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The Importance of Six-Day Creation

By **R. J. Rushdoony** | Sept 1998

Creation is the initial doctrine we encounter in opening our Bibles, and it has been the point of initial attack of critics of Biblical Faith. The attack is almost as old as Christianity, because the early church moved in a Greco-Roman culture deeply committed to an evolutionary perspective. Aristotle as a scientist was deeply interested, as Cornelius Van Til showed us in a telling essay, in freaks because they represented a possible next step in evolution. More than a few of the early church Fathers, being pagan in origin, compromised on Genesis 1.

With the Enlightenment, the departures from an orthodox view of Genesis 1 became more common, and they were the starting point for the development of modernism. Today, in seminaries professing to be orthodox and created as protest against modernism, six-day creationism is held in contempt and compromising views are held.

All attempts to undermine strict six-day creationism have a deadly effect. First, they require a different view of the Bible. Orthodoxy has long held that the plain and obvious meaning of the text must prevail, not those meanings known only by scholars and apparent to none else. These novel kinds of exegesis deny the validity of the Reformation and the view of Scripture as given to the believer, not the scholar.

Second, a denial of six-day creation requires a different view of God. Process theology rapidly takes over and the Biblical God wanes as a humanistic and evolutionary "god" replaces him. Biblical theology has waned with the rise of process theology. The expert replaces the common believer, and the Bible becomes a closed book.

Third, more than a few adherents of this shift can be called symbolic theology champions. They can read out of a text meanings which we, as men of simple faith, never can imagine are there! They are indeed a self-appointed elite in the world of the church.

Fourth, a grim division has been created by these attacks by the anti-six-day creationists between the seminary and the church. Thus far, the seminaries have prevailed, but a rebellion in some circles is brewing. It is important to note that the rapid growth of the church since the 1960s has been among churches bypassing the seminary. The seminary sees this as the triumph of ignorance, but many of these non-trained pastors have taught themselves Greek and Hebrew and more theology than the seminaries can boast of. A revolution is underway.

The issues in six-day creationism are thus more basic than many are willing to admit. The life of the church is at stake.

I pass at times in my travels a large stone church here in California. Seating about 1400, it was once full, but modernism killed it. The church which then purchased the structure started off well, until a seminary-trained fool gutted it with his modernism. It may soon need a third buyer!

The Objectivity of Biblical History

By **P. Andrew Sandlin** | Sept 1998

Dualism and History

The Bible does not present a fundamental dualism between heaven and earth, spirit and matter, and eternity and history. While God is the eternal, unchangeable, and transcendent being, he is exhaustively involved in his creation. Though fully distinct from his creation, he is in no sense sequestered from it. He is actively at work in the world moment by moment (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).

God created man in his own image (Gen. 1:26-27), and man exists on the plane of history in the arena of God's cosmic actions. What theologians sometimes call "ordinary history" (*Historie*) is nothing other than the immediate sphere of God's dealings with man. The Bible knows nothing of a "suprahistory" or, in Bultmann's terms, "significant [existential] history" (*Geschichte*) of man's personal decision shorn of certain contact with "real" history (= history!). Even Cullman's "salvation history" (*Heilsgeschichte*), referring to God's redemptive acts in history (history *as* revelation), is objectionable inasmuch as it creates a semantic distinction between the nature of these historical events and all others. In God's incomparable works of creation and redemption, not to mention his numerous miraculous acts recorded in the Bible, the sphere of his supernatural activity is the sphere of "normal" history. The earth on which man lives today is the same earth whose six-day creation Genesis 1 relates, though the present earth has been cursed because of man's sin. Christ's virgin birth, sinless life, vicarious death, bodily resurrection, and witnessed ascension all occurred in human history about two millennia ago. Though they were distinctly miraculous events, they were in no sense ethereal, suprahistorical events. The history in which we exist is the only history Christianity knows anything about.

St. John warned of those antichrists who claim that Christ had not come in the flesh (1 Jn. 4:1-3). For nineteenth-century liberals, and many liberals today, the deity of Christ has been difficult to affirm. As faithless rebels, they cannot conceive how a man can be God. In large sectors of the patristic era, however, the problem was just the opposite: it was difficult to understand how God as Jesus Christ was actually a man.¹ Numerous Christological heresies (Docetism, for example) arose as an expression of this crucial misunderstanding. At many points the church was under pressure from Greek philosophy, which usually held that the body is the cage or capsule of the soul which is freed at death and that history is somehow dirty and inferior to the Forms or Ideals which are the Reality toward which man should strive. This introduced a fatal dualism from which the church was not exempt.² Human history necessarily suffers at the hands of this dualism, which always looks beyond history for true meaning and reality, while Christianity asserts that Christ as God of very God has entered history as Man of very man to reveal the fullness of God (Col. 2:9).

