

ONLY THREE WAYS TO MAKE AN APEMAN

Perhaps the most bitter pill to swallow for any Christian who attempts to “make peace” with Darwin is the presumed ape ancestry of man. Even many Christians who uncritically accept evolution as “God’s way of creating” try to somehow elevate the origin of man, or at least his soul, above that of the beasts. Evolutionists attempt to soften the blow by assuring us that man didn’t exactly evolve from apes (tailless monkeys) but rather from *apelike* creatures. This is mere semantics, however, as many of the presumed apelike ancestors of man are apes and have scientific names, which include the word *pithecus* (derived from the Greek meaning “ape”). The much-touted “human ancestor” commonly known as “Lucy,” for example, has the scientific name *Australopithecus afarensis* (meaning “southern *ape* from the Afar triangle of Ethiopia”). But what does the Bible say about the origin of man, and what exactly is the scientific evidence that evolutionists claim for our ape ancestry?

BIBLICAL STARTING ASSUMPTIONS

God tells us that on the same day He made all animals that walk on the earth (the sixth day), He created man separately in His own image with the intent that man would have dominion over every other living thing on Earth (Genesis 1:26–28). From this it is clear that there is no animal that is man’s equal, and certainly none his ancestor.

Thus when God paraded the animals by Adam for him to name, He observed that “for Adam there was not found an help meet for him” (Genesis 2:20). Jesus confirmed this uniqueness of men and women when He declared that marriage is to be between a man and a woman because “from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female” (Mark 10:6). This leaves no room for prehumans or for billions of years of cosmic evolution prior to man’s appearance on the earth. Adam chose the very name “Eve” for his wife because he recognized that she would be “the mother of all living” (Genesis 3:20). The Apostle Paul stated clearly that man is not an animal: “All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds” (1 Corinthians 15:39).

ONLY THREE WAYS TO MAKE AN “APEMAN”

Knowing from Scripture that God didn’t create any apemen, there are only three ways for the evolutionist to create one.

1. Combine ape fossil bones with human fossil bones and declare the two to be one individual— a real “apeman.”
2. Emphasize certain humanlike qualities of fossilized ape bones, and with imagination upgrade apes to be more humanlike.
3. Emphasize certain apelike qualities of fossilized human bones, and with imagination downgrade humans to be more apelike.

These three approaches account for *all* of the attempts by evolutionists to fill the unbridgeable gap between apes and men with fossil apemen.

COMBINING MEN AND APES

The most famous example of an apeman proven to be a combination of ape and human bones is Pilt-down man. In 1912, Charles Dawson, a medical doctor and an amateur paleontologist, discovered a mandible (lower jawbone) and part of a skull in a gravel pit near Pilt-down, England. The jawbone was apelike but had teeth that showed wear similar to the human pattern. The skull, on the other hand, was very humanlike. These two specimens were combined to form what was called “Dawn man,” which was calculated to be 500,000 years old.

The whole thing turned out to be an elaborate hoax. The skull was indeed human (about 500 years old), while the jaw was that of a modern female orangutan whose teeth had been obviously filed to crudely resemble the human wear pattern. Indeed, the long ape canine tooth was filed down so far that it exposed the pulp chamber, which was then filled in to hide the mischief. It would seem that any competent scientist examining this tooth would have concluded that it was either a hoax or the world’s first root canal! The success of this hoax for over 50 years, in spite of the careful scrutiny of the best authorities in the world, led the human evolutionist Sir Solly Zuckerman to declare: “It

is doubtful if there is any science at all in the search for man's fossil ancestry."¹

MAKING MAN OUT OF APES

Many apemen are merely apes that evolutionists have attempted to upscale to fill the gap between apes and men. These include all the australopithecines, as well as a host of other extinct apes such as *Ardipithecus*, *Orrorin*, *Sahelanthropus* and *Kenyanthropus*. All have obviously ape skulls, ape pelvises and ape hands and feet. Nevertheless, australopithecines (especially *Australopithecus afarensis*) are often portrayed as having hands and feet identical to modern man, a ramrod-straight, upright posture and a human gait.

