The question of origins is the question of where we came from. Our answers to this question determine our decisions about how we live and where we draw our values and our sense of meaning and purpose in life.

If we understand ourselves as being rooted in divine creation, we will accept the divine norms as our own. Our purpose will be derived from God. We will accept our value or meaning as that which the Creator has placed upon us. If we accept the notion of evolution, we must recognise that the only norms which may make any claim upon us are our own. Then, our sense of purpose must be founded in ourselves, our own desires and ambitions, and our value is purely subjective; no more than we are valued as productive or desirable. The question of origins is, therefore, more than just one of science-fact, but one of crucial importance to how we view, and live, life. This study will examine the Scriptural answer to the origin of life. Scripture claims God as the origin of life.

Now that we have established the Scriptural view that life did not have an origin, but several separate origins, what is the Scriptural view of the originating principle, or force for life?

The simple clarity of the Genesis account should leave no doubt with regard to this question. But the debate on origins intends to question the account. Did Genesis mean to report fact or fable? Was this an account of Creation or a myth about meaning? What are the questions seek to uncover (for the sceptic) is: Did the author of Genesis know what he was saying, or does later Scripture clarify this understanding into something else? Let us look and see.

In order to discover what Scripture has to say on the topic, we check with a concordance. We look under words like "create", "found", "make", and so forth. Look up Psalm 24:2. What does this say about creation? Who is responsible? Check Psalm 89:11-12. Does it agree or disagree? What is God cited as doing in Psalm 104:8? These have little to do with life per se, but they have their point in this study. Now read Isaiah 45:18. How does this tie the creation of the world, and of modern geography, with life?

Now look at Isaiah 45:12. Here the prophet asserts the fact that God created man. Other passages which assert a similar idea are Genesis 5:1; Deuteronomy 4:32; Isaiah 43:1; and Malachi 2:10 - just to name a few.

Turn to Psalm 104:24-30. What is God described as having created? What else does He do? What power do verses 29-30 ascribe to God? Discuss: does this strengthen the understanding presented in Genesis 1, or does it weaken it or change it?

Some biblical ideas are understood by the inference of the text. Job chapters 38 through 41 are scriptures from which one may validly draw creationist inferences. Quickly read these chapters. How many different life forms does God speak about as Creator? Notice how the creation of the world is always part of the understanding of the creation of life. Could you suggest a reason for this (hint: remember Isaiah 45:18 above).

Finally, look at Zechariah 12:1. Here the prophet expresses an understanding of origins. What is it? Is it any different than the one in Genesis? This is also the beginning of the reason why we even bother with the debate. God not only has created plant and animal life, birds, fish, and human life, but spiritual life. God has founded this too. The foundation is mentioned briefly in Proverbs 10:25. What do you think Solomon was referring to?

Now read Isaiah 28:16-17. This should sound familiar; it is quoted in the New Testament. Who does this passage refer to as the founder? Who is the foundation? Notice, too, that he who believes shall not be disturbed, but the one who does not believe is discussed in the last half of verse 17 and following. Here we have the gospel
in the Old Testament just as clearly as in the New. To fill out your understanding of the image, turn to Ephesians 2:20-22. This is also life God has created, new life, eternal life in Jesus Christ.

This is where the central importance of the understanding of creation comes in. Without the scriptural understanding of Genesis, how can we have the biblical, gospel understanding of Isaiah 28, or Ephesians 2? The same God created both, or all types of life. One may debate the creationist understanding of Genesis, but not without surrendering the plain sense of other Scriptures as well, including those which reveal the gospel to us!

Close this study with a reading of Psalm 139. Don't skip over verses 19-22, but discuss how we can understand these words in the light of this study (for example), and still remember to love our enemies as Christ commands us. Pray for steadfastness in the understanding and confession of the truth of God's Word.

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