Likewise, the Bible reveals our God as actively involved in history from the point of creation, and most intensely in the incarnational and redemptive work of Jesus Christ. To those Jews who doubted his messiahship, Jesus Christ asserted that he and the Father are one (Jn. 10:30), to a doubting disciple he stated that to see him

was to see the Father (Jn. 14:9), and the writer to Hebrews describes our Lord as the very image of the invisible God (Heb. 1:3). Jesus himself stated that no man may come to the Father except by him (Jn. 14:6). Man cannot be saved apart from history, not merely because man himself is the object of God's creation, but primarily because Jesus Christ as a historical figure is the subject of man's redemption. Further, while human history will one day pass into eternity after the final judgment, man's existence will not be an ethereal spiritist mode. Rather, the Bible teaches the resurrection of both the just and the unjust, the just to everlasting life, the unjust to everlasting damnation (Jn. 5:28-29; cf. 1 Cor. 15). Contrary to popular evangelical belief, the Bible does not teach that the saints will live in a heaven "somewhere up in outer space." Rather, it teaches that God will purify and renovate the present earth, and that God will descend to dwell with men (Rev. 21:1-3). This will be heaven on earth, in its most absolute sense.

History, the Medium of God's Revelation

History is the ordinary medium of divine revelation. To be sure, God in times past revealed himself in dreams and visions as well as in direct contact with Moses on Sinai and St. Paul in the Arabian desert. But the first chapter of Hebrews informs us that in these "last days," the interadvental era, God has spoken to us in his Son, Jesus Christ — a discrete, historical figure. God's impeccable, infallible revelation is mediated to man in the historically anchored Holy Scripture, as well as the historically anchored Son of God, Jesus Christ. It is true that some of the "history as revelation" school stress the revelational character of history to the exclusion of Scripture as the infallibly definitive interpretation of history. And so-called evidentialists hold that even the miraculous events of redemptive history are self-interpreting, not requiring the attestation and interpretation of Holy Scripture. These deviant viewpoints, however, must never corner us into adopting the opposite error of perceiving the Christian Faith, human salvation, and Holy Scripture as merely rational, experiential, intuitive, or "suprahistorical" matters not securely anchored in God's predestinating concrete historical dealings.³ For Christianity, history is an objective fact.⁴

Assaults on the Objectivity of Biblical History

Most modern assaults on the objectivity of Biblical history among those who nonetheless claim a measure of fidelity to the Bible's authority spring from an alleged alertness to literary analysis. Clark Pinnock, for example, who once embraced and articulated the highest form of Biblical authority,⁵ states in a more recent work:

Starting with some Old Testament examples, indications of the special character of the Bible's historical writing crop up again and again. At the very beginning, we are confronted with a six-day creation and begin to wonder how the world can have been created in so short a time. When we look for other explanations, we soon notice the internal parallelism of the days (days one to three describe spheres, and four to six point to inhabitants of those spheres) and contextual factors (the need to correct the theology of the Babylonian myths of creation). The problem seems to have been a misunderstanding of the literary genre. In the narrative of the fall of Adam, there are numerous symbolic features (God molding man from dirt, the talking snake, God molding woman from Adam's rib, symbolic trees, four major

rivers from one garden, etc.), so that it is natural to ask whether this is not a meaningful narration that does not stick only to factual matters.⁶

