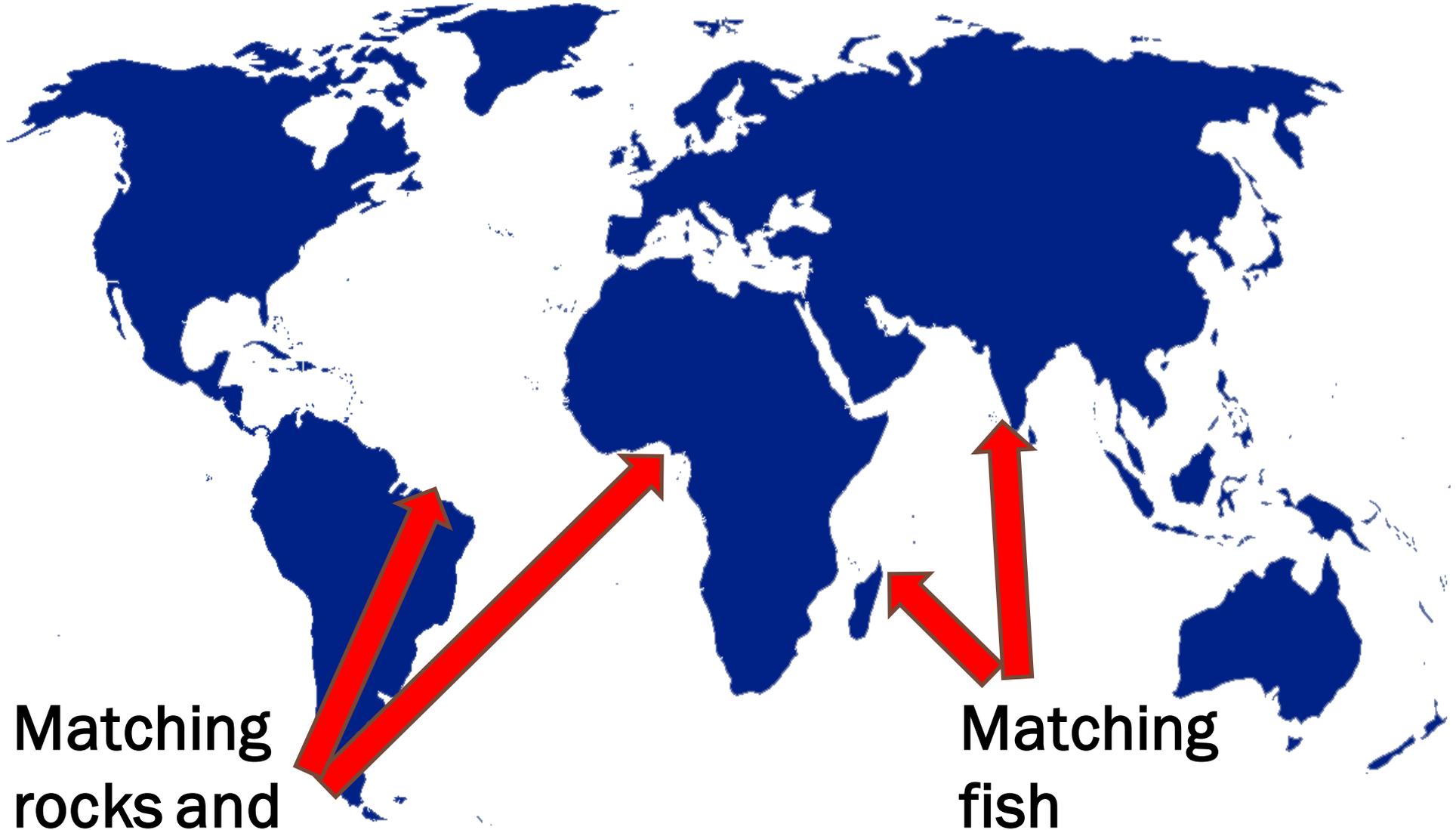


BIBLE EXTRA EXTRA

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

Part 2

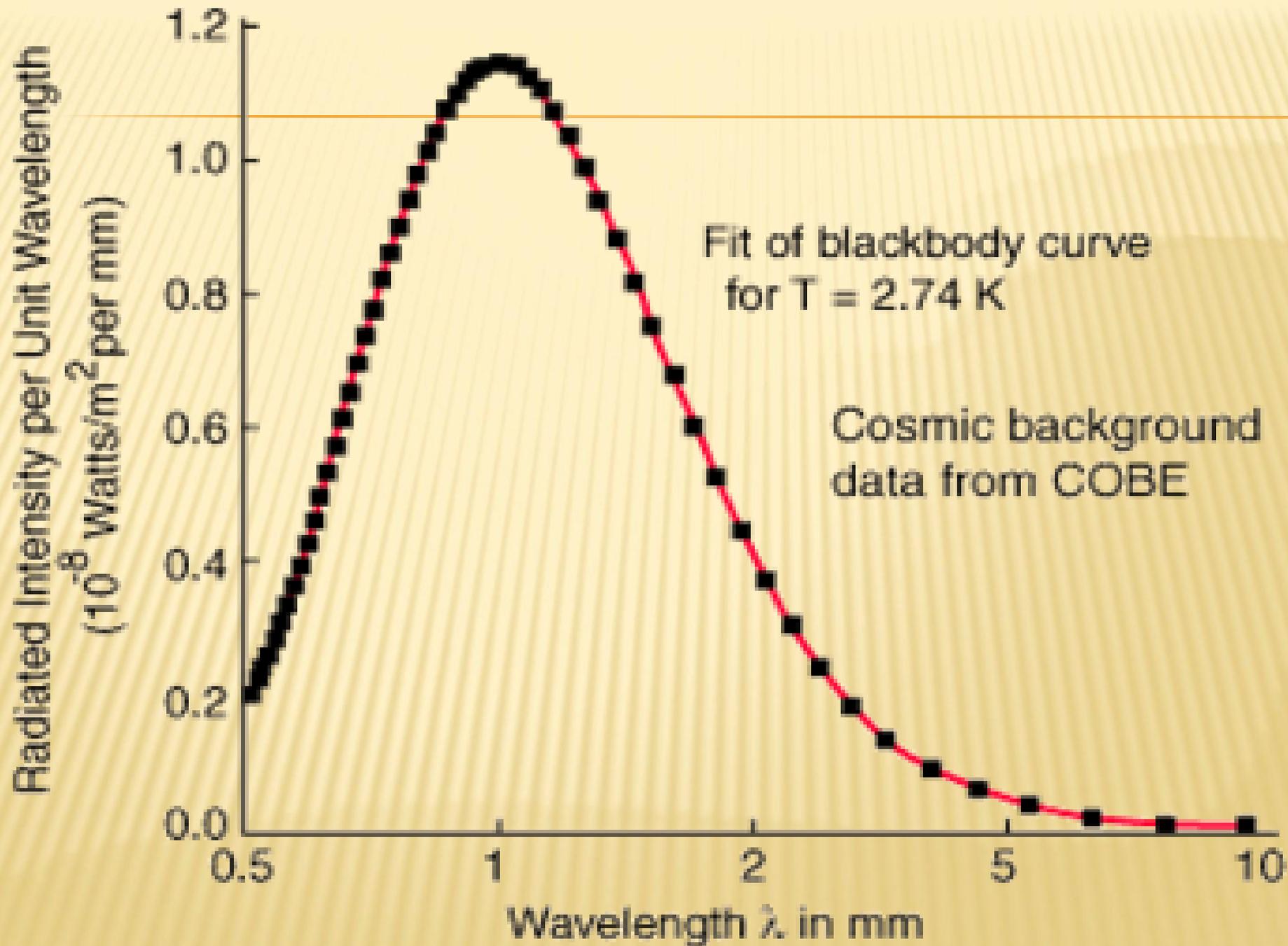


**Matching
rocks and
fossils**

**Matching
fish
species**

WHAT IS THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE FOR THE BIG BANG?

