
Creation Answers

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Who does this newsletter?

This newsletter is produced by Wayne Spencer on a Quarterly basis. Its purpose is to bring creation research within the reach of Christians and provide up-to-date reliable information on creation issues. Wayne Spencer is a creation author and former teacher who has presented papers at the International Conference on Creationism and has published in various creation publications, such as the Creation Research Society Quarterly, Creation Ex Nihilo, TJ, and Origins (from the Biblical Creation Society, UK).

This newsletter is meant to help people plug into creation resources and get informed about creation and evolution. It is provided free of charge on request. Using the free Adobe Acrobat Reader is necessary for viewing the newsletter. There are no restrictions in copying this newsletter or passing it on to others. To request to be placed on the e-mail list, send a request to Wayne at wayne@creationanswers.net.

More information on Wayne Spencer's education and publications can be found on the creationanswers.net web site. You'll also find many other resources. <http://creationanswers.net>

In this issue...

- **The Relevance of Recent Creation**
- **Review of "Dinosaurs, Genesis, & the Gospel"**
- **Thousands Not Billions conference in Dallas, Sept. 30, 2006**

A Personal Note from Wayne Spencer

I would like to welcome new readers of this newsletter. This issue addresses the relevance and importance of the age question in the article, "The Relevance of Recent Creation." I have tried to explain why the age question matters for Christians. I hope that some of you will pass this issue on to others, such as pastors, Christian teachers, and other Christian friends. In our time in history it is important that Christians be aware of issues that shape the thinking of people in our culture. The controversy about the Age of the Earth tends to reveal people's values and their view of the Bible.

I also want to call everyone's attention to the *Thousands Not Billions* conference that is coming up in the Dallas area. This conference will present what I believe is some truly historic research findings. Much effort has been put into packaging the information in a way that makes it understandable for the average Christian. The message from it will be that the Bible can be trusted. Well qualified scientists will be speaking at the conference. More information is available on my website and the ICR website.

I have also included something special for parents in this issue. I have a short review of a special DVD set from Answers in Genesis. This video set is a great resource for parents or Christian teachers who want to give kids a Biblical view regarding dinosaurs, Genesis, and God's creation. Much of the program is geared to elementary kids. There is also a special message on it where Ken Ham tells about his own family upbringing.

Wayne Spencer, M.S., Physics

The Relevance of Recent Creation

“Recent Creation” is a term that refers to the view known as “young-age scientific creationism.” To put it simply, it is the view that not only did God create the world, but He did so *recently*. What is meant by *recently*? *Recently* here means thousands of years ago rather than millions or billions of years ago as accepted ideas from modern science say. The recent creation point of view takes a strong view of the historicity, authority, and inerrancy of the Bible. Many Christians have little interest in the controversy about the age of the Earth. Some will say, “What matters to me is the Rock of Ages, not the ages of rocks.” This article is about why this statement, though it sounds reasonable in a sense, opens up the door to undermining the authority of Scripture.

Age and a Biblical World View

You cannot look up a verse in the Bible that tells the age of the Earth. Nor does the Bible put much emphasis on it. It is true there are uncertainties in dating some ancient events, especially if they are prior to reliable historical records and there is little archeological evidence. Some would even say the Bible tells us nothing at all about the age of the Earth.

However, there are many problems with interpreting the Bible in a way that allows for an old Earth and universe. It is simply impossible to fit “deep time” into the Bible without using some improper methods of interpretation. Genesis chapters 5 and 11, in listing genealogical data documenting families from Adam to Abraham, adds chronological data to the genealogical information. This and other information in the Bible makes it possible to make at least an approximate estimate for the age of the Earth. Scripture emphasizes in Exodus 20:11 and other passages how God created in a week by his word, rather than by a long

process. Also, if the Earth is as old as many historians and scientists argue today, this throws into question many details of Old Testament history, especially the early chapters of Genesis. Indeed many scholars today do not believe that the Bible is historically accurate prior to the time of King David in ancient Israel.

