

What Do the Finches Prove?

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Coming to terms in a discussion means that each party understands what the other means when a certain word or term is used. Any discussion in which terms are not agreed upon can quickly turn into a quagmire of misunderstanding and confusion. For instance, the assertion is made: Evolution has occurred on Earth. The most important aspect of the assertion centers on what is meant by the term “evolution.” If, by evolution, one means that living organisms have the genetic ability to alter their appearance in minor ways over a period of time, such an assertion would be accepted by both creationists and evolutionists. If, however, the term “evolution” is defined to mean organisms can genetically mutate into other kinds of organisms over millions of years, gradually changing from simple organisms like amoebas into complex organisms like humans, then the majority of creationists would certainly disagree with such an assertion.

The real confusion enters when one definition is used but then replaced (using “sleight of hand” tactics) by the definition that is not agreed upon. For instance, science writers and textbooks often state that evolution is a fact. As evidence, they point to tiny variations in the size of a finch’s beak, color in a moth population, or length of a neck bone, and they say these minor variations prove “evolution.” Then, they say, since evolution is a proven fact, we know that monkeys and humans “evolved” from a common ancestor. By paying close attention, one can ferret out the “trick” and see that the definition of evolution was switched from “small changes within the same kind of organism” to “huge genetic changes turning one kind of animal into another.”

Understanding this situation becomes increasingly important when reading literature produced by those in the scientific community. In the July 14 issue of *Science*, Peter and Rosemary Grant presented a paper titled “Evolution of Character Displacement in Darwin’s Finches.” The thesis of the article is that one particular species of finch (*Geospiza fortis*) “evolved” a slightly smaller beak due to the arrival of a larger-beaked finch (*G. magnirostris*) competing for larger seeds of the *Tribulus cistoides* plant during a severe drought (Grant and Grant, 2006).

Randolph Schmid, an *Associated Press* author who wrote about the Grants’ latest article, opened his summary of their findings with these words: “Finches on the Galapagos Islands that inspired Charles Darwin to develop the concept of evolution are now helping confirm it—by evolving” (2006). Notice what Schmid did in his introduction. He commingled two separate definitions of evolution into his statement, falsely equating the two. The generally accepted definition for the concept of evolution proposed by Darwin is “huge genetic changes turning one kind of animal into another,” often called Darwinism. But the

“evolving” accomplished by the finches on the Galapagos Islands was simply “small changes within the same kind of organism.”

Schmid interviewed Robert Fleischer, a scientist who works with the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History, who stated that the Grants merely had documented an instance of “microevolution” (small changes within the same kind of organism). Yet, the titles of the articles by both Schmid and the Grants misleadingly imply that Darwinian evolution has been proven by the finch research, and Schmid goes so far as to make this bold claim in his introductory paragraph.

What do the finches really prove? They prove that finches stay finches, and the only documented kind of “evolution” is that of small changes within the same kind of organism. The Grants have been studying the finches for 33 years, and this change in beak size, which amounted to about .6 millimeters in beak length and .8 millimeters in beak depth (“Study: Darwin’s...”), was “the strongest evolutionary change seen in the 33 years of the study” (Grant and Grant, 2006). Even more ironic is the fact that this “evolutionary” change to a smaller beak that allegedly helped the finches to survive might not be so helpful after all. In the same article for *Science*, the Grants alluded to research done in 1977 when a drought struck the same island and killed many of the finches. The Grants noted: “Most finches died that year, and mortality was heaviest among those with **small beaks**” (2006, *emp. added*). Thus, if *G. fortis* keeps “evolving” a smaller beak size, a major drought in the future could easily spell its demise.

Scientific observation has never produced a single shred of evidence that proves even the possibility of “huge genetic changes turning one kind of animal into another.” In fact, all the observable evidence proves that every living organism multiplies “according to its kind” exactly as stated in Genesis 1:24, small changes in beak size, body weight, or skin color notwithstanding.

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- “Study: Darwin’s Finches Rapidly Evolving” (2006), [On-line], URL: <http://www.macnewsworld.com/story/dP6qz1wCRQQfO4/Study-Darwins-Finches-Rapidly-Evolving.xhtml>. What do the finches prove?



R&R RESOURCES

Q My child has become very inquisitive about the Ice Age since recently watching the new *Ice Age* cartoon movies. From a Christian's perspective, what can I tell him about the Ice Age?

A Although the Bible does not specifically reveal the cause of the millions of cubic miles of ice on the Earth today (such as that which covers Antarctica and Greenland), and even though the Bible does not reveal specific information about a time when ice apparently covered much of northern Europe, northwest Asia, and North America, these ice sheets likely formed as a result of the Noahic Flood.

Two factors logically explain the build up of ice sheets: (1) increased snowfall; and (2) cooler summers. With more snowfall in the winter, and less snow melting in the summer due to cooler temperatures, snow could build up rapidly and turn into ice. But what could cause more snowfall and cooler summers? From whence did the trillions of gallons of water come, which were needed to make snow that formed the massive ice sheets? What catastrophic event could have changed the weather so drastically that this water turned into snow,

and eventually into millions of cubic miles of ice? One event comes to mind that could adequately account for such a phenomenon: the Global Flood of Noah's day.

The Flood would have changed the weather on Earth drastically. Reduced summer temperatures could have been caused by volcanic dust (produced during the upheavals of the Flood—Genesis 7:11,17-24), or by increased cloud cover that shielded the planet from some of the Sun's radiation. A reduction in solar radiation, in turn, could have caused a rapid cooling of certain landmasses, which allowed snow to remain during the summer months in certain areas of the world where it currently thaws. Over time, this snow would compact and form huge sheets of ice that would remain until the weather patterns on Earth changed.

While we cannot be sure about all of the causes of the Ice Age, we can offer possible explanations that would not require millions of years, and would take into account the biblical record of the Flood. Remember, true science never contradicts the Bible.

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IN THE NEWS

The first same-sex couple to receive a legal marriage license in U.S. history two years ago (2004) now have terminated their "marriage" (Bone, 2006). The lesbian couple acted as plaintiffs in the 2003 case that led to the Massachusetts State Supreme Court legalizing same-sex "marriage" (Abraham and Paulson, 2004). While the legitimacy of same-sex marriage may not be called into question strictly on the basis of this couple's actions, it surely is suggestive of the larger picture.

In his book *Outrage: How Gay Activists and Liberal Judges are Trashing Democracy to Redefine Marriage*, Peter Sprigg argues that homosexuals are less likely than heterosexuals to enter into long-term relationships, less likely to be sexually faithful, and less likely to stay together for a lifetime ("Books and..." 2006). In the recent ruling by the Washington State Supreme Court which repudiated same-sex marriage, Justice James Johnson noted: "Direct comparisons between opposite-sex homes and same-sex homes further support the former as a better environment for children. For example, studies show an average shorter term commitment and more sexual partners for same-sex couples" (*Andersen v. . .*). That explains why less than half the homosexual couples in Massachusetts have bothered to "marry" even though they now have been granted the legal right to do so (Perkins, 2006). Nevertheless, normalizing sexually deviant behavior will inevitably alter how people conceptualize marriage itself. Legalizing illicit sexual activity cannot help but undermine the foundations of the marriage institution, which is characterized by and dependent on

commitment, sexual fidelity, and dedication to permanence.

The Designer of marriage has indicated that one man for one woman for life is the very essence, nature, and character of marriage (Genesis 1:27; 2:24). Any other arrangement is "against nature" and the result of a "debased mind" (Romans 1:26,28). Those who engage in same-sex relations have been given up "to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves" (Romans 1:24).

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