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Ken Ham

# WHAT'S WRONG WITH PROGRESSIVE CREATION?

**KEN HAM & DR. TERRY MORTENSON**

ONE RESULT OF compromising with our evolutionary culture is the view of creation called the “day-age” theory or “progressive creation.” This view, while not a new one, has received wide publicity in the past several years. Much of this publicity is due to the publications and lectures of astronomer Dr. Hugh Ross—probably the world’s leading progressive creationist. Dr. Ross’s views on how to interpret the book of Genesis won early endorsements from many well-known Christian leaders, churches, seminaries, and Christian colleges. The teachings of Dr. Ross seemingly allowed Christians to use the term “creationist” but still gave them supposed academic respectability in the eyes of the world by rejecting six literal days of creation and maintaining billions of years. However, after his views became more fully understood, many who had previously embraced progressive creation realized how bankrupt those views are and removed their endorsement.

In this chapter some of the teachings of progressive creation will be examined in light of Scripture and good science.

# WHAT'S WRONG WITH PROGRESSIVE CREATION?

## IN SUMMARY, PROGRESSIVE CREATION TEACHES:

- The big bang origin of the universe occurred about 16 billion years ago.
- The days of creation were overlapping periods of millions and billions of years.
- Over millions of years, God created new species as others kept going extinct.
- The record of nature is just as perfect as the Word of God.
- Death, bloodshed, and disease existed before Adam and Eve.
- Manlike creatures that behaved much like us (and painted on cave walls) existed before Adam and Eve but did not have a spirit and thus had no hope of salvation.
- The Genesis Flood was a local event.

## THE BIG BANG ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

Progressive creation teaches that the modern big bang theory of the origin of the universe is true and has been proven by scientific inquiry and observation. For Hugh Ross and others like him, big bang cosmology becomes the basis by which the Bible is interpreted. This includes belief that the universe and the earth are billions of years old. Dr. Ross even goes so far as to state that life would not be possible on earth without billions of years of earth history:

It only works in a cosmos of a hundred-billion trillion stars that's precisely sixteen-billion-years old. This is the narrow window of time in which life is possible.<sup>1</sup>

Life is only possible when the universe is between 12 and 17 billion years.<sup>2</sup>

This, of course, ignores the fact that God is omnipotent—He

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<sup>1</sup> Dallas Theological Seminary chapel service, September 13, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Toccoa Falls Christian College, Staley Lecture Series, March 1997.

# EXPOSING PROGRESSIVE CREATION

could make a fully functional universe ready for life right from the beginning, for with God nothing is impossible (Matthew 19:26).<sup>3</sup>

## THE DAYS OF CREATION IN GENESIS 1

Progressive creationists claim that the days of creation in Genesis 1 represent long periods of time. In fact, Dr. Ross believes Day 3 of Creation Week lasted more than 3 billion years!<sup>4</sup> This assertion is made in order to allow for the billions of years that evolutionists claim are represented in the rock layers of earth. This position, however, has problems, both biblically and scientifically.

The text of Genesis 1 clearly states that God supernaturally created all that is in six actual days. If we are prepared to let the words of the text speak to us in accord with the context and their normal definitions, without influence from outside ideas, then the word for “day” in Genesis 1 obviously means “an ordinary day of about 24 hours.” It is qualified by a number, the phrase “evening and morning,” and for Day 1, the words “light and darkness.”<sup>5</sup>

Dr. James Barr, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford University, who himself does not believe Genesis is true history, admitted that, as far as the language of Genesis 1 is concerned,

... 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 Gen. 1–11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that (a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience, (b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story, (c) Noah’s Flood was understood to be world-wide and extinguish all human and animal life except

<sup>3</sup> For an evaluation of the big bang model, see section 2: “Does the big bang fit with the Bible?”

<sup>4</sup> [www.reasons.org/resources/apologetics/creation\\_timeline\\_chart/](http://www.reasons.org/resources/apologetics/creation_timeline_chart/), September 13, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> See *The Answers Book*, chapter 2: “Did God really take six days?” for a more detailed defense of literal days in Genesis 1.

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for those in the ark.<sup>6</sup>

Besides the textual problems, progressive creationists have scientific dilemmas as well. They accept modern scientific measurements for the age of the earth, even though these measurements are based on evolutionary, atheistic assumptions. Dr. Ross often speaks of the “facts of nature” and the “facts of science” when referring to the big bang and billions of years. This demonstrates his fundamental misunderstanding of evidence. The scientific “facts” that evolutionists claim as proof of millions of years are really *interpretations* of selected observations that have been made with *antibiblical, philosophical assumptions*. We all have the same facts: the same living creatures, the same DNA molecules, the same fossils, the same rock layers, the same Grand Canyon, the same moon, the same planets, the same starlight from distant stars and galaxies, etc. These are the facts; how old they are and what they mean are the *interpretations* of the facts. And what one believes about history will affect how one interprets these facts. History is littered with so-called “scientific facts” that supposedly had proven the Bible wrong, but which were shown years or decades later to be not facts but erroneously interpreted observations because of the antibiblical assumptions used.<sup>7</sup>

## THE ORDER OF CREATION

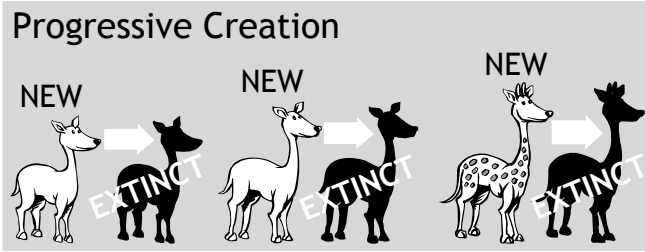
As their name indicates, progressive creationists believe that God progressively created species on earth over billions of years, with new species replacing extinct ones, starting with simple organisms and culminating in the creation of Adam and Eve. They accept the evolutionary order for the development of life on earth, even though this contradicts the order given in the Genesis account of creation. Evolutionary theory holds that the first life-forms were marine organisms, while the Bible says that God created land

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<sup>6</sup> Letter to David C. C. Watson, April 23, 1984.

<sup>7</sup> See *War of the Worldviews* chapter 12: “What’s the best ‘proof’ of creation?” for more on how our presuppositions influence our interpretations.

# EXPOSING PROGRESSIVE CREATION



plants first. Reptiles are supposed to have predated birds, while Genesis says that birds came first. Evolutionists believe that land mammals came before whales, while the Bible teaches that God created whales first.

Dr. Davis Young, former geology professor at Calvin College, recognized this dilemma and abandoned the “day-age” theory. Here is part of his explanation as to why he discarded it:

The biblical text, for example, has vegetation appearing on the third day and animals on the fifth day. Geology, however, had long realized that invertebrate animals were swarming in the seas long before vegetation gained a foothold on the land . . . . Worse yet, the text states that on the fourth day God made the heavenly bodies after the earth was already in existence. Here is a blatant confrontation with science. Astronomy insists that the sun is older than the earth.<sup>8</sup>

## THE SIXTY-SEVENTH BOOK OF THE BIBLE

Dr. Ross has stated that he believes nature to be “just as perfect” as the Bible. Here is the full quote:

Not everyone has been exposed to the sixty-six books of the Bible, but everyone on planet Earth has been exposed to the sixty-seventh book—the book that God has written upon the heavens for everyone to read.

And the Bible tells us it’s impossible for God to lie, so the record

<sup>8</sup> Young, D., *The Harmonization of Scripture and Science*, science symposium at Wheaton College, March 23, 1990.

# WHAT'S WRONG WITH PROGRESSIVE CREATION?

## CREATIONWISE

### WHICH ONE ARE YOU GOING TO TRUST?

IT IS  
WRITTEN”<sup>MATT. 4:4</sup>

OR

It is  
REWRITTEN  
and  
REWRITTEN  
and  
REWRITTEN  
and  
*Rewritten*  
and...

of nature must be just as perfect, and reliable and truthful as the sixty-six books of the Bible that is part of the Word of God ... . And so when astronomers tell us [their attempts to measure distance in space] ... it's part of the truth that God has revealed to us. It actually encompasses part of the Word of God.<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Ross is right that God cannot lie, and God tells us in Romans 8:22 that “the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs” because of sin. And not only was the universe cursed, but man himself has been affected by the Fall. So how can sinful, fallible human beings in a sin-cursed universe say that their interpretation of the evidence is as perfect as God’s written revelation? Scientific assertions must use *fallible* assumptions and *fallen* reasoning—how can this be the Word of God?

The respected systematic theologian Louis Berkhof said,

Since the entrance of sin into the world, man can gather true knowledge about God from His general revelation only if he studies it in the light of Scripture, in which the elements of God’s original self-revelation, which were obscured and perverted by the blight of sin, are republished, corrected, and interpreted. ... Some are inclined to speak of God’s general revelation as a second source; but this is hardly correct in view of the fact that nature can come into consideration here only as interpreted in the light of Scripture.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ref. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Berkhof, L., Introductory volume to *Systematic Theology*, pp. 60, 96, 1946.

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In other words, Christians should build their thinking on the Bible, not on “science.”

## DEATH AND DISEASE BEFORE ADAM

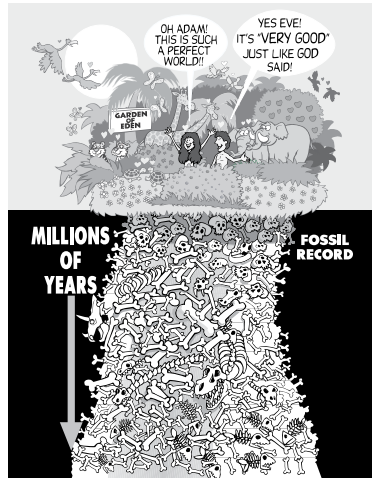
Progressive creationists believe the fossil record was formed from the millions of animals that lived and died before Adam and Eve were created. They accept the idea that there was death, bloodshed, and disease (including cancer) before sin, which goes directly against the teaching of the Bible and dishonors the character of God.

God created a perfect world at the beginning. When He was finished, God stated that His creation was “very good.” The Bible makes it clear that man and all the animals were vegetarians before the Fall (Genesis 1:29). Plants were given to them for food (plants do not have a *nephesh* [life spirit] as man and animals do and thus eating them would not constitute “death” in the biblical sense<sup>11</sup>).

Concerning the entrance of sin into the world, Dr. Ross writes, “The groaning of creation in anticipation of release from sin has lasted fifteen billion years and affected a hundred billion trillion stars.”<sup>12</sup>

However, the Bible teaches something quite different. The Apostle Paul states, “Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin” (Romans 5:12). It is clear that there was no sin in the world before Adam sinned, and thus no death.

