

BIBLE EXTRA EXTRA

**Believing in the Creator without being a
creationist**

Part 1

Usually, even a non-Christian knows something about the earth, the heavens, and the other elements of this world, about the motion and orbit of the stars and even their size and relative positions, about the predictable eclipses of the sun and moon, the cycles of the years and the seasons, about the kinds of animals, shrubs, stones, and so forth, and this knowledge he holds to as being certain from reason and experience. Now, it is a disgraceful and dangerous thing for an infidel to hear a Christian,

presumably giving the meaning of Holy Scripture, talking nonsense on these topics; and we should take all means to prevent such an embarrassing situation, in which people expose vast ignorance in a Christian and laugh it to scorn. The shame is not so much that an ignorant individual is derided, but that people outside the household of faith think our sacred writers held such opinions, and, to the great loss of those for whose salvation we toil, the writers of our Scripture are criticized and rejected as unlearned men.

If they find a Christian mistaken in a field which they themselves know well and hear him maintaining his foolish opinions about our books, how are they going to believe those books in matters concerning the resurrection of the dead, the hope of eternal life, and the kingdom of heaven, when they think their pages are full of falsehoods about facts which they themselves have learnt from experience and the light of reason? Reckless and incompetent expounders of Holy Scripture bring untold trouble and sorrow on their wiser brethren,

when they are caught in one of their mischievous false opinions and are taken to task by those who are not bound by the authority of our sacred books. For then, to defend their utterly foolish and obviously untrue statements, they will try to call upon Holy Scripture for proof and even recite from memory many passages which they think support their position, although they understand neither what they say nor the things about which they make assertion.

Augustine

GENESIS 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

JOHN 1:3

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

COLOSSIANS 1:16

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

ISAIAH 45:12

It is I who made the earth
and created mankind on it.

My own hands stretched out the heavens;
I marshalled their starry hosts.

HEBREWS 11:3

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

PSALM 19:1

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

TWO VIEWS

MODERN SCIENCE

- × Big Bang 14 billion yrs
- × Galaxies/stars 13 billion yrs
- × Solar system 4.5 billion yrs
- × Earth 4.5 billion yrs
- × Life 3.5 billion yrs
- × Land life 350 million yrs
- × Dinosaurs X 65 million yrs
- × Hominids 3 million yrs
- × Homo-sapiens 200,000 yrs

GENESIS

- × Earth
- × Light & dark d1
- × Sea & sky d2
- × Land & plants d3
- × Sun/moon/stars d4
- × Fish & birds d5
- × Animals & man d6
- × Rest d7

4 MAIN INTERPRETATIONAL APPROACHES TO GENESIS

1. **Reject completely** (atheism/naturalism)
2. **Literal** (Leads to young earth creationism)
3. **Concordist** (Tries to interpret “days” within an old earth chronology. Leads to a variety of views.)
4. **Literary** (Also called “framework theory”. Leads to either theistic evolution or some types of old-earth creationism.)

Solomon Grundy,
Born on a Monday,
Christened on Tuesday,
Married on Wednesday,
Took ill on Thursday,
Grew worse on Friday,
Died on Saturday,
Buried on Sunday,
That was the end,
Of Solomon Grundy

FRAMEWORK THEORY

“Genesis 1-3 is best understood as a literary framework describing REAL historical events and people, but using timeless, poetic and figurative language which provides the theological meaning and significance of those events, but not the scientific detail.”

4 MAIN VIEWS OF ACTUAL ORIGINS

- 1. Naturalistic evolution**
- 2. Young Earth Creationism**

“One can be a Christian and an evolutionist just as one can a Christian thief, or a Christian adulterer, or a Christian liar. It is absolutely impossible for those who profess to believe the Bible and to follow Christ to embrace evolutionism.”

Henry Morris

4 MAIN VIEWS OF ACTUAL ORIGINS

1. Naturalistic evolution
2. Young Earth Creationism
3. Old Earth Creationism (Or episodic creationism. Various views under this heading.)
4. Theistic Evolution (Also called evolutionary creationism.)

NATURALISTIC EVOLUTION

- ✘ Anti-God
- ✘ Relies on blind chance

YOUNG EARTH CREATIONISM

- ✘ Simple to understand
- ✘ Provides an easy way to explain all suffering and death. It comes from the Fall.
- ✘ Denies clear evidence of an old earth
- ✘ Guilty of doing some bad science
- ✘ Relies too heavily on the flood
- ✘ Naïve approach to a subtle and figurative text
- ✘ Not as orthodox as they claim

ORIGEN

For who, that has understanding, will suppose that the first, second, and third day, and the evening and morning, existed without a sun, moon, and stars, and that the first day was, as it were, also without a sky? And who is so foolish as to suppose that God, after the manner of a husbandman, planted a paradise in Eden, and placed in it a tree of life, visible and palpable, so that one tasting of the fruit by the bodily teeth obtained life? And again, that one was a partaker of good and evil by masticating what was taken from the tree? And if God is said to walk in the paradise in the evening, and Adam to hide himself under a tree, I do not suppose that anyone doubts that these things are to be taken figuratively and not literally.

OLD EARTH CREATIONISM

- ✘ Embraces the evidence for an old earth
- ✘ Direct creation of species avoids any problems with evolution and explains complex structures like the eye
- ✘ Explains fossil record jumps
- ✘ Feels a little arbitrary and ad hoc
- ✘ Leaves questions over the evidence of early “homo” species.

THEISTIC EVOLUTION

- ✘ Best fit with the biological evidence
- ✘ Concords with the Biblical view of God's providence in ALL natural processes
- ✘ Creates tricky questions about Adam and the Fall
- ✘ You might not feel comfortable with the idea that you and your cat have a common ancestor! (But this is a problem of taste not of theology.)

TALK CAN BE DOWNLOADED AT

http://www.bodminroadchurch.com/?page_id=1155