

We have looked at two of the three places where *bara'* (create) is used in Genesis 1. We have found that the creation of the heavens and the earth (the Universe) appears to be, scientifically speaking, a clear step or *original* creation. We have also analyzed the appearance of animal life in the sea and in the air. While there may be disagreement about the origin of birds, we have seen in the last chapter that the origin of animal life in the sea is totally undocumented in the fossil record. This gaping "black hole" in 400 million years of sedimentary deposits leads to the conclusion that this also is a very direct and special intervention by God in His plan of creation.

The third place the word *bara'* is used is in God's creation of human beings. We will explore the scientific evidence for this in the next chapter. The point which must be made here is that a highly visible miracle is not required by Scripture in the creation of animal life on the land because of the fact that the word *bara'* is *not* used. In my judgment, Scripture does not therefore preclude the transformation by God of a fish into an amphibian. The fact that the *eusthenopteron* lobe-finned fish appears to have been preadapted to life on the land indicates a long-term cohesive plan. Whether one believes God created in this way or not is a matter of judgment. However, I believe we should allow God to perform His miracles in His way and in His time. He may have chosen to perform these miracles in a seemingly more "natural" way than some had considered, but the prerogative is His.

It is uncertain whether God created amphibians from fish, reptiles from amphibians, or mammals from reptiles. But He may have chosen this route to accomplish His miracle when He said, " 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind'; and it was so." (Gen. 1:24)

Regardless of the specific processes by which God created animal life on the land, the scientific record of the order of events is again in harmony with Scripture. The creation of animal life on the land followed animal life in the sea. Major new life forms appeared quite suddenly in geologic time and rapidly multiplied into a variety of new life forms. The next significant event in both biblical and scientific history was the creation of man. However, before we can deal with this emotionally charged subject, we must explore the primates as a whole -- the biological order in which scientists classify apes, monkeys, and humans.