



*"The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1)*

## REASONS TO BELIEVE - SEATTLE AREA CHAPTER

NEWS AND VIEWS

FEBRUARY 2008

### What's Happening?

#### [RTB Creation Update](#)

RTB discusses a wide range of scientific and theological issues in their weekly Creation Update radio program, Tuesdays, 11 AM to 1 PM. To listen live, go the RTB website and click on the icon on the bottom of the page. A topical index of past shows is also available.

#### [Chapter Meeting](#)

On Feb. 9, the Seattle Chapter hosted David Marshall of the Christ the Tao Ministry who spoke on worldview apologetics. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April. We'll keep you advised of the time, place and speaker in upcoming issues of our newsletter. Please plan to join us!

#### [We Do Presentations](#)

The Seattle chapter does presentations on wide range of topics ranging from the scientific evidences for God, to the age of the earth debate. If your church or group is looking for speakers, contact us at [seattle@reasons.org](mailto:seattle@reasons.org).

### Inside This Issue

- In The News. . . . . page 2
- Book Reviews. . . . . page 3
- Who We Are . . . . . page 9

## The Days of Creation: A Closer Look at Scripture

JON W. GREENE

[Note: This is Part 2 of this article. Part 1 appeared in our January newsletter.]

### Day Four: Sun, Moon, and Stars

The narrative of the fourth creation day states:

*Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth," and it was so. God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. (Gen. 1:14-19)*



#### Young-Earth View

Young-earth creationists claim God created the Sun, Moon, and stars in an instant.

#### Old-Earth View

Old-earth creationists contend the Sun, Moon, and stars were created "in the beginning" as part of the "heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). On the fourth day, God caused the atmosphere to clear so these heavenly bodies became visible for the first time from the surface of the Earth to mark signs, seasons, days and years.

#### Exegetical Support

While English translations can make it sound as though God created the Sun, Moon and stars that instant, the Hebrew text indicates otherwise. First, the text states God "made" (*asah*) the lights, not that He "created" (*bara*) them. *Asah* expresses the idea of producing something from pre-existing material, not the idea of bringing something into existence that did not exist before (*bara*).<sup>60</sup> Also, the verb *asah* does not specify when God created the heavenly bodies, only that he completed the action. Second, the Hebrew "Let there be . . ." does not imply the creation of the heavenly bodies in the sense of their coming into existence.<sup>61</sup> "Let there be" is completed with the purpose clause "to separate." Thus, the narrative focuses on the *function* of the lights rather than their *origin*.<sup>62</sup> Third, the Hebrew "and it was so" denotes a com-

pleted action—that the sun and moon had performed the functions God commanded, serving as signs for years, seasons and days. This could not be accomplished in a 24-hour period. All of these things argue against an instantaneous creation.

It is also important to remember that the Hebrew phrase “the heavens and the earth” (*hashamayim we ha ‘erets*) in Genesis 1:1 encompasses everything in the physical universe. As previously discussed, this interpretation is supported by the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament,<sup>63</sup> Vine<sup>64</sup> and Grudem.<sup>65</sup> Bruce Waltke also confirms that *hashamayim we ha ‘erets* refers to the totality of the physical universe, all matter and energy and whatever else it contains.<sup>66</sup> Thus, the Hebrew text clearly states the Sun, Moon and stars were created “in the beginning” and not on the fourth day.

For these reasons, many Bible scholars believe Genesis 1:16 is more accurately interpreted as meaning God *had made* the heavenly bodies *prior* to the fourth day. Gleason Archer states: “The Hebrew verb *wayya`as*’ in verse 16 should better be rendered ‘Now [God] *had made* the two great luminaries . . .’<sup>67</sup> Wayne Grudem states: “[had made] can be taken as *perfects* indicating what God had done before . . . This view would imply that God had made the sun, moon, and stars earlier . . . or allowed them to be seen from the earth on Day 4.”<sup>68</sup> Harris, Archer, and Waltke state: “Verse 16 should *not* be understood as indicating the creation of the heavenly bodies for the first time on the fourth creative day; rather it informs us that the sun, moon, and stars were created on Day 1.”<sup>69</sup> And, James Montgomery Boice states: “It is not said that these [sun, moon, and stars] were created on the fourth day; they were created in the initial creative work of God referred to in Genesis 1:1.”<sup>70</sup>

#### Day Five: Sea and Flying Creatures

The narrative of the fifth day states:

*And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let the birds fly above the earth” . . . so God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves with which the waters swarm . . . according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. (Gen. 1:20-23)*

#### Young-Earth View

Young-earth creationists believe God created all the creatures of the sea and birds on the fifth day. Everything, both living and extinct, was created instantaneously.<sup>71</sup>

#### Old-Earth View

Old-earth creationists contend God created sea creatures and flying creatures progressively over long ages of time—not like a bolt of lightning.<sup>72</sup> As creatures died and went extinct, God created new creatures to replace them.

