



SUFFICIENCY OF THE GENESIS ACCOUNT OF CREATION

April 10, May 8, & May 28, 2015

Part 1, 2, & 3

Perry Atkinson and John Mittendorf

INTRODUCTION

Although there are multiple passages of Scripture within the Bible that are currently under attack, it is not surprising that some of the most virulent criticism is directed towards the Genesis account of creation as it is perceived to be in conflict with the assumptions of secular science and/or just hard to believe. However, what is most astounding is that some disbelief and reinterpretation of Scripture specifically comes from some religious organizations and “Christians” that acknowledge a belief in the authority of Scripture and inerrancy of the Bible. Some examples are:

- At the last Quadrennial General Conference, the United Methodist Church adopted a resolution explicitly opposing creationism in all of its forms
- There are 106 colleges in what is known as the Christian College Coalition. Only 5 believe in the literal interpretation of Genesis, 101 do not
- The BioLogos Foundation is a Christian advocacy group that is committed to the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God, but also believes the diversity and interrelation of all life on earth are best explained by the God-ordained process of evolution and common descent. Additionally, there was never a time when there was a single first couple

- Dr. Hugh Ross is an astronomer and president-founder of Reasons to Believe that is a Progressive Creationist ministry that presents its views as being based on a literal interpretation of the Bible. Some of these views include (1) the flood was local and not global, (2) death and bloodshed have existed from the beginning of creation and were not the result of Adam's sin, (3) the earth and universe are billions of years old, (4) the existence of millions of years of death before Adam, (5) the age of the earth is a "trivial doctrinal point," and (6) nature is a revelation of God and is like the sixty-seventh book of the Bible

It is vitally important to understand the primary differences between the biblical account of creation and the theory of evolution for three primary reasons:

1. Evolution is currently presented by science and the media as a Godless factual element of science. Therefore, all other explanations for the universe, earth and man are ridiculed – Figure 1

Evolution: not just a 'theory'

The 150th anniversary of Charles Darwin's 'On the Origin of Species' will be celebrated this week at SOU

By JOHN DARLING
for the Mail Tribune

On the 150th anniversary of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, professors at Southern Oregon University will devote the week to emphasizing that evolution is more than a theory — it's hard science.

"It's theory and it's fact. You can say it's 'just a theory' like the theory that the earth goes around the sun," says biology professor Charles Weldon, lead speaker of Darwin Week. "In science,

a theory is not speculation. It's supported by mountains of evidence. It's one of the best supported theories in science."

A century and a half after publication of Darwin's "On the Origin of Species," some 44 percent of Americans still believe in the Biblical account of creation by God in seven days, according to a Gallup poll.

Weldon calls that "shocking."

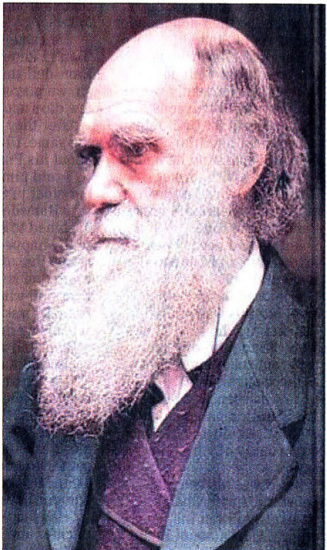
"Evolution is rejected in large numbers in only two places in the world, America and Turkey," said Weldon, in an interview. "Creation

science and intelligent design are not science at all. They should be taught, though, to educate students about the difference between science and pseudo-science."

Weldon will speak at 3 p.m. Monday in the Meese Room at Hannon Library on what the theory of evolution actually says and the evidence supporting it.

As any scientific theory must be, evolution is testable and able to make predictions, such as when science was able to predict, a

see DARWIN, Page 2B



Naturalist Charles Darwin, who in 1859 wrote the book, "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life," is honored at SOU this week.

"You can say it's 'just a theory' like the theory that the earth goes around the sun."

Biology Professor Charles Weldon,
lead speaker of Darwin Week

Figure 1

2. A Christian should be confident in the assurance the biblical account of creation is accurate and complete as stated
3. It is important to be able to give an account and/or defense to others as directed in 2 Tim. 3:16. As an example, one of the most debated issues of the Genesis account is the definition of the word "day." Interestingly, the

Presbyterian Church of America and the Westminster Theological Seminary allow a *diversity* of views on the meaning of the Hebrew word *Yom* that is regularly translated into English as *day*. So, does Genesis define the word *day* or is it necessary for Genesis to co-exist with a diversity of views and recent alleged scientific discoveries that can add to the challenge of defending Scripture?

From an apologetics viewpoint, KDOV has focused on the accuracy and relevance of Genesis that has included highlighting the Genesis-evolution debate by delineating why modern science validates creationism and refutes evolution. Although discussion and debate are often helpful and can be enlightening, the real issue of the evolution/creation debate is not trying to prove the validity of creationism by disproving evolution, it is a person's **TRUST** in the Genesis account of creation in the Bible. At this point it should be stated that Genesis 1 and 2 are pivotal Scripture's from the following perspective – *If Genesis is not true and complete as written, are there other portions of Scripture that are also not true or incomplete as written, such as the resurrection?* Obviously, either the Bible is true from the first verse in Genesis to the last verse in Revelation, or it is not!

