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Discovery

Scripture & Science for Kids



VESTIGIAL ORGANS:

EVOLUTION'S LEFT-OVERS OR EVOLUTIONISTS' IGNORANCE?

JEFF MILLER

IF EVOLUTION WERE

TRUE, YOUR GREAT, GREAT, GREAT, GREAT... GRANDFATHER WAS A CREATURE LIKE AN ape or a monkey, and you came from him. Over the years, your ancestors gradually changed or evolved from looking like an ape to looking like humans. Your ape-like, distant grandfather, like many primates today, probably would have had a tail, a big jaw, and a lot of hair. He probably also had several other organs you either do not have today, or you have, but unlike

him, you do not really need anymore. Those organs which you would no longer need are called vestigial (ves-TI-jul) organs by evolutionists. If evolution is true, then such organs should exist.



Robert Wiedersheim

In 1895, an evolutionist named Robert Wiedersheim made a list of 86 different organs that he thought were vestigial—organs that supported the idea that we evolved from ape-like creatures millions of years ago. Evolutionists were excited by this news since they believed it helped to prove evolution. Since then, evolutionists have argued that many parts of our bodies are no longer useful, but are remains of our evolutionary ancestors: our hair, wisdom teeth, appendix, coccyx, tonsils, several genes (“junk” DNA), and even goose bumps have been called leftovers of evolution.

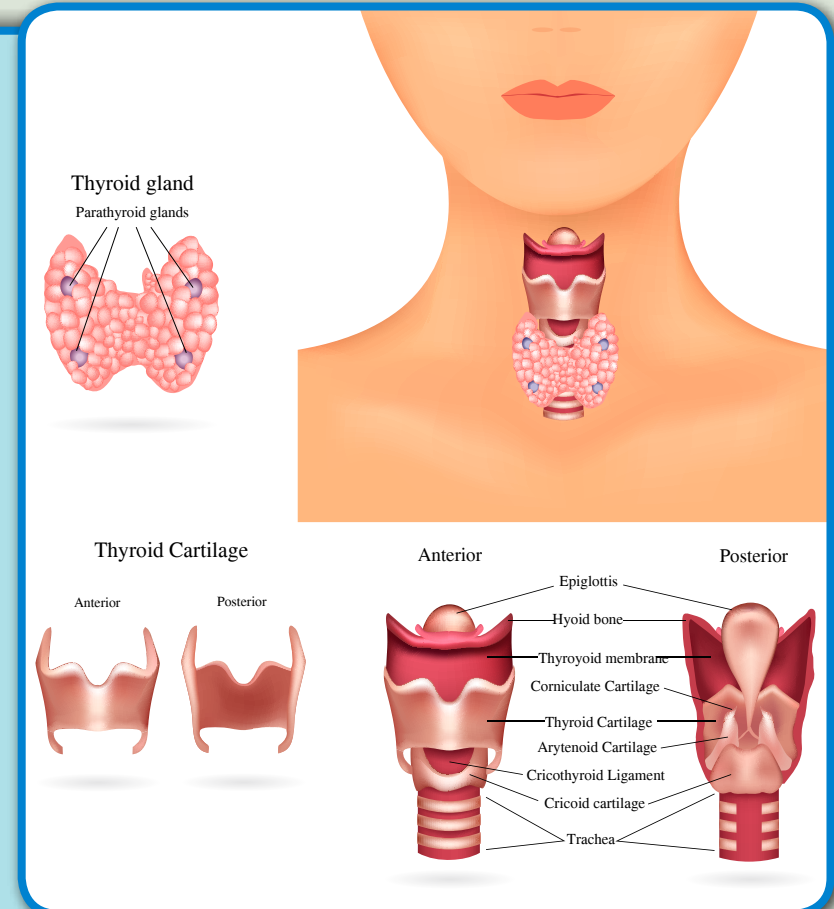
As time has passed, Wiedersheim’s list has gotten smaller and smaller. Why? Because scientists have studied more and more about the human body over the years and discovered that there are important functions for each of the organs on Wiedersheim’s list. The problem was never that there were not functions for those organs on the vestigial list. The problem was that scientists did not know enough to figure out what those functions were. In other words, the organs on the vestigial list are not evolution’s left-overs, but rather, they highlight evolutionists’ ignorance about those organs.



Consider the parathyroid glands, which evolutionists long considered to be vestigial organs. These four little glands are usually found sticking to the thyroid in your lower neck, just above your collar bone. If they are functionless, or not that important, then removing the parathyroid glands should not create a problem for humans, right? Why, do you suppose, when I had my thyroid removed several months ago, my doctors were so concerned about my parathyroid glands? They went out of their way to warn me that the glands might accidentally get cut off during my surgery. Why would they want to warn me about that possibility if it did not matter whether or not I had them? The reason is that doctors have discovered that the parathyroid glands are not vestigial. They are very important to humans. Without the parathyroid glands (the last major organ that humans have ever discovered), your body would not be able to regulate its calcium levels within the very narrow range that it requires, and the nervous and muscular systems would not function properly. People who believe in vestigial organs would be more likely not to worry about removing “vestigial” organs, since they do not believe they are important. This makes evolution a dangerous belief.

