

Contrast Between Classification Criteria – Biblical Classification vs. Modern Taxonomy

Biblical Criterion (Essence- or Purpose-oriented)	Example	Modern Taxonomic Criterion (Form-oriented)	Example
Sequence of disbursement in Creation	Day 5 creatures versus Day 6 creatures: A given Kind must have originally been created on one or the other.	Complexity (i.e. single-celled through multi-celled)	Kingdom <i>Protista</i> consists only of single-celled creatures, grouped because they are supposedly the “first” and simplest organisms.
		Presence or absence of nuclear membrane	“Prokaryote” versus “eukaryote” distinctions blur the line between plant and animal, even to the point of “domains” being suggested to group the five kingdoms into these two overarching themes.
Habitat	Water, Sky, or Land	Skeletal structure or absence thereof	A myriad of “invertebrate” phyla, and major phyla <i>Chordata</i> (sub-phylum <i>Vertebrata</i>) and <i>Arthropoda</i>
Mode of Life	Vegetation has no soul-life (<i>nephesh</i>), whereas all creatures are distinguished in a hierarchy: those without breath and those with breath (<i>ruwach</i>), and those with God-image also (i.e. mankind).	Degrees of Intelligence	Intelligence is difficult enough to compare between persons – how much more to evaluate the intelligence of creatures. Nonetheless, a creature’s purpose and essence is not necessarily marked by intelligence.
Locomotion	Presence or absence of fins/scales, presence of wings, “creeping” things, type of hoof, number of legs.	Mode of birth and nourishment of young.	Class <i>Mammalia</i> lumps a myriad of land creatures together with the bat, and with mankind.
Purpose, role, and authorizations	Lower aquatic creatures (photosynthetic) designed for consumption to nourish aquatic creatures; herbaceous, green vegetation supplied for creatures of land and sky; all vegetation for man; man is the one Kind given charge to rule, cultivate, and preserve.	Location in the food chain (to some degree)	This is a carryover from the belief in the “survival of the fittest” as a mechanism for macroevolution, but it suggests that non-carnivorous creatures, i.e. hoofed beasts, are inferior to those that prey upon them, which often proves untrue by biblical criteria.
Woody vs. herbaceous vegetation	A major distinction biblically in how plant kinds were associated at Creation. Hebrew <i>ets</i> (woody) versus <i>eseb</i> (herbaceous).	Presence or absence of vascular tissue	Presence of vascular tissue (phylum <i>Tracheophyta</i>) lumps together both woody and herbaceous Kinds. Absence of vascular tissue (phylum <i>Thallophyta</i>) leads to divisions among plants that are similar by many other criteria. The two are quite unbalanced in inclusiveness.
Designation as wild or for cultivation	Again, a classification of purpose, so much so, that Genesis 2 expands on the distinction between those things already sprung forth, and those latent until Adam was available to cultivate them.	Reproduction: Presence or absence of flowers or other structures, and whether seed is multi-cellular or single-celled (“spore”)	“Angiosperms” (flowering seed plants) are a large grouping of plants, inclusive of both woody and herbaceous, and inclusive of both cultivated and non-cultivated. Again, unbalanced in inclusiveness as compared to other groupings.
Original reproductive Kinds	Hebrew <i>miyn</i> used ten times in the Creation account. The Kind (original reproductive boundary) is important, as it is the essential unit of God’s planning in the act of Creation.	Presently reproducing populations and varieties (the “species”)	No single grouping (i.e. family, genus, species) parallels the biblical Kind. Furthermore, species are dynamic, and thus the prevailing taxonomy assumes that species are <i>being</i> designed, rather than to regard them as variations of what was <i>already</i> designed.
Original associations among Kinds	Organisms are to be grouped according to the manner in which similar Kinds were associated at the Creation.	Assumed evolutionary relationships among all	Rather than to regard today’s variations as each branching back in time from multiple, unique Kinds, modern taxonomy regards all as branching back to a single “root,” such that all things are ultimately “related.” Terms such as “descended,” “family,” “related,” “ancestral”, and <i>sapiens</i> (“modern”) reflect this bias.