In this series we will examine the perception of whether the biblical account of creation in Genesis 1 and 2 is accurate and complete (sufficiency of Scripture), or does the Bible need modern science and religious organizations to clarify Genesis so we can be more fully enlightened to understand the biblical account of creation. This discussion will be based on four essential principles of (1) Theology, (2) Perspicuity, (3) Faith, and (4) Motive.

THEOLOGY (1)

The study of creation should begin with a look at theology and science, as there is a fundamental difference between these two viewpoints. To begin, let's consider why creation is a biblical issue and **not** a scientific issue. Science is a "*systematized knowledge derived from observation, study, and repetition.*" Therefore, science determines knowledge from observable and repeatable events. As a result, this does not apply to creation as it was a one-time series of miraculous events that did not conform to natural laws and long periods of time.

On the other hand, knowledge about creation is derived from theology that is the *Study of God*. Therefore, creation is exclusively a theological issue since only God was responsible for creation and His eyewitness account is found in the first two chapters of Genesis. Interestingly, during the Middle Ages, theology was the definitive subject at universities and was referred to as the "*Queen of Sciences.*" As a result, creation was predominantly a theological issue until 1859

and the introduction of the publication *The Origin of Species*, by Charles Darwin that introduced a system to replace theology with science and eventually replace God with naturalism that the scientific community readily embraced and still does to this day.

At this point in our discussion, some people would fittingly suggest that science has made some astounding discoveries such as the ability to replace selected portions of the human body, medicines to cure previously incurable diseases, the ability to put a man on the moon, and so on. So, shouldn't we use modern secular science to give us a better understanding and/or explanation of creation? To some, this may seem like a realistic observation but there is a monumental problem with replacing the biblical account of creation with the secular scientific evolutionary process (Darwinism) that is used to replace God. Secular science cannot be used to explain creation for the following four reasons:

1. According to the July 2002 issue of Discover magazine (Figure 2, second paragraph), scientific theories only have a lifespan of about 20 years – *"a lot of what we swear is scientifically accurate today will be proved wrong within a couple of decades."* If you want to use science to explain creation, what theories are you going to use as they are likely to be proven wrong (according to the secular Discover magazine)
2. As previously mentioned, science is comprised of observation, study and repetition. Creation cannot be repeated and observed
3. The secular scientific model of evolution is based on natural laws, long periods of time, slow gradual changes that occur as a result of random, non-directed changes to organisms, and no divine intervention
4. Creation was a series of *one-time* miraculous events by God that was only witnessed by God. Naturalistic laws and processes were not involved as God instantaneously created everything in the universe *"by the word of his mouth"* and *"from nothing"*

Therefore, creation cannot be explained or verified by science, as there were no natural processes in creation. It was only comprised of a series of miraculous events in a one-time process by God. For this reason, there is no scientific way to explain creation. Consequently, it is up to every individual to either accept or reject the creation account that is found in the first and second chapters of Genesis that begins with Genesis 1:1 – *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*



Figure 2

PERSPICUITY (2)

Although the word perspicuity can initially appear as a large technical and/or cumbersome type of word, Webster's New World Dictionary defines perspicuity as "*easily understood, transparent, and clear.*" When perspicuity is applied to the Genesis account of creation, the perception of "easily understandable and clarity" should be considered as the clarity and accuracy of Genesis is often questioned and/or it is alleged that in the light of recent scientific discoveries it is necessary to combine modern science with Genesis to fully understand the creation account. So, let's consider the inerrancy/completeness, simplicity, and clarity of the Genesis account of creation.

INERRANCY/COMPLETENESS

The inerrancy and completeness of the entire Bible is outlined in 2 Timothy 3:16 – *“**All** scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be **complete**, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”* This verse tells us that **ALL** Scripture is complete, inspired by God, and is suitable for instruction and equipping us in our daily lives, and that includes the Genesis account of creation. To fully absorb the perspective of inerrancy and completeness, let’s look at the viewpoint of modifying Scripture and inclusiveness.

Modification of Scripture

The Bible is very clear in its admonition that Scripture shall not be modified by additions or deletions as found in the following verses:

- *“Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar”* – Proverbs 30:6
- *“Do not diminish a word”* – Jeremiah 26:2
- *“You shall not add to the word which I command you”* – Deuteronomy 4:2
- *“Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it”* – Deuteronomy 12:32
- *“If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book”* – Revelation 22:18-19

Individuals and/or organizations that believe the Genesis account of creation is not complete unless it is modified by science or supplementary viewpoints should thoughtfully consider the aforementioned five verses.

Inclusiveness

Virtually anyone who has read the Bible is familiar with the first verse in Genesis that not only begins the Bible but also commences the account of creation as follows – *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Initially it would seem that these ten words are simplistic from the perspective of containing any significant information and/or scientific revelations. However, to illustrate the scientific inclusiveness (taking everything into account) of Genesis 1:1, let’s consider an important scientific discovery by a renowned scientist.