Consider another way that belief in evolution, and specifically “vestigial” organs, is dangerous and even harmful to us. Have you ever stopped to think about how doctors and scientists learned everything we know about the human body? It was through careful research and study of the body over many years. Usually the way research happens is that doctors or scientists ask others to give them money to pay for their research and study. Otherwise, they would not have a way to live while they are studying, and they would not have the money to pay for the equipment they need to study the body. Now what do you think the effect would have been when Wiedersheim released his list of “vestigial” organs? Do you think as many doctors or scientists would have done research and study on those organs that were considered unimportant? Do you think they could have convinced as many people to give them money to support their study of those organs if they wanted to?

Perhaps you can see now how belief in vestigial organs is a dangerous idea. Less research and study will tend to be done on those organs, since evolutionists do not believe them to be important! If those organs were designed by God, however, we can trust that they do, in fact, have important purposes in our bodies, even if we do not quite understand those purposes yet. Instead of throwing out organs as useless, we should praise God, knowing that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14).



The APPENDIX is Not Vestigial

KYLE BUTT

HANGING OFF

THE SIDE OF YOUR INTESTINES IS A SMALL POUCH KNOWN AS the vermiform appendix. The word "vermiform" means "having a form like a worm" and is used because your appendix looks similar to a worm. For many years, evolutionists said that the appendix was a useless leftover of evolution. They said it was a smaller version of a part of the intestines of primates that humans no longer need. Just like with other organs, however, the more scientists have studied the appendix, the more they have realized that it has several functions.

First, scientists suggest that when an embryo is forming, the appendix produces certain hormones that help it grow correctly. Second, the appendix contains lymphoid cells that help to fight infection. Third, scientists think that the appendix could be a place to store good gut bacteria. You see, your body needs certain bacteria to digest food. If you get a bad stomach virus, the stomach and intestines clean themselves out—ejecting the good and bad bacteria. It seems that the appendix stores some of the good bacteria to help the gut replace it.

Sometimes, however, the appendix can cause trouble. It can become clogged and swell. This is called appendicitis. If the appendix bursts, it can cause serious trouble. Therefore, doctors remove the appendix when this happens. When your appendix is removed, you can still live a very healthy life.

Some evolutionists say that since removing the appendix doesn't seem to harm you, then it must be a useless leftover. But that thinking does not make sense. If you removed a small part of your pinky finger, could you still

live a healthy life? Sure, but that doesn't mean your pinky is vestigial. If you clipped off your earlobe, could you still be healthy? Sure, but that does not mean your earlobe is vestigial.

Your appendix is not vestigial. It is a well-designed part of your body that has many helpful functions. Sure, God is such a great designer that you can live without your appendix, but that certainly doesn't mean that it is a leftover of evolution. Let's praise God for the wonderful bodies He has given us.



Vestigial Organs: No Proof of Evolution

ERIC LYONS

ONE IMPORTANT TRUTH ABOUT EVOLUTION THAT YOU HAVE SEEN IN THIS issue of *Discovery* is that so-called "vestigial" organs are not the useless

organs that many evolutionists (and science textbooks) have made them out to be. Scientists and doctors may not be fully aware of all of the functions of a particular organ, but these organs are in no way proof of evolution.

That said, what if scientists really did discover that the human body had one or more organs in it that had a reduced function—or no function at all? What if the organ functioned perfectly in the past, but not so much today? Would this really be evidence of evolution as many science textbooks teach? Not at all.

The human body is a marvelous thing to study and shows amazing, complex, functional design. It certainly testifies that a grand Designer (God) exists! However, since Adam and Eve left the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden, and since Noah and his family stepped off the ark into a flood-ravished world, much degeneration has taken place. [For example, the lifespan of human beings has decreased drastically through the centuries—from people living over 900 years (such as Adam and Methuselah) to now far less than 1% of people living to reach just 100 years old.] It might also be that in "the world that then was" (the world before the Flood—2 Peter 3:6) certain organs were simply more necessary than they are today.

In addition, many diseases and mutations have been introduced into the human gene pool. Is it possible that there could be a loss of a gene for an organ which causes the organ not to function as well as it once did—or perhaps lose function altogether one day? If so, then even if it were ever proven that a "vestigial organ" exists, such an organ would not prove evolution to be true.

Human beings do not have body parts that are leftovers from some alleged ape-like creature that lived millions of years ago. We are the descendants of Adam and Eve—and of Noah and his wife. They may have had better functioning organs than we do, but that certainly is not proof of evolution. In fact, the very opposite is the case!