The best-known specimen of *A. afarensis* is the fossil commonly known as "Lucy." A life-like mannequin of "Lucy" in the *Living World* exhibit at the St. Louis Zoo shows a hairy humanlike female body with human hands and feet but with an obviously apelike head. The three-foot-tall Lucy stands erect in a deeply pensive pose with her right forefinger curled under her chin, her eyes gazing off into the distance as if she were contemplating the mind of Newton.

Few visitors are aware that this is a gross misrepresentation of what is known about the fossil ape *Australopithecus afarensis*. These apes are known to be long-armed knuckle-walkers with locking wrists. Both the hands and feet of this creature are clearly apelike. Paleoanthropologists Jack Stern and Randall Sussman² have reported that the hands of this species are "surprisingly similar to hands found in the small end of the pygmy chimpanzee—common chimpanzee range." They report that the feet, like the hands, are "long, curved and heavily muscled" much like those of living tree-dwelling primates. The authors conclude that no living primate has such hands and feet "for any purpose other than to meet the demands of full or part-time arboreal (tree-dwelling) life."

Despite evidence to the contrary, evolutionists and museums continue to portray Lucy (*A. Afarensis*) with virtually human feet (though some are finally showing the hands with long curved fingers).

MAKING APES OUT OF MAN

In an effort to fill the gap between apes and men, certain fossil *men* have been declared to be "apelike" and thus, ancestral to at least "modern" man. You might say this latter effort seeks to make a "monkey" out of man. Human fossils that are claimed to be "ape-

men" are generally classified under the genus *Homo* (meaning "self"). These include *Homo erectus*, *Homo heidelbergensis* and *Homo neanderthalensis*.

The best-known human fossils are of Cro-Magnon man (whose marvelous paintings are found on the walls of caves in France) and Neanderthal man. Both are clearly human and have long been classified as *Homo sapiens*. In recent years, however, Neanderthal man has been downgraded to a different species—*Homo neanderthalensis*. The story of how Neanderthal man was demoted to an apeman provides much insight into the methods of evolutionists.

Neanderthal man was first discovered in 1856 by workmen digging in a limestone cave in the Neander valley near Dusseldorf, Germany. The fossil bones were examined by an anatomist (professor Schaafhausen) who concluded that they were human.

At first, not much attention was given to these finds, but with the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, the search began for the imagined "apelike ancestors" of man. Darwinians argued that Neanderthal man was an apelike creature, while many critical of Darwin (like the great anatomist Rudolph Virchow) argued that Neanderthals were human in every respect, though some appeared to be suffering from rickets or arthritis.

Over 300 Neanderthal specimens have now been found scattered throughout most of the world, including Belgium, China, Central and North Africa, Iraq, the Czech republic, Hungary, Greece, northwestern Europe and the Middle East. This race of men was characterized by prominent eyebrow ridges (like modern Australian Aborigines), a low forehead, a long narrow skull, a protruding upper jaw and a strong lower jaw with a short chin. They were deep-chested, large-boned individuals with a powerful build. It should be emphasized, however, that none of these features fall outside the range of normal human anatomy. Interestingly, the brain size (based on cranial capacity) of Neanderthal man was actually *larger* than average for that of modern man, though this is rarely emphasized.

Most of the misconceptions about Neanderthal man resulted from the claims of the Frenchman Marcelin Boule who, in 1908, studied two Neanderthal skeletons that were found in France (LeMoustier and La Chapelle-aux-Saints). Boule declared Neanderthal men to be anatomically and intellectually inferior brutes who were more closely related to apes than humans. He asserted that they had a slumped posture, a "monkey-like" arrangement of certain spinal vertebrae

and even claimed that their feet were of a “grasping type” (like those of gorillas and chimpanzees). Boule concluded that Neanderthal man could not have walked erectly, but rather must have walked in a clumsy fashion. These highly biased and inaccurate views prevailed and were even expanded by many other evolutionists up to the mid-1950s.