God killed the first animal



<sup>11</sup> See *The Answers Book*, chapter 6: “How did bad things come about?” for more details.

<sup>12</sup> *Facts for Faith*, Issue 8, 2002.

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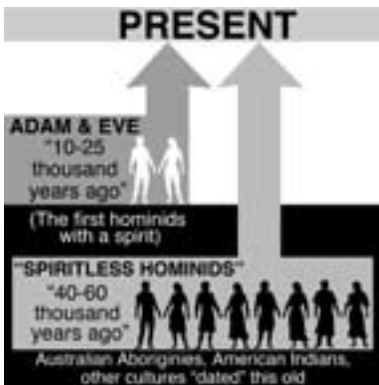
in the Garden and shed blood because of sin—if there was death, bloodshed, disease, and suffering before sin, then the basis for the Atonement is *destroyed*. Christ suffered death because death was the penalty for sin. There will be no death or suffering in the perfect “restoration”—so why can't we accept the same in a perfect (“very good”) creation before sin?

God must be quite incompetent and cruel to make things in the way that evolutionists imagine the universe and earth to have evolved, as most creatures that ever existed died cruel deaths. Progressive creation denigrates the wisdom and goodness of God by suggesting that this was God's method of creation. This view attacks His truthfulness as well. If God really created over the course of billions of years, then He has misled most believers for 4,000 years into believing that He did it in six days.

### SPIRITLESS HOMINIDS BEFORE ADAM

Since evolutionary radiometric dating methods have dated certain humanlike fossils as older than Ross's date for modern humans (approx. 40,000 years), he and other progressive creationists insist that these are fossils of pre-Adamic creatures that had no spirit, and thus no salvation.

Dr. Ross accepts and defends these evolutionary dating methods, so he must redefine all evidence of humans (descendants of Noah) if they are given evolutionary dates of more than about 40,000 years (e.g., the Neanderthal cave sites) as related to spiritless “hominids,” which the Bible does not mention. However, these same methods have been used to “date” the Australian Aborigines back at least 60,000 years (some have



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claimed much older) and fossils of “anatomically modern humans” to over 100,000 years.<sup>13</sup> By Ross’s reasoning, none of these (including the Australian Aborigines) could be descendants of Adam and Eve. However, Acts 17:26 says, “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.” All people on earth are descendants of Adam.

In addition, the fossil record cannot, by its very nature, conclusively reveal if a creature had a spirit or not, since spirits are not fossilized. But there is clear evidence that creatures, which Ross (following the evolutionists) places before Adam, had art and clever technology and that they buried their dead in a way that many of Adam’s descendants did. Therefore, we have strong reason to believe that they were fully human and actually descendants of Adam, and that they lived only a few thousand years ago.

## THE GENESIS FLOOD

One important tenet of progressive creation is that the Flood of Noah’s day was a local flood, limited to the Mesopotamian region. They believe that the rock layers and fossils found around the world are the result of billions of years of evolutionary earth history, rather than from the biblical Flood.

Dr. Ross often says that he believes in a “universal” or “world-wide” flood, but in reality he does not believe that the Flood covered the whole earth. He argues that the text of Genesis 7 doesn’t really say that the Flood covered the whole earth. But read it for yourself:

19 They [the flood waters] rose greatly on the earth, and *all* the high mountains under the *entire* heavens were covered. ...

21 *Every* living thing that moved on the earth perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, *all* the creatures that swarm over the earth, and *all* mankind.

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<sup>13</sup> White, T., *et. al.*, Pleistocene *Homo sapiens* from Middle Awash, Ethiopia, *Nature* 423:742–747, June 12, 2003.

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22 *Everything* on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died.

23 *Every* living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. *Only* Noah was left, and those with him in the ark [emphasis added].

Also, many questions remain for those who teach that the Genesis Flood was only local:

- If the Flood were local, why did Noah have to build an Ark? He could have walked to the other side of the mountains and missed it.
- If the Flood were local, why did God send the animals to the Ark so they could escape death? There would have been other animals to reproduce that kind if these particular ones had died.
- If the Flood were local, why was the Ark big enough to hold all the different kinds of vertebrate land animals? If only Mesopotamian animals were aboard, the Ark could have been much smaller.<sup>14</sup>
- If the Flood were local, why would birds have been sent on board? These could simply have winged across to a nearby mountain range.
- If the Flood were local, how could the waters rise to 15 cubits (8 meters) above the mountains (Genesis 7:20)? Water seeks its

<sup>14</sup> See *The Answers Book*, chapter 13: "How did the animals fit on Noah's Ark?"

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own level. It couldn't rise to cover the local mountains while leaving the rest of the world untouched.

- If the Flood were local, people who did not happen to be living in the vicinity would not be affected by it. They would have escaped God's judgment on sin. If this had happened, what did Christ mean when He likened the coming judgment of all men to the judgment of "all" men in the days of Noah (Matthew 24:37–39)? A partial judgment in Noah's day means a partial judgment to come.
- If the Flood were local, God would have repeatedly broken His promise never to send such a flood again.

## CONCLUSION

It is true that whether one believes in six literal days does not ultimately affect one's salvation, if one is truly born again. However, we need to stand back and look at the "big picture." In many nations the Word of God was once widely respected and taken seriously. But once the door of compromise is unlocked and Christian leaders concede that we shouldn't take the Bible as written in Genesis, why should the world take heed of it in *any* area? Because the church has told the world that one can use man's interpretation of the world (such as billions of years) to reinterpret the Bible, it is seen as an outdated, scientifically incorrect "holy book," not intended to be taken seriously.

As each subsequent generation has pushed this door of compromise open further and further, increasingly they are not accepting the morality or salvation of the Bible either. After all, if the history in Genesis is not correct as written, how can one be sure the rest can be taken as written? Jesus said, "If I have told you



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earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?” (John 3:12).

It would not be exaggerating to claim that the majority of Christian leaders and laypeople within the church today do not believe in six literal days. Sadly, being influenced by the world has led to the church no longer powerfully influencing the world.

The “war of the worldviews” is not ultimately one of young earth versus old earth, or billions of years versus six days, or creation versus evolution—the real battle is the authority of the Word of God versus man’s fallible theories.

Belief in a historical Genesis is important because progressive creation and its belief in millions of years (1) contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture, (2) assaults the character of God, (3) severely damages and distorts the Bible’s teaching on death, and (4) undermines the gospel by undermining the clear teaching of Genesis, which gives the whole basis for Christ’s Atonement and our need for a Redeemer. So ultimately, the issue of a literal Genesis is about the authority of the Word of God versus the authority of the words of sinful men.

Why do Christians believe in the bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ? Because of the *words of Scripture* (“according to the Scriptures”).

And why should Christians believe in six literal days of creation? Because of the *words of Scripture* (“In six days the Lord made ...”).

The real issue is one of authority—let us unashamedly stand upon God’s Word as our sole authority!

# DOES THE BIG BANG FIT WITH THE BIBLE?

DR. JASON LISLE

**T**HE “BIG BANG” is a story about how the universe came into existence. It proposes that billions of years ago the universe began in a tiny, infinitely hot and dense point called a *singularity*. This singularity supposedly contained not only all the mass and energy that would become everything we see today, but also “space” itself. According to the story, the singularity rapidly expanded, spreading out the energy and space.

It is supposed that over vast periods of time, the energy from the big bang cooled down as the universe expanded. Some of it turned into matter—hydrogen and helium gas. These gases collapsed to form stars and galaxies of stars. Some of the stars created the heavier elements in their core and then exploded, distributing these elements into space. Some of the heavier elements allegedly began to stick together and formed the earth and other planets.



## DOES THE BIG BANG FIT WITH THE BIBLE?

This story of origins is entirely fiction. But sadly, many people claim to believe the big bang model. It is particularly distressing that many professing Christians have been taken in by the big bang, perhaps without realizing its atheistic underpinnings. They have chosen to reinterpret the plain teachings of Scripture in an attempt to make it mesh with secular beliefs about origins.

### SECULAR COMPROMISES

There are several reasons why we cannot just add the big bang to the Bible. Ultimately, the big bang is a *secular* story of origins. When first proposed, it was an attempt to explain how the universe could have been created without God. Really, it is an *alternative* to the Bible; so it makes no sense to try to “add” it to the Bible. Let us examine some of the profound differences between the Bible and the secular big bang view of origins.

The Bible teaches that God created the universe in six days (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11). It is clear from the context in Genesis that these were days in the ordinary sense (i.e., 24-hour days) since they are bounded by evening and morning and occur in an ordered list (second day, third day, etc.). Conversely, the big bang teaches the universe has evolved over billions of years.



# EXPOSING PROGRESSIVE CREATION



The Bible says that earth was created before the stars and that trees were created before the sun.<sup>1</sup> However, the big bang view teaches the exact opposite. The Bible tells us that the earth was created as a paradise; the secular model teaches it was created as a molten blob. The big bang and the Bible certainly do not agree about the past.

Many people don't realize that the big bang is a story not only about the past but also about the future. The most popular version of the big bang teaches that the universe will expand forever and eventually run out of usable energy. According to the story, it will remain that way forever in a state that astronomers call "heat death."<sup>2</sup> But the Bible teaches that the world will be judged and remade. Paradise will be restored. The big bang denies this crucial biblical teaching.

## SCIENTIFIC PROBLEMS WITH THE BIG BANG

The big bang also has a number of scientific problems. Big bang supporters are forced to accept on "blind faith" a number

<sup>1</sup> The sun and stars were made on Day 4 (Genesis 1:14–19). The earth was made on Day 1 (Genesis 1:1–5). Trees were made on Day 3 (Genesis 1:11–13).

<sup>2</sup> Despite the name "heat death," the universe would actually be exceedingly cold.

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of notions that are completely *inconsistent* with real observational science. Let's explore some of the inconsistencies between the big bang story and the real universe.

### **Missing monopoles**

Most people know something about magnets—like the kind found in a compass or the kind that sticks to a refrigerator. We often say that magnets have two “poles”—a north pole and a south pole. Poles that are alike will repel each other, while opposites attract. A “monopole” is a hypothetical massive particle that is just like a magnet but has only one pole. So a monopole would have either a north pole or a south pole, but not both.

Particle physicists claim that many magnetic monopoles should have been created in the high temperature conditions of the big bang. Since monopoles are stable, they should have lasted to this day. Yet, despite considerable search efforts, monopoles have not been found. Where are the monopoles? The fact that we don't find any monopoles suggests that the universe never was that hot. This indicates that there never was a big bang, but it is perfectly consistent with the Bible's account of creation, since the universe did not start infinitely hot.

