

## INVESTIGATING ORIGINS

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### “Intelligent Design by Humans”

Most scientists bristle at the idea that the extremely complex compounds and chemicals that led to the first life were put together by intelligent design. Only a theory involving pure chance will even be considered. However, the notion that the building blocks of life needed to be formed not by blind accident but by the intentional manipulations of an outside, intelligent entity is gathering steam.

At one time, the vast, overwhelming majority of scientists wrongly believed in spontaneous generation — that life could spring suddenly from non-life. The Bible, on the other hand, makes it clear that a living being only appears “after its kind,” and never from non-life. We now know that the Bible was right and almost every scientist was wrong. As the journal *Science News*, mentioning some of the false theories held by earlier scientists, observed:

“Maggots don’t arise spontaneously out of dead, rotting meat. Aphids never materialize within drops of morning dew. Aristotle and others who believed in the spontaneous generation of life were dead wrong” (Barry 2008: 27).

Instead of springing spontaneously from non-life, all life must have had an intelligence guiding and controlling its formation. Intelligent designers in the laboratory are currently trying to do just that: guide and control the creation of life from non-life, as *Science News* reported:

“Scientists are on the verge of creating living cells by piecing together small molecules that are themselves not alive. The result would be the world’s first human-made life forms, synthetic cells made more or less from scratch.” (Ibid.).

Some scientists, such as John Glass of the J. Craig Venter Institute, are trying to “whittle down” the genome of a bacterium to its barest essentials and then synthesize that minimal genome. Other scientists are planning to assemble various molecules and genes to make a whole cell, not just a genome. Still others “hope to assemble a cell from more-primitive molecules that better mimic the molecules probably involved in the origin of life. If successful, these scientists may uncover clues about how the original ‘spontaneous generation’ of life occurred billions of years ago” (Ibid.).

These scientists have encountered problems in their endeavor, however. Glass’s cell, called Synthia, would consist of a manmade genome, but with a natural membrane enclosing it. “Essentially,” noted Glass, “we are commandeering the shell of a [pre-existing] cell” (Ibid. 28). Another scientist, Albert Libchaber of Rockefeller University, successfully created a protein system that produced fat, but he had to use an extract from an existing bacterium, “essentially borrowing the entire system from a living organism without knowing fully what it consisted of or how it worked” (Ibid.).

These problems demonstrate the difficulty in creating life from non-life, which in turn argues for the impossibility of such immeasurably complex life forms ever having come into existence by pure chance. As Giovanni Murtas of the Enrico Fermi Research Centre observed, “Using [modern] biological molecules, I find it hard to believe that an early simple cell...can ever have existed with only 30 to 40 genes” (Ibid.).

After quoting Murtas, the *Science News* article asked rhetorically: “But how could it be possible for the first cells to have already evolved more than 40 working genes?” (Ibid. 29). This

is the entire point: If intelligent human designers can't create life from non-life without using pre-existing life forms, then how could Earth's original life forms have formed by themselves, without external creation or guidance?

Two hundred years ago, the vast, overwhelming majority of scientists believed, contrary to the Bible, in spontaneous generation. Today, the vast, overwhelming majority of scientists continue to believe (again in contradiction to the Bible) in an alternate form of spontaneous generation: that the first life sprang from non-life. They were wrong back then, and the Bible was right. It appears that the situation has not changed.

Reference:

Barry, P. 2008. "Life from Scratch." *Science News* 173, no. 2.

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