

APOLOGETICS 14 – DEFENDING CREATION – PART 6

GENESIS 1:24-25 – LAND ANIMALS

INTRODUCTION

Apologetics - ἀπολογία apologia

The definition of Christian Apologetics is “the information that enables a believer to provide a defense for why a doctrine is believed.”

1 Peter 3:15 – But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.

So far, we have discussed the true age of the Earth. We have demonstrated that the biblical chronology puts the Earth at less than 10,000 years old. We have refuted popular theories within Christendom that capitulate to atheistic naturalists regarding the age of the Earth and universe: the Gap and Day-Age Theories. Also, we have looked at days 1-5 of creation from an apologetic and scientific perspective.

GENESIS 1:24-25

Let The Earth Bring Forth Living Creatures

Day 6 is divided into two parts. The first part deals with land animals, and the second is the crown jewel of creation, mankind. The account begins with the next level of creation. Every day of creation increases the specificity and awe of creation.

Let’s look at the text and then ask and answer some questions.

Let the earth bring forth...

Verse 20 states, “Let the waters teem...and let birds fly in the expanse.” God’s creation has natural barriers: sea life, air life, and land life. These boundaries are still in force today. There are some crossovers: beavers, otters, seals, walruses, turtles, frogs, bats, penguins, and ostriches. We do not know what type of adaptation has taken place, but all of these animals still belong to their kind. It is important to note that there was no commandment given to creation to segregate; only the natural habitat was set.

Verses 24-25 indicate there are three designations of animals.

Beast – חַיָּה chayyāh – this is a noun cognate of “to live.” This seems to be general usage in the Hebrew Scriptures for animal. (Genesis 3:1, 9:2)

Cattle – בְּהֵמָה behaymāh – This is a word that is used to describe large, powerful, supersized land animals. (Job 40:15-24)

Creeping things – רֶמֶשׂ remes – that which moves slowly or close to the ground

The best understanding of these categories in very general terms would be normal-sized, large-sized, and small-sized animals. Understanding this to make this mean cattle, dinosaurs, and reptiles creates categories that are too specific, leaving too many unaccounted-for animals.

APOLOGETICS 14 – DEFENDING CREATION – PART 6

GENESIS 1:24-25 – LAND ANIMALS

After its kind – we discussed this on Day 3 of creation, but it is a good reminder that God created plants, fish, birds, and now land animals as only able to reproduce with like kinds and have offspring of that same kind.

First question: how many kinds are there? One of the arguments against the account of Noah's ark is that the size of the ark, as described, could not hold the millions of different species that are alive today. Correct! But it does not say species. Kinds are different than the secular scientific categorization of species. Biblical kinds can be traced back to the original animal that has offshoots. For example, dogs, cats, and horses all have their original ancestor, which came off the ark about 4,400 years ago.

A study in 1996 estimated that 7,877 kinds entered the ark, but new data on genes, DNA sequencing, and known "species" that can inbreed show that this was a vast overnumbering. The original kinds, as created, are around 1,000 or fewer kinds of animals that entered the ark. The number of mammals is about 240; the number of birds is about 300; the number of reptiles is about 320; and the number of amphibians is about 70. Total: 930.

Second Question: if God created a perfect world with no death and no violence, what about predators? Genesis 1:29-30 demonstrates that man, animals, and birds were created vegetarian. Atheistic naturalists like to point to common foods and current observations to demonstrate that these animals are designed for killing.

It is a faulty assumption to state what is observed today is how it has always been. This is known as uniformitarianism. We cannot use current observation to dictate what the past was like. 2 Peter 3:3

We must also be careful about assuming what particular designs are for. Specifically, let's consider teeth and claws. The most used example of a land predator is the feline. Lions, tigers, panthers, and even the house cat are known for their predatory capabilities. But does that mean that they were designed for killing, or do they have the necessary adaptations to survive by killing and eating meat?

The first example questioned is that of teeth. Do teeth indicate carnivore or herbivore?

Panda – Bamboo

Chinese Water Deer – Grazer

Fruit Bat – Fruit

Monkeys – Some are vegetarians

Mosquitos – Observed to suck juice from fruit

Lions – Little Tyke; 1936 in Allahabad, India, was a vegetarian lioness

The teeth of an animal do not indicate their diet. Adaptations over the years do not mean design. Isaiah 11:6-9 is a well-known passage:

APOLOGETICS 14 – DEFENDING CREATION – PART 6

GENESIS 1:24-25 – LAND ANIMALS

And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the young goat, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them. Also, the cow and the bear will graze, Their young will lie down together, And the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.

Does this passage indicate God interfering with His original design or a miraculous work of restoration to the original intention of creation? Based on what we see in Genesis 1, we must conclude that the original intent for animals was not for violence or meat-eating but rather for peace, beauty, and the amazing variety of God's creative work.

What about venomous animals? If God created a world that is perfect, good, and non-violent, why is there venom in the world, specifically, those of snakes and spiders? Just like with the mammals, I believe that venom as we see it today was not how it was in Genesis 1. So, what changed? Some have read into Genesis 3:14, indicating that serpents were given venom, while others state that God gave various predatory and defensive skills after the flood. This is possible but let's look at a different answer.

Venom is modified saliva or a combination of many different proteins and enzymes. Basically, the venom is digestive juices inserted into food to aid digestion. These combinations have been altered in some way that creates a neurotoxic effect or a hemotoxic effect. Is it possible that these combinations of protein, enzymes, and saliva were designed to aid the eating of fruits and other plants?

Research has found that hyperbaric conditions lessen or eliminate the qualities that make venom toxic to humans and animals. Snake bites are treated with hyperbaric oxygen when no anti-venom is available.

What about dinosaurs? Yes, based on the biblical account, I believe that all animals originally coexisted in harmony with mankind, including dinosaurs.

As we have seen, the size, claws, and teeth do not indicate that they were intended to eat meat, but they may have adopted a meat diet due to the fall.

There were some large dinosaurs created, but the average size of a dinosaur was the size of a dog. The Velociraptor was only about one and a half feet tall.

Dinosaurs are large lizards that grow until their death. There are some now that if they were twice their size, they would be comparable to most dinosaur fossil records.

On Day 5, we see God's achievement in creation, animals that have increasing variety and beauty. His creations ranged from the largest dinosaurs to the smallest insects.

APOLOGETICS 14 – DEFENDING CREATION – PART 6

GENESIS 1:24-25 – LAND ANIMALS

So far, during these six days of creation, God has made everything out of nothing; He made space (heaven and earth) and then filled it. God made everything good, proper, and suitable for his crown jewel, mankind. The animals were not dangerous; they were to be cared for by man, and man was to have dominion over the animal kingdom and all creation. Even the insects that pester us now and carry diseases were not originally created that way.

What did original creation look like? What did creation look like from the fall to the flood? We can only review what is in Scripture and our definitive answers can only be what is in Scripture. Scientific observations can be useful, but they are only tools to help us understand what is written.

It is because of what we read in Scripture that some of our hypotheses about how it used to work, that experiments are performed, and amazing discoveries found. We know that man broke creation. From the sin of Adam, the ground is cursed, death is introduced, violence ensued, worldwide catastrophe was brought about, animals became food for man, animals were instilled with a natural fear of man, and only when the Promised One from Genesis 3:15 comes will everything be restored.