

# Life on Earth - Two Faiths

Myriads of **life forms** now exist on the earth, from microscopic bacteria to Bactrian camels, from mushrooms to maple trees. **One Faith** accepts the words of **Genesis**, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,*" followed by **the six days** of preparing terrestrial conditions and placing of land plants; aquatic life and flying creatures; land animals and man. Belief in **creation** is a matter of faith in **the Bible account**.

- The **other Faith** believes that only the known **natural laws** of nature, apart from the intervention of an outside intelligence, were involved in the **production** of all life. The earth **happened** to have the conditions to **permit** the existing minerals to **become interconnected** to form the first life. This first life form was able to **survive** and **replicate** over millions of years while **evolving** into the existing vast complexity of life.

Belief in **evolution** is a matter of **faith** in an **inexplicable process** which is still **hotly debated**. Evolution **denies** that there was any **intelligent design** of living creatures. It sees both the **origin** of life and its subsequent **development** as purely a matter of **chance**. The earth with all its life will eventually be **destroyed** by the sun, while the production of new life anywhere else will be made impossible in an **ever-expanding** universe.

- **Which faith** makes the most sense? To make our decision about the **origin of life** we need to know the **three qualities** which defines life. That can help to **assess** what the possibility is of it arising **spontaneously**, or whether the only explanation of the facts is **special creation**.

**All living things** are composed of **cells**, which are generally **microscopic** in size. Thin sections of plant and animal tissue under the microscope show that they are made up of **various** kinds of cells. But there are also **single-cell** animals and plants, such as bacteria, yeasts, and protozoa. While cells are of different shapes and sizes, all living matter consists of them. In fact **LIFE IS ONLY KNOWN TO EXIST WITHIN A CELL**. Furthermore, there are certain **characteristics** of this living substance in cells which **distinguish** it from non-living matter, like salt.

- A **molecule** of a substance is the smallest part of it that can exist on its own. Non-living matter consists generally of **small** molecules **Cells are unique in that they always contain ORGANIC MOLECULES which are ALWAYS VERY LARGE**, whereas non-living matter consists generally of **small** molecules. Some of these large molecules in cells are relatively **very big** indeed, often **hundreds of thousands** of times bigger than a molecule of salt.

Second, **LIVING MATERIAL CAN GROW**, and third, **IT CAN REPLICATE ITSELF**. A bacterial cell can **enlarge** and then **divide** into two identical cells in twenty minutes. Living substance has therefore been defined by science as "a **highly complex** substance having **large organic molecules** as its primary ingredient, **organized in cells**, and having the characteristics of **growth** and **reproduction**."

- Darwin evidently **had not thought through** the crucial role of cells in living things, despite that Schwann and Schleiden had stated in 1839 that cells are the "**elementary particles of organisms**" in both plants and animals and the earlier discoveries of **the nucleus** in 1833, and of **protoplasm**. Cells are now known to be **VERY COMPLEX** things - far more complex than when the original theory of evolution was first thought of. More next time, God willing.