T. rex was no Chicken

Gerald McKibben

A partial truth can be just as bad as an outright lie. A case in point is the media coverage of a recent article in*Science* showing that *T. rex* protein sequence analysis matched that of the common chicken more closely than that of any other species tested. *USA Today* reported the results in an article entitled *Yesterday's T. rex is today's chicken*. MSNBC, Fox News, BBC News, National Geographic News, The International Herald Tribune, Reuters, The Boston Herald, and probably others also reported the results. All of them that I read stated or implied that the results from the study reinforced the conjecture that birds evolved from dinosaurs.

The report stated that, in available protein databases, the closest match to the dinosaur collagen (from bones) was to that of the chicken. They showed it to have a 58% "sequence identity", and a 51% match to both a frog and a newt. They admitted that protein databases available to them were limited. There was no protein from the alligator, for example, a creature that would be expected to be similar, since dinosaurs were reptiles.

You wouldn't know it from reading the media accounts of the research, but the team also reported some interesting results with human protein comparisons. They reported, on page 282, an 81% match between *human and frog collagen*. They called these results "an extraordinarily high similarity."

I'll say. And if a 58% match between dinosaurs and chickens is evidence that birds evolved from dinosaurs, then a 97% match between humans and cows must make a much stronger statement about our relationship with the bovines. To Scientists working in this area, DNA similarity between cows and humans might not be surprising, given that humans and cows are both mammals. But similar studies showing a high degree of similarity between human and chimpanzee DNA is widely touted as evidence that humans and chimps share a common ancestor.

One must wonder about the outcome of studies coming out of the human genome project at the National Institutes of Health that showed a remarkable similarity in certain DNA components of the human and a tiny nematode worm. Dr. Francis Collins, then director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, was quoted as saying that "Half of the disease genes in humans have identifiable counterparts in this worm." He saw the findings as means to use the worm as a way of learning how to prevent and cure human illnesses. That would certainly appear to be a more sensible use of these DNA studies than using them to speculate what we did or didn't evolve from.

In the final analysis, the Biblical account of the Creation best \describes what we find in the fossil record: a wide array of different kinds of organisms, with no intermediate forms. Evidence that all life – including humans – evolved from some one-celled organism is still not supported by the evidence found in DNA or in fossils.