



London

A Detective Story.

I like watching Columbo, he is my favorite detective. Watching how he pieces together the evidence and how he traps the suspect into making a mistake. The detective must determine whether it was an accident or a crime. Once he has determined that it is a crime, he must find out who had the means, motive and opportunity to commit it. In the opening scenes of every Columbo, we see the crime taking place. It is very interesting to watch the criminal at work, of course I don't mean the dastardly deed, but the way the murderer tries to hide the evidence afterwards. The murderer will doctor the evidence or try other ways to send the detective in completely the wrong direction. The murderer will try to show that they did not have the means, motive, and/or opportunity. Of course, the detective doesn't see all this.

The most common theories of our origins are, the Big bang theory and the theory of descent by natural selection, also known as (Neo)Darwinism. There are other lesser known theories, but these two have become the orthodox. Both the Big bang theory and (Neo)Darwinism have evidence for them and evidence against them. These two theories, and many other's like them are attempts to remove God from the equation. Some Christians embrace them and try to find some way to fit God in somehow, but it isn't easy and it isn't pretty. I'm going to deal with just God as the explanation or Big bang/Darwinism as the explanation to try and keep things simple. We, like Columbo did not come in until after the opening scenes, that is, after the deed was done. We are left with evidence and we must weigh the evidence up carefully. We have two suspects, God (Supernaturalism) or Materialism (naturalism). So which one had means, motive and opportunity?

Means:- We believe that God had the means because He is all-powerful and intelligent. Does Natural selection have the means? Darwin used artificial selection to demonstrate how nature could produce the changes required for one organism to change into a completely new organism. The problem with artificial selection is that it requires human intervention to produce the changes. It requires a conscious decision to produce the desired effect, but we can't use this in nature. Artificial selection has also shown us that there are limits to how far we can change an organism. Another problem is that because natural selection is so slow a process, no one has ever seen one animal turn into a completely different animal, for example, no one has seen an ape(ape-like creature) turn into a man. Natural selection as a mechanism is insufficient to explain the origin of the different characteristics exhibited by living organisms, for example, structure, physiology, behaviour and development. These characteristics are supposed to be built up by small steps over each generation. Finally, over time it has been essential to add other selection pressures, for example, sexual selection (e.g. the peacock's tail). These pressures act against natural selection, thus limiting any advantage that natural selection might make. **Conclusion;** Natural selection does not look like it had the means.

Motive:- This is a simple one. God clearly had the motive for creating life, He is a conscious being. Natural selection, being an unconscious process clearly has no motive.

Opportunity:- The Bible doesn't say exactly how old the Universe or the Earth is. Some people believe that the Earth is just 6000 years old. Some believe that it is just 10 or 20 thousand years old, while others believe that it is millions or billions of years old. The Bible isn't dogmatic about the age, but it does say that God created it in six days. Some people believe that they were literal 24 hour days, while others believe that each day was equal to an age, a vast period of time. I don't believe it really matters, I mean, you could believe that it was created in six days (24 hr), but thousands or millions of years ago. What the Bible is very clear about, is that God created it. Did the Big bang and natural selection have the opportunity? The age of the universe has been put around 15 billion years and the Earth at around 4.5 billion years old. This vast age was attributed to the universe and the Earth in order to give the Big bang enough time to create the universe and natural selection enough time to create the whole diversity of life. Simply put, if the universe is less than 15 billion years and the Earth is less than 4.5 billion years then it would be highly questionable if the Big bang and natural selection had the opportunity.

It looks like God is our suspect.

Prayer:- Heavenly Father, we pray for those who are struggling with faith. Help us all to be like little children in the faith, to be humble and realize that we do not have all the answers. Faith doesn't need all the answers, just the simple assurance that you are our Father and you supply all of our needs. In the blessed name of Jesus. Amen.

By Philip Catherall