#### Exegetical Support

The first task of biblical exegesis is to discover the original, intended meaning of the words of the Bible.<sup>73</sup> The Hebrew term “living creature” (*nephesh khayyâ*) means “living animated being”<sup>74</sup> or “air-breathing creature.”<sup>75</sup> According to MacArthur, *nephesh* literally means that which breathes and speaks of soulful life (i.e., mind, will and emotion) as opposed to merely organic life.<sup>76</sup> These sea creatures and *nephesh khayyâ* may be air-breathing mammals such as dolphins, porpoises, and the like.<sup>77</sup> “Great sea creatures” (*tannin*) is translated “great whales” in some English Bibles but has a broader meaning, referring to enormous creatures.<sup>78</sup> These are most likely creatures the Israelites were familiar with—possibly whales or sharks<sup>79</sup> or large crocodiles, which

*Continued on page 4*

## In the NEWS...

### [The Chimpanzee Genome](#)

This article by Todd Charles Wood of BSG, a creation biology study group, focuses on the similarity of the chimpanzee and human genomes. The author explains why current creationist explanations for the similarity are inadequate and suggest potential solutions to this issue. Go to <http://www.bryancore.org/bsg/opbsg/007.pdf>.

### [The Moral Instinct](#)

This article by Dinesh D’Souza examines Darwinists’ effort to account for the origin of consciousness and morality. According to D’Souza, the entire framework of Darwinism doesn’t even come close to explaining these things. Go to [http://www.tothesource.org/1\\_29\\_2008/1\\_29\\_2008.htm](http://www.tothesource.org/1_29_2008/1_29_2008.htm).

### [Scientology](#)

This *Salvo Magazine* article examines the roots and basic doctrines of Scientology. The author states where Christian salvation comes from the hand of God, Scientology’s salvation comes by the power of man. Hardly a Christian-friendly religion as they claim. Go to <http://www.salvomag.com/new/articles/archives/religion/nicoll.php>.

### [Neo-Atheist Strategies](#)

This Breakpoint article discusses the new wave of atheism that is sweeping through our culture. According to the author, the ploy is an old one: blame Christianity for maladies besetting society. How do we respond? One way is to point to studies that demonstrate the social benefits of religion. Go to <http://www.breakpoint.org/listingarticle.asp?ID=7498>.

### [Livin’ on a Prayer](#)

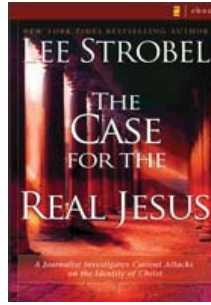
This *Salvo Magazine* article O’Leary examines the criticism leveled at a 1999 study that demonstrated the power of prayer in the recovery of coronary-care patients. The author’s conclusion? The study results are valid but the detractors seek to discredit prayer studies as a matter of principle. Go to <http://www.salvomag.com/new/articles/>

# Book Reviews

## The Case for the Real Jesus

Lee Strobel  
Zondervan, 2007

Reviewer: Greg Moore



Lee Strobel is known for his hard-hitting investigations into issues of faith. His award-winning books include *The Case for Christ*, *The Case for Faith* and *The Case for the Creator*. In *The Case for the Real Jesus*, Strobel examines current attacks on the traditional view of Jesus.

The book examines six major challenges to creedal Christianity that are currently circulating in popular culture.

- 1) Ancient documents just as credible as the four Gospels. Scholars paint radically different picture of Jesus.
- 2) The Bible's portrait of Jesus cannot be trusted because the Church tampered with the text.
- 3) New explanations refute the historicity of Jesus' resurrection.
- 4) Christianity's beliefs about Jesus were copied from earlier pagan religions.
- 5) Jesus cannot be the messiah because he failed to fulfill the messianic prophecies.
- 6) People should be free to pick and choose what to believe about Jesus.