Rather, it is natural to ask whether Pinnock's is not a patent attempt to subvert Biblical history by employing a fundamentally unbelieving hermeneutical method. This questioning or dismissal of revelation which the orthodox have routinely understood as referring to actual, discrete history is especially notable because Pinnock is regarded as an evangelical. Theological liberals have long questioned the objectivity of Biblical history on the grounds that such history — and especially the miracles of Biblical history — conflict with notions of the modern scientific and historical world view; in short, these narratives of Biblical history simply seem incredible to the modern mind.⁷ Evangelicals like Pinnock are not far behind in this race to undermine Biblical history. Their unbelief, one should note, is compatible with the loudest professions of adherence to formal Biblical authority,⁸ a fact from which we can deduce that "formal Biblical authority" is insufficient to guarantee maintenance of Biblical religion. If, for example, one claims that the Bible is certainly the infallible word of God and *also* that a proper hermeneutical treatment requires the symbolic interpretation of Genesis 1-11, a "metaphorical" virgin birth of Christ, or a "spiritual" resurrection of Christ, the claims of Biblical infallibility are meaningless and in fact hypocritical. A *material* Biblical authority sets forth *the type of book the Bible is* and the type of message it teaches, not merely *that* it is infallible. The orthodox hold that the outline of this message is enshrined in the Christian creeds, and that the divine message itself is expressed in, for the most part, simple, straightforward language in the Bible. It certainly includes figures of speech, but the language itself is ordinary language. Contrary to Pinnock, there is no "special character of the Bible's historical writing." If there were, Biblical interpretation and understanding would be the province of literary specialists, not the vast majority of Christians who lack (and have historically lacked) special literary training. In other words, *the attempt to hold Scriptural meaning hostage to "special . . . historical writing" is a form of gnosticism*. Biblical authority, to put it another way, is not merely a statement about the Bible's infallibility without reference to its meaning (mathematics textbooks, strictly speaking, may be infallible); rather, to assert the infallibility of the Bible is to claim that it speaks the unvarnished truth in ordinary human language; this is not a hermeneutical or exegetical induction, but a presupposition for approaching the Bible in the first place. Those who would counter that to insist on ordinary history and ordinary language is to impose our own views on the Bible are really contending that God has not been pleased to disclose himself to man as made in God's image, but only to a certain *kind* of man — one initiated into the gnosis of sophisticated literary analysis; this denies catholicity, a cornerstone of the Faith, and is anti-Christian to the core. The Faith subsists in ordinary history and the Bible speaks in ordinary language. Attempts to posit a special revelational language or a special revelational history subvert the Faith; they revive the spirit of antichrist.

Capitulation to the Prevailing Thought Forms

This assault on the orthodox understanding of the accounts of Biblical history is often accompanied by a diminution in the confidence of Biblical reliability or an attempt to appease the baying hounds of "scientific" sophistication of the modern

era. A prime example is Meredith Kline, who states in the introduction to a recent article delineating his attack on the literal, six-day creation account of Genesis 1:

To rebut the literalist interpretation of the Genesis creation week propounded by the young-earth theorists is a central concern of this article.... The conclusion is that as far as the time frame is concerned, with respect to both the duration and sequence of events, the scientist is left free of biblical constraints [*sic!*] in hypothesizing about cosmic origins.⁹

The implicit assumption seems that if we can eliminate an antiquated, constraining orthodox view of Biblical creation, we may with a great sigh of relief give modern scientism (the religion of science) free reign. One ponders whether it is possible to invent entire, structured, interpretative applications for the express or implied purpose of paying homage to the modern ethos. Unfortunately, it is. Mark Noll, for instance, championing B. B. Warfield's toleration of the evolutionary religion, holds that natural revelation (interpreted, of course, by "the consensus of modern scientists, who devote their lives to looking at the data of the physical world"¹⁰) is the key to understanding the Biblical [!] teaching regarding issues of modern science. We can expect this angle from modern evangelicalism, for whom Scripture is not and never has been the epistemological authority in terms of which all of life (including science) must be interpreted.¹¹ In referring to the doctrine of creation as an example of "damaging intellectual habits of fundamentalism,"¹² Noll is really connoting that those who espouse the straightforward Biblical account of creation refuse to surrender, in Kline's terminology, "[B]iblical constraints in hypothesizing about cosmic origins." Noll holds that in their tenacity, these "fundamentalists" are simply reflecting the "common sense" scientific approach of the nineteenth century,¹³ though this would not explain why Christians in *earlier* generations embraced creationism. Perhaps, moreover, it did not occur to Noll how his own "historically situated" assaults on creationism may not simply be — *must* be — instances of worship at the shrine of historical relativism and the lust for academic respectability among moderns for whom the scandal of Christ, the Bible and the orthodox Faith (Gal. 5:11) will never be respectable.

Theologians like Noll and Kline undermine the Faith and the church. Impressionable youth not sufficiently grounded in orthodoxy, dogmatics, exegesis, and ecclesiastical history are supple prey in the hands of such men who turn out entire generations of religious latitudinarians for whom Biblical history may be surrendered if it conflicts with the latest scientific fads. We have a name for this: *apostasy*.

