



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

REASONS TO BELIEVE - SEATTLE AREA CHAPTER

NEWS AND VIEWS

SEPTEMBER 2008

What's Happening?

Hugh Ross Visit

Hugh Ross will visit the Seattle area October 20-21. On Monday, Oct. 20, he will speak at 7 P.M. at the Best Western Cotton Tree Inn Conference Center, 2300 Market Street, Mount Vernon (Sponsored by Trinity Anglican Church). On Tuesday, Oct. 21, he will speak at 7 P.M. at the Lake Sammamish Foursquare Church, 14434 NE 8th Street, Bellevue.

Please help spread the word! This is a great opportunity for your unbelieving friends to hear the message of how science and the Bible agree. If you would like to support these events financially, it would be greatly appreciated. Please send donations to: Seattle RTB, PO Box 99683, Seattle, WA 98139-0683.

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What Genesis One Really Says about Creation

REV. GARY WAYNE JENSEN

The 24-hour interpretation of the "days" of Genesis 1 is often touted as the only position that does justice to the inerrant Word of God. And at *first glance* a few signs seem to point toward the literal-day interpretation of day. Yet *closer* study of Genesis 1 produces a host of other clues that seem to demand a non-24-hour interpretation of the days of Genesis. This second position neither compromises with the world, nor violates God's inerrant Word. The evidence is abundant within the text of Genesis 1, read in a straight-forward manner, that the days of creation are non-literal.¹

BIBLE SCHOLARS AND THE DAY-AGE VIEW

The following are some of the famous Bible scholars who advocate Biblical inerrancy and grant legitimacy to the day-age interpretation of Genesis 1: Oswald Allis, Gleason Archer, James M. Boice, William Lane Craig, Norman Geisler, Hank Hannagraff, Charles Hodge, Walter Kaiser, J. Gresham Machen, J.P. Moreland, James Orr, Bernard Ramm, C.I. Schofield, Wilbur Smith, R.A. Torrey, Benjamin Warfield, Edward J. Young, and John Warwick Montgomery (LCMS clergy).² At the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy Chicago Summit, *none* of the Old Testament scholars mandated that the "days" of Genesis mean 24-hour days.³



"DAY ONE" AND THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS⁴

The creation of the stars and the sun happens in verse 1 and on day one⁵—"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1 is narrative and an independent clause for the following reasons:⁶

- 1) Verse 1 is an independent clause. Translations that turn verse 1 into a dependant clause by suggesting God refashioned matter from pre-existing material,⁷ are flawed. The very first word, *bereshith* is a compound that includes a noun, *reshith* (beginning), that is joined with a preposition *be* (in). It is a not a participle (e.g. "when [God] began"). The second word, a verb, *bara* (create), is in the qal active form that is translated in the past completed tense (created). And it is a finite

verb (*created*), not infinite (e.g. *to create*). So *bereshith bara elohim* is to be rendered simply, “In (the) beginning God created.”

- 2) Verse 1 is connected with the remainder of the chapter as part of the body of the narrative. It is *not* heading. The *vav* conjunction “and,” which begins verse two, “And the earth” (*Va ha aretz*), would be grammatically pointless if verse 1 was a title. This *vav* construction is indeed acknowledged by those who regard 1:1 as a heading, to confound them with an “internal contradiction.”⁸ In their attempt to disarm this contradiction they are driven to appeal to the largely discredited documentary hypothesis.
- 3) In verse 2 the earth already exists, affirming it must have already been created in verse 1, together with the heavens. Indeed, if 1:1 was a heading, there would be no mention of the creation of the earth within the narrative.
- 4) In verse 1 the heavens take precedence over the earth, but in verses 14-16 the sun and moon exist to serve the earth. This reversal of the order of their mention would be a contradiction if verse 1 headed the narrative as an anticipatory summary. However, regardless of whether verse 1 is a heading or a narrative, the heavens come first, and then the earth.
- 5) If the heavenly bodies were created only later on day four, then the “heavens” in verse 1 would be no creation at all, but simply empty space. Such a non-existing “entity” cannot stand as the first creative act of God.