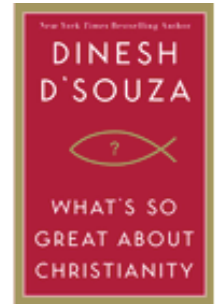
Strobel addresses each of these claims by consulting credible experts. Chapter 1 examines the ancient documents skeptics claim are as reliable as the Gospels. Chapter 2 examines the issue of whether the biblical text was changed. Chapter 3 examines the evidence for the resurrection. Chapter 4 examines the pagan beliefs that Christianity supposedly copied. Chapter 5 addresses the issue of whether Jesus' fulfilled the messianic prophecies. Chapter 6 examines the post-modern fallacy of relative truth. Strobel's conclusion? Confidence in the biblical portrait of Jesus is abundantly warranted.

The book is engaging and written for a lay audience. For those who want to understand and refute the popular challenges to Jesus' deity this is an excellent resource.

## What's So Great About Christianity

Dinesh D'Souza  
Regnery Publishing, 2007

Reviewer: Jon Greene



This book rebuts the multitude of recent atheist-authored books that attempt to deny the existence of God and discredit Christianity. D'Souza, a research scholar at Stanford University's Hoover Institute, presents a wide range of arguments to diffuse common arguments for atheism, which have recently been re-birthed by Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett, Richard Dawkins, and other authors.

D'Souza begins the book with an overview of the worldwide growth of Christianity and the numerous contributions Christianity has made to society. D'Souza notes that Christianity, a religion based on reason, provided fertile ground for the growth of science. He then goes on to discuss the argument for God from the design of the universe.

In the remainder of the book, D'Souza addresses the common question, "If God created the universe, what created God?" He also explains how Atheism's claim of an eternal universe and Hinduism/Buddhism's claim of endless cycles of cosmic reincarnation contradict the most basic laws of physics. Finally, he challenges Darwinian explanations for the origin of life, describing the complexity of life's first and simplest cells and referring to RNA/DNA's intricate machinery as the "signature of design."

Why is atheism so appealing? Quoting numerous atheists, D'Souza provides the answer: They don't want accountability to a Supreme Being, nor do they want to answer for their lack of moral restraint. They want sexual freedom and want to make up their own morality. As one philosopher has written, "I want atheism to be true . . . I don't want there to be a God." D'Souza writes, "The atheist seeks to get ride of moral judgment by getting rid of the judge."

The final chapters discuss the uniqueness of Christianity and how Christianity can change your life. The book is enlightening, provocative, and valuable to seekers and those who strive to uphold the faith.

were common in Moses' day.<sup>80</sup> The text does not indicate when fish (*dagā*) were created,<sup>81</sup> nor other types of marine organisms.

As to the flying creatures God created, all we can say with certainty is some flying creatures were created on the fifth day. This may refer to birds or other creatures. The word traditionally translated "birds" (*ōp*) means "flying thing" or "a thing that flies." Thus, it can denote creatures other than birds, such as flying insects or bats.<sup>82</sup>

While young-earth creationists claim the text indicates these creations were instantaneous, the Hebrew text does not support that view. There is a change from a singular to plural meaning in Genesis 1:20 and 1:21 that is obscured in most English translations.<sup>83</sup> The singular words in verse 20 are "nephesh the living" and "flyer." The plural words in verse 21 come about by the action of a Hebrew word translated "all" plus the plural word translated "by kinds." Thus, as Whitefield explains:

"Genesis 1:20 refers to a singular kind of 'air breathing creature' and a singular kind of 'flyer.' The swarm is singular in kind, but a swarm composed of many individual creatures of that kind. . . The two verses in sequence indicate the following: Initially, a single type (kind) of 'swarming' creature and a single type (kind) of 'flyer' were commanded to exist. Then the numbers of the individual types of 'swarming' creatures and 'flying' creatures increased, resulting in the use of the plural word 'by kinds.'"<sup>84</sup>

It should be noted that these verses attribute the increase in individual "kinds" to the creative (*bara*) action of God. God acted in producing new additional kinds.<sup>85</sup> This supports the view that the sea and flying creatures in the narrative were created over long periods of time. It is also in harmony with the creation Psalm, Psalm 104, which alludes to the creation and extinction of life, followed by further creation:

