ANIMALS AFTER THE FLOOD

JONATHAN SARFATI

WHAT DID ANIMALS EAT AFTER THEY LEFT THE ARK?

God instructed Noah to leave the Ark only after trees were growing again. Plant-eating animals need lots of food. But what about meat-eating animals? Why didn't they hunt and eat all the plant-eaters?

One reason is that hunting is very tiring. Also, the intended victim might fight back, hurting the hunter. The Flood had buried huge numbers of animals, some near the surface. Meat-eaters could have dug them up and eaten them. Even if the meat was unsafe for humans, animals would find it less risky than hunting. Also, retreating Flood waters would have left pools of trapped fish, easy prey for meat eaters.

Perhaps there was plenty of dried meat left over from the Ark's huge food stores. Meat eaters might have snuck back to the Ark's pantries for months after everyone had disembarked.

© Wolfhound911 | Dreamstime.com

ANIMALS FILLED THE EARTH

Eventually, the Ark's animals produced babies of the same kind. Those babies grew up and had babies, and so on. So animal populations increased and spread out.

During the Ice Age, much water from the ocean was in ice sheets on land. This meant sea levels were lower, which exposed land bridges (see previous article, *Creation* **47**(4):32–35, 2024). These bridges allowed animals to spread to most places, even those now cut off by sea. Also, animals can travel to islands on natural rafts formed by uprooted trees and tangled plants. Over many generations, animals eventually migrated worldwide.

ARK KINDS PRODUCED ANY VARIETIES

In the Ark article (*Creation* **45**(2):32–35, 2023), we learned that God selected a few thousand land animals with backbones (*vertebrates*) to go on board (Genesis 6:20). That is, one pair of each kind (seven pairs of relatively few clean animals—Genesis 7:2–3). The rest were destroyed in the Flood (Genesis 7:21–23).

Even before the famous evolutionist Charles Darwin (1809–1882), creationist scientists studied animals, including vertebrates. There is a huge number of varieties, much larger than the number of kinds on board the Ark.

These scientists realized that today's vertebrates must have descended from the Ark vertebrates. Therefore, they realized that each kind must have produced a wide variety of descendants. Thus, the biblical kind must be much broader than varieties. In fact, it was even broader than 'species'.

For example, the Ark didn't need to hold tigers, lions, leopards, ocelots, and housecats. Rather, there was just *one* pair of a cat *(felid)* kind. How do we know all cats are the same created kind? Because many can breed together to have *hybrids*. If two creatures can have hybrids together (*hybridize*), or with the same third creature, then they are members of the same created kind. The huge tiger can't hybridize with our pet cats. But tigers can hybridize with lions, which are smaller, to form *ligers* (male lion) or *tigons* (male tiger). Lions can hybridize with still smaller leopards. Then leopard with puma, to ocelot, to margay, to pet cats. This chain of smaller and smaller cats links tigers to pet cats. Therefore, they are the same created kind. The cat pair on board might have been medium-sized and spotted.

Similarly, poodles, dachshunds, corgis, labradors, coyotes, jackals, and wolves were not on board. Instead, there was just a pair of a dog (*canid*) kind. This pair looked much more like wolves than poodles. We have recorded history for the origin of many dog breeds. Also, many breeds can still hybridize with wolves or jackals, showing they are the same created kind.

The pre-Darwinian creationist scientists knew that creatures *could* have a wide variety of offspring. But they didn't know *how* such variation occurred. This had to wait until the creationist scientist Gregor Mendel (1822–1884) discovered *genetics*. Genetics is the study of how offspring inherit features from their parents. Modern scientists have discovered even more about the process.

GENES

In Genesis 1, God created distinct kinds of creatures. Genesis tells us there was one male and one female human (Adam and Eve). However, God could have created more than two of each kind of plant or animal.

God created each kind with lots of different *genes*. Genes are miniature 'instruction manuals' to produce various features. Genes are copied from parent to child, which is why you may look like your parents. When those original creatures produced offspring, the diverse genes meant many varieties. However, one kind could never turn into another kind.

The Flood was about 1,500 years after Creation Week. By that time, many created kinds had already produced many varieties. Scientists have discovered their fossils. But God selected only one pair (but seven pairs of some) of each kind to go on the Ark. He undoubtedly selected healthy animals with much genetic variation.

HOW VARIETIES AROSE

For any of the many features in an animal—for example, its fur—there is variation in things like the length, colour, and more. We'll just look at fur length, but the same *principles* apply to many other features.

The diagram shows the dog/wolf kind from the Ark. The red bars on their bellies represent genes for short and long fur. The pair on the Ark had both, so they had medium fur length.

Like you, wolves have genes in pairs. So when this wolf pair has pups, half of the offspring's genes come from the mother and half from the father. In particular, it will pass on *either* the short- *or* the long-version (*allele*) of the fur-length gene.

The left pup with short fur inherited a short-fur gene from both parents. The right pup with long fur got a long-fur gene from both parents. The two middle pups with medium fur received one long and one short, like their parents. Because the parents had genes for more than one fur length, their pups had varied fur length.

Note that God had *previously programmed* this variation in the genes. This is *not* evolution, i.e., simple creatures becoming complex ones. Evolution needs *new* genes, not shuffling *existing* genes.

Suppose those pups had lots of descendants that all stayed in one place. Then most of them would probably have medium-length fur. (They would likely be medium in most other features, too). However, the Ark case was unique. It landed in the mountains of Ararat. After small groups separated, the mountains would hinder them getting back together. Also, one small group could carry mainly short-fur genes while another could carry mainly long-fur genes. So different areas would contain different varieties. It would be the same with other features. Mountainous regions are well known for rapid variation.

NATURAL SELECTION

Now consider some animal groups entering cold regions during the Ice Age. Which would survive? The long-furred ones, of course! Their fur would protect them from the cold. So they were the only survivors that could pass on their genes—all long-fur. So their pups also had long fur.

This is *natural selection* (NS). Darwin did ***not*** discover NS. Creationist scientists discovered it decades before, and they knew things about NS that Darwin did not:

- NS is called 'survival of the fittest,' but doesn't explain the *arrival* of the fittest.
- NS selects only from what is available, *removing* genes (*culling* force). It doesn't create anything new by adding genes (*creative* force). Evolution is the opposite of NS; it needs *more* genes, not fewer.

CONCLUSION

All land vertebrates today descend from the pairs on the Ark. God selected these pairs with lots of gene diversity. Small groups of animals dispersing from mountainous regions would quickly produce many varieties. Natural selection would cull varieties that didn't fit the environment.

Activity

THE TONGUE ROLLING DETECTIVE

Do you have a special gene that lets you roll your tongue? Let's find out! Genes are tiny instruction manuals that decide what you look like and what you can do.

Step 1: Can You Roll?

Stick your tongue out and try to curl the sides up to make a "U" shape, like a hot dog bun.

- **YES!** You have the special Tongue-Rolling Gene!
- **NO!** You don't have the special gene.

Step 2: Check Your Parents!

Ask your parents to try the trick. Record your results!

Step 3: The Secret of the Genes

This special Tongue-Rolling Gene is a dominant trait (a strong instruction).

- If you get this strong instruction from at least one parent, you can roll your tongue.
- If both parents give you the weak instruction (meaning neither of them can roll), then you won't be able to do it!

It's your family's instruction manuals that decide if you can do the trick!

Parent 1 can roll	Parent 2 can roll	Child result
Yes	No	Can usually roll!
No	No	Cannot roll!