The Laws of Thermodynamics

July 1995

The two most fundamentally important laws of the universe have to do with energy. The First Law of Thermodynamics basically states that energy is neither created or destroyed but only converted into different forms. The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that the process of energy conversion decreases the amount of energy available to do useful work.

Consider, for example, a burning log. As it burns, energy is not being destroyed but converted from wood into heat and light. But once the energy has dissipated into the atmosphere, it is no longer "useful." It will not flow back into the cold ashes and make another log.

Henry Morris notes the disharmony between these *Laws* and the *theory* of evolution: "Since ... everything in the physical universe is energy in some form and, since in every process some energy becomes unavailable, it is obvious that ultimately, *all* energy in the universe will be unavailable energy, if present processes go on long enough. When that happens ... everything will be at the same low temperature. There will be no 'differential' of energy levels, therefore no 'gradient' of energy to induce its flow. No more work can be done and the universe will reach what the physicists call its ultimate 'heat death.'

"The fact that the universe has not yet reached this dead condition ... proves that it is not infinitely old. If it were of infinite antiquity, it obviously would already be dead.

"Thus the Second Law proves, *as certainly as science can prove anything whatever*, that the universe had a beginning. Similarly the First Law shows that the universe could not have begun itself. The total quantity of energy in the universe is constant, but the quantity of *available* energy is decreasing. Therefore, as we go *backward* in time, the available energy would have been progressively greater until, finally, we would reach the beginning point, where available energy equaled total energy. Time could go back no farther than this. At this point both energy and time must have come into existence. Since energy could not create itself, the most scientific and logical conclusion to which we could possibly come is that: 'In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.'

The evolutionist will not accept this conclusion, however. He hypothesizes that either: (1) some natural law canceling out the Second Law prevailed far back in time, or (2) some natural law canceling out the Second Law prevails far out in space. When he makes such assumptions, however, he is denying his own theory, which says that all things can be explained in terms of presently observable laws and processes. He is really resorting to creationism, but refusing to acknowledge a Creator" (*The Troubled Waters of Evolution*, pp. 117-118).