THE HEBREW WORD FOR “DAY” AND THE AGE OF GOD’S CREATION

Biblical Hebrew had a far smaller vocabulary (merely 3,000 nouns, excluding proper names) than English.⁹ Consequently, it was common to employ words in a number of different senses. The Hebrew word *yom*, for example, can mean either the daylight hours, or a calendar day. Yet it can also be used to mean indefinite, sometimes long, periods of time. Exegetical clues for this third meaning abound.

For example, the Hebrew definite article “*ha*” (the) is generally not used to reference the days in Genesis 1. Gleason Archer states that this omission in “prose of this genre” suggests that the time-frame for the creation days was “indefinite.”¹⁰ The lengthy list of all the activities accomplished by Adam late (1:26) on day 6 (Gen. 2) further suggests that the days of Genesis 1 are not intended as 24 hours. And, the point of the phrase “there was evening and there was morning,” in chapter 1 is ambiguous. Evening (*erev*) opens the day, but morning (*boker*) doesn’t close it. It rather begins the daylight. Between them only 12 hours or so of darkness are crossed. So they don’t act as a frame that encloses a 24-hour day. The only similar grammatical construction in Scripture (Dan. 8:26) sheds no light on this mystery.

The bottom line is Genesis chapter 1 has no close analogy with any other passage in the Bible. So there is no valid outside standard of comparison for measuring the meaning of “day.” We are left then to find its meaning within this context.

THE COMMON WITNESS ON “STRETCHING OUT THE HEAVENS”

On eleven occasions five separate writers of the Bible describe God as “stretching out the heavens.” This list includes Job 9:8, Psalm 104:2; Isaiah 40:22; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; 48:13; 51:13; Jeremiah 10:12; 51:15, and Zech. 12:1.¹¹ No other single term for

Continued on page 4

In the NEWS...

[Gabriel’s Tablet](#)

This *tothesource* article examines Gabriel’s Tablet, dubbed the Dead Sea Scroll on stone, alleged to reveal that the concept of death and resurrection was a part of Jewish tradition. Go to http://www.tothesource.org/8_19_2008/8_19_2008.htm.

[Multiverse Hypothesis](#)

This Discovery Institute article examines the philosophical motives of those promoting the multiverse (multi-universe) theory for the origin of universe. Go to http://www.evolutionnews.org/2008/08/caveat_emptor_if_buying_multiverse.html.

[Theory of Everything](#)

This Breakpoint article examines how finding the mega-principle of the universe that reconciles general relativity with quantum mechanics will only explain the “how”, not why” of the universe. Go to <http://www.breakpoint.org/listingarticle.asp?ID=8385>.

[Freedom is Not Our Goal](#)

This *ChristianityToday* article examines how Alexandr Solzhenitsyn’s life should remind us about freedom’s biblical purpose—that true freedom is only available through Christ and is much different more than individual rights. Go to <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2008/augustweb-only/133-11.o.html>.

[Persistent Vegetative State](#)

This Discovery Institute article contends that the effort to diagnose persistent vegetative state, as in the Terri Schiavo case, is pseudoscience with profound ethical consequences. Go to http://www.evolutionnews.org/2008/08/terri_schiavo_and_the_persiste.html.

[Work and God](#)

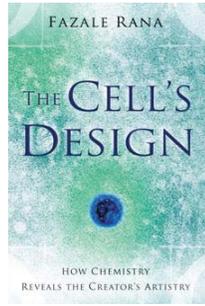
This Breakpoint article examines the Christian perspective of work. Using Ecclesiastes as a guide it contends we must see our work as a calling from God to gain the benefit of what God intends from it. Go to <http://www.breakpoint.org/listingarticle.asp?ID=9078>.

Book Reviews

The Cell's Design

Fuzale Rana, PhD
Baker Books, 2008

Reviewer: Jim Reeverts



Dr. “Fuz” Rana has released a sequel to his earlier work, *Origins of Life*. In this new volume, he highlights “hallmark characteristics” of a Creator’s work within the confines of the living cell. More than a dozen particular features at the molecular level are discussed in detail as to their particular design attributes.