Of course, Biblical literary analysts who undermine the orthodox conception of Biblical history may accuse their orthodox opponents of confusing hermeneutics with history or theology: the intent is not to diminish Biblical history, they say, but to highlight Biblical language. It is not hard to detect the fatal flaw of this idea. For were all of the Bible interpreted, for example, mythically, or according to the canons of modern literary analysis, it would be possible to undo *every single* aspect of Biblical history. Then the Bible would be nothing but an interesting spiritualizing and moralizing storybook. Actually, what "post-conservative" evangelicals like Clark Pinnock and Stanley Grenz are proposing sounds quite similar at points to just this "narrative" notion.¹⁴ The Bible then becomes little more than a Semitic literary document whose contact with the history in which it arose is not always clear.

It all boils down to the issue of what sort of book the Bible really is. Orthodox Christians hold that it is the inspired and infallible word of the Living God issuing from eternity but arising within specific historical situations and bound inextricably to human history. This does not imply that the orthodox view of Scripture requires a uniform literalism at all points, defying tropes — like metaphor, simile, allegory, and so forth. The Bible is literally true, but not all of the Bible is true literally. But, as Noel Weeks insightfully observes, tropes are possible only because they refer to some prior concrete historical phenomenon. This fact holds special significance for those who repudiate the literal, six-day creation account of Genesis.¹⁵ The *structure* of the Bible's message is not tropological; it is straightforward literature — even in its tropes — and designed to be read by believers of all walks of life.¹⁶

Biblical history, moreover, is a seamless robe. To deny the historicity of the Genesis account of creation is to establish the groundwork for an equally plausible denial of Jesus Christ's historical redemptive ministry. Biblically, creation and redemption stand in an absolute continuum. This fact is evidenced not only by Jesus Christ's direct reference to the creation account as an actual, discrete historical event and Adam and Eve as actual, discrete historical individuals (*Mt. 19:4-6*), but also by the clear implications of the striking representational parallelism in Romans 5: Adam, the first man, plunges the entire human race into sin while Christ, the Second Adam, restores to the elect the status Adam lost. Christ acts for the elect, not only in his full deity, but also in his full humanity — because Adam as fully man acted for those whom he represented (the entire race) in choosing sin and depravity, so Christ as fully man acted for those whom he represented (the elect) in leading them into justification and righteousness. To deny the discrete humanity of Adam is not merely to subvert the verbal and situational parallelism of this passage; it is to undercut Christian salvation. In short, the historicity of Adam is one of the hinges on which Christian soteriology swings. This is only one example of how a supposed "literary approach" to Scripture readily subverts Biblical religion.

Conclusion

Biblical history — including the creation account — is *history*. It is the objective history in which we presently subsist. There is no other history. Further, to assail accounts of Biblical history by appeal to modern hermeneutical methodologies is to deny Biblical infallibility and subvert the Faith. If we are to preserve the Faith, we must draw the line *here*.

Notes

1. Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies* (San Francisco, 1984), 27.
2. Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition From Plato to Denys* (Oxford, 1981).
3. Geerhardus Vos, "Christian Faith and the Truthfulness of Bible History," in ed., Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos* (Phillipsburg, NJ, 1980), 458-471.
4. This does not imply that history is self-interpreting, or that Biblical revelation is unnecessary, or that one may appeal to bare history for apologetic purposes. As Van Til notes, natural revelation and supernatural

(propositional) revelation were designed from the beginning to be complementary, "Nature and Scripture," in eds., N. B. Stonehouse and Paul Woolley, *The Infallible Word* (Philadelphia, 1946), 255-275.

5. Clark H. Pinnock, *A Defense of Biblical Infallibility* (Nutley, NJ, 1967).

6. *Idem.*, *The Scripture Principle* (San Francisco, 1984), 119.

7. L. Harold DeWolf, *The Case for Theology in Liberal Perspective* (Philadelphia, n. d.), 31-43.

8. Editorial [Kenneth Kantzer], "Rhetoric About Inerrancy: The Truth of the Matter," *Christianity Today*, September 4, 1981, 16-19.

9. Meredith G. Kline, "Space and Time in the Genesis Cosmogony," from *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*, 48:2-15, 1996 [American Scientific Affiliation], published at <http://mcgraytx.calvin.edu/ASA/PSCF3-96Klineold.html>. Kline's earlier and less audacious piece is "Because It Had Not Rained," *Westminster Theological Journal* 20 (1958), 146-157.

