creationism isn't science, then it cannot be tested (and rejected). He concluded that creationism wasn't scientific—and was instantaneously greeted with vocal comments from a local professor.

In graduate school at Harvard, my chosen field of study (cell and developmental biology) also assumed the usual evolutionary basis. But evolution itself rarely made an appearance in day-to-day operations of me and my labmates. We were focused on how adult blood stem cells (the cells that sustain our bloodstream) worked, and if they could be therapeutically manipulated to cure cancer and solve other medical problems. Evolution and other historical topics had little to do with this contemporary subject. Occasionally, someone might mention in passing that a part of the immune system was “conserved through evolution.” But this was simply evolutionary shorthand for the fact that some parts of our physiology have similarities to the physiology of animals. Evolution took a back seat to our research.

Evolution did not, however, escape our friendly banter. My labmates knew I was a creationist, and we would probe one another on our respective views. In my experience, my evolutionary colleagues knew little about creationism. Therefore, they lacked well-informed, in-depth objections to it. Conversely, they also tended to be unacquainted with the creationist objections to evolution. As a result, I felt I had the upper hand in our discussions. Yet, to my knowledge, no one changed their mind about evolution.

Shortly after receiving my PhD and immediately before joining the Institute for Creation Research, I gave a public lecture at my church on creation/evolution. About 100 excitable atheists came out, along with a labmate or two. One was a lapsed Catholic who reconsidered her non-participation in religious activities as a result of the lecture. But it was not because I presented an outstanding case. Rather, it was the aggressive, unflattering responses from the atheists who pushed her away from apathy and back toward embracing church.

For the past 10 years, I have been professionally engaged in the creation/evolution debate. I have continued to devour the origins literature—on both sides—at the popular and technical levels. I’ve also discovered that the traditional scientific fields in this debate—the fossil record, comparative anatomy, comparative embryology, etc.—take a back seat to genetics. This fact is one of the best-kept secrets of the 150-year-old debate.

The proof for this conclusion is easy to derive. Consider: species are defined by their heritable characteristics (traits). This means that the field of science dedicated to the study of inheritance—the field of genetics—is the most important field of science on Darwin’s central question. However, when Darwin wrote his book in 1859, “genetics” wasn’t even a term—let alone a field of science. In fact, it took nearly a century for the field of genetics to gain its footing. It wasn’t until 1953 that the scientific community realized that DNA was the substance of heredity. Then it took another half century before the scientific community would possess an initial genetic sample of species around the globe. In other words, Darwin tried to answer a fundamentally genetic question long before its time.

Darwin took a massive scientific risk when writing *On the Origin of Species*.



Over the past 10 years, I have performed my own original genetic research and made several groundbreaking discoveries on the origin of species. One discovery relates to the existence of genetic “clocks.” These clocks are biological timekeepers that mark the lapse of time since a species first originated. With these watches in hand, it’s now nearly impossible to genetically describe the origin of species without some commitment to a specific timescale. Conversely, these clocks have caused creationists and evolutionists to trade places.

In 2017, I described the impact of these advances in a monumental book, *Replacing Darwin: The New Origin of Species*. However, *Replacing Darwin* ended up being rather technical in nature. The heavy science content and the intense genetic detail made the conclusions inaccessible to many readers. The book that you hold aims to make the progress of the last 150 years—and especially of the last 40—much more digestible.

In addition, some of the scientific predictions that I made in *Replacing Darwin* have already come to pass—a remarkable advance that further strengthens the conclusion of the book. In the present work, I seek to give voice to these critical discoveries in a manner that will hopefully reach as wide an audience as possible.

In the midst of these discoveries, I have also engaged in several formal and informal debates. In defending my views, especially in hostile settings, I’ve found general patterns in the strategies of my opponents. This book details how evolutionists respond to creationism—and how creationism readily counters these arguments.

To make our discussion easier to follow, I’ve divided this book into two parts. In Part 1, we’ll wrestle with the question of the origin of species. We’ll walk through the biology in an understandable way so that all can follow. We’ll hit the highlights and make genetics accessible. Once we’ve grappled with how species formed, from whom they formed, where they formed, and when they formed, we’ll explore what to do with the information in Part 2.

Whether you’re a skeptic of creationism or a die-hard creationist yourself, I hope this small book brings you up to speed on where the origins debate now sees the most action. And I hope it whets your appetite for more.



*Part 1:*  
The New Origin of Species

# Chapter 2:

## *The Origin of Species After the Flood*

One of the keys to unlocking the origin of species revolves around a subject that provokes excitement or consternation, depending on the audience. To many people today, Noah's ark remains a mystery. Perhaps on some mountain in the Middle East, explorers might still find the remnants of the gigantic ship of Genesis 6–8. But the absence of this vessel, combined with the unfamiliarity that many have with the biblical narrative, leaves many gazing through a dim lens at a dark horizon in the past.

Shrouded in even more mystery are the biological traces left by the animals on Noah's ark. A cursory survey of the depictions of Noah's ark and the animals it contained are as varied as the moods of a toddler. Some images show a tiny ark with modern species poking out the sides and roof. Other representations show a large boat—but still containing modern species. Evolutionists depict no boat at all; they think the ark is an ancient myth with no relevance to the modern world.

For those who are willing to consider the ark's existence, a flood of questions immediately enters their minds. What did Noah see? What animals did he bring on board? How many came?

After the flood, where did the animals go? What happened to the animal passengers? Did they go extinct? Did they change? Are they with us today? Have they left any echo of their existence in our modern world?



In response to the last question, many non-Christians would answer no. Some professing Christians who believe the earth is billions of years old are only slightly less skeptical. Fitting animals on the ark, growing their population sizes after the flood, and producing the modern diversity of life are, to them, impossible scientific problems to solve for the literal-Noah, literal-ark, literal-animals view. Compared to non-Christians, these Christians view the ark account only slightly less fancifully.

Scripture allows us to step back in time and view the ark from a distance. Genesis 1–11 contains clear, unambiguous descriptions of the historical events surrounding the flood account. Though these chapters do not contain a list of creatures with which Noah and his family made their year-long voyage, these passages in Scripture set a framework in which we can hunt for additional clues.

Modern science is giving us even more windows into this enigma of antiquity. The more we learn about the origin of species, the more hints we gain into Noah's vistas. The stamp of the flood reverberates all the way down to the present day—in the form of genetics.

Over the next several chapters, we'll be following these discoveries to chart a path into the ancient past—a path that leads right back to the animals on Noah's ark.

## Continue Reading