Written by Administrator Friday, 18 October 2013 01:18 -

Are we Martians? asks ScienceNOW in a report about a revived theory of how life arrived on earth, also reported BBC News 29 August 2013, New Scientist 1 September 2013, and ABC News in Science 2 September 2013. Biochemist Steven Benner of the Westheimer Institute of Science and Technology in Gainesville, Florida has proposed that "Life started on Mars and came to Earth on a rock". According to evolutionary theory life is supposed to have arisen from non-living materials when simple hydrocarbons and other small molecules combined to form large complicated molecules such as carbohydrates, proteins, RNA and DNA. However, left to themselves hydrocarbons just form useless tars, and even if a molecule as complex as RNA formed in water it would quickly break down. Benner notes that minerals such as molybdates (oxidised molybdenum) and oxidised boron can prevent organic materials from turning into tar. These substances would have been more abundant on early Mars, rather than early Earth, because Mars was drier and had a more oxidising atmosphere. He also claims these can convert certain organic molecules into ribose – the sugar component of RNA.

Many chemical evolutionists claim that RNA was the first complex life molecule to form, but have had another problem forming in early Earth's oceans because of a lack of phosphate, which also forms part of RNA. There is plenty of phosphate on earth but it is commonly in the form of fluoroapatite, which is not very soluble, and therefore the early earth oceans would not have contained enough dissolved phosphate for life to start. Another group of scientists believe Mars could solve this problem as well. Using data from the Mars rovers and Martian meteorites Christopher Adcock of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and colleagues estimate that Mars is rich in phosphate containing minerals named chlorapatite and merrillite and the scientists claim they would have provided a better supply of phosphates for emerging life. Adcock and colleagues synthesised these in a laboratory and then tested them to see if how well they would release phosphate into the surrounding environment. Adcock explained: "We found that these more Mars relevant minerals chlorapatite and Merrillite, not only dissolved faster than fluoroapatite, they have higher solubilities, so the concentration of phosphate in solution is higher. And that equates to a higher availability of phosphate for potential biologic reactions on Mars".

In spite of these theories and experiments, some scientists accept they may never know how and where life emerged. Benner commented: "We will likely need to be satisfied with answers to a more indirect question: How *might* life have emerged?" (Emphasis in original.) He went on to say: "Building a time machine will help".

ABC, BBC, New Scientist, ScienceNOW

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Editorial Comment: This "life from Mars" theory is just a variation of an old theory called "panspermia" which claims the earliest life forms evolved somewhere else in space, and came to earth on meteorites. However, all such theories about the origin of life ignore the fact that chemistry alone cannot make life, whether it be on Earth or some other planet. It is true that living cells are made of chemicals, such as RNA, but it is not the chemistry that governs life, but the way such chemicals are organised, and the information they carry, which is ultimately encoded in DNA. That is what makes the difference between life and non-life. Until scientists can explain where the information came from they cannot explain the origin of life.

Furthermore, they do not need to build a time machine to find out. They just have to take notice of the information given by the Creator who made life from the chemicals He originally formed out of nothing. Check Genesis 1:1ff for the print version from the Creator who said "let there be ..." (Ref. astrobiology, chemistry, biochemistry)

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