10. Mark Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, 1994), 207, cf. 196-208.

11. An idea opposed fully by Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith* (Phillipsburg, NJ, 1967 edition), 8 and *passim*.

12. *Ibid.*, 208.

13. *Ibid.*, 199.

14. Millard Erickson, *The Evangelical Left* (Grand Rapids, 1997).

15. Noel Weeks, *The Sufficiency of Scripture* (Edinburgh, 1988), 105.

16. In contradistinction to the "interpretive maximalism" of e. g., James Jordan, *Judges* (Tyler, TX, 1985), xi-xvii. Jordan contends that man's existence as God's created image requires a symbolic approach to the Bible's message. One may have thought that it denoted just the opposite: man thinks in a creaturely (analogically, not univocally) way, just as God thinks the Creator's way.

Evolutionary Faith

By **Mark R. Rushdoony** | Sept 1998

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. (Colossians 1:16-17)

Charles Darwin did not originate the idea of a world without God. Sinful men longed for such a world since the first rebellion. All Darwin did was give a seemingly scientific explanation that made the idea sound biologically possible. The result was that men flocked to his theory. They wanted to believe in a world without God, or at least in a world where he was reduced to a useful addendum. The Enlightenment claim was that man is in his essence a rational creature. Man does have a mind and does reason, but is essentially a religious creature, Scripture tells us. He is a creature of faith. Man can think only in terms of what he believes. We understand a man when we understand what he believes. Darwin assumed God did not create, and many who longed for such an existence independent of divine origin flocked to this faith. Those who believe Scripture assume God did create and admit this as an article of faith.

What Science Cannot Do

Evolutionists begin with the assumption that evolution happened, then deny that this assumption is a faith. When opposed they must appear logical (reasonable), so they define science in an entirely self-serving way. They define God and the supernatural out of the realm of science and then smugly declare their faith to be the only "scientific" explanation. It is true that the scientific method is based on what is measurable, observable, and repeatable; but those criteria are never the sole determination of what is real or what happened in the past. Science constantly tries to work with a given historical reality without feeling the need to prove the historical act that precipitated it. The argument that science is limited cannot be used as grounds to deny what is beyond those limits. It only proves there are limits to what science can or cannot prove.

The whole concept of origins is, in fact, beyond the limits of what is measurable, observable, or repeatable. Either evolution or Divine creation must therefore be accepted by faith. Origins involves historical events not subject to the scientific method. Does that mean our world and life had no origin because it cannot be subject to the scientific method? Evolutionists say Divine, miraculous origin is non-scientific but that their own faith in origins by "natural" processes (no longer observable) is. Far too many have allowed themselves to be intimidated by such a self-serving summary rejection of their Faith for another faith.

Evolution's Borrowing of Christian Capital

The evolutionary faith must borrow Biblical ideas and adopt them. The idea of the eternal is merely transferred from God to matter. Evolution cannot explain the origin of matter, so God must be reluctantly accepted as a first cause of matter (and then forever limited to the realm of religion), or it must be postulated that

matter itself is eternal. Evolution simply cannot explain the origin of matter. It must be their starting point.

Intelligent design by the Creator is also transferred to the natural realm. The "Laws of Nature" take the place of Divine design. Evolutionists often absurdly ascribe foresight, intent, and intelligent development to biological processes or creatures themselves. Thus a creature is said to have "adapted itself," "developed the ability," or "evolved a unique organ which allows. . . ."

Since evolution posits life from non-life, it must also borrow the idea of the miraculous. What is not possible is said to be plausible if it occurred over a long time. Inheritance of acquired characteristics, natural selection (Darwin's idea), and mutation-selection have been suggested as entirely different methods for these changes to take place. The fact that the entire "scientific" basis of Darwin's theory has since been discredited as a means of changing species is itself a powerful witness to the fact that evolution is based on a faith that survives its science being discredited and revamped.

Christian Compromise

There has been a trend in this century for Christians to abandon Genesis 1-11 as scientifically or historically accurate. By various means and reasoning they make concession to the evolutionary faith. But they have not thereby gained the respect of evolutionists, and why should they? They have merely tacked God onto another faith. But the Biblical idea of a Sovereign who controls time and eternity is inconsistent with evolution. When creation is transferred to the inherent physical nature of matter, sovereignty and power are also transferred. God becomes an outsider to nature. If God is not the Creator, in what way can he claim any right or interest in the creation or in us as creatures?