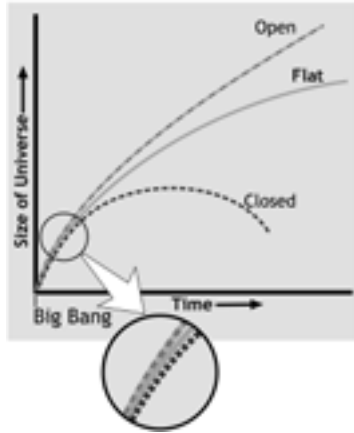
### **The flatness problem**

Another serious challenge to the big bang model is called the “flatness problem.” The expansion rate of the universe appears to be very finely balanced with the force of gravity; this condition is called “flat.” If the universe were the accidental byproduct of a big bang, it is difficult to imagine how such a fantastic coincidence could occur. Big bang cosmology cannot explain why the matter density in the universe isn't greater, causing it to collapse upon itself (closed universe), or less, causing the universe to rapidly fly apart (open universe).

The problem is even more severe when we extrapolate into the past. Since any deviation from perfect flatness tends to increase as time moves forward, it logically follows that the universe must

# EXPOSING PROGRESSIVE CREATION

have been *even more* precisely balanced in the past than it is today. Thus, at the moment of the big bang, the universe would have been virtually flat to an extremely high precision. This must have been the case (assuming the big bang), despite the fact that the laws of physics allow for an *infinite* range of values. This is a coincidence that stretches credulity to the breaking point.



Of course, in the creation model, “balance” is expected since the Lord has fine-tuned the universe for life.

## Inflating the complexities

Many secular astronomers have come up with an idea called “inflation” in an attempt to address the flatness and monopole problems (as well as other problems not addressed in detail here, such as the horizon problem). Inflation proposes that the universe temporarily went through a period of accelerated expansion. Amazingly, there is no real supporting evidence for inflation; it appears to be nothing more than an unsubstantiated conjecture—much like the big bang itself. Moreover, the inflation idea has difficulties of its own, such as what would start it and how it would stop smoothly. In addition, other problems with the big bang are not solved, even if inflation were true. These are examined below.

## Where is the antimatter?

Consider the “baryon number problem.” Recall that the big bang supposes that matter (hydrogen and helium gas) was created from energy as the universe expanded. However, experimental physics tells us that whenever matter is created from energy, such a reaction also produces *antimatter*. Antimatter has similar

## DOES THE BIG BANG FIT WITH THE BIBLE?

properties to matter, except the charges of the particles are reversed. (So whereas a proton has a *positive* charge, an antiproton has a *negative* charge.) Any reaction where energy is transformed into matter produces an exactly equal amount of antimatter; there are no known exceptions.

The big bang (which has no matter to begin with—only energy) should have produced exactly equal amounts of matter and antimatter, and that should be what we see today. But we do not. The visible universe is comprised almost entirely of matter—with only trace amounts of antimatter anywhere.

This devastating problem for the big bang is actually consistent with biblical creation; it is a design feature. God created the universe to be essentially matter only—and it's a good thing He did. When matter and antimatter come together, they violently destroy each other. If the universe had equal amounts of matter and antimatter (as the big bang requires), life would not be possible.

### **Missing Population III stars**

The big bang model by itself can only account for the existence of the three lightest elements (hydrogen, helium, and trace amounts of lithium). This leaves about 90 or so of the other naturally occurring elements to be explained. Since the conditions in the big bang are not right to form these heavier elements (as big bang supporters readily concede), secular astronomers believe that stars have produced the remaining elements by nuclear fusion in the core. This is thought to occur in the final stages of a massive star as it explodes (a supernova). The explosion then distributes the heavier elements into space. Second and third generation stars are thus “contaminated” with small amounts of these heavier elements.

If this story were true, then the *first* stars would have been comprised of only the three lightest elements (since these would have been the only elements in existence initially). Some such stars<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Small (red main sequence) stars do not use up their fuel quickly. These stars theoretically have enough fuel to last significantly longer than the estimated age of the (big bang) universe.

# EXPOSING PROGRESSIVE CREATION

should still be around today since their potential lifespan is calculated to exceed the (big bang) age of the universe. Such stars would be called “Population III” stars.<sup>4</sup> Amazingly (to those who believe in the big bang), Population III stars have not been found anywhere. All known stars have at least trace amounts of heavy elements in them. It is amazing to think that our galaxy alone is estimated to have over 100 billion stars in it. Yet not one star has been discovered that is comprised of *only* the three lightest elements.

## THE COLLAPSE OF THE BIG BANG

With all the problems listed above, as well as many others too numerous to include, it is not surprising that quite a few secular astronomers are beginning to abandon the big bang. Although it is still the dominant model at present, increasing numbers of physicists and astronomers are realizing that the big bang simply is not a good explanation of how the universe began. In the May 22, 2004 issue of *New Scientist*, there appeared an open letter to the scientific community written primarily by *secular* scientists<sup>5</sup> who challenge the big bang. These scientists pointed out that the copious arbitrary assumptions and the lack of successful big bang predictions challenge the legitimacy of the model. Among other things, they state:

The big bang today relies on a growing number of hypothetical entities, things that we have never observed—inflation, dark matter and dark energy are the most prominent examples. Without them, there would be a fatal contradiction between the observations made by astronomers and the predictions of the big bang theory. In no other field of physics would this continual recourse to new hypothetical objects be accepted as a way of bridging the gap between

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<sup>4</sup> If a star has a very small amount of heavy elements, it is called a “Population II” star. Pop. II stars exist primarily in the central bulge of spiral galaxies, in globular star clusters, and in elliptical galaxies. If a star has a relatively large amount of heavy elements (like the sun) it is called “Population I.” These stars exist primarily in the arms of spiral galaxies. The (hypothetical) Pop. III star would have no heavy elements at all.

<sup>5</sup> The alternatives to the big bang that these scientists had suggested are equally unbiblical. These included a steady-state theory and plasma cosmology.

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theory and observation. It would, at the least, raise serious questions about the validity of the underlying theory.<sup>6</sup>

This statement has since been signed by hundreds of other scientists and professors at various institutions. The big bang seems to be losing considerable popularity. Secular scientists are increasingly rejecting the big bang, in favor of other models. If the big bang is abandoned, what will happen to all the Christians who compromised and claimed that the Bible is compatible with the big bang? What will they say? Will they claim that the Bible actually does not teach the big bang, but instead that it teaches the latest secular model? Secular models come and go, but God's Word does not need to be changed because God got it exactly right the first time.

## CONCLUSION

The big bang has many scientific problems. These problems are symptomatic of the underlying incorrect worldview. The big bang erroneously assumes that the universe was *not* supernaturally created, but that it came about by natural processes billions of years ago. However, reality does not line up with this notion. Biblical creation explains the evidence in a more straightforward way without the ubiquitous speculations prevalent in secular models. But ultimately, the best reason to reject the big bang is that it goes against what the Creator of the universe Himself has taught: "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).



<sup>6</sup> Lerner, E., *et al.*, An open letter to the scientific community, *New Scientist* **182**(2448):20, May 22, 2004. Available online at [www.cosmologystatement.org](http://www.cosmologystatement.org).

# THE HUGH ROSS FACT SHEET

**MARK VAN BEBBER AND PAUL S. TAYLOR**

## SUBJECT

**HUGH NORMAN ROSS**, President of Reasons to Believe, Inc., Pasadena, California / Born 1945 / Christian speaker and author / PhD in astronomy, University of Toronto / Former Minister of Evangelism, Sierra Madre Congregational Church, Sierra Madre, California.

Dr. Hugh Ross is a full-time speaker and author increasingly popular among evangelical and charismatic churches, schools, and ministries. He has a weekly television program on the Trinity Broadcasting Network. Dr. Ross is currently the head of a non-denominational, worldwide apologetics ministry. He opposes atheistic evolutionism and teaches progressive creationism. Three beliefs listed below are particularly foundational to his teachings. This chapter also provides a partial list of other problem areas in his writings and lectures.

## SOME BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF HUGH ROSS

### **Billions-of-Years-Old Universe**

This is the central belief that guides much of Dr. Ross's teachings. Again and again he states that the universe is billions of years

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old. Dr. Ross and other progressive creationists fervently believe that the size of the universe and various other astronomical discoveries prove this beyond any doubt. He rejects as nonsense all suggestions from science that the earth and the universe could be young.<sup>1</sup>

## Our brief response

First, we must remember that no scientist was there over the billions of years in question. The Creator is the only one existing from the very beginning; only He is in a position to know with certainty the true history and age of the universe. His Word indicates that all creation was completed during six rotations of the earth.

God's Word provides genealogies between Adam and Jesus Christ. Even if there were a few gaps in the lists, it would be absurd to accept insertions of millions (or even tens of thousands) of years.

Actually, the great majority of scientific dating methods indicate a young earth. Dr. Ross's bias is apparent in his willingness to accept only those methods that agree with his belief in long ages. In the final analysis, none of man's dating methods can be considered foolproof. We must stick with the testimony of the only eyewitness, God.

## Death Always, No Paradise Planet

Dr. Ross does not believe the original creation was free of death, suffering, or degeneration. He believes that death and degeneration existed in the beginning and have continued for billions of years. He also teaches that neither the Fall into sin nor the Flood resulted in significant physical changes in nature.<sup>2</sup>

## Our brief response—Paradise lost

According to the Bible, death (both physical and spiritual) entered the world through man's sin (Genesis 2:17, 3:19; Romans 5:12, 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:20–23). The Bible indicates that our world is very

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<sup>1</sup> See: Ross, H., *Creation and Time: A Biblical and Scientific Perspective on the Creation-Date Controversy*, NavPress, 1994; Ross, H., *The Fingerprint of God*, second edition, Promise Publishing Co, 1991; etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Creation and Time*, pp. 55, 65.

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different from the one which God created and pronounced as “very good.” The Bible clearly says that man and animals were not created carnivorous; God originally commanded them to eat plants (Genesis 1:29–30). Because of sin, God cursed the ground and physical creation (Genesis 3:17). Scripture says the whole creation has been affected by man’s sin, causing it to groan as it awaits freedom from bondage to decay (Romans 8:20–22). The global Flood judgment changed the earth even more (Genesis 8:21). One day God will restore paradise and once again the wolf will lie down with the lamb (Isaiah 11:6).

