

cause they choose to. The belief solely in mechanistic processes is also an act of faith. No amount of data or scientific evidence can resolve the issue. It is a matter of personal choice. We will discuss these two belief systems further in Chapter 14. For now I would like to focus on what might be inferred from the Bible about evolution. Here the term *evolution* will be used in its broader sense of change over time.

The Bible teaches that all the present diverse races of the world have descended from the first man and woman, Adam and Eve. They were our common ancestors. We are their descendants. And we are a diverse and varied group of people. All the present races of the world have evolved from Adam and Eve.

Furthermore, I believe Genesis 1 is a step-by-step account of changes that God made in the geologic and biologic forms on the Earth. The scientific record confirms that the events recorded in Genesis did take place in real time in geologic history. However, the question remains, *how* did God do it?

The Bible's major focus is man's relationship to his Creator. It contains the answers to the *who* and the *why* of creation. It is not intended to be a science book which contains the answers to the *how* and *when* of creation. The Bible does not give us any details of the creation process. Neither does it give any direct clues, but perhaps there are inferences we can draw.

The Hebrew verb *bara'*, which means "create," is used very sparingly in the Old Testament. In Genesis 1 it is used only three times: when God *created* "the heavens and the earth [i.e., the Universe]" (1:1); "The great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed [i.e., animal life in the water]" (1:21); and "man" (1:27).⁹ As opposed to *fashioning* or *shaping* an object, the word *bara'* emphasizes the initiation of the object. *Bara'* is limited to divine (as opposed to human) activity, and its primary emphasis is on the newness of the created object.¹⁰ It is only God who can initiate the action of causing the result termed in Hebrew *bara'*.

While the Hebrew word *bara'* (create) does not necessarily preclude the use of existing material, it appears to imply more than a simple change in life forms. It implies a more direct creation, an original creation from scratch. Tools and materials may be used as when an artist uses a canvas, paints, and a paintbrush to create a work of art. But the word *bara'* suggests more than a mere change in color to improve a picture. *Bara'* suggests the creation of an original masterpiece.