- ✘ The expansion of the universe
- ✘ The proportions of light elements
- ✘ The microwave background radiation



WHAT IS THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE FOR THE EVOLUTION OF LIFE?

FOR

- ✘ Small scale evidence
- ✘ Geographical distributions
- ✘ Clear fossil series
- ✘ Homologies
- ✘ Vast extinctions
- ✘ Genetics / DNA
- ✘ Unity of all cellular processes

AGAINST

- ✘ Irreducible complexity
- ✘ Fossil record gaps

A CLOSER LOOK AT GENESIS

- ✘ Genre
- ✘ Metaphor & figurative language
- ✘ Poetic structure
- ✘ Two accounts
- ✘ Over-all structure

HENRY MORRIS –THE GENESIS FLOOD

“The Scriptures, in fact, do not need to be interpreted at all, for God is well able to say exactly what he means.... The Biblical record of origins was written to be understood and therefore is to be taken literally.”

“it would not eat dust in a literal sense of course.... the expression is a graphic figure of speech”.

“DAY”

*“These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the **day** that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.”*

Gen 2:4

SEPARATION & FILLING

“FORMLESS” SEPARATION

DAY 1 day from night
DAY 2 sky from sea
DAY 3 sea from land

“EMPTY” FILLING

DAY 4 sun, moon, stars
DAY 5 birds & fish
DAY 6 animals and man

If a builder is describing how his company built a hospital he will probably describe the process chronologically; “We dug a hole, laid foundations and then put up the superstructure floor by floor: basement car park; ground floor administration; first floor wards; second floor operating theatres; third floor, more wards.”

But ask the surgeon to describe the construction of the hospital and he might say; “We put the operating theatre on the second floor and located the wards above and below it on the first and third floors.” The surgeon describes the hospital logically from his perspective, not chronologically. We would not insist on understanding him to imply that the operating theatre suddenly appeared in mid-air. Yet we know he is still describing a very real and literal hospital.

John Lennox

"It has been unfortunate that one device which our narrative uses to express the coherence and purposiveness of the creator's work, namely, the distribution of the various creative acts to six days, has been seized on and interpreted over-literally... The six day schema is but one of several means employed in this chapter to stress the system and order that has been built into creation. Other devices include the use of repeating formulae, the tendency to group words and phrases into tens and sevens, literary techniques such as chiasm and inclusio, the arrangement of creative acts into matching groups, and so on. If these hints were not sufficient to indicate the schematization of the six-day creation story, the very content of the narrative points in the same direction."

Gordon Wenham

“The style is lively and picturesque... there is a dream-like garden with strange trees and a cunning animal who opens a conversation... here we have a literary and religious achievement of the highest order. The way the story is treated places it within the Wisdom writings. It is a learned ingenuousness which uses common language to set forth a unique message.” Henri Blocher

SUMMARY SO FAR

- ✘ The Universe looks to be very old.
- ✘ Big Bang theory is well supported, fits with the Biblical claim of creation ex nihilo, but cannot remove the need for God.
- ✘ Evolution has hard evidence, but takes nothing away from God's creative genius if understood in a theistic, providential context.
- ✘ A literary approach to Genesis 1-3 avoids a conflict with science, and best honours the nature of the text itself.

SUMMARY SO FAR

- ✘ The battle is NOT between evolution and creation, just as the need for an oven to bake a cake does not remove the need for a baker! “Evolution” and “creation”, like “baker” and “oven” are different categories of explanation and therefore can be complementary.
- ✘ The real battle is between materialism and naturalism on the one hand, and theism on the other.

WHO WAS ADAM THEN?