Herbert Spencer was a staunch evolutionist, an English Philosopher and Sociologist who died in 1903 and was known for coining the phrase *“Survival of the Fittest”* that was quickly adopted by Darwinian evolutionists. However, Spencer is most well-known for his book *First Principles*, in which he outlined his discovery of *The Categories of The Knowable* that explained how everything that

exists fits into one of five categories – (1) time, (2) force, (3) action, (4) space, and (5) matter. This discovery was hailed by science as a breakthrough cataloging of realities. If we apply the Categories of The Knowable to Genesis 1:1 that was written over 5,000 years ago, we suddenly find the following parallels:

- “In the beginning” - - **time**
- “God” - - **force**
- “Created” - - **action**
- “The heavens” - - **space**
- “The earth” - - **matter**

Not surprisingly, all of the five categories that were discovered by Herbert Spencer and hailed as a major scientific achievement are contained in the ten words of Genesis 1:1.

SIMPLICITY

The biblical account of creation clearly states – *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”* Genesis then goes on to say that God created the universe and man in six days, and then rested on the seventh day. If this sounds rather straightforward, that’s because the Bible is straightforward and has not changed since it was written, unlike secular science that often changes after each new discovery (Figure 3)!



Figure 3

When reading the Bible, remember two basic concepts:

- The principle of simplicity goes something like this – *“We ought to take what God says and understand that if God said it, that’s probably what He meant, or else He would have said it a different way.”* This principle comes from a simplistic perspective that means God – *“Said it so we can understand it”*
- The simplicity of Scripture is also known as the principle of straightforwardness – *“All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing crooked or perverted in them. They are all straightforward to him who understands, and right to those who find knowledge”* – Proverbs 8:8-9

CLARITY

A simplistic definition of clarity is *the quality of being clear, easy to understand* which immediately raises the perspective of clarity in the creation account in Genesis. Let’s look at two examples of the absolute clarity of Genesis.

First, the Bible was written so that it is easy to understand (particularly the Old Testament), even to small children. Consider Deuteronomy 6:7 that is discussing the commandments, statutes, and judgments for the Israelite people and their responsibility to teach them to their children – *“You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down to sleep, and when you rise up.”* This verse indicates that Scripture was discernible to children so they could comprehend it, and without modern science.

Second, did creation take place over six 24-hour days or does the Bible allow for long periods of time in the creation account? If the Bible is clear in its account of creation, this diversity of opinions should not be a major point of debate within the church and between Christian leaders, but it is. As an example, many Christian leaders do not believe and teach biological evolution but accept various definitions for the word day and long ages for the age of the universe and earth. The 2011 book *Already Compromised*, details how the majority views of Christian college presidents, vice presidents, heads of religion or Bible departments, and heads of science departments believe there can be various lengths of time that can be ascribed to the biblical word day in addition to the perspective that the universe and earth are billions of years old when the Bible clearly states 6 days for the creation account (i.e., Exodus 20:11). At this point, a relevant question is – *“why do some people feel it is important to insert long periods of time into the biblical creation account if the Bible does not allow for long periods of time in the creation account?”* The answer to this question will be addressed in detail beginning on page 14.

With the preceding thoughts in mind, let's first apply the concept of clarity to the word *day* and then consider the *age* of the universe and earth from a biblical and scientific perspective as both of these subjects are arguably the most debated portions of the creation account.

The Biblical Word "Day"

The two principal viewpoints regarding the definition of day are (1) a day means a literal 24-hour day, or (2) the word day can also mean long indefinite periods of time such as millions and billions of years. Obviously, these two viewpoints are diametrically opposed in their length of time as God either created in six 24-hour periods of time or He created over six long periods of time.

As a starting point, let's look at the word day from a Hebrew perspective (as the Old Testament was written in Hebrew) and see if the Bible clearly defines day, and if so, are there any consequential implications. The Hebrew word for day in the Genesis account of creation is "*Yom*" and occurs 2,300 times in the Old Testament, with 1,450 in the singular, 845 in the plural, and 5 in the dual form. Its semantic range is limited to five meanings:

1. A period of a year
2. A general or vague concept of time
3. A period of light in a day/night cycle
4. A specific point of time
5. A period of 24 hours

As can be seen by the five preceding meanings, *Yom* can be defined as various periods of time and is used in different contexts throughout the Bible. As an example, the word day is used in Genesis 1, in Exodus 20:11, in describing the three days Jonah was in a great fish, and so on. However, one use of the word day that is often boldly used to illustrate that a day can mean long periods of time is found in 2 Peter 3:8 – "*One day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.*" Even though the context of this verse has nothing to do with creation (but has everything to do with the fact that God's time is different than out time) and the verse does not say "*a day is a thousand years,*" this verse is still used to give a measure of credibility to a day meaning long periods of time.

From a Hebrew semantic perspective, consider the following clarification on the Genesis use of the word *Yom* from *The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach* by James Stambaugh, M. Div:

Nevertheless, Hebrew grammatical contexts of yom demonstrate that, when used with a 'number' (1, 2, 3, etc.), the pattern is always a normal time period. If 'night' is combined with yom, it always denotes a 24-hour day. If yom is used with either

'morning' or 'evening,' they too refer to a literal day. When 'morning' and 'evening' are used together, with yom, it always signifies a solar day. So, the syntagmatic relationships (relationship between two or more linguistic units) that yom has illustrated clearly that the meaning is to be; considered a normal time period, consisting of one axial rotation of the earth, called a 'day'.