When you hide your face, they are dismayed; When you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. When you send forth your Spirit, they are created [*bara*] and you renew the face of the ground. (Psalm 104:29-30, ESV)

### Day Six: Land Animals and Man

The narrative of the sixth day states:

*And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so . . . Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . . So God created man in his own image . . . (Gen. 1:24-31)*

### Young-Earth View

Young-earth creationists contend God created all land animals and the first humans, Adam and Eve, in a 24-hour period. MacArthur states this position clearly: "Bear in mind that the creation of Adam occurred on the same day all other land animals were created. All of this occurred in one twenty-four hour period—one revolution of the earth."<sup>86</sup> In their view, Neanderthals and other ancient hominids were human beings that descended from Adam and Eve.

### Old-Earth View

Old-earth creationists contend God created land animals on the sixth day. These were created progressively, over long ages of time, beginning several hundred million years ago. God created the first humans, Adam and Eve, much later, around 50 thousand years ago.<sup>87</sup> In their view, the hominids, such as *Homo erectus* and the Neanderthals, are not human beings and preceded God's fiat creation of Adam and Eve.

### Exegetical Support

The narrative speaks of three types of land animals: livestock, creatures that move along the ground and wild animals. The Hebrew word for livestock (*behemā*) refers to large four-footed mammals that are easy to domesticate.<sup>88</sup> The Hebrew word for creatures that move along the ground (*remes*) refers to the locomotion of small creatures—small rodents and possibly small reptiles.<sup>89</sup> The Hebrew word for wild animals (*chay*) means wild or alive and comes from the root *haya* that conveys living life to the fullest.<sup>90</sup> Because this requires the attributes of mind, will and emotion; *chay* seems to refer to wild mammals. As a result, it is evident the text does not describe the creation of all land creatures—only certain mammals and perhaps some small reptiles. Thus, we can only speculate as to when large reptiles, dinosaurs, amphibians, insects and a host of other land creatures were created.

Some readers of Genesis 1:24 take the phrases, "*And God said . . . And it was so*," to mean immediate action on God's part. However, these statements simply mean God's commanded action was *completed* at some point in the past. It conveys no information about how long ago the action took place or how long it took to complete.<sup>91</sup> Thus, there is no textual requirement that these activities were completed within the confines of a 24-hour day. A number of Bible scholars also note the extreme improbability that the events of the sixth "day" could have been accomplished in 24 hours. Gleason Archer comments:

"There it is stated that on the sixth day (apparently toward the end of the day, after all the animals had been fashioned and placed on the earth—therefore not long before sundown at the end of the same day), 'God created man in His own image; He created them male *and female*.' This can only mean that Eve was created in the closing hour of Day Six, along with Adam. As we turn to Genesis 2, however, we find that a considerable interval of time must have intervened between the creation of Adam and the creation of Eve . . . the LORD God put Adam in the Garden of Eden . . . to cultivate and keep [the garden] . . . God then gave Adam a major assignment . . . he was to classify every species of animals and bird . . . the garden must have had hundreds of species of mammal, reptile, insect, and bird . . . It must have required some years, or, at the very least, a considerable number of months to complete this comprehensive inventory of all the birds, beasts and insects that populated the Garden of Eden . . . [It is] very apparent that Genesis 1 was never intended to teach that the sixth creative day, when Adam and Eve were *both* created, lasted a mere twenty-four hours . . . it would seem to border on sheer irrationality to insist that all



of Adam's experiences in Genesis 2:15-22 could have been crowded into the last hour or two of a literal twenty-four hour day."<sup>92</sup>

Similarly, Wayne Grudem notes:

"An additional argument for a long period of time in these 'days' is the fact that the sixth day includes so many events that it must have been longer than twenty-four hours . . . [It] includes the creation of animals . . . God's creation of Adam, God's putting Adam in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it, and giving Adam directions regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, his bringing all the animals to man for them to be named, finding no helper fit for Adam . . . creating Eve . . . The finite nature of man and the incredibly large number of animals created by God would by itself seem to require that a much longer period of time than part of one day would be needed to include so many events . . ."<sup>93</sup>

C. John Collins, Norman Geisler and Hugh Ross express similar doubts that the events of the sixth "day" could be accomplished in a 24-hour day.<sup>94</sup> Ross points out that it is useful to note Adam's exclamation upon seeing Eve for the first time. His remark in Genesis 2:23 is *happa'am*, usually translated "now at length." This is equivalent to our expression "at last!" Clearly, this would be an odd statement for Adam to make if he had only waited a few hours for God to create his helpmate, Eve.