The fundamental charge of the book is to reassert the “watchmaker” argument of William Paley, natural theologian of the 18th century. Paley argued by analogy, that just as a watch, when found along the ground, would be an obvious indicator of a designer, so life denotes a Creator. This argument has fallen out of favor for more than two centuries within the science community. Recent science, however, is reviving the notion of the watchmaker analogy, since actual “motors, timers, pumps and ratchets” are literally a part of the cell’s components.

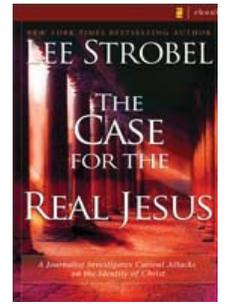
One feature worth the price of the book is a table with one hundred referenced research articles on molecular convergence. This points out research done by scientists around the world identifying a feature that the evolutionary framework cites as improbable and was, until recently, considered extremely rare. The pervasiveness of molecular convergence creates a compelling stage for Dr. Rana’s argument for a supernatural designer. Elsewhere, he addresses the very important developments in what were once considered to be “bad designs.” Here he cites several examples of where current research is uncovering valuable components of previously contemptible patterns in nature. Each of these has acquired the reputation of a bad design, yet over time, scientific advances have “rehabilitated their image.”

The purpose Fuz has in mind, to reveal the Creator’s artistry, is certainly met in this piece. I appreciated his style that has in mind both the reader of interest and the reader of expertise. Fuz also made clear his deep respect for science and for the Christian faith. I recommend the book as a useful tool for educational resource, for professional discussion, and for enjoyable enrichment.

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.

creation is more commonly and broadly employed in the Bible than these statements which, in fact, beautifully echo Big Bang cosmology.

THE AGE OF CREATION AND GOD'S OMNIPOTENT POWER

The majesty of God is not at stake in the question of how long creation took for its completion. Time is an aspect of our experience within the created order, not a restriction on God and His power. Notice how Moses, the same author for both Genesis and Psalm 90, describes God as independent of our experience of time: "*For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that is just gone by, or like a watch in the night*" (Psalm 90:4). In complete freedom God can choose to create the universe instantaneously. And God can also choose to create in stages within time, whether over the span of six 24-hour days, or in billions of years. In either case God, standing outside of time, created effortlessly by commanding, "Let there be" and space and time unfolded.

"AFTER THEIR KIND" AND THE MANNER OF CREATION

The text of Genesis 1 affirms the special creation of life by God on days 3, 5, and 6, and precludes the naturalistic development of life. It is also significant that the scientific¹² data challenges Darwinism as well. Yet we should avoid imposing precision into Genesis 1 when the actual text is descriptive in nature, as opposed to analytical and specific. The language of Genesis 1 allows latitude in both the manner ("*Let the earth bring forth*"-1:20,24-- also 11) and the number of creative acts involved each "day." It does not teach the "fixity of the species."¹³

"DAY" FOUR AND THE MANNER OF CREATION

If Genesis 1:14-19 were isolated from the rest of the creation story it would be possible textually to understand the sun and moon coming into existence on day four. Yet, again, this position contradicts the declaration of 1:1. Belief in a fourth-day creation of the Sun continues to be voiced right up to the present, and in the past has been held to by some of the greatest Christian thinkers. However, the interpretation of the events of day four has always been a source of dispute, even within the "inner circles" of Judaism. For example, the Rabbinical School of Hillel believed the earth was created before the Sun. Yet the Rabbinical School of Shammal believed the sun was created first.¹⁴

We should not be surprised to discover Luther (and Calvin) among the list of sun-on-the-fourth-day creationists. In Luther's time (1483-1546) Copernicus was just beginning to publish (1543) his heliocentric ideas that the earth revolves around the sun. Up through his day (and beyond) virtually all scientists shared the belief inherited from Ptolemy that the earth is the center of the universe. Copernicus' new perspective on the heavens required time before it would become embraced by academia.¹⁵ Only with Galileo, over a hundred years later, did empirical evidence begin to surface that could overturn the prevailing worldview that had been grounded on common sense and reason. Everything their senses told them said the earth was stationary, not rotating at

700 mph (50°N) and shooting around the sun at 67,000 mph.¹⁶ And Copernicus' new mathematical formulas regarding the predictability of planetary orbits hardly improved on Ptolemy's.¹⁷ Interestingly, far from battling reason, Luther back in his own time had already praised astronomy as a worthy field of knowledge.¹⁸ So he cannot be held up as an example of one who maintained his interpretation of Scripture by resisting established scientific fact.