The point of discussing the semantic approach should be rather obvious. God, through the pen of Moses, is being redundant for redundancy's sake. God is going out of His way to tell us that the 'days' of creation were literal solar days. He has used the word yom, and combined this with a 'number,' the word 'night' and the words 'morning' and 'evening.' God has communicated the words of genesis 1 in a specific manner, so that the interpreter could not miss the point. God could not have communicated the timing of creation more clearly than He did in Genesis 1.

Not surprisingly, the creation account uses all three of these considerations (Yom uses a number, night, and morning and/or evening). Therefore, based on the Hebrew rules of grammar, Yom in the Genesis account of creation means 24-hours. The clearest example of the use of Yom is found in the Fourth Commandment in both Exodus 20:8-11 and 31:17 – *"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."* The word *for* (also having the sense *because*) at the beginning of the expression is a causal explanation showing that the creation week is the very basis of the working week. In these passages, it's explicit that the creation days were the same as those of the human workweek. Therefore, if a biblical day is supposed to mean billions and millions of years, then is the Sabbath day billions and millions of years in length? Consider the following quotes:

- *"Probably, so far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Genesis 1-11 intended to convey to their readers that creation took place in a series of 6 days which were the same as the days of 24-hours we now experience, and Noah's flood was understood to be worldwide"* – James Barr, past Regis Professor of Hebrew, Oxford University
- *"I have not met any Hebrew professors who had the slightest doubt about this unless they were already committed to some alternative by other considerations that do not arise from a straightforward reading of the Hebrew text as it stands"* – Hugh Williamson, current Regis Professor of Hebrew at Oxford University.
- *"For the biblical people this was history, difficult as it is for us to accept this view"* – Emanuel Tov, J.L. Magnes Professor of Bible, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

- *“Although the Young Universe Creationist position is not widely held within secular academia, the position – that the author of Genesis 1 maintained that the world was created in six literal days – is nearly universally held”* – Peter Williams, Warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge University (this is a residential theological research library)
- *“There isn’t much in the way of observational evidence in astronomy to conflict with a very young age for the sun and earth; less than 7,000 years”* – Evolutionist John Eddy, one of the world’s leading Solar Astronomers

Three additional side points of interest are:

- *“God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night”* – Genesis 1:5. This verse begins the cycle of the day. With the creation of light, it is now possible to have a cycle of light and darkness, which God labels “day” and “night.” Evening is the transition from light/day to darkness/night. Morning is the transition from darkness/night to light/day. Having an evening and a morning amounts to having one full day. Hence, the following equation is what Genesis 1:5 expresses – Evening + Morning = one day. Consequently, by using a most unusual grammatical construction, Genesis 1 is defining what a day is
- A literal reading of Genesis 1:5 through Genesis 2:2 directly from the Hebrew would read as follows – (1:5) *“One day morning and was evening and was (1:8) second day morning and was evening and was (1:13) third day morning and was evening and was (1:19) fourth day morning and was evening and was (1:23) fifth day morning and was evening and was (1:31) sixth day morning and was evening and was (2:2) the seventh on day God And finished had He made which work His the seventh day on and He rested.”* Notice the first day has a cardinal number (one, two, three, etc.) and the others have ordinal numbers (second, third, fourth, etc.). Therefore, a literal translation of creation week would be *day one, a second day, a third day, a fourth day, a fifth day, the sixth day, the seventh day*
- According to 2 Peter 3:10-13 the universe and earth will ultimately melt in fervent heat that ends human history, as we know it. However, Revelation 21:1 says that a new heaven and earth will be made as a replacement. If it is believed it took evolution and/or God billions and millions of years to create the original universe and earth, will it also take billions and millions of years to re-create the new heaven and earth or will God create it in an instant by the *word of his mouth?*

Therefore, in a biblical and Hebrew context in the Genesis account of creation, the word day means 24 hours and the resultant consequential implications are:

- **The long periods of time that evolution requires do not fit within the 6-day creation account**
- **The evolutionary process within the 6-day creation week is also not possible**
- **There is no room for evolution, anywhere, in the biblical account of creation**

To conclude the aforementioned comments on the meaning of the word day, if the text of Genesis 1 and 2 does not mean to teach traditional chronology and literal 24-hour days, then how are the following questions answered that have been posed by Dr. Jud Davis, Associate Professor of Greek at Bryan College:

- Why do nearly all world-class Hebraists assume that the writer of Genesis intended normal days and the text as history?
- Why did the ancient, medieval, and modern church – until about 1800 – have few commentators (if any) who believed in an ancient universe?
- Why is there little or no classical Rabbinic support for an ancient universe?
- Why does Jesus take Genesis 1 & 2 as teaching history (Matt 19:4, Mark 10:6)?
- Why does Paul take Genesis as history (Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 11:8-9, 15:21-22, 15:45, 1 Timothy 2:12-14)?
- Why do all of the ancient translations and paraphrases, such as the Aramaic Targums, take the words in Genesis 1 at face value and translate them as “days” with no hint that they might mean “ages?”
- Why are there well-qualified Ph.D. scientists who still support physical data as consistent with a young-earth view?

