Religion in the Garb of Science? (The Associate Editor's Desk)

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Anyone who has kept up with the news lately could hardly have overlooked the recent rekindling of interest in matters related to how science and religion tend to come together in the debate over origins. Not that it has ever been laid to rest, but the recent resurgence of discussion is owed in large part to the efforts of a group of scientists who are lending their influence to a movement called Intelligent Design (ID).

This movement argues that the complexity of the mechanisms that make up living organisms and permit them to survive and adapt to their environments, even to thrive, is such that it so far exceeds the bounds of statistical probability that it can only be explained as a product of intelligent design, as opposed to purely materialistic and random, accidental evolution. One has only to consider a few small examples of this complexity, such as the metabolism of proteins, DNA, the function of the eye, or the human reproductive system, to imagine what the odds are against the whole living ecosystem having developed and remained in balance purely by chance mutations. The ID movement studies this improbability in a wide range of specialized features of life and uses scientific statistical calculations to assess the odds of these features developing by random, accidental evolution.

Despite the fact that their theory is supported by scientific data and studies, it is being widely rejected by materialistic scientists as “religion in the garb of science.” It does not matter that most leading ID proponents are well-qualified scientists and that many do not support the biblical account of a recent six-day fiat creation. The very idea of bringing God into the picture of origins scares the materialistic evolutionists because it comes from science rather than religion, and it strikes a scientific blow at the heart of their own theories. If it were accepted as genuine science rather than as religion, it would be devastating to materialistic evolu-
Christians believe, based on philosophy? Is there room for supernatural events like prophecy, miracles, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Second Coming, and so forth? What happens to our understanding of the purpose of the plan of redemption, the Incarnation, the atonement, the judgment, and the new creation? What happens to our understanding of God’s plan for marriage, for human dominion and stewardship, and for the Sabbath, which is explicitly enshrined within the Decalogue?

These theological issues have their origin in the account of Creation and the Fall as recorded in Genesis 1–3. Can we somehow blend with our theology a theory that is fundamentally at odds with biblical theology? These are pressing questions.

This issue of PD addresses some of these questions. The answers are not always easy, but as we ponder the issues in the debate, we may be enriched by probing their depth and scope. We trust the reader will at least be stimulated by the discussion.
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