

Course Syllabus for
EVOLUTION AND SPECIAL CREATION

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I. BASIC DEFINITIONS

A. Definitions of Evolution

"When I first came to the notion,...of a succession of extinction of species, and creation of new ones, going on perpetually now, and through an indefinite period of the past, and to continue for ages to come, all in accommodation to the changes which must continue in the inanimate and habitable earth, the idea struck me as the grandest which I had ever conceived, so far as regards the attributes of the Presiding Mind."

-- from a letter of Sir Charles Lyell to Sir John Herschel, London, June 1, 1836. Quoted In *Life, Letters and Journals of Sir Charles Lyell*, ed. by Katherine H. Lyell (London: 1881), Volume 1, pp. 467-468.

"It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being Growth with Reproduction; Inheritance which is almost implied by reproduction; Variability from the indirect and direct action of the condition of life, and from use and disuse; a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of Less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, while this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved."

-- Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species* concluding paragraph.

"Evolution is the gradual development from the simple unorganized condition of primal matter to the complex structure of the physical universe; and in like manner, from the beginning of organic life on the habitable planet, a gradual unfolding and branching out into all the varied forms of beings which constitute the animal and plant kingdoms. The first is called inorganic, the last Organic Evolution."

-- Richard Swann Lull, *Organic Evolution* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1917), p. 6.