An interesting point of interest is – *“If the top Hebrew scholars all agree that the writer(s) of Genesis 1 intended the word day to mean 24 hours.....then why can’t we?”*

Age of The Universe/Earth

In the previous section, we discussed the biblical word day (*Yom* in Hebrew) and the grammatical Hebrew interpretation that is rendered as a literal calendar day/earth rotation day (or 24-hours), not long periods of time such as billions and millions of years. Additionally, now that we have determined the Hebrew definition of the word *day*, we can also use Bible Chronology to determine the approximate age of the universe and earth by referring to the chrono-genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 as each name contains a time stamp. As an example, Seth was born to Adam when he was 130, and Seth had Enosh when he was 105. So, from Adam to Enosh was 235 years. Continuing on:

- If the genealogy list and resultant ages are added from Adam to the birth of Noah’s sons, there should be 1,556 years. Shem was the middle child (Genesis

- 9:24, 10:21), and was born when Noah was 502, resulting in Shem's birth 1,558 years after the creation of Adam
- Beginning with the dates of Shem's descendants in Genesis 11:10 and going to Terah accumulates another 320 years. Using Genesis 11:32 and 12:4, we find that Terah was 130 when Abraham was born
 - Adding the aforementioned dates yields a time span of about 2,008 years from Adam until Abraham
 - As most biblical and secular scholars agree that Abraham was born around 2,000 BC (which also agrees with the Bible), we know Abraham to Jesus covers about 2,000 years, and we are about 2,000 years removed from Jesus (specifically 2021 years)
 - **So, $2,000 + 2,000 + 2,000$ means that the universe and earth are about 6,000 years old, as in Figure 4**

The word *about* is previously used several times as there are some differences in various manuscripts. Although the dates can vary by a few thousand years at the most, the approximate age of the universe and earth is about 6,000 years old with an upper range to possibly 8,000 years old. This is far different than the secular dates of billions of years for the universe and billions of years for the earth.

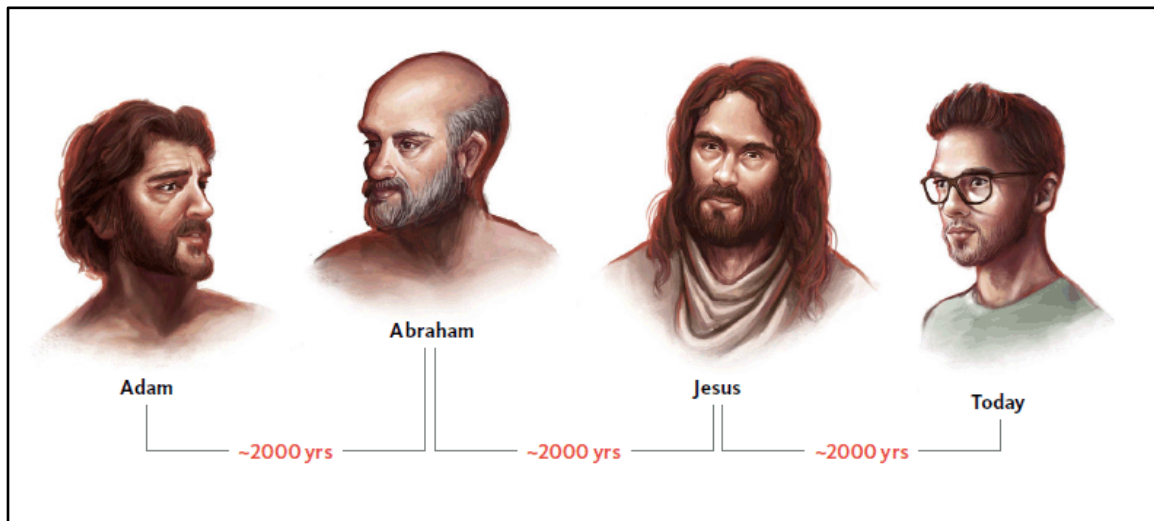


Figure 4

However, there is a common disagreement between the biblical age of the universe/earth and the views of the majority of secular scientists. Modern secular science teaches the universe is about 13.8 billion years old and the earth is about 4.5 billion years old, which ultimately leads to the question of “*Why is there such a*

large age difference between the Bible and science?" The answer is easily answered from three viewpoints as follows:

1. The humanistic views of science and the need for long ages is used as a replacement and/or adjunct for God and biblical Scripture
2. The most revealing answer was affirmed by evolutionist and Nobel Laureate, Dr. George Wald of Harvard University – *"Time is in fact the hero of the plot (evolution).....Given so much time, the impossible becomes possible, the possible probable, and the probable virtually certain. One only has to wait: time will itself perform the miracle."* This quote by Dr. Wald indicates that the insurmountable obstacles to evolution are simply swept under the rug of vast ages
3. Prior to the 18th century, the age of the universe and earth was thought to be in thousands of years. However, in the 18th century, the concept of millions, if not billions of years began to appear and has been willingly implemented as the foundation of evolutionary science