## Dual Revelation!

Dr. Ross believes that nature provides an accurate understanding of God and His plan for history. He holds the unorthodox theological view that “the plan of salvation as stated in the Bible can be seen through observation of the universe around us.” For example, he teaches that Job “without the aid of scriptures ... discerned all the elements of the gospel ... .”

Dr. Ross frequently says that nature is like the “sixty-seventh book” of the Bible. Nature is “on an equal footing” with the written revelation of God. Dr. Ross states that neither is “inferior or superior” to the other; they are simply “different, just like the content of Ezra is distinct from that of Romans.”<sup>3</sup> He accepts most of the interpretations of secular science while attempting to maintain the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. He has accused young-earth creationists of believing in “Single-Revelation Theology” and denying “physical reality.”<sup>4,5</sup>

## Our brief response—dual revelation, yes. But ...

Ross is incorrect about young-earth creation scientists. Most, if not all, believe in Dual Revelation. To believe otherwise would undermine the very words of Scripture. Obviously, mankind can

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<sup>3</sup> *Creation and Time*, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> *The Fingerprint of God*, second edition, (first quotation: p. 179; second quotation: p. 181), also see 144–145, 163–164; *Creation and Time*, pp. 11, 41, 55–57, 123; Hugh Ross’s Apologetics Hot Line, *Christianity Today*, March 11, 1991, p. 23; Hugh Ross, *Creation Days*, audiotape, Reasons to Believe, 1990.

<sup>5</sup> *Creation and Time*, pp. 55, 65.

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learn many things about the physical laws and construction of God's creation. Through this, we are able to understand the basics of God's nature (His existence, His invisible attributes, and His eternal power—Romans 1:20). Dr. Ross extends Dual Revelationism to a dangerous extreme. The gospel, for example, cannot be fully discerned by man in nature alone.

It is important to understand that:

1. Nature has no speech or voice (Psalm 19:3). Therefore, nature is subject to man's misinterpretation, as the history of science has repeatedly demonstrated.
2. Man is particularly limited in his ability to know the ancient past with certainty. We have no time machines to travel back and examine actual events. Secular scientists who describe in great detail ancient animals and environments are guessing, making assumptions, and hypothesizing.
3. The world and the universe have changed since their creation. The Fall and the global Flood of Noah greatly marred the perfection of God's creations. What we see now is different in many ways from what God originally created.
4. We humans are quite ungod-like in our abilities and understanding. We are sinful, finite creatures with an enormous inclination to believe in lies. Earth is under the dominion of the Father of Lies, Satan. Our understanding of this universe is very incomplete and fallible. Scientific opinions are often biased and change regularly, sometimes radically.

Dr. Ross even goes so far as to make the strange claim that “in addition to the words of the Bible being ‘God-breathed, ... useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness,’ so also are the words of God spoken through the work of His hands.”<sup>6</sup> Dr. Ross elevates the message of creation beyond its natural limitations. On many matters, it is naive, pompous, and

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<sup>6</sup> *Creation and Time*, p. 56.

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exceedingly dangerous to rate sinful man's incomplete and changing understanding of this degenerating universe as equal in clarity with the written Word of God! Such views have led to dreadful errors. The Bible has demonstrated its beautiful accuracy again and again, in contrast to the "scientific" pronouncements of man which have frequently been wrong and often dominated by blinding bias.

## HUGH ROSS'S INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS 1-9

### **The Origin of the Universe, the Big Bang**

Hugh Ross claims that the universe began with a God-engineered "big bang" about 15 billion years ago, plus or minus 3 billion years. He claims that the big bang theory has been "undeniably" proven. He has taught the theory so strongly that if it is ever abandoned by the majority of scientists, as one day may be the case, it will be a major embarrassment to his ministry.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Origin of Stars and Planets**

In contrast to Scripture, Dr. Ross teaches that the sun, moon, and stars were not created on the fourth "day" of creation. He says that most of the stars existed long before earth's creation; approximately 18–12 billion years of stellar evolution occurred prior to the Creation Week. (Thus, he claims that not all of the heavens and earth were created in 6 days as plainly stated in Exodus 20:11: "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them . . . .")

Dr. Ross claims that Genesis 1 describes creation from the point of view of one standing on the earth; and that the sun, moon, and stars became visible on the fourth day. He believes the stars were not created instantaneously; rather, they evolved by the physical laws of nature put into place by God. He says, "This entire process of stellar evolution is by natural process alone. We do not have to invoke Divine intervention at any stage in the history of

<sup>7</sup> *Creation and Time*, pp. 91–118, 129; *Fingerprint of God*, pp. 158–159; Hugh Ross, Why Big Bang Opponents Never Say Die, *Facts & Faith* newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 4, Winter 1990–91.

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the life-cycle of the stars that we observe.”

According to Dr. Ross, many stars had long ceased to exist by the time of Adam’s creation. “The planets and life-essential elements are the burned-up remains—i.e., ashes—of [the big bang’s] hydrogen gas.”<sup>8</sup>

## **A Billions-of-Years Creation Week**

According to Hugh Ross, the Creation Week has taken billions of years. He claims that “... each of God’s creation days is several hundred million years long.” He says earth was created about 4.6 billion years ago, and that some (or all) of the creation days partially overlapped. Dr. Ross teaches that we are currently in the seventh day—a day that began after God made Adam and Eve and which will not end until the beginning of the new heavens and earth.<sup>9</sup>

## **The Origin of Death, Not a Result of Sin**

Dr. Ross teaches that the existence of physical death in our world is not due to Adam’s sin. Death, suffering, and animal predation existed for billions of years throughout the world prior to Adam’s sin. Where did all these things come from? He says that God created them as a basic part of earthly existence.<sup>10</sup>

[Note: This is one of our greatest concerns about Dr. Ross’s teachings. It is in stark contrast to the gospel, which says that the Last Adam came to conquer the spiritual and physical death that entered paradise due to the sin of the first Adam—and that Christ will one day restore the paradise we lost.]

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<sup>8</sup> *The Fingerprint of God*, pp. 158–159, 165–169; *Creation and Time*, p. 52; Why Big Bang Opponents Never Say Die; First quotation: Hugh Ross, *Species Development: Natural Process or Divine Action*, audiotope, Pasadena, CA: Reasons to Believe, 1990; Second quotation: *Creation and Time*, p. 131.

<sup>9</sup> *Creation and Time*, pp. 59, 91–118; *Fingerprint of God*, pp. 146–155; Quotation is from: Hugh Ross, *Genesis 1: A Scientific Perspective*, Revised Edition, Sierra Madre, California: Wiseman Productions, p. 11, 1983.

<sup>10</sup> *Fingerprint of God*, pp. 153–155, 159–160; *Reasons to Believe*, 90 second radio spots No. 47 & 48 (February 1991); Hugh Ross, *Focus on the Family* radio program (April 18, 1991).

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## **No Original Paradise**

According to Dr. Ross, there was no original paradise; except in the sense that Adam walked with God, experienced less pain than we do, and experienced no sin initially. Dr. Ross claims that our planet has always been subject to catastrophes and violent predation. He says that long before Adam, there were supernovas and collisions with meteorites that wiped out millions of animals and caused “mass extinction.” There were floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, harmful mutations, and diseases of all sorts. In other words, God used “random, wasteful, inefficiencies” to create the world into which Adam was placed.<sup>11</sup>

## **The Origin of Species, Progressive Creations**

Dr. Ross accepts a history of life very similar to that outlined by the late evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould. Gould’s punctuated equilibrium theory describes slow progress by natural means, interspersed with mass extinctions and sudden, rapid advances. For Dr. Ross, the advances are the result of a multitude of divine miracles. He seems to accept far more miraculous creations (“hundreds of millions of species of life”) than most progressive creationists when he claims to “deny any significant biological evolution over timescales long or short.”

Elsewhere, Dr. Ross seems to have a different attitude when he says that “many of the changes that take place within the biological arena [are] ... by natural process ... natural selection, mutational advance ... .”

Dr. Ross defines progressive creationism as “the hypothesis that God has increased the complexity of life on earth by successive creations of new life forms over billions of years while miraculously changing the earth to accommodate the new life.” He teaches that for billions of years before Adam, major disasters befell the animals, including supernovas, asteroid impacts, etc. As a result, animals frequently became extinct, never to be seen by man. God stepped in many times to create replacements or improved

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<sup>11</sup> *Creation and Time*, pp. 65–69, 88; Hugh Ross, *Species Development: Natural Process or Divine Action*, audiotape, Pasadena, CA: Reasons to Believe, 1990.

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models—sometimes completely abandoning entire groups of animals, changing the previous course of life on earth.<sup>12</sup>

## The Origin of Man

According to Hugh Ross, Adam and Eve were created from dust after the majority of earth's history had already taken place, after billions of years of animal death. He says, "If the time since the creation of the universe were scaled down to a single year, the whole of human history would be less than one minute."<sup>13</sup>

[Note: The Bible says that "from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female" (Mark 10:6).]

Dr. Ross infers that man was created about 24,000 years ago (or perhaps as much as 60,000 years).

## Man-like Animals

"Starting about 2 to 4 million years [or at least 1 million years] ago God began creating man-like mammals." Although some of these creatures looked completely human (e.g., Cro-Magnon, Neanderthal) and they "used tools . . . buried their dead and painted on cave walls," they were actually animals and "had no spirits," according to Dr. Ross. "The hominid species may have gone extinct before, or as a result of, the appearance of modern man."<sup>14</sup>

## The Pre-Flood World

According to Dr. Ross, the pre-Flood world was basically identical to the post-Flood world—same geology and paleontology, no significant environmental changes. He claims that rain began during the second creation day when the modern atmosphere was created billions of years before the creation of Adam.

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<sup>12</sup> First quotation: Hugh Ross, *Open Line* radio program, Moody Broadcasting Network, April 1994; Second quotation: *Creation and Time*, p. 83; Third quotation: Species Development, audiotape; Fourth quotation: Dinosaurs and Hominids, audiotape, Reasons to Believe, 1990.

<sup>13</sup> Quotation: *The Fingerprint of God*, p. 178; *Creation and Time*, pp. 140–141; Hugh Ross, *Open Line* radio program with Chris Fabry, Moody Broadcasting Network, April and May 1994.

<sup>14</sup> First two quotations: Genesis One, Dinosaurs and Cavemen, Reasons to Believe, 1989; Third quotation: *Creation and Time*, p. 88, etc.; *Fingerprint of God*, p. 160, also see pp. 159–160.

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[Note: The Bible specifically says there was no rain until at least the sixth day (Genesis 2:5), which for Dr. Ross would be billions of years after plants and animals had first been created.]