- ✘ Instantaneous creation on day 6 (Y.E.C)
- ✘ God's final instantaneous creation, millions of years after his first (O.E.C)

- ✘ Everyman (totally non-literal view)
- ✘ Federal Head

For long centuries, God perfected the animal form which was to become the vehicle of humanity and the image of Himself. He gave it hands whose thumb could be applied to each of the fingers, and jaws and teeth and throat capable of articulation, and a brain sufficiently complex to execute all of the material motions whereby rational thought is incarnated. The creature may have existed in this state for ages before it became man: it may even have been clever enough to make things which a modern archaeologist would accept as proof of its humanity. But it was only an animal because all its physical and psychical processes were directed to purely material and natural ends.

Then, in the fullness of time, God caused to descend upon this organism a new kind of consciousness which could say “I” and “me,” which could look upon itself as an object, which knew God, which could make judgments of truth, beauty and goodness, and which was so far above time that it could perceive time flowing past.... We do not know how many of these creatures God made, nor how long they continued in the Paradisal state. But sooner or later they fell. Someone or something whispered that they could become as gods.... They wanted some corner in this universe of which they could say to God, “This is our business, not yours.” But there is no such corner. We have no idea in what particular act, or series of acts, this self-contradictory, impossible wish found expression. For all I can see, it might have concerned the literal eating of a fruit, but the question is of no consequence.

(C.S. Lewis, Problem of Pain, 68-71)

THEOLOGY IN GENESIS 1-3

1. God

One not many (Polytheism X)

Transcendent (separate) (Pantheism X)

Immanent (present & interested) (Deism X)

Personal & knowable (Islam X)

Moral/Holy (Greek/Roman X)

Good (Assyrian X)

All-powerful

THEOLOGY IN GENESIS 1-3

2. Creation/ The Universe

Made out of nothing and had a beginning

Basically good (Gnosticism X)

Planned not accidental

Spoilt by sin

Material not spiritual (Animism X)

Ordered and predictable

THEOLOGY IN GENESIS 1-3

3. Humans

Climax of creation distinct from the animals

Made in God's image (like God)

God's steward & representative on earth

Both material & spiritual

Both good & corrupted (Humanism X)

Free & responsible (Fatalism X)

Made for dependence not autonomy

A social being

THEOLOGY IN GENESIS 1-3

4. Evil, / the Devil

There is a third party!

Evil is distinct from God

Not co-eternal or co-equal (Dualism X)

Interacts with humans using temptation and deceit

Devil is a personal being. (Although the serpent is a figurative device, we should NOT conclude that the serpent is merely the personification of generalised evil.)

THEOLOGY IN GENESIS 1-3

5. Sin

Not part of the original plan

Consists of the desire for autonomy and the assertion of independence

Contagious

Breaks the harmony of all relationships

Separates man from God

Brings judgment

“Not many Christians today find it necessary to defend the concept of a literal six-day creation, for the text does not demand it, and scientific discovery appears to contradict it. The biblical text presents itself not as a scientific treatise but as a highly stylized literary statement. “It is most unfortunate that some who debate this issue (evolution) begin by assuming that the words “creation” and “evolution” are mutually exclusive. If everything has come into existence through evolution, they say, then biblical creation has been disproved, whereas if God has created all things, then evolution must be false.

It is, rather, this naïve alternative which is false. It presupposes a very narrow definition of the two terms. My acceptance of Adam and Eve as historical is not incompatible with my belief that several forms of pre-Adamic 'hominid' may have existed for thousands of years previously. These hominids began to advance culturally. They made their cave drawings and buried their dead.... You may call them homo erectus. I think you may even call some of them homo sapiens, for these are arbitrary scientific names. But Adam was the first homo divinus, if I may coin a phrase, the first man to whom may be given the Biblical designation 'made in the image of God'. Precisely what the divine likeness was, which was stamped upon him, we do not know, for Scripture nowhere tells us. But Scripture seems to suggest that it includes rational, moral, social, and spiritual faculties which make man unlike all other creatures and like God the creator.

JOHN STOTT

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