

Religion, Evolution, and Biased Research?

By Duane D. Miller

This evening I was leisurely reading through science magazine in my spare time and while browsing I read a letter from the editor titled “Breakthrough of the Year” [1] a short blurb is written about relief over the political/religious debate on where species originate. The editor says we can relax this year since Religion and politics are off the table. It seems some people have closed the book on the topic of creation while evolution is accepted as fact.

While reading through the table of contents of the issue of Science magazine, I also noticed two articles concerning human evolution: (i) “Brain Man Makes Waves With Claims of Recent Human Evolution” [2] and (ii) “Links Between Brain Genes, Evolution, and Cognition challenged.” [3]

These articles are a profile of a researcher named Bruce Lahn who is a geneticist. Some of Lahn’s research is considered a major landmark in the scientific community dealing with deciphering the evolutionary history of the human Y chromosome. His most recent work however deals with seeking to identify the genes behind human’s superior cognitive abilities as compared to animals. Lahn published two Science papers that concluded beneficial brain mutations are common in Eurasia but rare in Africa which attempts to provide evidence for racial differences in cognition. In the section titled “tackling the evolving brain” [2] Lahn claims two genes which are thought to regulate brain growth called microcephalin and ASPM appear to have undergone strong natural selection since the human and chimpanzee lineages split between 5-7 million years ago. Lahn and coworkers claim these genes are implicated in regulating cell division in developing neural cells and mutations can cause microcephaly. The very next sentence goes on to say the function of these genes in normal humans is not clear because they find these genes expressed in non-neural tissues as well. How can it be concluded natural selection has occurred when the very function of these genes in humans is unknown? Furthermore, Lahn and coworkers publish two papers [4, 5] in science in 2005 saying natural selection on variants of these two genes and report these variants have conferred survival, reproductive benefits and “perhaps” a cognitive benefit as well. Media interviews with Lahn reveal an interesting truth however. Lahn admits there was no real evidence natural selection had acted on cognition or intelligence. However, he then says the two papers point out mutations occur when key events in human cultural development occurred 37,000 years ago. These proposed cultural developments 37,000 years ago are nothing more than evolutionary rhetoric taught as fact amongst the vast books written on the subject of human evolution.

When people arrogantly presume evolution as truth and fact, not only is that conferred throughout the published literature but one can clearly see how one’s research is skewed to fall within their priori on origins. Reading further some of the co-authors of the papers such as Sarah Tishkoff [2, 3] are distancing themselves from the attempts to link ASPM variant to human evolution. What I find interesting is during interviews with Lahn, he

speaks about political bias, and claims some scientists fit their data to their particular political bias. However, what he is missing is his religious bias towards humanism and evolution and its influence on his own research.

If political bias can skew ones research, why can't a religious bias also skew ones research?

I propose that our religious beliefs can out weigh even the scientific method which is so fundamental in research. Scientific methodology involves challenging existing paradigms, and testing data. What we need to understand is that running an experiment is conducted in the present. As soon as you make a statement about what happened in the far past, bearing in mind that you weren't there, you step outside scientific methodology. This is the distinction that concerns the very foundation of research being conducted on evolution. There is a difference between operational science and origins science. Origin science has everything to do with accepting a priori that evolution is fact and thus skewing research results.

This problem can be explained with one word "arrogance." Arrogance in the belief that one presumes to know our origins, presuming to have knowledge and that knowledge is correct. When I think about arrogance and knowledge, I am reminded of two verses found in 1st Corinthians chapter 8.

הראשונה אל-הקורנתים ח:ב-ג [6]

החשב כי-הוא ידע דבר-מה עוד לא-ידע מאומה כאשר עליו לדעת אתו:
אבל אם-יאהב איש את-האלהים האלהים ידעו:

1Corinthians 8:2-3 [7]

And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him. (KJV)

These verses allow for no arrogance before God. If a man thinks he knows something he does not know as he ought to know ... and ... the man who loves God, God knows him. In verse 2, prideful certainty is a sign of knowledge gone astray and we can see this within the scientific community where humanism and evolutionary thinking has caused knowledge to go astray. In verse 3, His (God's) knowledge of me not mine of him is what is crucial because in order for us to know the Lord we must first draw near to him and that happens only by the Lord calling us near to him. God reveals himself to us in greater and greater measures once we have placed our faith in his son Yeshua.

Do we know God, or do we know about God?

Our religious beliefs transcends all areas of our life, from our personality (how we behave), how we work (our jobs), to our relationships with others. The kind of personal relationship we should seek is a personal relationship with God which can only be

described as having a hunger to know God intimately and personally. Do you have that kind of hunger to know God?

I want to thank God for AIG (Answers in Genesis Ministries) [8] and those ministries working hard to stand for the truth of God's Holy word starting from the very first verse of the Bible. This year is the opening of the Creation Museum [9] and when it opens I am certain there will be a media frenzy over this issue of creation and evolution.

Arrogance in humanism and evolutionary thought has led many astray. This is a war ... a war which is going on in society between Christianity and humanism. We need to wake up to the fact of what is really going on. This is a war of greater proportions a war over the souls of men and women on this earth. This is a war between creation versus evolution, good versus evil, righteousness versus sin, and ultimately whether mankind is willing to receive God's outstretched arm calling us to faith in Yeshua Hamoshiach. Our enemies are not the humanists and evolutionists or the scientists coming up with new ways to teach/preach evolutionary rhetoric. This is not a battle against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Eph6:12) Because this is a spiritual battle we need to pray, and get serious about praying. Especially for those who are trapped into a mindset which stands itself against the truth of God's word. I believe the time is growing short before our Lord Yeshua's return.

In conclusion, I would like to think about humanity and the best qualities of human nature because I feel it reveals something of God's love for us. For example, if I saw you drowning in a lake, I would do all that I could to throw you a line anything to bring you to shore by any method possible. This is the way God sees all of mankind, drowning in a sea of sin. God has reached out to us, and continues to reach out to us through his son Yeshua Hamoshiach. This is the analogy that I have for those who are lost in sin who do not know the Lord and are drowning in a sea of sin and rebellion. There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12), other than Yeshua Hamoshiach, the Creator and Sustainer of the world.

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah for ever and ever

References

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