Incredibly, Dr. Ross has also claimed that before the Flood “... probably at least 19 out of 20 people were dying a death of murder ... That’s what was keeping the people from living a long period of time.”<sup>15</sup>

[Note: The Bible indicates pre-Flood lifespans were generally very long. The average for the patriarchs was 912 years. In addition, such violent conditions would cause people to scatter all over the world—a problem the local flood theory of Dr. Ross.]

## The Flood and the Ark

Hugh Ross teaches that the Flood did not cover the entire earth nor all the mountains of the day. Rather, Noah and the animals floated on a shallow, temporary inland sea (22 feet deep) somehow covering the Mesopotamian region. He claims that the earth’s entire human population was limited to this area. The Bible clearly states that every land animal and bird on the face of the earth was wiped out (Genesis 6:7, 7:21–23). Dr. Ross teaches that most of the animals of the world were not affected, only those animals in Mesopotamia. Of course, few, if any, of these animals were unique to the region.

According to Dr. Ross, all of today’s land animals and birds are not descended from the creatures on the Ark. In other words, God required Noah to consume 120 years of his life building a huge boat to save representative animals which really didn’t need to be saved. Most, if not all, of these animals were alive and well in other parts of the world.

In Dr. Ross’s scenario, dry land is just over the horizon all along. Despite the lack of necessity, God keeps Noah trapped in this boat full of animals under these strange circumstances for over a year.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ross, H., *The Flood*, audiotape, Reasons to Believe, 1990.

<sup>16</sup> *Creation and Time*, p. 73; Hugh Ross, *Facts & Faith*, multiple-part article on the Flood, 1989–91, Fall & Winter, 1990; Hugh Ross, Noah’s Floating Zoo, *Facts & Faith*, Vol. 4, Fall 1990, pp. 4–5; Hugh Ross, *The Flood*, audiotape, Reasons to Believe, 1990.

# SIX DAYS OR MILLIONS OF YEARS?

**Ken Ham**

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

**I**F THE DAYS of creation are really “geologic ages” of millions of years, then the gospel message is undermined at its foundation because it puts death, disease, thorns, and suffering *before* the Fall. This idea also shows an erroneous approach to Scripture—that the Word of God can be interpreted on the basis of the fallible theories of sinful people.

It is a good exercise to read Genesis 1 and try to put aside outside influences that may cause you to have a predetermined idea of what the word “day” may mean. Just let the words of the passage speak to you.

Taking Genesis 1 in this way, at face value, without doubt it says that God created the universe, the earth, the sun, moon and stars, plants and animals, and the first two



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people within six ordinary (approximately 24-hour) days. Being really honest, you would have to admit that you could never get the idea of millions of years from reading this passage.

The majority of Christians (including many Christian leaders) in the Western world, however, either do not insist that these days of creation were ordinary-length days or they accept and teach that they must have been long periods of time—even millions or billions of years due to outside influences.



## HOW DOES GOD COMMUNICATE TO US?

God communicates through language. When He made the first man, Adam, He had already “programmed” him with a language, so there could be communication. Human language consists of words used in a specific context that relates to the entire reality around us.

Thus, God can reveal things to man, and man can communicate with God, as these words have meaning and convey an understandable message. If this were not so, how could any of us communicate with each other, or with God, or God with us?

## WHY “LONG DAYS”?

Romans 3:4 declares: “Let God be true, and every man a liar.”

In *every* instance where someone has not accepted the “days” of Creation to be ordinary days, it is because they have *not* allowed the words of Scripture to speak to them in context, as the language requires for communication. They have been influenced by ideas from *outside* Scripture. Thus, they have set a precedent that could allow any word to be reinterpreted by the preconceived ideas of the person reading the words. Ultimately, this will lead

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to a communication breakdown, as the same words in the same context could mean different things to different people.

## **The Church Fathers.**

Most “church fathers” accepted the days as ordinary days.<sup>1</sup> It is true that some of the early church fathers did not teach the “days” of creation as ordinary days—but many of them had been influenced by Greek philosophy, which caused them to interpret the days as allegorical. They reasoned that the creation “days” were related to God’s activities, and God being timeless meant that the “days” could not be related to human time.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to today’s allegorizers, they could not accept that God took *as long as* six days.

Thus, the non-literal “days” resulted from extra-biblical influences (i.e., influences *outside* the Bible), not from the words of the Bible!

This approach has affected the way people interpret Scripture to this day. As the man who started the Reformation said:

The days of creation were ordinary days in length. We must understand that these days were actual days (*veros dies*), contrary to the opinion of the Holy Fathers. Whenever we observe that the opinions of the Fathers disagree with Scripture, we reverently bear with them and acknowledge them to be our elders. Nevertheless, we do not depart from the authority of Scripture for their sake.<sup>3</sup>

## **Today's Church Leaders.**

Many church leaders today do *not* accept the creation days as ordinary earth-rotation days. However, when their reasons are investigated, we find that influences from *outside* of Scripture (particularly belief in a billions-of-years-old universe) are the

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<sup>1</sup> Van Bebber, M. and Taylor, P., *Creation and Time: A Report on the Progressive Creationist Book by Hugh Ross*, Films for Christ, Mesa, Arizona, 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Hasel, G., “The “days” of Creation in Genesis 1: literal “days” or figurative “periods/epochs” of time?” *Origins* 21(1):5–38, 1994.

<sup>3</sup> M. Luther as cited in Plass, E., *What Martin Luther Says: A Practical In-Home Anthology for the Active Christian*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, p. 1523, 1991.

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ultimate cause.

Again and again, such leaders admit that Genesis 1, taken in a straightforward way, seems to teach six ordinary days. But they then say that this cannot be, because of the age of the universe, or because of some other extra-biblical reason!



Consider the following representative quotes from Bible scholars who are considered to be conservative, yet do not accept the days of creation as ordinary-length days:

From a superficial reading of Genesis 1, the impression would seem to be that the entire creative process took place in six twenty-four-hour days. . . . This seems to run counter to modern scientific research, which indicates that the planet Earth was created several billion years ago.<sup>4</sup>

We have shown the possibility of God's having formed the Earth and its life in a series of creative days representing long periods. In view of the apparent age of the Earth, this is not only possible—it is probable.<sup>5</sup>

It is as if these theologians view “nature” as a “67<sup>th</sup> book of the Bible,” albeit with more authority than the 66 written books. Consider the words of Charles Haddon Spurgeon in 1877:

We are invited, brethren, most earnestly to go away from the old-fashioned belief of our forefathers because of the supposed discoveries of science. What is science? The method by which man tries to conceal his ignorance. It should not be so, but so it is. You are not to be dogmatical in theology, my brethren, it is wicked; but for scientific men it is the correct thing. You are

<sup>4</sup> Archer, G., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, Moody Press, Chicago, pp. 196–197, 1994.

<sup>5</sup> Boice, J., *Genesis: An Expository Commentary*, Vol. 1, Genesis 1:1–11, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 68, 1982.

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never to assert anything very strongly; but scientists may boldly assert what they cannot prove, and may demand a faith far more credulous than any we possess. Forsooth, you and I are to take our Bibles and shape and mould our belief according to the ever-shifting teachings of so-called scientific men. What folly is this! Why, the march of science, falsely so called, through the world may be traced by exploded fallacies and abandoned theories. Former explorers once adored are now ridiculed; the continual wreckings of false hypotheses is a matter of universal notoriety. You may tell where the learned have encamped by the debris left behind of suppositions and theories as plentiful as broken bottles.<sup>6</sup>

Those who would use historical science (as propounded by people who, by and large, ignore God's written revelation) to interpret the Bible, to teach us things about God, have matters back to front. Because we are fallen, fallible creatures, we need God's written Word, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, to properly understand natural history. The respected systematic theologian Berkhof said:

Since the entrance of sin into the world, man can gather true knowledge about God from His general revelation only if he studies it in the light of Scripture, in which the elements of God's original self-revelation, which were obscured and perverted by the blight of sin, are republished, corrected, and interpreted. ... Some are inclined to speak of God's general revelation as a second source; but this is hardly correct in view of the fact that nature can come into consideration here only as interpreted in the light of Scripture.<sup>7</sup>

In other words, Christians should build their thinking on the Bible, not on "science."

### THE "DAYS" OF GENESIS 1

What does the Bible tell us about the meaning of "day" in Genesis 1? A word can have more than one meaning, depending

<sup>6</sup> Spurgeon, C., *The Sword and the Trowel*, p. 197, 1877.

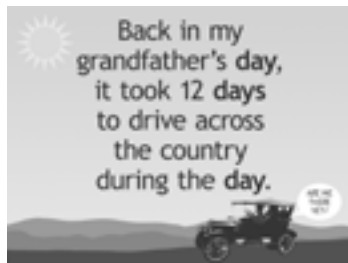
<sup>7</sup> Berkhof, L., introductory volume to *Systematic Theology*, Wm. B. Eerdsman's, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pp. 60, 96, 1946.

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on the context. For instance, the English word “day” can have perhaps 14 different meanings. For example, consider the following sentence: “Back in my grandfather’s day, it took 12 days to drive across the country during the day.”

Here the first occurrence of “day” means “time” in a general sense. The second “day,” where a number is used, refers to an ordinary day, and the third refers to the daylight portion of the 24-hour period. The point is that words can have more than one meaning, depending on the context.

To understand the meaning of “day” in Genesis 1, we need to determine how the Hebrew word for “day,” *yom*, is used in the context of Scripture. Consider the following:



- A typical concordance will illustrate that *yom* can have a range of meanings: a period of light as contrasted to night; a 24-hour period; time; a specific point of time; or a year.
- A classical, well-respected Hebrew-English lexicon<sup>8</sup> (a one-way dictionary) has seven headings and many subheadings for the meaning of *yom*—but it defines the creation days of Genesis 1 as ordinary days under the heading “day as defined by evening and morning.”
- A number and the phrase “evening and morning” are used for each of the six days of creation (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31).
- Outside Genesis 1, *yom* is used with a number 410 times, and each time it means an ordinary day.<sup>9</sup> Why would Genesis 1 be

<sup>8</sup> Brown, F., Driver, S. and Briggs, C., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 398, 1951.

<sup>9</sup> Some say that Hosea 6:2 is an exception to this because of the figurative language. However, the Hebrew idiomatic expression used, “After two days ... in the third day,” meaning “in a short time,” makes sense only if “day” is understood in its normal sense.