Figure 5

As the subject of molecules-to-man evolution and its companion of billions and millions of years is a topic of discussion for another day, let's keep our focus on the clarity of Genesis and briefly discuss – *“where did the idea of millions of years come from and how millions of years have been slowly and successfully assimilated into the Genesis account of creation”* – effectively weakening the creation account and the foundation of the cross (Figure 5). Remember that this concept is stated as a warning in Psalm 11:3 – *“If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?”*

Up until the 18th century, scientists and the Christian church alike generally accepted the viewpoint of an age of thousands of years for the universe/earth, but the introduction of new theories of universe/earth age history from various scientists from about 1770 to 1830 began to erode the accepted principles of the acceptance of thousands of years. Some primary examples are:

- A cooling earth over long ages
- Biological evolution over long ages
- Fossils date the rocks, so long ages
- The present is the key to the past, once again, long ages
- Introduction of the evolutionary Geologic Column (Figure 6). As the current basis of modern Geology, it is an alleged pictorial representation of the fossil record, rock strata and long ages over millions of years and is found in virtually all geology textbooks

So, by the 19th century, there were three competing views of earth history as follows:

1. Catastrophic view. Although the adherents of this viewpoint believed in God, they also believed in numerous catastrophic floods over millions of years
2. Uniformitarian view. Although the adherents of this viewpoint may have believed in God, they did not believe in a global flood and believed there were slow gradual changes over millions of years
3. Biblical/Traditional view. Belief in a supernatural creation, a global flood, and a universe/earth that are about 6,000 years old

Although the 19th century witnessed the previous three competing views of earth history, the Christian church generally still believed in thousands of years and a global flood. Now, let's look at how the Christian church began to incorporate millions of years into biblical Scripture:

- 1810 – Introduction of the Gap Theory (insert long ages between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1. The Gap Theory is explained in a following section)
- 1820 – Introduction of the Day-Age Theory (creation days are interpreted as long ages) and the concept of a Peaceful Global Flood theory

- 1830 – The introduction of the Local Flood Theory (Mesopotamian Valley area) and the perception of Genesis as a myth – not history
- 1850 – The general acceptance of millions of years by the Christian church that was framed on the foundation of “everything can be explained by *time*, plus *chance*, plus the *laws of nature*”