And there are two linguistic problems with the above interpretation. First of all, the choice of vocabulary raises questions for a "day four" creation of the sun. The Hebrew word for the appearance of the "greater light" and the "lesser light" on day four in verses 14-19 is NOT *bara*, meaning creation by God out of nothing, but *asah*, (make or cause to appear) which is a categorically weaker word. Gleason Archer translates Genesis 1:14 as, "Let luminaries in the firmament of heaven be for the purpose of separating between day and night, in order that they may be for signs." In other words, the two lights already created on day one were finally allowed to shine through a dissipating atmosphere that had been nearly opaque.¹⁹

Secondly, Hebrew grammar allows an alternative to a day-four creation of the sun. Dr. Archer also states, "The Hebrew verb *wayya'as* in v.16 should better be rendered 'Now [God] had made the luminaries, etc.,' rather than the simple past tense 'made.' Hebrew has no special form for the pluperfect tense [had made]."²⁰

Oswald Allis sheds light on this discussion with his observation that the sequence in which events in the Bible are recorded may not be strictly chronological. He writes, "We find in describing an event, the Biblical writer first makes a brief and comprehensive statement and then follows it with more or less elaborate details." Among his list of examples he cites the statement, "*And God made the two great lights and stars,*" from Genesis 1:16.²¹ It is therefore significant that the stated purpose for stating the appearance of the lights in 1:14 was not to mark their existence per se, but specifically for the purpose of stating their purpose: namely to act as time-keepers! ("Let them be for signs and for seasons...").

Critics charge that scholars such as Gleason Archer impose an alien scenario not specifically permitted by the actual biblical text. In response we turn readers back to Gen. 1:1, and reply further that supporters of a sun-on-day-four-creation cannot ground their explanation for the existence of light prior to the sun on the actual text of the Bible. Where does Scripture support the oft-cited reply that this light was either the Shekinah light of God Himself, or some other temporary source? The mere appeal to a tradition of the interpretation of Genesis (even Luther!) cannot be decisive since speculation on what Scripture is silent about is never infallible. Faithfulness to Scripture obligates us to test our traditions against the biblical text.

The text of Genesis never even hints at the proposal cited above.

Indeed the logical incongruity (though nothing is impossible with God) of a day-four-creation of the Sun would reasonably lead one to expect some focus within the text on this miracle and its point. Absent such attention it is much more reasonable to conclude that the Sun was actually created with the heavens back on day one.

But again, we are told that the day-age position interprets the word “day” in an artificial manner. And we “day-agers” are urged to let go of our “alien” interpretation of the word “day” and embrace the use of that word in its “normal 24-hour sense.” Yet if it were actually true that the sun was created on day four, then only three days out of the seven (days 4, 5, and 6) can possibly be treated as “normal” days. The three terms day, evening, and morning, on days 1, 2, and 3 cannot be taken in their “normal” usage without the existence of the sun. As for “day seven,” Scripture never brings it to a conclusion (the phrase “evening and morning” does not appear), but it instead continues “day 7” up to the present (Hebrews chapter 4). These are clear pointers within Scripture that the days of Genesis cannot mean 24 hours.

GENESIS 2:4 AND THE DURATION OF CREATION

One example of a non-24 hour usage of the word *yom* appears within the creation story itself and directly bears on the interpretation of the word day: “*These are the generations [toledoth] of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day [beyom] that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens...*” (Gen. 2:4).

Even within the creation account (2:4b) the events of the entire week are summarized as having all taken place in one day (*beyom*).²² By contrast, in the first half of the verse (2:4a) the word *toledoth* (generations--delineating decades) is used to mark the span of creation. While it is granted that 2:4a is a formulized summary that appears 11 times in Genesis, in light of Genesis 1 it is significant that Moses kept the word “generations” instead of returning to the word “day” so familiar from the previous chapter. Either choice would have broken precedent. His choice of *toledoth* adds another clue that days in Genesis 1 meant long periods of time.