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the exception?<sup>10</sup>

- Outside Genesis 1, *yom* is used with the word “evening” or “morning”<sup>11</sup> 23 times. “Evening” and “morning” appear in association, but without *yom*, 38 times. All 61 times the text refers to an ordinary day. Why would Genesis 1 be the exception?<sup>12</sup>
- In Genesis 1:5, *yom* occurs in context with the word “night.” Outside of Genesis 1, “night” is used with *yom* 53 times—and each time it means an ordinary day. Why would Genesis 1 be the exception? Even the usage of the word “light” with *yom* in this passage determines the meaning as ordinary day.<sup>13</sup>
- The plural of *yom*, which does not appear in Genesis 1, *can* be used to communicate a longer time period, e.g. “in those days.”<sup>14</sup> Adding a number here would be nonsensical. Clearly, in Exodus 20:11, where a number is used with “days,” it unambiguously refers to six earth-rotation days.
- There are words in biblical Hebrew (such as *olam* or *qedem*) that are very suitable for communicating long periods of time, or indefinite time, but *none* of these words are used in Genesis 1.<sup>15</sup> Alternatively, the days or years could have been compared with grains of sand if long periods were meant.

Dr. James Barr (Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford University), who himself does not believe Genesis is true history, nonetheless admitted as far as the language of Genesis 1 is concerned that:

So far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament

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<sup>10</sup> Stambaugh, J., The days of Creation: a semantic approach, *Proc. Evangelical Society's Far West Region Meeting*, Master's Seminary, Sun Valley, California, p. 12, April 26, 1996.

<sup>11</sup> The Jews start their day in the evening (sundown followed by night)—obviously based on the fact that Genesis begins the day with the “evening.”

<sup>12</sup> Stambaugh, Ref. 10, p. 15.

<sup>13</sup> Stambaugh, Ref. 10, p. 72.

<sup>14</sup> Stambaugh, Ref. 10, pp. 72–73.

<sup>15</sup> Stambaugh, Ref. 10, pp. 73–74.

Grigg, R., How long were the days of Genesis 1? *Creation* 19(1):23–25, 1996.

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at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Gen. 1–11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that (a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience (b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story (c) Noah's Flood was understood to be worldwide and extinguish all human and animal life except for those in the ark.<sup>16</sup>

In like manner, 19<sup>th</sup> century liberal Professor Marcus Dods, New College, Edinburgh, said:

If, for example, the word “day” in these chapters does not mean a period of twenty-four hours, the interpretation of Scripture is hopeless.<sup>17</sup>

## CONCLUSION ABOUT “DAY” IN GENESIS 1

If we are prepared to let the words of the language speak to us in accord with the context and normal definitions, without being influenced by outside ideas, then the word for “day” found in Genesis 1—which is qualified by a number, the phrase “evening and morning” and for Day 1 the words “light and darkness”—*obviously* means an ordinary day (about 24 hours).



In Martin Luther's day, some of the church fathers were saying that God created everything in only one day, or in an instant. Martin Luther wrote:

When Moses writes that God created Heaven and Earth and whatever is in them in six days, then let this period continue to have

<sup>16</sup> Barr, J., Letter to David Watson, April 23, 1984.

<sup>17</sup> Dods, M., *Expositor's Bible*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, p. 4, 1888, as cited by Kelly, D., *Creation and Change*, Christian Focus Publications, Fearn, Scotland, p. 112, 1997.

## SIX DAYS OR MILLIONS OF YEARS?

been six days, and do not venture to devise any comment according to which six days were one day. But, if you cannot understand how this could have been done in six days, then grant the Holy Spirit the honor of being more learned than you are. For you are to deal with Scripture in such a way that you bear in mind that God Himself says what is written. But since God is speaking, it is not fitting for you wantonly to turn His Word in the direction you wish to go.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, John Calvin stated, “Albeit the duration of the world, now declining to its ultimate end, has not yet attained six thousand years. . . . God’s work was completed not in a moment but in six days.”<sup>19</sup>

Luther and Calvin were the backbone of the Protestant Reformation that called the church back to Scripture—*Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone). Both of these men were adamant that Genesis 1 taught six ordinary days of Creation—only thousands of years ago.

### WHY SIX DAYS?

Exodus 31:12 says that God commanded Moses to say to the children of Israel:

Six days may work be done, but on the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore the sons of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant. It is a sign between me and the sons of Israel forever. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed (Exodus 31:15–17).

Then God gave Moses two tablets of stone upon which were written the commandments of God, written by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18).

Because God is infinite in power and wisdom, there’s no

<sup>18</sup> Plass, Ref. 3, p. 1,523.

<sup>19</sup> McNeil, J. (Ed.), *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion I*, Westminster Press, Louisville, Kentucky, pp. 160–161, 182, 1960.

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doubt He could have created the universe and its contents in no time at all, or six seconds, or six minutes or six hours—after all, with God nothing shall be impossible (Luke 1:37).

However, the question to ask is “Why did God take so long? Why as long as six days?” The answer is also given in Exodus 20:11, and that answer is the basis of the Fourth Commandment:

For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and sanctified it.

The seven-day week has no basis outside Scripture. In this Old Testament passage, God commands His people, Israel, to work for six days and rest for one—thus giving us a reason why He deliberately took as long as six days to create everything. He set the example for man. Our week is patterned after this principle. Now if He created everything in six thousand, or six million years, followed by a rest of one thousand or one million years, then we would have a very interesting week indeed!

Some say that Exodus 20:11 is only an analogy in the sense that man is to work and rest—not that it was to mean six literal ordinary days followed by one literal ordinary day. However, Bible scholars have shown that this commandment “does not use analogy or archetypal thinking but that its emphasis is ‘stated in terms of the imitation of God or a divine precedent that is to be followed.’”<sup>20</sup> In other words, it was to be six literal days of work, followed by one literal day of rest, just as God worked for six literal days and rested for one.

Some have argued that “the heavens and the earth” is just Earth and perhaps the solar system, not the whole universe. However,



<sup>20</sup> Hasel, Ref. 2, p. 29.

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this verse clearly says that God made *everything* in six days—six consecutive ordinary days, just like the commandment in the previous verse to work for six consecutive ordinary days.

The phrase “heaven(s) and earth” in Scripture is an example of a figure of speech called a *merism*, where two opposites are combined into an all-encompassing single concept, in this case the totality of creation. A linguistic analysis of the words “heaven(s) and earth” in Scripture shows that they refer to the totality of all creation (the Hebrews did not have a word for “universe”). For example, in Genesis 14:19 God is called “Creator of heaven and earth.” In Jeremiah 23:24 God speaks of himself as filling “heaven and earth.” See also Genesis 14:22; 2 Kings 19:15; 2 Chronicles 2:12; Psalms 115:15, 121:2, 124:8, 134:3, 146:6; and Isaiah 37:16.

Thus, there is no scriptural warrant for restricting Exodus 20:11 to earth and its atmosphere, or the solar system alone. So Exodus 20:11 does show that the whole universe was created in six ordinary days.

### Implication

As the days of creation are ordinary days in length, then by adding up the years in Scripture (assuming no gaps in the genealogies<sup>21</sup>), the age of the universe is only about six thousand years.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Whitcomb, J. and Morris, H., *The Genesis Flood*, Presbyterian and Reformed Publ., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, USA, pp. 481–483, 1961, Appendix II. They allow for the possibility of gaps in the genealogies because the word “begat” can skip generations. However, they point out that even allowing for gaps would give a maximum age of around 10,000 years.

<sup>22</sup> Pierce, L., The forgotten archbishop, *Creation* 20(2):42–43, 1998. Ussher carried out a very scholarly work in adding up all the years in Scripture to obtain a date of Creation of 4004 BC. Ussher has been mocked for stating that Creation occurred on 23 October—he obtained this date by working backwards using the Jewish civil year and accounting for how the year and month etc. were derived over the years. Thus, he didn’t just pull this date out of the air, but gave a scholarly mathematical basis for it. This is not to say this is the correct date, as there are assumptions involved, but the point is, his work is not to be scoffed at. Ussher did *not* specify the hour of the day for creation as some skeptics assert. Young’s *Analytical Concordance*, under “creation,” lists many other authorities, including extra-biblical ones, who all give a date for creation of less than 10,000 years ago.

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## REFUTING COMMON OBJECTIONS TO SIX LITERAL DAY

### Objection 1

“Science” has shown the earth and universe are billions of years old; therefore the “days” of creation *must* be long periods (or indefinite periods) of time.

### Answer

- a. The age of the earth, as determined by man’s fallible methods, is based on unproven assumptions; so it is not proven that the earth is billions of years old.<sup>23</sup>
- b. This unproven age is being used to force an interpretation on the language of the Bible. Thus, man’s fallible theories are allowed to interpret the Bible. This ultimately undermines the use of language to communicate.
- c. Evolutionary scientists claim the fossil layers over the earth’s surface date back hundreds of millions



<sup>23</sup> Morris, H. and Morris, J., *Science, Scripture, and the Young Earth*, Institute for Creation Research, El Cajon, California, pp. 39–44, 1989.

Morris, J., *The Young Earth*, Master Books, Green Forest, Arkansas, pp. 51–67, 1996.

Austin, S., *Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe*, Institute for Creation Research, El Cajon, California, pp. 111–131, 1994.

Humphreys, D., *Starlight and Time*, Appendix C, Master Books, Green Forest, Arkansas, 1996.

Progress towards a young-earth relativistic cosmology, *Proc. 3rd ICC*, Pittsburg, pp. 83–133, 1994.

Wieland, C., Creation in the physics lab (interview with Dr. Russell Humphreys), *Creation* 15(3):20–23, 1993.

Taylor, I., *In the Minds of Men*, TFE Publ., Toronto, pp. 295–322, 1984.

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of years. As soon as one allows millions of years for the fossil layers, then one has accepted death, bloodshed, disease, thorns, and suffering before Adam's sin.

The Bible makes it clear<sup>24</sup> that death, bloodshed, disease, thorns, and suffering are a *consequence* of sin.<sup>25</sup> In Genesis 1:29–30, God gave Adam and Eve and the animals plants to eat (this is reading Genesis at face value, as literal history, as Jesus did in Matthew 19:3–6). In fact, there is a theological distinction made between animals and plants. Human beings and higher animals are described in Genesis 1 as having a *nephesh*, or life principle. (This is true of at least the vertebrate land animals as well as the birds and fish: Genesis 1:20, 24.) Plants do not have this *nephesh*—they are not “alive” in the same sense animals are. They were given for food.

Man was permitted to eat meat only after the Flood (Genesis 9:3)—this also makes it obvious that the statements in Genesis 1:29–30 were meant to inform us that man and the animals were vegetarian to start with. Also, in Genesis 9:2, we are told of a change God made in the way animals react to man.