What harm is there in science telling children or anyone else that the Earth and the universe are billions of years old? We can trust in Jesus Christ and apply his word to our daily lives without worrying about the age issue. But there is a subtle attack of Christian faith in the suggestion that the Earth and the universe are extremely old.

I think that philosophically the belief that the world is very old does not fit well with Christianity. In the old age view, God, as the Creator that we have to deal with, is pushed far back in space and time, if he has any place at all. Contrast this with the Bible that puts the origin of the Earth and the universe not too long before recorded history. Also, why would an omnipotent God use millions of years of a violent wasteful inefficient process like evolution to create living things? When God’s word spells out that many things were spoken into existence immediately, accepting a long process like evolution is not Biblical. The God of the Bible would not use a long process of death and struggle to create. The violence and struggle in nature is not normal and is something God is going to eventually do away with.

The Nature of Truth

When you take scientific arguments saying things are old as authoritative on one hand, and hold to the Bible as the word of God on the other, you end up with a distorted view of truth. God’s word speaks to us on historical events just as authoritatively as it speaks to us on how we should behave and think about God. The Bible claims to describe real people, places, and events. Of course the Bible is not a science book in the sense that it does not give scientific level detail. But the information it does give is

authoritative and is to be fully trusted. In some matters, Scripture gives only a sketchy outline of the events. Science can sometimes help figure out some of the details in the outline, but not if the basic outline is thrown out. Rejecting what God's word says on an issue often makes it impossible to come to real answers on that issue.

When science says that events and processes happened that follow a different time scale than the Bible, you tend to put scientific arguments and Biblical information in different categories in your mind. We also naturally think in different categories because we are taught in categories in our education. Subjects are divided and not integrated together very much in most of traditional education. What tends to happen in the minds of young people in school is that science, because it is considered authoritative about the real world, it is what is trusted about history and about nature. Science comes to be treated as objectively true but Biblical concepts tend to be thought of as subjectively true, but not objectively true. Thus young people sometimes disconnect Bible stories from the real world, though they have the knowledge of the Bible. If something is only subjectively true that means it is your own perception or feeling that it is true. But objective truth is true regardless of your own opinion, perception, or feelings.

If the Bible is the revealed word of the Creator-God, then it is authoritative on everything it says! Thus Scripture is just as authoritative when it describes things about nature and history as when it gives us a theology of God or tells how to be forgiven of our sins. So, a Biblical view implies that everything Scripture reveals is objectively true, so long as we interpret it correctly. As Josh McDowell has rightly pointed out, the subjective experience of every Christian is based on the same objective facts of history. Only Christianity can be true to both the facts about the world and explain human experience. No other belief system or religion can do both.

If the Bible is not true to the facts about the real world, there is no basis for us trusting it to explain our day to day human experience. This is what is often said by skeptics. Moreover, this is the impression many skeptics have of how Christians think! Atheists often realize that many Christians are contradicting their own beliefs by questioning a variety of things in the Bible such as Genesis or various miracles. If you can make Christians doubt what appears to be insignificant details of time, date, places, events from the Bible, then Christians may look at the whole Bible differently. So the historicity of Scripture and its accuracy regarding time and events are quite important.

Thus in the age issue we choose who we consider to be the authoritative source of truth. When evolutionary ideas from science are accepted, it undermines sound Biblical thinking in many ways. Evolutionary concepts are not based on the Bible. Historically, they came from atheists and agnostics who wanted to explain the world without God and without having to accept the Bible. There was a time when many geologists believed in a global Flood and that the Earth was only about 6,000 years old. But as evolutionary ideas came to be accepted in the 1800s, some theologians and influential religious people began to reinterpret various things in the Bible so that it would allow for acceptance of evolutionary ideas, including the idea of an old Earth. The primary motivation for believing in an old Earth and universe is not because of any sort of scientific evidence but to allow time for the Big Bang and biological evolution. All the purported evidences for the Earth being old can be shown to be based on a selective distorted interpretation of the facts or based on assumptions that are just not realistic.