CHALLENGES TO THE “DAY-AGE” POSITION ANSWERED

1. Does a number assigned to a creation day (“day one...2nd day” etc.) demand a “24-hour day” interpretation? No. Writes Norman Geisler, “Numbered days need not be solar. Neither is there a rule of Hebrew language demanding that all numbered days in a series refer to twenty-four-hour days.”²³ Hosea 6:1,2 is a counter-example.
2. Does Exodus 20:11, which says, “Six days you shall labor... but the seventh day is a Sabbath...for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth,” demand a 24-hour-day interpretation? No. Yahweh occasionally used non-equivalent unit-for-unit comparisons. For example, Moses states in Numbers 14:34, “*According to the number of days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for every*

day a year, you shall bear your iniquity, forty years.” Note 40 years of wandering for 40 days of disobedience.

3. Do the millions of years of death and decay contradict the assertion that death is the result of Adam and Eve’s Fall? To the contrary, the Bible never connects the sin of Adam with death across nature in general. Rather, from the first warning of the consequences of eating from the tree in the garden (Genesis 2:17), all the way to the Apostle Paul’s theology linking death to Adam (1 Corinthians 15: 21,22), the curse of death following from Adam’s Fall into sin is limited specifically to the human family. As St. Paul states: “*And so death spread to all men because all men sinned*” (Romans 5:14).

Even within the time-frame of young-earth creationism death and decay existed in nature prior to Adam’s Fall. The animals ate food (metabolic decay) and crawling insects would have been stepped on by larger creatures (death). The stars had already been shining through nuclear reaction in their interiors (the 2nd law of thermodynamics). Each of these processes represents the existence of death, decay, and the depletion of physical energy in the world prior to Adam’s sin.²⁴

4. Is it wrong to change an interpretation of Scripture in light of recent scientific discovery? First of all there are no grounds for certainty that the “days” of Genesis chapter one are intended as 24-hour days. The ten exegetical counter-arguments cited above ought to caution the 24-hour creationists from claiming infallibility in the face of established scientific observations about the cosmological past. Inerrancy belongs only to the actual text of the Bible and not to an *insecure* interpretation of it. And Scripture nowhere forbids the consideration of new evidence in matters of interpretation. Rather, where the claims of Scripture intersect with scientific knowledge, the interpreter should seek to credibly fit the two together.²⁵ Indeed, the claim by young-earth creationists to certain evidence in their favor²⁶ is a tacit admission by them that the correlation of Scripture with the real world is necessary for its proper interpretation. Yet in their appeal to evidence it is necessary that the data of science be treated with integrity. God’s honor is tarnished when well-meaning Christians force His Word to be aligned with discredited science.

Consider for example the following Scripture passage that had the potential to keep the church in the dark ages: “*The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved*” (Psalm 93:1). On the basis of this passage the Church of the 17th century resisted Galileo’s claim that the Earth revolved around the Sun. But Galileo’s observations were proven accurate so that the Church corrected its interpretation from a geocentric (earth-centered) view of the solar system to a heliocentric (sun-centered) one. If Christians had failed to shift their interpretation of Psalm 93:1, their future witness would have proven disastrous. Where would the church be today if, having persisted in clinging to its inherited (unmovable earth) interpretation of that

passage, they should continue to teach even today that the Sun revolves around the Earth?

On the other hand unfettered scientific inquiry has given to the Bible what many Christians have most feared losing. Major discoveries from science, most from the last 100 years, affirm what the Bible had anticipated 3400 years earlier, thereby demonstrating the supernatural nature of biblical revelation:

- The universe had an absolute beginning and was created out of nothing (Genesis 1:1)—The Big Bang
- No new matter is being created (Gen. 2:1)—1st law of thermodynamics.
- The universe is expanding (various verses)—The Big Bang.
- There are as many stars in the heavens as there are grains of sand on all the seashores (Gen. 22:17)—The Hubble Space Telescope.²⁷
- Time does not transcend the cosmos, but is an aspect of the created order (Psalm 90:4)—Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity
- The universe is running down (Isaiah 40:6)—2nd law of thermodynamics.