God warned Adam in Genesis 2:17 that if he ate of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” he would “die.” The Hebrew grammar actually means, “dying, you will die.” In other words, it would be the commencement of a process of physical dying. It also clearly involved spiritual death (separation from God).

After Adam disobeyed God, the Lord clothed Adam and Eve

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<sup>24</sup> Ham, K., *The Lie: Evolution*, Master Books, Green Forest, Arkansas, Introduction, pp. xiii–xiv, 1987.

Ham, K., The necessity for believing in six literal days, *Creation* 18(1):38–41, 1996.

Ham, K., The wrong way round! *Creation* 18(3):38–41, 1996.

Ham, K., Fathers, promises and vegemite, *Creation* 19(1):14–17, 1997.

Ham, K., The narrow road, *Creation* 19(2):47–49, 1997.

Ham, K., Millions of years and the “doctrine of Balaam,” *Creation* 19(3):15–17, 1997.

<sup>25</sup> Gill, J., *A Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 1760. Republished by Primitive Baptist Library, p. 191, 1980. This is not just a new idea from modern scholars. In 1760 John Gill, in his commentaries, insisted there was no death, bloodshed, disease or suffering before sin.

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with “coats of skins” (Genesis 3:21).<sup>26</sup> To do this He must have killed, and shed the blood of, at least one animal. The reason for this can be summed up by Hebrews 9:22:

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

God requires the shedding of blood for the remission of sins. What happened in the garden was a picture of what was to come in Jesus Christ, who shed His blood on the Cross as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

Now if the Garden of Eden were sitting on a fossil record of dead things millions of years old, then there was the shedding of blood *before* sin. This would destroy the foundation of the Atonement. The Bible is clear: the sin of Adam brought death and suffering into the world. As Romans 8:19–22 tells us, the whole of creation “groans” because of the effects of the fall of Adam, and the creation will be liberated “from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. 8:21). Also, bear in mind that thorns came into existence after the Curse. Because there are thorns in the fossil record, it had to be formed after Adam and Eve sinned.

The pronouncement of the death penalty on Adam was both a curse and a blessing. A curse because death is horrible and continually reminds us of the ugliness of sin; a blessing because it



<sup>26</sup> All Eve’s progeny, except the God-man Jesus Christ, were born with original sin (Romans 5:12, 18–19), so Eve could not have conceived when she was sinless. So the Fall must have occurred fairly quickly, before Eve had conceived any children (they were told to “be fruitful and multiply”).

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meant the consequences of sin—separation from fellowship with God—need not be eternal. Death stopped Adam and his descendants from living in a state of sin, with all its consequences, forever. And because death was the just penalty for sin, Jesus Christ suffered physical death, shedding His blood, to release Adam’s descendants from the consequences of sin. The Apostle Paul discusses this in depth in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15.

Revelation 21–22 makes it clear that there will be a “new heavens and a new earth” one day, where there will be “no more death” and “no more curse”—just like it was before sin changed everything. If there are to be animals as part of the new earth, obviously they will not be dying or eating each other, nor eating the redeemed people!

Thus, adding the supposed millions of years to Scripture destroys the foundations of the message of the Cross.

### Objection 2

According to Genesis 1, the sun was not created until Day 4. How could there be day and night (ordinary days) without the sun for the first three days?

### Answer

- a. Again, it is important for us to let the language of God’s Word speak to us. If we come to Genesis 1 without any outside influences, as has been shown, each of the six days of creation appears with the Hebrew word *yom* qualified by a number and the phrase “evening and morning.” The first three days are written the *same* way as the next three. So if we let the language speak to us—all six days were ordinary earth days.
- b. The sun is not needed for day and night! What is needed is light and a rotating earth. On the first day of creation, God made light (Genesis 1:3). The phrase “evening and morning” certainly implies a rotating earth. Thus, if we have light from one direction, and a spinning earth, there can be day and night.

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Where did the light come from? We are not told,<sup>27</sup> but Genesis 1:3 certainly indicates it was a created light to provide day and night until God made the sun on Day 4 to rule the day He had made. Revelation 21:23 tells us that one day the sun will not be needed, as the glory of God will light the heavenly city.

Perhaps one reason God did it this way was to illustrate that the sun did not have the priority in the creation that people have tended to give it. The sun did not give birth to the earth as evolutionary theories postulate; the sun was God's created tool to rule the day that God had made (Genesis 1:16).

Down through the ages, people such as the Egyptians have worshiped the sun. God warned the Israelites, in Deuteronomy 4:19, not to worship the sun as the pagan cultures around them did. They were commanded to worship the God who made the sun—not the sun that was *made* by God.

Evolutionary theories (the “big bang” hypothesis for instance) state that the sun came before the earth, and that the sun's energy on the earth eventually gave rise to life. Just as in pagan beliefs, the sun is, in a sense, given credit for the wonder of creation.

It is interesting to contrast the speculations of modern cosmology with the writings of the early church father Theophilus:

On the fourth day the luminaries came into existence. Since God has foreknowledge, he understood the nonsense of the foolish philosophers who were going to say that the things produced on Earth came from the stars, so that they might set God aside. In order therefore that the truth might be demonstrated, plants and seeds came into existence before stars. For what comes into existence later cannot cause what is prior to it.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Some people ask why God did not tell us the source of this light. However, if God told us everything, we would have so many books we would not have time to read them. God has given us all the information we need to come to the right conclusions about the things that really matter.

<sup>28</sup> Lavallee, L., The early church defended creation science, *Impact*, No. 160, p. ii, 1986. Quotation from *Theophilus, “To Autolytus,”* 2.8, Oxford Early Christian Texts.

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## Objection 3

2 Peter 3:8 states that “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years,” therefore the days of creation could be long periods of time.

## Answer

- a. This passage has *no* creation context—it is *not* referring to Genesis or the six days of creation.
- b. This verse has what is called a “comparative article”—“as” or “like”—which is not found in Genesis 1. In other words, it is *not* saying a day *is* a thousand years—it is comparing a real, literal day to a real, literal thousand years. The context of this passage is the Second Coming of Christ. It is saying that, to God, a day is *like* a thousand years, because God is outside of time. God is not limited by natural processes and time as humans are. What may seem like a long time to us (e.g., waiting for the Second Coming), or a short time, is nothing to God, either way.
- c. The second part of the verse reads “and a thousand years as one day,” which, in essence, cancels out the first part of the verse for those who want to equate a day with a thousand years! Thus, it cannot be saying a day is a thousand years or vice versa.
- d. Psalm 90:4 states, “For a thousand years in your sight are as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.” Here a thousand years is being compared with a “watch in the night” (four hours<sup>29</sup>). Because the phrase “watch in the night” is joined in a particular way to “yesterday,” it is saying that a thousand years is being compared with a short period of time—not simply to a day.
- e. If one used this passage to claim that “day” in the Bible means a thousand years, then, to be consistent, one would have to say that Jonah was in the belly of the fish three thousand years, or that Jesus has not yet risen from the dead!

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<sup>29</sup> The Jews had three watches during the night (sunset to 10 pm; 10 pm to 2 am; 2 am to sunrise), but the Romans had four watches, beginning at 6 pm.

# EXPOSING PROGRESSIVE CREATION

## Objection 4

Insisting on six solar days for creation limits God, whereas allowing God billions of years does not limit Him.

## Answer

Actually, insisting on six ordinary earth-rotation days of creation is not limiting *God*, but limiting *us* to believing that God actually did what He tells us in His Word. Also, if God created everything in six days, as the Bible says, then surely this reveals the power and wisdom of God in a profound way—Almighty God did not *need* eons of time! However, the billions of years scenarios diminish God by suggesting that mere chance could create things, or that God needed huge amounts of time to create things—this would be limiting God’s power by reducing it to naturalistic explanations!

## Objection 5

Adam could not have accomplished all that the Bible states in one day (Day 6). He could not have named all the animals, for instance; there was not enough time.

## Answer

Adam did not have to name *all* the animals—only those God brought to him. For instance, Adam was commanded to name “every beast of the field” (Genesis 2:20), not “beast of the earth” (Genesis 1:25). The phrase “beast of the field” is most likely a subset of the larger group “beast of the earth.” He did not have to name “everything that creeps upon the earth” (Genesis 1:25) or any of the sea creatures. Also the number of “kinds” would be much less than the number of “species” in today’s classification.<sup>30</sup>

When critics say that Adam could not name the animals in less than one day, what they really mean is they do not understand how *they* could do it, so Adam could not. However, our brain has

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<sup>30</sup> Ham, K. *et al.*, *The Answers Book*, Master Books, Green Forest, Arkansas, pp. 180–182, 2000.

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suffered from 6,000 years of the Curse—it has been greatly affected by the Fall. Before sin, Adam’s brain was perfect.

When God made Adam, He must have programmed him with a perfect language. Today we program computers to “speak” and “remember.” How much more could our Creator God have created Adam as a mature human (he was not born as a baby needing to learn to speak), having in his memory cells a perfect language with a perfect understanding of each word. (That is why Adam understood what God meant when he said he would “die” if he disobeyed, even though he had not seen any death.) Adam may also have had a “perfect” memory (something like a photographic memory, perhaps).

It would have been no problem for this first perfect man to make up words and name the animals God brought to him and remember the names—in far less than one day.<sup>31</sup>

### Objection 6

Genesis 2 is a different account of creation, with a different order, so how can the first chapter be accepted as teaching six literal days?

### Answer

Actually, Genesis 2 is not a *different* account of creation. It is a *more detailed* account of Day 6 of creation. Chapter 1 is an overview of the whole of creation; chapter 2 gives details surrounding the creation of the garden, the first man, and his activities on Day 6.<sup>32</sup>

Between the creation of Adam and the creation of Eve, the King James Version says, “Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air” (Genesis 2:19). This seems to say that the land beasts and birds were created between the creation of Adam and Eve. However, Jewish scholars did not recognize any such conflict with the account in chapter 1,

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<sup>31</sup> Grigg, R., Naming the animals: all in a day’s work for Adam, *Creation* 18(4):46–49, 1996.

<sup>32</sup> Batten, D., Genesis contradictions? *Creation* 18(4):44–45, 1996.

Kruger, M., An understanding of Genesis 2:5, *TJ* 11(1):106–110, 1997.

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where Adam and Eve were both created after the beasts and birds (Genesis 1:23–25). There is no contradiction, because in Hebrew the precise tense of a verb is determined by the context. It is clear from chapter 1 that the beasts and birds were created before Adam, so Jewish scholars would have understood the verb “formed,” in Genesis 2:19, to mean “had formed” or “having formed.” If we translate verse 19 “Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field,” the apparent disagreement with Genesis 1 disappears completely.