DNA STRAND



ACTIVITY PAGES



MATCHING

1. ___ A piece or part left by something
2. ___ Without these glands, your body would not be able to properly regulate its calcium levels.
3. ___ Tiny muscles at the base of each hair follicle
4. ___ Listed 86 different organs in 1895 that he thought were vestigial
5. ___ Another name for vestigial
6. ___ Worm-shaped organ that hangs off the side of your intestines
7. ___ Means "having a form like a worm"
8. ___ When someone's appendix gets clogged and swells
9. ___ The first man

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| A. Robert Wiedersheim | F. vermiform |
| B. parathyroid | G. leftover |
| C. appendix | H. <i>erector pili</i> |
| D. Adam | I. appendicitis |
| E. vestigial | |

FILL IN THE BIBLE VERSES (NKJV)

1. "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and _____ made; _____ are Your works, and that my soul knows very well" (Psalm 139:14).
2. "Then God saw _____ that He had made, and indeed it was very _____" (Genesis 1:31).
3. "[B]y the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the _____ that _____ existed perished, being flooded with water" (2 Peter 3:5-6).

TRUE OR FALSE

1. ___ Evolutionists believe that humans have body parts that are left over from evolution.
2. ___ Without the parathyroid glands, your nervous and muscular systems would not function properly.
3. ___ Goose bumps are clearly vestigial.
4. ___ Scientists are beginning to realize that the parts they once considered useless are quite helpful.
5. ___ The word vestigial refers to a vest that scientists sometimes wear in a lab.
6. ___ The appendix helps in fighting off infection.
7. ___ Goose bumps only occur on geese.
8. ___ The appendix exists to allow germs to enter the human body.
9. ___ Many diseases and mutations have been introduced into the human gene pool since Creation and the Flood.
10. ___ Even if it were proven that a "vestigial organ" exists, such an organ would not prove evolution to be true.

ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER

1. Explain why we sometimes get goose bumps.
2. Discuss why, even if it were ever proven that a "vestigial organ" exists, such an organ would not prove evolution to be true.

Dear Digger Doug,
There are some evolution books in the library. Should I read the books?



Dear Reader,

That is a wonderful question! In fact, many kids have asked the very same question. We know that evolution is a lie. But sometimes, Satan can be very convincing when he lies. Do you remember how he lied to Eve about the fruit in the Garden of Eden? Many people have believed in the lie of evolution, because they have read books about it. Because of this, it might not be the best idea to read all the books in the library that talk about evolution.

But, on the other hand, since evolution is a lie, if you think through it correctly, you can see the problems with it. For this reason, I believe it could be a good thing to sometimes read books about evolution if your parents believe you are ready. In fact, I often read books about evolution. That way, I can better understand why some people do not believe that God created the world. Then I can explain to kids, such as you, why I know those people are wrong.

The Bible says that we should "test all things" and "hold fast what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). What that means is that we should be willing to listen to others. When we hear good things, we should focus on them, so that we can become wiser. When we hear untrue things, such as evolution, we should make sure to know why they are untrue.

So, yes, it might be safe to read a few books about evolution when your parents say it is okay. Just make sure that you read the Bible more and that you read good books that teach the truth about God's creation, so that you can find the answers to any questions you may have when you are reading about evolution.





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GOD Gave US Goose BUMPS!

DAVE MILLER

YOU'VE EXPERIENCED GOOSE BUMPS. WHEN YOU HAVE GOTTEN COLD, YOU'VE NOTICED BUMPS RISE ON

your arms (or even your legs, neck, and other areas of the skin that have hair). Evolutionists continue to claim that goose bumps are leftover from our evolutionary ancestors. That's silly. Everything about your body was designed by God. The different parts of your body serve important purposes as God intended.

Goose bumps get their name from bumps that can be seen on a goose when its feathers are plucked. Goose bumps happen when tiny muscles at the base of each hair follicle contract and force the hair to stand up. These muscles are called *erector pili* [ih-RECK-ter PIE-lie] muscles. Isn't it amazing that this happens without you thinking about it? God made them to work whether you think about them or not.

But why do we get goose bumps? Consider two reasons. First, goose bumps occur when we get cold. The muscles that contract cause the skin to "bunch up,"

forming little bumps that cause your hairs to stand up straight. In addition to the muscle tension, the rising hair forms a layer that traps air between the hairs and skin, creating insulation and warmth. This amazing way for the body to preserve its own heat, reducing heat loss, had to have been designed by God. Goosebumps are not evolutionary leftovers!

Second, we also get goose bumps when we get hot, or face extreme heat. God made our bodies to sweat as part of an efficient cooling system. As perspiration accumulates on our skin, it naturally evaporates. As the sweat evaporates, it cools down the skin surface. But this process causes a dramatic temperature difference. So the body responds to the "chill" of the sweat evaporation by engaging the "goosebump response" when we get too chilled.

Notice that goose bumps serve very important purposes for people. Goose bumps were designed by God. They most certainly are not unused, unnecessary "vestigial organs" left over from evolution!



ANSWERS

TRUE OR FALSE: 1. T; 2. T; 3. F; 4. T; 5. F; 6. T; 7. F; 8. F; 9. T; 10. T.
MATCHING: 1. B (vestigial); 2. B (parathyroid); 3. H (erector pili); 4. A (Robert Wiedersheim); 5. G (leaver); 6. C (appendix); 7. F (vermiform); 8. I (appendix); 9. D (Adam); 10. D (Adam).
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