GOD’S COMMAND TO TEST AGAINST THE WITNESS OF NATURE

In Romans 1:18-20 the Apostle Paul writes: 18 *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men, who by their wickedness, suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 Ever since the creation of the universe His invisible nature, namely His eternal power and deity have been clearly perceived in the things that He has made, so they are without excuse.”* Four implications logically follow from St. Paul’s declaration:

- Nature testifies to the existence of the Creator and humans are held accountable for the conclusions drawn about God from nature.
- Nature is not deceptive, but tells the truth about God’s power.
- The suggestion that nature is unreliable testimony diminishes human culpability for its disbelief in God.
- Despite pious protestations to the contrary, refusal to test the claims of Scripture against the reality of nature is not biblical. And it undermines the claims of Scripture by placing the Bible under a cloud of suspicion.

Indeed nowhere does the Bible command us to reject the witness of nature as a test of our belief in God’s Word. 2 Kings 6:15, which is occasionally cited for that inference, calls us to believe in a spiritual realm above nature (“an army of horses and chariots”), not to reject nature per se.

Since scientists are flawed humans just like the rest of us, it is legitimate to grant their tendency to at times err in judgment (even as Bible scholars will at times err in their interpretations of Scripture).

We are even justified in charging certain scientists with anti-theistic bias. Yet, at bottom, their bias must be confronted with the checks and balances of scientific data, not with a dose of one’s own theological bias. None of these charges leveled against flawed and “ungodly” science are credible so long as they rest merely on abstractions. Critics of science are obligated to actually confront and rebut the specific scientific evidence they are calling into question.²⁸

My presentation on the Big Bang (see footnote 27) lists 10 separate sets of observable evidence that confirm the correctness of the Big Bang model. This evidence is rigorously confirmed by testing. The continuous parade of new discoveries contributes to the mounting stack of confirmatory evidence. For this reason the Big Bang by can’t be escaped by appealing to the record of overturned scientific theories of the past, since in this case the weight of evidence is becoming more pronounced over time.²⁹ What emerges fits into an inescapable pattern of a universe that is expanding out from its initial beginning.

The oft-cited counter-assertion that no one was present at the beginning is true in one sense, but is also profoundly misleading. The distances astronomers deal with (light years) directly involve us in history. For example, to look at an object 100,000 light-years away (the undisputed³⁰ width of our Milky Way galaxy), is to see it as it was 100,000 light-years ago, since that is how long it took for light from that distance to reach our eyes. For a host of independent reasons these distances cannot be explained away out-of-hand. The bottom line is, when we look into the heavens we see only into the past. And we see there a pattern comparable to watching a movie in rewind mode. God has granted us a clear unfolding of the expansion of the universe which, if fully retraced, will take us all the way back to the very beginning of His creation.³¹ *Creatio ex nihilo!*

INTERPRETATION AND EFFECTIVE “CREATION EVANGELISM”

Young-earth creationists restrict the term creation evangelism to their 24-hour-day interpretation of Genesis. But this paper establishes that the “day-age” view of Genesis is truer to the text. And it is much more consistent with the facts of the world people actually live in. In other words, instead of merely pronouncing that the Bible is without error (“If the facts get in the way of the Bible, so much worse for the facts!”), the day-age position actually substantiates its claim about God’s Word by demonstration that it is consistent with what scientists actually discover in nature.³² By honoring credible evidence from nature and showing its correlation with the claims of the Bible, many scientists, especially cosmologists, are coming to the conclusion that there must be a Creator and Designer of our universe.³³

The young-earth creation position, on the other hand, raises doubts in the general public about the Bible with their refusal to wrestle with scientific evidence that is problematic for their view of Scripture. For their position, the body of scientific data as a whole is not allowed to

stand on its own. Instead many cherry-pick for only data that will suit their purposes, just as many of the scientific naturalists (whom they rightly criticize) cherry-pick for only data that favors naturalism. Even their criticism of Darwinism (which in many respects is correct) is undermined by their dogma that all “science” must be filtered through their interpretation of the Bible. For since what they claim as evidence is made subservient to their religious commitments, then the very “evidence” to which they appeal is demoted to the status of a propped-up foundation. But this arrangement is an oxymoron (contradiction in terms). In order for young-earth creationists to qualify their position as scientifically grounded, they must instead allow science its rightful parameters. This involves moving beyond merely cherry-picking for confirmatory evidence, to instead submitting their hypotheses to testing and counter-testing against the entire array of scientific data.³⁴

Now I am not suggesting that scientific inquiry must be theologically indifferent. Nor am I challenging the power of God to reveal truth about the natural world. To the contrary, He can and He did! The Bible is the inerrant and revealed Word of the Maker of the universe. And I go even farther by demonstrating that the inerrant Word of God corresponds to what the scientific method discovers about nature. And is that not, at bottom, what is to be expected of God’s revealed Word?