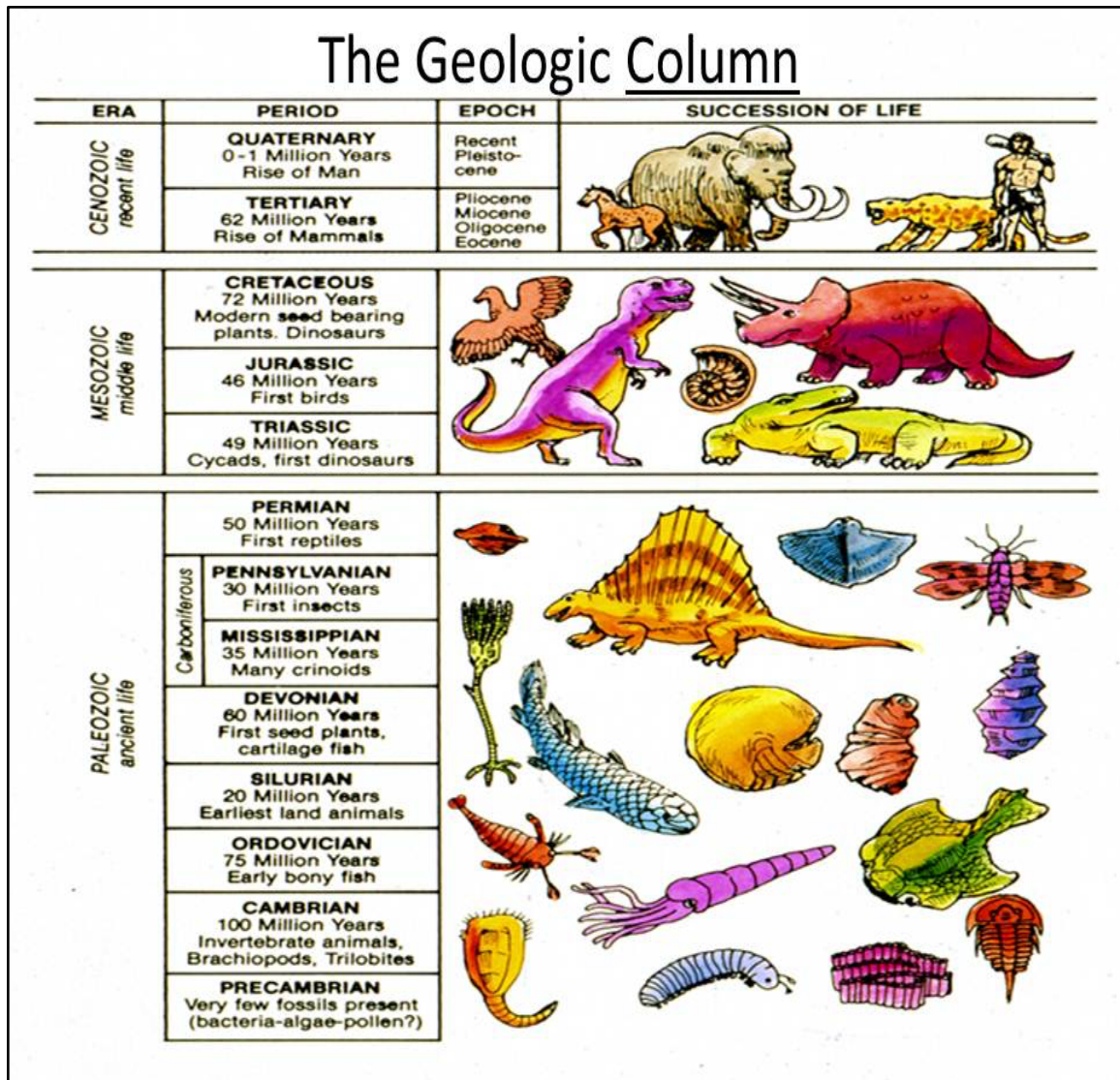


Figure 6

Once the concept of millions of years had gained the status of acceptable science, some influential and respected Christian authors and publications added to its credibility. Several examples are:

- 1909 C.I. Scofield, Scofield Reference Bible. The margin notes for Genesis 1:2 states – “The first creative act refers to the dateless past, and gives scope for all the geologic ages”

- 2000 Dr. Norman Geisler, Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics. Pages 270 and 272 state – *“The problem is deepened by the fact that there is prima facie evidence to indicate that the days of Genesis are indeed twenty-four-hour periods.....Most scientific evidence sets the age of the world at billions of years”*

The Gap Theory

The most common method that is used to insert secular science with its long periods of time into Genesis is re-translating the word “*was*” in Genesis 1:2 and was popularized by The Scofield Bible, and almost universally accepted. Let’s look at how this is accomplished.

Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 reads as follows – (1) *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* (2) *Now the earth was without shape and empty, and darkness was over the surface of the watery deep, but the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water.”* When this verse is read as written, it appears to flow from the beginning of verse one to the end of verse two. However, there are some alternative viewpoints that modify this verse as follows – *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Then, in the next verse the word “*was*” is retranslated or changed to the word “*became!*” So, the next verse (v2) would then read as follows – *“The earth became without shape and empty; and darkness was over the surface of the watery deep, but the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water.”*

According to this theory, Genesis 1:1 describes the initial creation of the universe. Following this, the standard events of cosmic evolution took place, which eventually produced our solar system about 5 billion years ago. Then, on the earth, the various geologic ages followed, as identified by their respective assemblages of fossils (such as dinosaurs, etc.). Then, a devastating global cataclysm occurred that destroyed all life on earth, leaving a vast fossil graveyard everywhere. This situation is then said to be what is described in Genesis 1:2. The cataclysm is thought to have occurred as a result of the rebellion of Satan and his angels against their Creator in Heaven with God casting them out of Heaven to earth.

The subtle word change in Genesis 1:2 purportedly allows a gap of time to be inserted between the first and second verse so long periods of time can then be inserted between these two verses that allow for the billions and millions of years that evolution requires! This point of view is known by various names such as the Gap Theory, Ruin Reconstruction Theory, Day Age Theory, and so on. Currently, one of the most popular viewpoints is known as the *Progressive Creation* movement, but the basic idea of a gap between the first and second verses is still the same. Although these viewpoints are contrary to Scripture,

they have, nonetheless, become very popular so science (evolution) and the required long periods of time can become an integral part of the creation account.

Contrary to biblical scripture, the Gap Theory is still being advocated by a number of evangelical theologians. As an example, the 1997 Nelson Study Bible states the following in its footnotes on Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 – *“Here it means that God renewed what was in a chaotic state. God changed chaos into cosmos, disorder into order, emptiness into fullness.....the two words, without form and void, express one concept – chaos. The earth had been reduced to this state – it was not the way God had first created it.”*

FAITH (3)

In the first two sections of our discussion on the Sufficiency of the Genesis Account of Creation, we initially considered the perspectives of Theology (the study of God) and Perspicuity (the clarity and ability to understand Scripture) as being essential and fundamental to understanding the creation account from two basic viewpoints. First, only God was present and responsible during the one-time miraculous events of creation. His eyewitness account of everything we see (universe, earth, and all living things) that were created in six consecutive calendar days is found in the first two chapters of Genesis. Second, secular science takes an aggressive and bold approach that is based on the premise that evolution, not God, was responsible for everything we see (universe, earth, and all living things) and happened from slow micro-changes over millions and billions of years.

However, this diversity of opposing viewpoints creates a significant challenge for every person – either a person believes the biblical account of creation or they believe the scientific model of evolution. These two choices are succinctly summarized by Dr. George Wald, a Nobelist from Harvard when he said – *“When it comes to the origin of life on this earth, there are only two possibilities; creation or spontaneous generation (evolution). There is no third way.”* As a result, each person either accepts the biblical account of creation by *faith*, or they must reject it. Equally, a person must either believe evolution by faith, or they must reject it.