In 1957, the anatomists William Straus and A. J. Cave examined one of the French Neanderthals (La Chapelle-aux-Saints) and determined that the individual suffered from severe arthritis (as suggested by Virchow nearly 100 years earlier), which had affected the vertebrae and bent the posture. The jaw also had been affected. These observations are consistent with the Ice Age climate in which Neanderthals had lived. They may well have sought shelter in caves and this, together with poor diet and lack of sunlight, could easily have lead to diseases that affect the bones, such as rickets.

In addition to anatomical evidence, there is a growing body of cultural evidence for the fully human status of Neanderthals. They buried their dead and had elaborate funeral customs that included arranging the body and covering it with flowers. They made a variety of stone tools and worked with skins and leather. A wood flute was recently discovered among Neanderthal remains. There is even evidence that suggests that he engaged in medical care. Some Neanderthal specimens show evidence of survival to old age despite numerous wounds, broken bones, blindness and disease. This suggests that these individuals were cared for and nurtured by others who showed human compassion.

Still, efforts continue to be made to somehow dehumanize Neanderthal man. Many evolutionists now even insist that Neanderthal man is not even directly related to modern man because of some differences in a small fragment of DNA! There is, in fact, nothing about Neanderthals that is in any way inferior to modern man. One of the world’s foremost authorities on Neanderthal man, Erik Trinkaus, concludes: “Detailed comparisons of Neanderthal skeletal remains with those of modern humans have shown that there

is nothing in Neanderthal anatomy that conclusively indicates locomotor, manipulative, intellectual or linguistic abilities inferior to those of modern humans.³

CONCLUSION

Why then are there continued efforts to make apes out of man and man out of apes? In one of the most remarkably frank and candid assessments of the whole subject and methodology of paleoanthropology, Dr. David Pilbeam (a distinguished professor of anthropology) suggested the following:

Perhaps generations of students of human evolution, including myself, have been flailing about in the dark; that our data base is too sparse, too slippery, for it to be able to mold our theories. Rather the theories are more statements about us and ideology than about the past. Paleoanthropology reveals more about how humans view themselves than it does about how humans came about. But that is heresy.⁴

Oh, that these heretical words were printed as a warning on every textbook, magazine, newspaper article and statue that presumes to deal with the bestial origin of man! No, we are not descended from apes. Rather, God created man as the crown of His creation on Day Six. We are a special creation of God, made in His image, to bring Him glory. What a revolution this truth would make, if our evolutionized culture truly understood it!

(Taken from “Did Humans Really Evolve from Apelike Creatures?” by Dr. David Menton, *War of the Worldviews*, Answers in Genesis, 2005, pp. 43–58. For more on apemen, go to www.answersingenesis.org/go/anthropology.)

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Zuckerman, S., *Beyond the Ivory Tower*, p. 64, 1970.
- ² *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 60:279–317, 1983.
- ³ *Natural History* 87:10, 1978.
- ⁴ *American Scientist* 66:379, 1978.

LESSON 8 OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

HERE'S THE CHALLENGE

You will need notebook paper, a pen or pencil, and your Bible.

One of the most blatant ways that evolution varies from creation is in the order that things came about in the universe. Just as we learned that in order to detect a counterfeit we need to really know the real thing, we will apply this principle to our knowledge of creation.

1. Read Genesis chapter 1.
2. Fill in the chart below to show on what day God made each part of His creation. Give examples of each category where applicable, e.g. beasts – cows, dinosaurs, etc.
3. Compare your chart to the order given in secular science textbooks. (Ken Ham used a pictorial chart in his “War of the Worldviews” talk that illustrates this contradiction.)

Day #	What was Created?	Any Examples?