Evolution and Christianity are different faiths that have mutually exclusive claims. Evolution posits matter that made man who made his gods. Any attempt to accommodate this view with Scripture places God in a subordinate role. It also destroys the integrity of Scripture because it claims two sources of truth. The Bible is seen as a source of spiritual truth and nature is seen as the source of scientific truth. But this is dualism. It posits two sources of truth from two gods. But inevitably one will be favored and given preeminence. Since this position began with accommodation to evolution, further surrender becomes a criteria of respectability. Once evolutionary faith is accepted, nature is our source of knowledge about science, and the Bible is increasingly ruled out. We are left with man's reason and nature. If only the divine is excluded, only the natural is left. Evolution is an exclusive faith that defends itself by excluding all others.

Darwin offered men who wanted freedom from God an "out." He provided an account of origins which provided miracles but was impersonal, materialistic, and held no man to account. Men felt freed from the Creator and creaturehood. Once God is a creation of evolved men, he may be accepted, rejected, or limited by those men at will. Truth is a premise of human thought. There are no "brute facts." Facts have significance because meaning is a part of God's Creation. Without God there can be no meaning or truth. Man accepts or rejects the God of Scripture as an expression of his religious nature, but he must posit an eternal order. If he rejects God as Creator he will posit an origin and truth without God. Creation or evolution

are the only alternatives as origins. Men structure their thoughts on one of these faiths.

We must challenge any artificial definition of science, which would remove God from his Creation. Evolution offers billions of years of chaos and chance but then borrows Christian ideas of law and truth. Men cannot escape faith; they only choose another. Evolutionary faith is the faith of rebels against God and represents that rebellion and irrationalism in the name of science.

Wimps, Gimps and Blackguards: Creation, Presuppositions, and Treason

By **Brian M. Abshire** | Sept 1998

Why do so many sincere Christians compromise on the issue of six-day creation? The first eleven chapters of Genesis are so clear, that it would take a creative writing professor to misunderstand them. God lays out in straightforward manner how he created heaven and earth. He identifies the "days" as having morning and evening. He sets the seventh day as an eternal reminder of his rest. He even provides genealogies from Adam to Christ. How much clearer could he be?

The problem, of course, is that the controversy has nothing to do with the clarity of God's revelation, but the fact that it is embarrassing revelation. "Science" for the past 150 years has been utterly opposed to a Creator, and the church for the most part has simply knuckled under. But why did Christians surrender to the humanists on this one so quickly? Is the evidence for evolution, an ancient earth, local flood, etc., so overwhelming that we had to crawl back into our churches with our tails between our legs?

I am going to suggest that there are three main reasons why Christians compromise on this issue: because they are wimps, gimps or blackguards. The wimps are those who refuse to take a stand because they fear controversy. The gimps are those who are handicapped by an inadequate Christian worldview and find themselves compromised despite their sincere desire to be orthodox. The blackguards are those who hate God and are seeking to destroy the church by pretending to be something they are not. Together, these three groups amount to theological treason, for they sell out their church and their God for the mantle of academic respectability.

Theological Wimps

Nobody loves a wimp. Oh, you might not hate him either, but you don't respect him and you certainly cannot trust him. A man who refuses to take a stand, who fears controversy and will not roll up his sleeves and get down in the mud and the blood when necessary, is beneath contempt. Such men are by nature slaves and are useless to themselves, their families, their churches and their nation. Families and churches with wimpy men are soon run by women, quickly degenerating into heresy and irrelevance. Nations with wimpy men are soon conquered by their more aggressive neighbors.

However, seminaries and denominational colleges run by wimps get academic accreditation! Modern broad evangelical Christianity is largely composed of wimpy men who run like rabbits at the first sign of trouble. These individuals fear men more than God and constantly sell out the Faith. There is perhaps no more reprehensible evidence of this than the furor over six-day creation. Think about this: for 1800 years of church history, few Bible scholars, theologians, prophets or priests ever believed or taught anything except literal, six-day creation. Then, with the advancing technological power of science in the nineteenth century, leading men in the church suddenly discovered for the first time that a "day" was not really a day any longer but could mean millions and millions of years. Wow, amazing! But

does anyone really believe that there would have been any incentive to reinterpret the Scriptures unless humanistic evolutionary presuppositions had infiltrated the church?