It is true that some Christian theologians allow for an old age on the basis of biblical considerations and not because of a commitment to evolution. But these people are a small minority and they have been negatively influenced by the various incorrect interpretations of Genesis that have now

been prevalent for many years. Unfortunately, seminaries do not have a good track record in training Pastors and Bible scholars on the origins issue.

Old age thinking is now so accepted that it keeps people from knowing how to understand history and science. There is also the misconception that there is no scientific evidence that supports the Bible being accurate about history and the age of the world. It is true that young-age creationists have occasionally made some mistakes in some young-age arguments. But, that does not make the Bible less authoritative. Also, there is now a lot of evidence that confirms that the Earth is less than 10,000 years old. I will not go into detail on these evidences here but there are good arguments that have stood up to criticism. The best scientific arguments for a young Earth suggest Earth is between 6,000 and 8,000 years old. To say 6,000 is probably closer to it from Biblical considerations, though I think 8,000 is not impossible.

The Limitations of Experimental Science

We all benefit a great deal from science because of all it has done for us. Experimental science does have a certain authority because systematic scientific methods are used to come to conclusions. Thus we benefit from experimental science in matters like the design of automobiles or computers and in modern medicine. But what many people trained in the sciences do not realize is that the study of origins is very different from experimental science. You simply cannot do experiments in the past. Even if you set up an experiment to simulate something that happened in the past, there is no certain way of knowing that what happens in the experiment accurately represents what happened in the past. This is true regardless of how careful your observations (made in the present) are. Origins issues represent one-time unrepeatable events, and so normal scientific methods just do not apply.

This does not mean that science cannot or should not deal with origins. It means the process is different and science cannot speak as authoritatively about events of the past. Many unprovable assumptions have to be made in developing theories about the events of the past. Thus theories about evolution and about creation are really the same in the sense that neither can conclusively prove anything about the past. Rather, they deal with what is plausible and realistic and what is not. There is often deep disagreement between evolutionists and creationists. Some of the disagreement comes from one side or the other misunderstanding the other side. But both positions on the age issue are choices of faith made by people.

Young-age creationists believe we have a written source recording events of the past from one who was there, the word of the Creator himself. If you can accept the idea of God revealing truth, accepting a young age for the world should not be too big a step. Thus, from the young age point of view, scientific ideas about origins should be built on the foundation given in Scripture, though there may be a number of possibilities for how details could be worked out. Young age creationists in the sciences have done research on many technical issues. There are multiple approaches by creationists to some issues and there are sometimes multiple plausible answers to the technical questions.

Age and the New Testament

Evolutionary concepts depend on very long periods of time and they assume there has been no divine intervention into history. Many evolutionists are of the opinion that science must necessarily be naturalistic, that it cannot allow for any kind of supernatural. So there is a great reliance on natural processes that we see happening in our time, and assuming that the same processes are sufficient to explain everything about the past. II Peter chapter 3 mentions that such thinking would be prevalent in the "last days" as

people would doubt the return of Christ. II Peter 3:3-7 from the NIV says the following:

“First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, ‘Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.’ But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.”

Everything has not “gone on as it has” throughout Earth history because God intervened in judgement and it other ways. The great works of God at Creation and the Noahic Flood are denied and not taken seriously today. But this just ignores overwhelming evidence that is literally right under our feet. There are many things (which point to a young Earth) that evolutionary scientists just do not ever think to look for because of their old age assumptions. The passage above affirms what Genesis says about the very first day of the Creation week in its description of the Earth. It also affirms that the world was deluged and destroyed in Noah’s Flood.

What about Jesus? Did Jesus say anything giving any idea what he thought about the age of the Earth? Jesus did not seem to address the subject directly, but he did refer to Genesis occasionally. Thus he clearly affirms the historicity of Genesis. One of the times he did this was in commenting on divorce. He says in Mark 10:6 that *“at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’”* This quotes Genesis 1:27 and contradicts evolutionary concepts. In the evolutionary view of things, the beginning of the universe was about 12 billion years ago with homo sapiens evolving from ape-man

intermediates about 2 million years ago. So, science would say that human males and females didn’t exist until well over 11 billion years after the beginning. This is just one minor example of how Scripture refers to creation as complete in the beginning, so there was no long process of development of living things.