From a biblical perspective, the issue of faith is the central theme of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, verses one and three as follows – *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”* This verse tells us that:

- True faith is not based on empirical (observed) evidence but on divine assurance
- The worlds (everything we see) were framed by God
- Everything that we see was not made from things that we see

Along with the eleventh chapter of Hebrews are numerous other verses that unequivocally state that God created everything we see. Additionally, it is also important to remember the meaning of several Hebrew words that are used within the creation account as follows:

- *Bara*. This word is a perfect verb meaning the action of creating – as stated in the text – is finished. So, when this verb is used (i.e., Day 1, etc.), it means that the act of creation during that particular time frame needed no further action – it was finished. From another perspective, God did not start the creation procedure and then let evolution finish the process
- *Ex Nihilo*. This word means God created out of nothing. Before the act of creation, nothing existed (except God)

Now, let's look at some additional verses that clarify God was solely responsible for everything we see (notice the repetitious use of the word *all*):

- *"All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made"* – John 1:3
- *"All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist"* – Colossians 1:16-17
- *"Since the day that God created man on the earth"* – Deuteronomy 4:32
- *"O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all"* – Psalm 104:24
- *"Who created all things through Jesus Christ"* – Ephesians 3:9
- *"I have made the earth, and created man on it"* – Isaiah 45:12
- *"For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created"* – Revelation 4:11
- *"Who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it"* – Revelation 10:5
- *"The Creator of the ends of the earth"* – Isaiah 40:28

A common theme of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation is that God is the Creator who made everything. Not surprisingly, the authors of the Old and New Testament confirm the Genesis record. As an example, there are 165 passages from Genesis that are directly quoted or referred to in the New Testament, and every New Testament author refers to Genesis. When an organization and/or individual either rejects and/or feels that it is necessary to modify the creation account by combining it with secular science, then God is

denied as the Creator. This is a fundamental problem with the Intelligent Design (ID) movement. Although ID recognizes there is an intelligent mind behind the universe, earth, and all living things, it does not recognize who the intelligent mind is and leaves that decision up to each individual.

To summarize this section on faith, there is a greater problem than scientists who do not believe in God. It is Christians who believe science, rather than the Bible and come up with many new ideas such as:

- God used the “big bang” and evolution to create. This allegedly enables science to be reconciled with the Bible (Theistic evolution)
- There was a previous creation that was destroyed and the present creation is a re-creation. This is supposed to explain the “oldness” of the earth (The Gap Theory)
- The earth was not created in six 24-hour days but seven periods of billions and/or millions of years. This is an attempt to reconcile the age of the earth and/or universe according to science (referred to as seven long days)

So, the primary issue is – do you believe the Genesis account of creation as written (literal history) or not?

REASON (4)

When considering the creation account, the original sin by Adam and Eve, the resultant death of Christ on the cross and His subsequent resurrection, one has to wonder why God originally created perfection when He knew it would be ruined by sin and require the death of His Son to offer mankind eternal life in place of death. Isaiah 46:9 states – *“My purpose will be established, I will accomplish all My good pleasure.”* So, why did God create the universe, the earth, and all living things? The answer is found in Ephesians 3:9 that states – *“And to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery; which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Christ Jesus; to the intent that now the manifold (diverse) wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* This verse tells us that God created all things so that He could display His redemptive salvation through the church so He could be praised forever in eternity.

When this concept is applied to creation, it is the beginning of the purposes of God in redemption. 2 Corinthians 4:6 states – *“For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”* In this verse, Paul is drawing a parallel between God creating light out of darkness during the first

day of creation and the light He can also shine in the dark sinful heart of mankind. Jonathan Edwards, a Christian preacher and theologian during the 1700's – and widely acknowledged to be one of America's greatest intellectuals – observed that as the light replaced the darkness on the first day of creation, God still needed additional time to complete His creative work, and at the end of the sixth day, everything was very good prior to the final day of rest on day seven. Jonathan Edwards and Dr. John MacArthur, president of Masters Seminary, compared this to the life of a believer that when God replaces the darkness with light in a sinner's heart, that person begins to live in the light and grow until one day he enters into eternal rest.

If the Genesis account of creation is rejected or modified by the tenets of evolution, a person is meddling with the instantaneous miracle of God who replaced darkness with light in creation as a parallel to the same God who can instantaneously replace darkness with light in a sinner's heart. This is the wonder of redemption that is also within the creation account. Therefore, don't minimize, modify, or reject God the creator and His ability to change a sinner's heart!

CONCLUSION

This series has summarized the importance of trust and faith when applied to the Bible, and particularly the Genesis account of creation. Unfortunately, many people either reject Genesis or find Genesis hard to believe even though they claim to believe in the authority and inerrancy of the Bible. This dilemma is best explained as outlined in Romans 1:18-23 – *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth by their unrighteousness, because what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes-his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, because they are understood through what has been made. So, people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or give him thanks, but they became futile in their thoughts and their senseless hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools.”*

However, the real question is – *“What is the best explanation for your purpose in life?”* If creation is true (and the evidence from science and Scripture indicate that it is), then each person should be concerned with their future destiny and specifically, where you will spend eternity. The Bible clearly says – *“All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God”* – Romans 3:23, and those without a personal acceptance of God will spend eternity in a lake of fire (Revelation 20:15).

Nevertheless, God has provided an alternate choice, and that choice is a free gift that only needs to be accepted by you – *“For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”* – John 3:16, and *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be saved”* – Romans 10:13. This is God’s message to you, so have you accepted his free gift of eternal life?

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