

Genesis 1:1

Introduction

Dinosaurs are making a comeback, among both children and adults. "Barney" dominates morning television; "Jurassic Park" is the one, must-see movie of the summer. What makes these contemporary dinosaur fictions so fascinating is that in them the dinosaurs live side-by-side with human beings. We are intrigued by that because we have been taught dinosaurs are creatures that once ruled the earth millions of years ago, before mankind had evolved into its present form. They are almost a symbol for those who point to the natural selection of evolution over millions or billions of years as being responsible for life as we know it on planet earth.

If Genesis One is literal, then God created dinosaurs alongside man on the fifth and sixth days of an ordinary seven day week less than 10,000 years ago! Does that seem incredible to you? It does to most people. Even most *Christians* now hold interpretations of Genesis One which they believe can accommodate the theory of evolution with its processes of natural selection over millions or billions of years.

Genesis is under attack, from those outside the Church *and* from many within. The conflict between God's special creation and the theory of evolution is not just a matter of theological importance; the whole basis of society as we know it hangs in the balance. If God's special creation is true, then it is the foundation upon which society is to be built. If God's special creation is true, then there are absolute truths about which God speaks with absolute authority. If, on the other hand, some form of evolution is adopted as true, then *it* becomes the foundation upon which human society will be built. There can be *no* absolute truths and only man in the majority can speak with authority.

The truth of the matter is that society has rejected God's special creation and replaced it with the theory of evolution. Building upon this foundation has produced devastating effects: lawlessness,

homosexuality, pornography, and abortion on demand are some of its inevitable by-products.

In Psalm 11:3 (NIV) we read, "If the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

Genesis is foundational to Christianity. Every Bible doctrine, either directly or indirectly, ultimately has its basis in the Book of Genesis. The Christian Gospel itself, that Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose the third day, depends on the origin of the problem for which the Savior's death was, and is, the only solution - and that goes back to Genesis.

The foundations are being attacked; society is crumbling. You and I are going to go *back* to Genesis to understand God's special creation.

#1 You Should See God's Special Creation In Genesis One Is Supernatural

Christians seem to be at a disadvantage when they compare God's special creation with the theory of evolution. People have been taught that to have faith in God's special creation is to somehow abandon the facts of science. It is not an issue of the facts of science versus the faith of Christians! Both God's special creation *and* the theory of evolution are faith-belief systems about the past which interpret the same facts existing in the present.

It is important to realize this from the outset. We cannot test the past using the scientific method. The scientific method, you might recall from school, involves repeating things and watching what happens.

No scientist in the world today, creationist or evolutionist, was present when the world came into existence, nor do any have the privilege of watching worlds being created today. We readily admit that God's special creation cannot be proved; but neither can the natural selection processes of the theory of evolution!

Both the creation scientist and the evolutionist look at the same facts. Both are biased. The creationist's bias for God's special creation is

found in Hebrews 11:3, which says, "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." The evolutionist is no less biased. Here is how we might describe him: "By faith, I, an evolutionist, understand that the worlds were *not* framed by the word of any god, so that what is seen has indeed been made out of previously existing and less complex visible things, by purely natural processes, through billions of years."¹

The theory of evolution looks at the facts which exist in the present and says that time, chaos, random chance, and the struggle for survival are responsible for life as we know it. Evolution is not itself an established fact; it is a belief system for interpreting evidence. Noted evolutionist Theodosius Dobzhansky quotes Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who said, "Evolution is a light which illuminates all facts, a trajectory which all lines of thought must follow."² Evolutionists themselves agree: Their theory is a faith-belief system through which they interpret the evidence.

As such, it is a belief system about the past based on the words of men who were *not* there but who are trying to explain how all the evidence of the present originated.

God's special creation is a belief system, too. But it is a belief system based upon a Book which claims to be the Word of One Who *was* there, Who knows *everything* there is to know, and Who *tells* us what happened!

In the Book of Job God asks his servant,

Job 38:4-12 "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut in the sea with doors, When it burst forth and issued from the womb; When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; When I fixed My limit for it, And set bars and doors; When I said, 'This far you may come, but no farther, And here your proud waves must stop!' Have you commanded the morning since your days began, And caused the dawn to know its place..."

¹John Whitcomb, The Early Earth, p. 52

²Ken Ham, Evolution: The Lie, p. 16

The theory of evolution attempts to explain the origins of the world in terms of purely natural processes. Genesis One states that God created all things supernaturally. The fact that God's special creation was supernatural means that we can only know it by revelation. Reasoning will not help; God alone can tell us how the world began, because no man was there to see it being created, and even if a human observer had been present, he could not have understood fully what he saw without God's own interpretation.