Young-earth creationists dispute the fact that hominids existed on the Earth before Adam and Eve were created. However, it is clear that a great number of hominids preceded the appearance of modern man on the Earth, including *Homo habilis*, *Homo erectus*, and the Neanderthals.<sup>95</sup> These were creatures God created that walked upright, had limited intelligence and later went extinct. The pinnacle of God's creation, human beings, came later, marked by the appearance of Cro-Magnon Man (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) about 50 thousand years ago. Unlike the hominids, Cro-Magnon Man is identical to modern man anatomically and exhibits all of the same behaviors, including a spiritual dimension.

The young-earth claim that hominids were human and descended from Adam has no scientific support. For example, recent DNA studies cast a dark shadow on any connection between Neanderthal and modern man. Researchers at the University of Stockholm, University of Glasgow, and the Max Planck Institute studied Neanderthal DNA and concluded, "The cumulative weight of evidence appears to decisively sever the link between Neanderthals and humans."<sup>96</sup>

It should be noted that the genetic fingerprint of modern man, found in the mitochondrial DNA of females and the Y-chromosomal DNA of males, traces back to a single male and a single female.<sup>97</sup> This lends amazing credibility to the Genesis account of humanity arising from one man and one woman. It also negates the claim of evolutionary connections between man and the hominids.

### Day Seven: God Rested

The narrative of the seventh day states:

*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished ... And on the seventh*

*day God ... rested ... from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy ... (Gen. 2:1-3)*

### Young-Earth View

Young-earth creationists believe the seventh day of God's rest was a 24-hour period. Based on the statement in Exodus 20:11 (ESV), "*For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day,*" they maintain the creation "week" was a period of seven 24-hour days.

### Old-Earth View

Old-earth creationists contend the seventh day is an ongoing period. Although God continues His providential work of preserving and governing His creation, He is at rest because He is no longer creating. Because the seventh day is a period of indeterminate length, they argue this is evidence the other creation days are not 24-hour periods.

### Exegetical Support

The seventh day lacks the concluding "evening/morning" refrain found in the other creation days. This indicates God's Sabbath rest is ongoing. Since God's Sabbath rest is unending, the seventh day must be unending.<sup>98</sup> The New Testament confirms the seventh day of God's rest is an ongoing reality.<sup>99</sup> For example in Hebrews, God invites us, present tense, to join Him in His Sabbath rest:

*For we who have believed enter that rest, as he said, 'As I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter my rest,' although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: 'And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.' And again in this passage he said, 'They shall not enter my rest.' (Hebrews 4:3-5, ESV).*

The English translation of Exodus 20:11, "*For in six days the LORD made the heavens and earth . . .*," makes it sound as though God created everything in six calendar-days. However, the preposition "in" does not appear in the original Hebrew.<sup>100</sup> Rather, the verse is more correctly translated, "*For six yôms the LORD made. . .*" The addition of "in" originated with the King James Version translation and "played a significant role in the advocacy of the creation days being completed within 144 hours (6x24)."<sup>101</sup> When the verse is correctly translated, it is clear the creation "days" could have been long time periods.

The reference to the Sabbath in Exodus 20 seems to refer to the *pattern* of "days," not their duration.<sup>102</sup> The emphasis is on the pattern of work and rest, a ratio of six to one, not on the length of the creation days. Exodus 20:9 addresses the work-week of humans (seven 24-hour days); Exodus 20:11 addresses the work-week of God (seven time periods). Thus, as Hebrew scholar Gleason Archer notes: "By no means does this [Exodus 20:9-11] demonstrate that 24-hour intervals were involved in the first six 'days,' any more than the eight-day celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles proves that the wilderness wanderings under Moses occupied only eight days."<sup>103</sup> In Leviticus 25:4 the pattern of one out of seven is duplicated with six years of planting the land and one year of

“Sabbath rest for the land.”<sup>104</sup> This further demonstrates the analogy of our Sabbath to God’s Sabbath does not demand that the creation “week” consisted of seven 24-hour days.<sup>105</sup>

## DEATH BEFORE THE FALL

For centuries, the traditional young-earth view included a belief in 24-hour creation days, the creation of Adam & Eve six-to-ten thousand years ago, and that Noah’s flood was global. It was only in the mid-20th century that *modern* young-earth creationism added “no death before the Fall” as a matter of doctrinal orthodoxy.<sup>106</sup> Although the death-before-the-fall issue does not directly pertain to the creation days, it is an important aspect of the young-earth/old-earth debate.