In the face of the witness of the heavens, philosophies that oppose the God of the Bible are receiving a serious blow:

- The atheistic belief that the universe is eternally self-existing is refuted by the demonstrated fact that the universe had a beginning.
- Darwinian evolution is ruled out by the fact that the age of our world is finite. Even the time frame for the Big Bang is vastly too short to allow the simplest life forms to appear and develop naturalistically.³⁵
- The pervasive fine-tuning of the universe, from the very moment of its inception, likewise undermines Darwinism. For the “design” under consideration precedes natural life and therefore precedes natural selection (the Darwinists’ claimed mechanism for evolutionary change).
- Big Bang cosmology also overthrows both the steady state and the oscillating theories of cosmology. It thereby undermines Eastern pantheistic philosophy, including both the deification of nature and the belief in eternal cycles of reincarnation.

Never in the history of human investigation has the case for the existence of the God of the Bible stood on such a secure foundation as now. Until recently the classic philosophical arguments of Augustine and Aquinas offered the most powerful grounds for His existence. Yet their speculative nature restricted their power. But the Big Bang has advanced the case for God into the realm of irrefutable demonstration. An exegetically valid interpretation of Holy Scripture is fully compatible with the array of scientific discoveries that continue to mount in its support. For these reasons we Christians must seize our opportunity to proclaim with biblical and scientific authority the truth of the existence

of the God of the Holy Bible, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”—Genesis 1:1.

Gary Jensen is pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, LCMS, in Snohomish, WA. He is trained RTB apologist and is active in the local chapter.

REFERENCES

1. Non-literal days should not be confused with non-historical events. The creation of the universe, Adam and Eve, and their Fall into sin in the garden, are all historical events.
2. Dr. Montgomery writes in praise of day-age advocates, Robert E. Newman, et.al. *Genesis One and the Origin of the Earth*. (Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Inst. 2nd ed, 2007), “[This work] does not relegate contemporary scientific views to the realm of heresy, yet at the same time it tries scrupulously to be faithful to the text of Genesis one. This book in its first edition helped many to see compatibility between science and the Bible; in its second edition...it will doubtless accomplish even more.” (back cover)
3. David Hagopian, ed. *The Genesis Debate*. (CruxPress, 2001), p.79.
4. While “heavens” (*shama im*) can also mean either the abode of God (1 Kings 8:30) or the air where birds fly (Gen. 1:20), the context of Gen. 1:1 can only be the realm of the sun, moon, and stars.
5. The decision to leave the luminaries unnamed in Genesis 1 was theologically motivated for the purpose of denigrating them, since they were worshipped as gods by Israel’s pagan neighbors.
6. James G. Murphey. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Genesis*. (Andover, 1868), p.30f. The counter-position that v.1 is an overview is argued by Edward J. Young. *Studies in Genesis One*. (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1975), p.7f. Other scholars who agree with him are noted in Claus Westermann. *Genesis 1-11*. (Fortress, 1984), p.95. Yet as I weigh all the interpretive options, it is Murphy’s alone that both accounts for Israel’s monotheistic faith and fits all the above pieces together.
7. Ibn Ezra translates 1:1, “When God began to create the heavens and the earth.” Cited by Young. *Ibid*. p.1. He thereby does an injustice to Israel’s belief in creatio ex nihilo. See Walter Eichrodt. *Old Testament Theology*. v.II, (Westminster, 1967), p.101f. ** and Paul Copan. “Is Creatio Ex Nihilo a Post-Biblical Invention?” http://www.earlychurch.org.uk/article_exnihilo_copan.html#50
8. Claus Westermann. *Op.cit.* (6), p.95.
9. Hugh Ross. *The Genesis Question*. (NavPress, 1998), p.20.
10. Gleason Archer. *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. (Zondervan, 1982), p.61.
11. Hugh Ross. *The Creator and the Cosmos*, 2nd ed. (NavPress, 1995), p.115-16.
12. Michael Denton. *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*. (Adler and Adler). 1985. Denton is not a Christian. ** Over 600 scientists have expressed disagreement with Darwinism. See www.dissentfromdarwin.org.
13. John Klotz. *Modern Science in the Christian Life*. (Concordia, 1962), p. 97.
14. Abraham Cohen. *Every Man’s Talmud*. (Schocken Books, 1949), p.37
15. Theodore Tappert, ed. *Luther’s Works: Table Talk*, v.54. (Fortress, 1967), # 438.
16. “Ask an Astrophysicist.” http://imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/ask_astro/answers/970401c.html.