The idea that God's special creation requires faith and that the theory of evolution is a fact is a fallacy! Both are faith-belief systems which interpret the same evidence. It should be obvious that faith in God's revelation is preferable to faith in man's own reasoning. Why isn't it obvious to the evolutionist?

Listen to the reason that the evolutionists give:

Professor D.M.S. Watson: "[Creation] will present a parallel to the theory of evolution...a theory universally accepted not because it can be proven by logically coherent evidence to be true, but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible."

Sir Julian Huxley: "I suppose the reason we leaped at [the theory of evolution] was because the idea of God interfered with our sexual mores."³

Romans 1:28 says of unbelievers, "...they did not like to retain God in their knowledge..." Their failure to adopt the faith-belief system of God's special creation is because of sin and rebellion - *not* because of facts!

Isaac Newton, who was a creation scientist, once made a scale model of the universe. A colleague of his was impressed, and asked Newton who made the model. Newton, who evidently had a keen sense of evangelical humor, replied that no one made the model. As you can imagine, his colleague would not accept the answer; the design required a designer and a builder. Finally Newton challenged him: If so simply a model as this required an intelligent designer and

³Bible Doctrines For Today, A Beka Book, p. 147

builder, how could he believe that the infinitely more wonderful and complex universe that it was a mere model of was the product of random chance?⁴

He couldn't - and you can't - unless you want to hold on to your sin. The issue isn't science; it's sin, the Savior, and salvation!

#2 You Should See God's Special Creation In Genesis One Is Sudden

Among Christians is has been popular, and is becoming increasingly so today, to believe in *both* God's special creation *and* some form of evolution. They say that God's special creation was not sudden; it was not accomplished in a week of seven literal, 24 hour days. These theories are an attempt to make Genesis One seem more scientific - to be more sympathetic to the supposed facts of evolution or of the geologic ages.

There are two popular theories among Christians: The Gap Theory and the Day-Age Theory.

The Gap Theory says that the creation of Genesis 1:1 may have taken place billions of years ago, with all the geological ages atheistic scientists talk about inserted into a tremendous time "gap" between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Verse two is said to be the description of the earth after a great cataclysm devastated the earth - leaving the earth dark and covered by water. The catastrophe is usually explained as a divine judgment against Satan in his rebellion against God. Following the cataclysmic judgment, God then "re-created" the world in the six literal days, described in verses 3-31.

The Day-Age Theory says that the "days" of Genesis One are not in any sense literal, 24 hour days, but are, in fact, long geological ages of time during which God used evolutionary processes to create the world as we know it today.

There is much we could say to refute both of these unbiblical theories. Two words are the most significant: Days & Death.

⁴Excerpt from a tape by David Hocking, Genesis 1:1

Days

The word for "day" used in Genesis One is the Hebrew word "yom." It can mean a day in the ordinary, 24 hour sense; it can mean the daylight portion of such a 24 hour day; or occasionally in the Bible it is used in the sense of a short, indefinite period of time - e.g., "in the days of the Judges of Israel. "Yom" never means a long period of time; the Hebrew word for that is "olam."

Besides this, God defines exactly what He means by "day" in the context of Genesis One. The very first time the word appears, in Genesis 1:4, we read in the NIV, "God called the light day, and the darkness He called night." Genesis 1:5 (NIV) reads, "And there was evening, and there was morning - the first day." This is the same phrase used for the other days of Genesis One and shows the ordinary, literal cycle of 24 hour days as the earth rotates on its axis, morning followed by evening followed by morning. God is going into great detail to describe a literal, 24 hour cycle so we will not be confused.

This literal definition of "day" is crucial if we are to understand the verses which follow. We read in Genesis 1:14, "Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years..." If the "days" are not literal, 24 hour days, then there is no definition to the "seasons, days, and years" in verse 14. "Seasons" and "years" are obviously to be taken literally, and must be based on a literal understanding of the days that comprise them.

Here's another way of looking at it. Adam was created on the seventh "day." Later, in Genesis 5:5, we are told "all the *days* that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died." If the "days" of Genesis one are ages of time, so are the "years." How long did Adam live? Did he live 930 literal years; or did he live through 930 unspecified ages of geologic time?

These considerations should dispel the Day-Age Theory; but what about the popular Gap Theory? There is another, more compelling reason to reject the Gap Theory, a reason which *also* refutes the

Day-Age Theory. It is the presence of Death in these theories, death before Adam.

Death

If the Day-Age Theory is correct, God employed evolutionary processes in creation *prior* to the creation of Adam on the sixth day, or in the sixth geological age. If the Gap Theory is correct, in-between the original creation of verse 1 and the re-creation of verse 2 there was a destructive catastrophe. In both cases, death and bloodshed and suffering *precede* the creation of Adam and Eve.