In the young-earth view, God’s declaration in Genesis 1:31 that everything He had made was “very good” eliminates the possibility of pain, suffering and carnivorous activity prior to the Fall. Young-earth creationists Ken Ham and Terry Mortenson state the idea of animal death before the Fall “goes directly against the teaching of the Bible and dishonors the character of God.”<sup>107</sup> Similarly Henry Morris writes, “The Bible is quite explicit in teaching that there was no suffering or death of sentient life in the world before man brought sin into the world.”<sup>108</sup>

The old-earth view is that Adam’s sin resulted in the *spiritual* death of mankind followed (eventually) by physical death. Thus, animal death occurred long before the creation of mankind and was not a result of the Fall. To examine this issue, it is important to first consider God’s warning to Adam in Genesis 2:

*And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.’* (Genesis 2:16-17, NASB)

In this passage, God tells Adam, “you shall surely die.” Animal death is neither stated nor implied. Both young-earth and old-earth advocates agree the death was *spiritual*. Young-earth creationist John MacArthur writes, “*Spiritually*, our first parents did die in the very same day they partook of the forbidden fruit. But physically, their lives were graciously prolonged.”<sup>109</sup> Old-earth creationist Gleason Archer writes, “The death that overtook the guilty pair that day was *spiritual only*; physical death did not come until centuries later . . . They were plunged immediately into a state of *spiritual death*.”<sup>110</sup> It is curious then, why young-earth creationists insist the command included the death of animals.

Young-earth creationists often quote a portion of Romans 5:12 to support their claim that animal death was the result of the Fall: “*Through one man sin entered the world and death through sin...*” However, it is important to examine the complete verse which reads: “*Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned*” (Romans 5:12, NASB). This clearly states death came to all “men.” “Men” comes from the Greek word *anthropos*, meaning “a human being, male or female, in distinction from animals.”<sup>111</sup> Why did death come to men? Because through Adam all men (*anthropos*) sinned,

resulting in *man’s* spiritual and physical death.

Respected theologians agree with this view. For example, referring to Romans 5:12, James Montgomery Boice states: “But this [death] does not really pertain to the animal realm, in that animals do not have God-consciousness . . . . [It] is conceivable that animals could be created to enjoy a normal lifespan and then to die without having any of the judgmental qualities death has for man.”<sup>112</sup> Similarly, young-earth creationist Louis Berkof states: “All of this does not mean, however, that there may not have been death in some sense of the word in the lower creation apart from sin . . . .”<sup>113</sup>

Another verse often used by young-earth creationists is I Corinthians 15:21: “*For since by a man came death.*” Once again, it is important to examine the entire verse: “*For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as Adam all die, so in Christ all shall be made alive.*” (I Corinthians 15:21-22) This verse tells us human death came about by Adam and that humans (*anthropos*) will be made alive through Christ. The context pertains exclusively to human death and resurrection because it is clear that animals will not be “made alive” through Christ’s atoning death.

Young-earth creationists also use Romans 8:20-22 to suggest animal death and even a decaying universe were caused by Adam’s sin:<sup>114</sup>

*For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.* (Romans 8:20-22)

However, this interpretation clearly goes beyond the text, because Adam’s sin and the Fall are not directly referenced and animal death is not mentioned. The context of Romans 8 is the ultimate glorification of mankind (verses 19, 21) and the hope that the creation, likewise, will be liberated from decay. The “frustration” or “futility” of the creation (Greek *mataiotes*) is its “frailty, emptiness, and transitoriness,”<sup>115</sup> which will some day be swallowed up when the present creation is replaced with a new creation—“*the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved*” (2 Peter 3:10).

