

Linnaeus was a strong believer in the truth of the Bible. In his early days he felt certain that what he designated as species were the kinds mentioned in Genesis, each of which, he said, God had created individually and separately, so that there could be no development from one species into another. Later in his life Linnaeus decided that perhaps it is what he called the genus, rather than the species, that is designated in the Book of Genesis by the word "kind."

Actually the Bible does not tell us how large such a "kind" is. In I Corinthians 15:39 Paul says: "All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds." Here Paul divides most animate life into four main classes. While it would seem likely that the kinds referred to in Genesis 1 involve a much larger number of different classes than those to which Paul makes reference here, we should recognize that Genesis does not say whether the word "kind" represents the hundreds of thousands of "species" that science designates today, or the smaller number of "genera," or the still smaller number of "families," or the next higher grouping of "orders," or possibly some division altogether different from anything yet worked out by science.

Where the Bible does not give us definite information it is unwise to guess. Yet Christians readily accepted Linnaeus' first idea, that what he called a species is what Genesis means by a "kind."

#### AN UNFORTUNATE RESULT

All too often Christians accept the science of a particular generation as being what the Bible teaches. At points at which the Bible does not give specific information they sometimes read into it the ideas of contemporary scientists. Then, if the views of later scientists radically change, as far as the particular point is concerned, people easily come to think that the Bible is wrong, when actually what was mistaken was only the science of a previous generation that Christians had read into the Bible. The Bible tells us many facts but there are many with which it does not deal. Nothing that the Bible actually teaches has ever been proven false.