Regarding the plants and herbs in Genesis 2:5 and the trees in Genesis 2:9 (compare with Genesis 1:12), the plants and herbs are described as “of the field” and they needed a man to tend them. These are clearly cultivated plants, not just plants in general (Genesis 1). Also, the trees (Genesis 2:9) are only the trees planted in the garden, not trees in general.

In Matthew 19:3–6 Jesus Christ quotes from both Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24 when referring to the *same man and woman* in teaching the doctrine of marriage. Clearly, Jesus saw them as *complementary* accounts, *not* contradictory ones.

## Objection 7

There is no “evening and morning” for the seventh day of the Creation Week (Genesis 2:2). Thus, we must still be in the “seventh day,” so none of the days can be ordinary days.

## Answer

Look again at the previous section, entitled “Why six days?” Exodus 20:11 is clearly referring to seven literal days—six for work and one for rest.

Also, God stated that He “*rested*” from His work of creation (not that He *is resting!*). The fact that He rested from His work of creation does not preclude Him from continuing to rest from this activity. God’s work now is different—it is a work of sustaining His creation, and of reconciliation and redemption because of man’s sin.

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The word *yom* is qualified by a number (Genesis 2:2–3); so the context still determines that it is an ordinary solar day. Also, God blessed this seventh day and made it holy. In Genesis 3:17–19 we read of the Curse on the earth because of sin. Paul refers to this in Romans 8:22. It does not make sense that God would call this day holy and blessed if He cursed the ground on this “day.” We live in a sin-cursed earth—we are not in the seventh blessed holy day!

Note: In arguing that the seventh day is not an ordinary day because it is not associated with “evening and morning” like the other days, proponents are tacitly agreeing that the other six days are ordinary days because they are defined by an evening and a morning!

Some have argued that Hebrews 4:3–4 implies that the seventh day is continuing today. However, verse 4 reiterates that God rested (past tense) on the seventh day. If someone says on Monday that he rested on Friday and is still resting, this would not suggest that Friday continued through to Monday! Also, only those who have believed in Christ will enter that rest, showing that it is a spiritual rest, which is compared with God’s rest since the Creation Week. It is not some sort of continuation of the seventh day (otherwise *everyone* would be “in” this rest).<sup>33</sup>

Hebrews does *not* say that the seventh day of Creation Week is continuing today, merely that the rest He instituted is continuing.

### Objection 8

Genesis 2:4 states, “In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.” As this refers to all six days of creation, it shows that the word “day” does not mean an ordinary day.

### Answer

The Hebrew word *yom* as used here is *not* qualified by a number, the phrase “evening and morning,” or light or darkness. In this context, the verse really means “in the time God created” (referring to the Creation Week) or “when God created.”

<sup>33</sup> Anon., Is the Seventh Day an eternal day? *Creation* 21(3):44–45, 1999.

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## Other Problems with Long Days and Similar Interpretations

- If the plants made on Day 3 were separated by millions of years from the birds and nectar bats (created Day 5), and insects (created Day 6) necessary for their pollination, then such plants could not have survived. This problem would be especially acute for species with complex symbiotic relationships (each depending on the other; e.g., the yucca plant and the associated moth<sup>34</sup>).
- Adam was created on Day 6, lived through Day 7, and then died when he was 930 years old (Genesis 5:5). If each day were a thousand years, or millions of years, this would make no sense of Adam's age at death!
- Some have claimed that the word for “made” (*asah*) in Exodus 20:11 actually means “show.” They propose that God showed or revealed the information about creation to Moses during a six-day period. This allows for the creation itself to have occurred over millions of years. However, “showed” is not a valid translation for *asah*. Its meaning covers “to make, manufacture, produce, do,” etc., but not “to show” in the sense of reveal.<sup>35</sup> Where *asah* is translated as “show”—for example, “show kindness” (Genesis 24:12)—it is in the sense of “to do” or “make” kindness.
- Some have claimed that because the word *asah* is used for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars on Day 4, and not the word *bara*, which is used in Genesis 1:1 for “create,” this means God only revealed the sun, moon, and stars at this stage. They insist the word *asah* has the meaning of “revealed.” In other words, the luminaries were supposedly already in existence, and were

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<sup>34</sup> Meldau, F., *Why We Believe in Creation Not in Evolution*, Christian Victory Publ., Denver, Colorado, pp. 114–116, 1972.

<sup>35</sup> Nothing in Gesenius's *Lexicon* supports the interpretation of *asah* as “show.”

See Charles Taylor's “Days of Revelation or creation?” (1997) found on the *Answers in Genesis* website, [www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org).

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only revealed at this stage. However, *bara* and *asah* are used in Scripture to describe the same event. For example, *asah* is used in Exodus 20:11 to refer to the creation of the heavens and the earth, but *bara* is used to refer to the creation of the heavens and the earth in Genesis 1:1. The word *asah* is used concerning the creation of the first people in Genesis 1:26—they did not previously exist. And then they are said to have been created (*bara*) in Genesis 1:27. There are many other similar examples. *Asah* has a broad range of meanings involving “to do” or “to make,” which includes *bara* creation.

- Some accept that the days of creation are ordinary days as far as the language of Genesis is concerned, but not as literal days of history as far as man is concerned. This is basically the view called the “framework hypothesis.”<sup>36</sup> This is a very complex and contrived view which has been thoroughly refuted by scholars.<sup>37</sup>

The real purpose of the “framework hypothesis” can be seen in the following quote from an article by one of its proponents:

To rebut the literalist interpretation of the Genesis creation “week” propounded by the young-earth theorists is a central concern of this article.<sup>38</sup>

- Some people want the days of creation to be long periods in an attempt to harmonize evolution or billions of years with

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<sup>36</sup> Kline, M., Because it had not rained, *Westminster Theological Journal* 20:146–157, 1957–1958.

Kline, M., Space and time in the Genesis cosmology, *Perspectives on Science & Christian Faith* 48(1), 1996.

<sup>37</sup> Kruger, Ref. 31, pp. 106–110.

Pipa, J., From chaos to cosmos: a critique of the framework hypothesis, presented at the Far-Western Regional Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, USA, April 26, 1996.

Wayne Grudem’s *Systematic Theology*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, USA, pp. 302–305, 1994, summarizes the framework hypothesis and its problems and inconsistencies.

<sup>38</sup> Van Bebbler and Taylor, Ref. 1, pp. 55–59.

Whitcomb and Morris, Ref. 21, pp. 212–330.

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the Bible's account of origins. However, the order of events according to long-age beliefs does not agree with that of Genesis. Consider the following table:

## Contradictions between the Order of Creation in the Bible and Evolution/Day-Ages

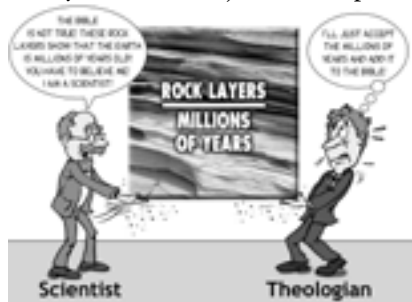
Biblical Account of Creation	Evolutionary/long-age speculation
Earth before the sun and stars	Stars and sun before earth
Earth covered in water initially	Earth a molten blob initially
Oceans first, then dry land	Dry land, then the oceans
Life first created on the land	Life started in the oceans
Plants created before the sun	Plants came long after the sun
Land animals created after birds	Land animals existed before birds
Whales before land animals	Land animals before whales

Clearly, those who do not accept the six literal days are the ones reading their own preconceived ideas into the passage.

### LONG-AGE COMPROMISES

Other than the gap theory (the belief that there is a gap of indeterminate time between the first two verses of Genesis 1), the major compromise positions that try to harmonize long ages and/or evolution with Genesis fall into two categories:

1. theistic evolution wherein God supposedly directed the evolutionary process of millions of years, or even just set it up and let it run, and
2. progressive creation where God supposedly intervened in the processes of death and struggle for survival to create millions of species at various times over



## SIX DAYS OR MILLIONS OF YEARS?

millions of years.

All long-age compromises reject Noah's Flood as a global Flood—it could only be a local event, because the fossil layers are accepted as evidence for millions of years. A global Flood would have destroyed this record and produced another! Therefore, these positions cannot allow a catastrophic global Flood that would form layers of fossil-bearing rocks over the earth. This, of course, goes against Scripture, which obviously teaches a global Flood (Genesis 6–9).<sup>38</sup> Sadly most theologians years ago simply tried to add this belief to the Bible instead realizing that these layers were laid down by Noah's Flood.

### DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

Yes, it does matter what a Christian believes concerning the days of creation in Genesis 1. Most importantly, all schemes which insert eons of time into, or before, creation undermine the gospel by putting death, bloodshed, disease, thorns, and suffering before sin and the Fall, as explained above (see answer to Objection 1). Here are two more reasons:

1. It is really a matter of how one approaches the Bible, in principle. If we do not allow the language to speak to us in context, but try to make the text fit ideas outside of Scripture, then ultimately the meaning of any word in any part of the Bible depends on man's interpretation—which can change according to whatever outside ideas are in vogue.
2. If one allows “science” (which has wrongly become synonymous with evolution and materialism) to determine our understanding of Scripture, then this can lead to a slippery slope of unbelief through the rest of Scripture. For instance, “science” would proclaim that a person cannot be raised from the dead. Does this mean we should “interpret” the Resurrection of Christ to reflect this? Sadly, some do just this, saying that the Resurrection simply means that Jesus' teachings live on in His followers!

# EXPOSING PROGRESSIVE CREATION

When people accept at face value what Genesis is teaching, and accept the days as ordinary days, they will have no problem accepting and making sense of the rest of the Bible.

Martin Luther once said:

I have often said that whoever would study Holy Scripture should be sure to see to it that he stays with the simple words as long as he can and by no means departs from them unless an article of faith compels him to understand them differently. For of this we must be certain: no clearer speech has been heard on Earth than what God has spoken.<sup>39</sup>

## PURE WORDS

God's people need to realize that the Word of God is something very special. It is not just the words of men. As Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "You received it not as the word of men, but as it is, truly the word of God."

Proverbs 30:5–6 states that "every word of God is pure . . . . Do not add to His words, lest He reprove you and you be found a liar." The Bible cannot be treated as just some great literary work. We need to "tremble at his word" (Isaiah 6:5) and not forget:

All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfected, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

In the original autographs, every word and letter in the Bible is there because God put it there. Let us listen to God speaking to us through His Word, and not arrogantly think we can tell God what He really means!



<sup>39</sup> Plass, Ref. 3, p. 93.