Further, the Bible tells us the creation was subject to decay from the beginning. In Psalms we are told: “*Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish . . . they will all wear out like a garment . . . they will pass away*” (Psalm 102:25-26). As James Montgomery Boice explains, “The cosmos is decaying or running down. This is called the second law of thermodynamics . . . . One day the sun will use up its energy and be gone. The whole universe is like that. It is all running down, dissipating . . . . It is not only the sun that is dying, of course, living creatures die, too.”<sup>116</sup>

Finally, it is important to note that animal predation and death are extolled in Scripture as part of God’s creation. The claim that God’s “very good” creation had no animal death is contradicted by Job 38:39,

wherein God glories in his ability to provide prey for the lion:

*Can you hunt the prey for the lion, or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, when they crouch in their dens and lie in wait in their lair? . . . The eagle mounts up and makes a nest on high . . . Spies out food; His eyes see from afar. His young ones also suck up blood; And where the slain are, there is he. (Job 38:39-14, 39:27-30)*

Psalm 104:21 expresses the same idea:

*The beasts of the forest prowl about. The young lions roar after their prey and seek their food from God . . . In wisdom you have created them all . . . (Psalm 104:20-24)*

Regarding the issue of animal predation Augustine writes: “One might ask why brute beasts inflict injury on one another, for there is no sin in them for which this could be a punishment . . . The answer, of course, is that one animal is the nourishment of another. To wish that it were otherwise would not be reasonable.”<sup>117</sup> Seen in this light, animal predation is simply God’s loving provision for the animal kingdom. Keep in mind that only Adam and Eve were granted eternal life through the “tree of life” in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9). Since the animals did not have access to the “tree,” they had no way to avoid death.

It should also be noted that *prior* to the creation of Eve and before the Fall, God brought the animals to Adam to name. The names Adam chose clearly suggest he was familiar with animal predation and death. For example, the Hebrew word for lion (*arly*, Strong’s number H738) means “in the sense of violence;” cormorant (*shalak*, H7994) means “bird of prey;” hawk (*nets*, H5322) means “unclean bird of prey;” eagle (*nesher*, H5404) means “to lacerate;” owl (*tachmac*, H8464) means “do violence to.”<sup>118</sup> These names indicate Adam had observed firsthand these flesh-eating predators inflicting suffering and death on each other in God’s “very good” creation, prior to the Fall.

Some young-earth creationists suggest wild animals (Hebrew *chay*) were originally created vegetarian, based on their interpretation of Genesis 1:30. However, nothing in Scripture suggests a rapid post-Fall transformation of vegetarian creatures into carnivores. Vegetarian herbivores are designed with flat molars and jaws that move in a circular motion to grind food, ruminant stomachs, and digestive systems capable of digesting cellulose from plants. Carnivores have sharp teeth and claws, specialized digestive systems, and finely-programmed hunting instincts.<sup>119</sup> Evolutionary theory cannot account for such rapid transformation and neither can Scripture, since these changes had to occur *after* Day Six and the Fall, which according to young-earth chronology is no more than ten thousand years ago.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to provide cogent arguments for old-earth creationism based on the Hebrew text of Genesis. Reasons often cited to support the young-earth view fade in the light of newer scholarship that has superseded Lightfoot and Ussher’s mid-17th century calculations. In addition, Hebrew linguists acknowledge “day” (*yôm*), even when accompanied by ordinals and the “evening and morning”

refrain, does not necessarily refer to a 24-hour day. *Yôm* can most definitely refer to a long “day-age” or epoch, and creation can *literally* be said to have occurred long ages ago.

The “creation science” and “flood geology” used to justify young-earth creationism is widely regarded as pseudoscience. This reflects negatively on Christianity and may contribute to the 70-to-80 percent attrition rate of young Christians after they enter college.<sup>120</sup> As Gleason Archer once asked, “Who can calculate the large numbers of college students who have turned away from the Bible altogether by the false impression that it bounds the conscience of the believer to the 24-hour Day theory?”<sup>121</sup> This is clearly something that must be considered in judging the contrasting creationist views.

Well before Big Bang cosmology proved a creation billions of years old, conservative theologian Charles Hodge (1797-1878) wrote:

“It is of course admitted that, taking the [Genesis creation] account by itself, it would be most natural to understand the word [“day”] in its ordinary sense; but if that sense brings the Mosaic account into conflict with facts, and another sense avoids such conflict, then it is obligatory on us to adopt that other [view]. . . The Church has been forced more than once to alter her interpretation of the Bible to accommodate the discoveries of science. But this has been done without doing any violence to the Scriptures or in any degree impairing their authority.”<sup>122</sup>