God did not create by any kind of long process, but by miraculous acts and by speaking things into existence in moments. This is emphasized in a number of places, such as in Psalm 33:6 and 9, where it says *“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made. . . he spoke and it came to be.”* These statements cannot possibly mean that God spoke and then millions or billions of years later something finally came about. These verses are emphasizing that what God said took place immediately. This is also strongly emphasized by how the Creation account itself is written. In Genesis 1 it often says what God said, then it points out that “it was so.” Many ask the question, “how do we know it couldn’t mean . . .” long periods of time? The answer is by doing our homework and paying attention to what it says.

Science cannot overrule the authority of Scripture. But good science does not really conflict with Scripture. Only bad science that is biased against the God of the Bible conflicts with Scripture. We cannot give in as Christians to the pressure to accept an old age for the world. Dinosaurs did not go extinct millions of years before human beings evolved and rock layers do not take millions of years to form. The Biblical history is sound and is confirmed by strong scientific evidence. It is understandable that people with training in the sciences would have many scientific questions about the young-age view. The Creation Answers web site has an article that summarizes some evidence for the world being young on the following page: <http://www.creationanswers.net/geology/CRYOUNG3.HTM>

Other more technical sources can be recommended for those that are so inclined. There is a need for Christians to be better

informed. We can have confidence in the Bible and we can believe all of it.

Review of “Dinosaurs, Genesis, & the Gospel” from Answers in Genesis

Answers in Genesis, Ken Ham’s ministry, has produced a video program called “Dinosaurs, Genesis, and the Gospel.” This is a two DVD set aimed at helping parents to teach their kids about creation and dinosaurs from a Biblical perspective. Ken Ham speaks to the kids and Buddy Davis helps out occasionally with music and other interesting things he brings in. There is also a special lecture to parents. Buddy Davis writes creation related music, with a country style, that is fun music to sing along with. Buddy Davis also is a sculptor and does some fun activities on stage with Ken Ham such as with puppets.

The video is organized into segments on various topics to some degree, with important ideas put in special visual cartoon graphics to help kids learn and remember them. Ken Ham occasionally asks the kids to repeat statements to help them remember important concepts. Though there is no real assignment handouts I know of to go with the DVD’s, I think the way it is organized it would not be hard to create something for that purpose. There is a small booklet with the DVDs that summarizes the concepts presented.

The content of the program is very good. I would differ from Ken Ham on a couple of minor points but I would still heartily recommend the program to Christian parents. It emphasizes a Biblical overview of history, and addresses common questions about dinosaurs, Noah’s Ark, and fossils. There are some great examples of intelligent design in living things such as the platypus and the woodpecker. These portions are made even more fun and effective as a learning tool by the sing along songs written by

Buddy Davis. This DVD set cost me only \$12.99 from the Answers in Genesis website: <http://www.answersingenesis.org>

The Thousands Not Billions conference in Dallas, Sept. 30, 2006

A special conference is coming to the Dallas area September 30, 2006. It is known as the Thousands Not Billions conference. The Institute for Creation Research and First Baptist Church of Dallas will be sponsoring the event. This conference is something ICR has been taking to several cities around the USA. This will be a lay-level conference explaining results from a major research project ICR conducted regarding radioactive dating methods and the age of the Earth. There is major news from this research that Christians should hear. It will confirm the historicity of the Bible in unprecedented ways.

This will be a one day conference from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM on a Saturday. First Baptist Church of Dallas is located in downtown Dallas, Texas. There is a small cost. Lunch will be provided at the conference. You can call ICR at 800-743-6374 or email Denise Prock at dprock@icr.org.

Look for more information on <http://creationanswers.net>. For Dallas area contacts use Scott Zachary at 972-747-7688 (Brokerzac1@aol.com) or Wayne Spencer at 817-223-1985. Brochures and Church bulletin inserts are available to churches.

ICR’s web page detailing the conference is at <http://www.icr.org/index.php?module=events&action=view&ID=207>