17. Rodney Stark. *For the Glory of God*. (Princeton, 2003), pp.137f.
18. Jaraslov Pelikan, ed. *Luther's Works: Genesis 1-5*. v.1. (Concordia, 1958), p.41.
19. Gleason Archer. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. (Moody, 1974), p.188.
20. Gleason Archer. *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. (Zondervan, 1982), p.61.
21. Oswald Allis. *The Old Testament: Its' Claims and its' Critics*. (Presb.and Ref., 1972), pp. 82,87.
22. *Beyom* can be translated "when." But this is by no means a hard grammatical rule. W. von Soden high-lights Gen. 2:4 as an exception. See J. Botterweck, ed. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. v.7. (Eerdmans, 1990), p.15. ** The Septuagint translation says, "...the day God made..." (<http://septuagint.org>). ** Indeed, virtually every context of *beyom* in Genesis can be correctly translated "in [the] day."
23. Norman Geisler. *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. (Baker, 1999), p.271.
24. Hugh Ross. *A Matter of Days*. (NavPress, 2004), ch.9.
25. J. W. Montgomery. "The Theologians' Craft." *The Suicide of Christian Theology*. (Bethany, 1970), p.267f.
26. D. Hagopian. Op.cit. (3). "The 24 hour Reply" by J. Ligon Duncan and David W. Hall. (CruXpress, 2001.). Note 27, p.119.
27. Gary Jensen. Power point presentation and paper outline, "The Heavens Declare the Glory of God."
28. Francis Pieper. *Christian Dogmatics*. (Concordia, 1950), v.1, p.468. ** Edward J. Young. Op.cit. (6), p.100f. Neither of these noted scholars confront any of the relevant specific scientific facts.
29. In contrast to Pieper and Young (Ibid), Hugh Ross. *Creation as Science*. (NavPress, 2007), invites rigorous testing of his own works. And he calls for the thorough evaluation of the cross-section of origin hypotheses that are proposed across the entire scientific community.
30. This is conceded even by young-earth creationist, Paul Steidl. Cited in Fred Heeren. *Show Me God*. (Day Star, 2004), p.186. Heeren notes in this context that merely averaging the minimum possible distance between stars, using fool-proof parallax methods, confirms our galaxy to be this size. Yet the distance-measuring methods scientists use are far broader and more sophisticated. (p.186)
31. Ibid. p.186f. Also <http://hubblesite.org/newscenter/archive/releases/1996/01/image/a/>.
32. Hugh Ross. Op.cit. (29). ** I cite eight examples in Op.cit. (27).
33. Robert Jastrow. *God and the Astronomers*. (Norton, 1978), ** www.reasons.org,** Hugh Ross. *The Creator and the Cosmos*. (NavPress, 2001), ** and Fred Heeren. *Show Me God*. (Daystar, 2004).
34. Karl Popper. "Science, Pseudo-Science, And Falsifiability." 1962, http://karws.gso.uri.edu/JFK/critical_thinking/Science_pseudo_falsifiability.html.
35. Fazale Rana and H. Ross. *Origins of Life: Biblical and Evolutionary Models Face Off*. (Navpress, 2004).



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 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. 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. You can also call the RTB hotline seven days a week, 5:00 to 7:00 PM at 626-335-5282.