Science is respected and holds a prominent place in our culture. That doesn’t mean that science is always correct. However, where mainstream science can be used to defend biblical creation, we should take advantage of that opportunity rather than relying on pseudoscience. For example, here are several statements by mainstream scientists that clearly support the biblical worldview:

- The Big Bang creation: “There is no doubt that a parallel exists between the big bang as an event and the Christian notion of creation from nothing.” (George Smoot, Astronomer, U.C. Berkeley, Nobel Prize in Physics, 2006)<sup>123</sup>
- Design of the Universe: “Astronomy leads us to a unique event, a universe which was created out of nothing, one with the very delicate balance needed to provide exactly the conditions required to permit life, and one which as an underlying (one might say, ‘supernatural’) plan.” (Arno Penzias, Nobel Prize, Physics)<sup>124</sup>
- Origin of Life: “An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to almost be a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to have been satisfied to get it going. (Francis Crick, Co-developer of DNA)<sup>125</sup>

And,

“Precious little in the way of biochemical evolution could have happened on earth. If one counts the number of trial assemblies

of amino acids that are needed to give rise to the enzymes, the probability of their discovery by random shufflings turns out to be less than 1 in 1040,000.” (Chandra Wickramasinghe, Professor & Chairman, Department of Applied Mathematics and Astronomy, University College, Wales)<sup>126</sup>

- Problems with Evolution: “It remains true, as every paleontologist knows, that most new species, genera, and families and nearly all new categories above the level of families appear in the [fossil] record suddenly and are not led up to by known, gradual, completely continuous transitional sequences.” (Stephen J. Gould, Paleontologist, Harvard)<sup>127</sup>

And,

“Unfortunately, the origins of most higher categories [of life] are shrouded in mystery: Commonly new higher categories appear abruptly in the fossil record without evidence of transitional forms.” (Colin Patterson, Senior paleontologist, British Museum of Natural History, London)<sup>128</sup>

Perhaps it is now time for Bible-believing evangelicals to heed the words of the late Gleason Archer, noted Hebrew linguist and co-author of the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* regarding the age of the earth debate:

“Moses never intended the creative days to be understood as a mere twenty-four hours in length, and the information he included in chapter 2 logically precludes us from doing so. It is only by a neglect of proper hermeneutical methods that this impression ever became prevalent among God’s people, during the post-biblical era. Entirely apart from any findings of modern science or challenges of contemporary scientism, the twenty-four hour theory was never correct and should never have been believed – except by those who are bent on proving the presence of genuine contradictions in Scripture.”<sup>129</sup>

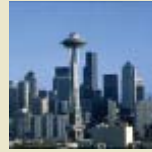
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## Seattle Chapter Reasons To Believe

### Who Are We?

The Seattle Chapter of Reasons To Believe is a local extension of the worldwide, interdenominational Reasons To Believe ministry. We exist to support our parent organization and foster local involvement in the ministry. We serve the Puget Sound area and are composed of Christians of different ages and backgrounds.

It is our conviction that the same God who created the universe inspired the Bible. Therefore, what God says through His word must agree with the facts of nature. We reject the notion that science and the Bible are at odds and provide a scientifically-sound and Biblically-faithful alternative to Darwinism and young-Earth creationism.

### What Do We Do?

Our mission is to remove the doubts of skeptics and strengthen the faith of believers. We provide scientific, historical and philosophical evidence that supports the Christian worldview and helps remove barriers to a belief in God, the Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We carry out this mission by:

- Helping people access RTB and other scientifically and biblically sound resources.
- Bringing nationally-known speakers into the area to promote the scientific reliability of the Bible.
- Assembling a team of local apologists to address questions about science, the Bible and related topics.
- Working with teachers and homeschoolers to achieve a balanced approach to the teaching of origins.
- Building alliances with local churches, ministries and groups to maximize the exposure of the RTB ministry.
- Reaching out to unbelievers with gentleness and respect, encouraging them to evaluate their worldviews.

We welcome your involvement and support. For more information, contact us at [seattle@reasons.org](mailto:seattle@reasons.org). Tax-deductible donations can be sent to: Seattle RTB, PO Box 99683, Seattle, WA 98139-0683.

## Questions? Get Answers.

Whether you are looking for scientific support for your faith or answers to questions about God, the Bible, and science, contact us at [seattle@reasons.org](mailto:seattle@reasons.org). You can also call the RTB hotline seven days a week, 5:00 to 7:00 PM at 626-335-5282.