The Bible says there was *no* death, bloodshed, or suffering before Adam and Eve sinned in Eden:

Romans 5:12 "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin..."

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 "For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."

Evolution and theories of long, geologic ages teach that for millions or perhaps billions of years before man things lived, struggled, and died. Their story is one of death, bloodshed, and suffering. The Bible declares that it was man's rebellion that led to sin, which only afterward led to death, bloodshed, and suffering. If evolution is true, or if there are vast geological ages of catastrophes, then the reason Christ died on the Cross is obscured, if not destroyed.

The Day-Age theory cannot be true since it says God used the processes of evolution to bring man into existence. The Gap Theory cannot be true, either: While still holding to a literal six days of creation, it inserts death and destruction in the "gap" prior to Adam's sin, and that cannot be biblically true.

We're not saying that those who hold these theories are not sincere Christians. We are strongly suggesting, though, that they abandon them in favor of a literal approach to Genesis One - an approach which strengthens our foundation rather than helping our enemies to further erode it.

#3 You Should See God's Special Creation In Genesis One Is Significant

Why is all of this so significant?

Many important reasons could be suggested. I'd like to suggest two.

First, God's special creation in Genesis One is significant because of the erosion of the foundation of our society. If the foundation of God's special creation is destroyed, we have no absolute basis for law, marriage, standards of decency, or the meaning of life. All of these require submission to God's Absolute Authority as Creator; all of these go back to Genesis.

People are arguing about a great many things today. The subject of homosexuals in military service is a hotly debated item. The primary reason I hear, even from Christians, that homosexuals should not serve in the military is that AIDS will wipe out the defense budget due to health care given to homosexuals in the military. While that may indeed prove true, the real reason goes back to Genesis! Because of the absolute foundation in Genesis, we know that God's design for sexual behavior is that of heterosexual, monogamous couples who remain married for life. God's special creation in Genesis One gives Him Absolute Authority to regulate our sexual behavior.

The problem is not financial; it is sin! In Romans we have this in perspective, against the backdrop of God's special creation:

Romans 1:20-27 "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man; and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due."

According to the Bible, we are not evolving; we are de-evolving! Adam didn't fall upwards. Things are getting worse, not better.

What should we do? There are three courses of action: Revolution/Reform/Regeneration. We would reject forms of revolution. We should pursue reforms in our laws, reforms that are biblically based. Ultimately "the heart of the problem is the problem of the heart"! We should seek to see men won to Christ as Savior and regenerated.

That brings us to the second reason why God's special creation in Genesis One is significant, especially for you and I today. It is significant if we are to evangelize the lost in this eroding world.

When we studied Acts we saw that Paul appealed to God's special creation when evangelizing people who had little or no biblical background. Creation evangelism, grounded in an understanding of Genesis, is becoming more and more appropriate to the society in which we live - a society with little or no biblical background that has been taught to think according to an atheistic, evolutionary philosophy that makes man supreme instead of God.

Creationist author Ken Ham:

"It wasn't so very long ago that Biblical creation was the basis of our society. Creation was taught in the universities and the school system. People automatically sent their children to Sunday School or similar places, so they would learn Christian absolutes. Even people who were not Christians, by and large, respected and obeyed these laws based upon the Bible. Sexual deviancy in all areas was outlawed. Abortion in most instances was considered murder."⁵

That is not the society we see today. It is more pagan than Christian. As Paul did among the pagans of the first century, we should establish that God is Creator in our evangelism more and more. Creation is God's universal revelation to all men of His glory. Remember Romans 1:20?

"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse..."

⁵Ken Ham, Evolution: The Lie, p. 98

The Psalmist declares, Psalms 19:1

"The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork."

Creation declares God's glory. Our message to a post-Christian culture should start there and *then* go on to speak of the "goodness of God [that] leads...to repentance..." (Romans 2:4).

Conclusion

God's special creation is only a backdrop, only a scaffolding, for His real work: That of redeeming a people to inherit and inhabit eternity with Him!

In Romans 1:20 God calls creation "the things that were *made*." The word for "made" is our word for poem. Creation is God's poem to all men everywhere to reveal His glory.

The only other place that word for poem is used is in Ephesians 2:10, where believers are said to be His "workmanship" - His *poem*.

You and I are new creatures, the poem of God's goodness and grace among those who are perishing.

Creation reveals God's glory to all men; His new creatures in Christ - you and I - reveal His goodness and grace to all men. It's a wonderful poem that speaks of sin, the Savior, and His salvation.