

Lesson 6: The Problem with “Origin of Life” Research

Overview

Life comes from God. Living things are not simply collections of chemicals, but highly organized systems capable of processing information, maintaining themselves, and reproducing.

Thousands of “Origin of Life” researchers are using intelligence and highly guided chemistry in order to determine how life arose from unguided chemistry.

Key Scriptures

- Genesis 2:7
- Acts 17:25
- John 1:4
- Psalm 36:9

Starting Assumptions

- God is the source of life.
- Naturalism must explain life without God.
- “Origin of life” theories begin by limiting which explanations may be considered.

Origin-of-Life Efforts are Misguided

Researchers have proposed several possible pathways:

- Primordial soup
- Hydrothermal vents
- RNA world
- Life or organic material arriving from space

These proposals may change the suggested location or chemical pathway, but none has demonstrated the complete transition from non-life to life.

The Miller-Urey Experiment

The 1953 Miller-Urey experiment:

- Used selected gases and carefully controlled laboratory conditions.
- Added water, heat, and electrical sparks.
- Produced several organic compounds, including amino acids.
- Produced no proteins, genetic code, cell membrane, or living cell.

Amino acids are ingredients used in proteins, but producing some ingredients is not the same as producing life.

Chemistry and Life

Chemical reactions follow established physical and chemical laws. They may produce increasingly complex molecules, but complexity alone is not life.

The chemicals found in DNA are very simple, the complexity is not in the chemicals used, it is in the resulting process.

Living cells require:

- Organized and coordinated parts
- Stored biological information
- Systems that read and copy that information
- Energy use and regulation
- Maintenance and repair
- Reproduction of the complete system

Information and Organization

The problem is not simply obtaining the correct chemicals. Those chemicals must be arranged correctly and operate together according to biological instructions.

Life requires not just Information, Ingredients, Organization, Coordination, & Operation, but also meaning & reason, purpose & intent, and an Amazing God.