But to hold to six-day creation in a "scientific" age exposes one to endless ridicule, and that is the one thing a wimp fears most. I well remember the first historical geology class I took in a secular university. I took the class with an old friend who was known for his caustic sense of humor towards theological liberals. When the professor was explaining how fossils were dated by the strata of the rock, and that the rocks were dated by the kind of fossils found in them, I raised my hand and (believe it or not) innocently asked, "But isn't that circular reasoning?" The professor looked at me with dripping contempt, then went into an impromptu speech saying that every year he had at least one of these anti-intellectual fundamentalist nuts, but he soon whipped them into shape or ran them out of his class. I slowly rose to my feet and said, "Sarcasm and ridicule is a poor substitute for logic and sound reasoning" and was about to invite the professor to step outside for a private little tutorial of my own when my friend jabbed me in the ribs with his elbow. He quietly explained that this was his last class before graduation so I should sit down and shut up. You get the message? Don't make waves, because a degree is more important than truth. The problem was not the insulting behavior of the professor, nor the complete bankruptcy of his worldview, but the fact that I had the audacity to point out that the emperor had no clothes. There were a number of other Christians in that class; but not one of them stood up, not one of them disagreed. How much evolutionary humanism did each one absorb simply because each just wanted to get a good grade?

Theological Gimps

Perhaps I am being cruel in calling all those Christians who bow the knee to modern evolutionary "science" wimps. Maybe they are not afraid of controversy. Maybe instead, they are theological "gimps" handicapped by an inadequate worldview that is simply unable to stand against the humanist onslaught. B. B. Warfield springs to mind. Depending on Scottish rationalism, Warfield eventually compromised on the issue of creation and the age of the earth because the rational arguments of the day seemed unanswerable. His philosophical presuppositions were such that he believed that truth was determined by "brute facts." And when the supposed "facts" of science undercut the old Christian worldview regarding the age of the earth, he was then forced to reinterpret Scripture to fit those facts.

Of course, since Van Til, we all ought to know that there are no "brute facts," only interpreted ones. No one brings a clean slate to any issue. All of us interpret reality in the light of certain fundamental preconceptions. Nineteenth-century science rode on the crest of an Enlightenment dedicated to severing Christianity from civilization. Apostate men were looking for ways of overturning the Christian consensus and by attacking the historicity of Scripture, they were implicitly undermining its authority.

Take for example Lyell and his Uniformitarianism. Lyell was a geologist who postulated that all contemporary geological features were the result of ongoing geological processes. The very idea of "catastrophism," that certain geological features were the result of disjunctive events, became heresy of the first degree. The philosophical appeal is obvious, *e.g.*, if all canyons are formed by rivers eroding

the banks, then one can measure the rate of annual erosion and project back approximately how long it took the banks to reach their present depth. Therefore, the age of the earth indeed must be very old for such geological features as the Grand Canyon to have formed. An ancient earth is fundamental to evolutionary theory; there must be massive amounts of time for one animal to turn into another. On the other hand, the Scriptures give a reliable time line of human events. If one can demonstrate that the earth is immeasurably older than the Scriptural record, it is held, one has therefore destroyed Biblical credibility.

Notice, though, that Lylle begins with an unverifiable assumption; *i.e.*, how can he know that present processes can be extrapolated into the past? How can he know that rivers always ran at the same speed with the same amount of erosion? He cannot. But the assumption is necessary because he has to prove that the earth is incredibly more ancient than the Bible record teaches.

Furthermore, when that same uniformitarian assumption is used in other areas to demonstrate that the earth is NOT ancient, the results are simply ignored. Take, for example, meteorite dust. Scientists can estimate the amount of dust that falls every year. Extrapolating the same rate in the past (a "fundamental" axiom of uniformitarianism), if the earth is billions of years old, there ought to be incredible mountains of meteorite dust. But no such dust mountains are found. Well, maybe they all washed into the oceans or something. We need some place where there is no erosion. Remember the big pads the Apollo landers had? Those were designed to soften the landing on the incredibly deep levels of dust thought to have piled up in the billions of years since the moon was formed. Instead the astronauts found no more dust than would have collected over a few thousand years. But nobody talks about that because, you see, it doesn't fit the humanist picture. Therefore Lylle and men like him were not objective seekers of truth, but men with an agenda. They deliberately choose one set of presuppositions over another, and ignored the inconsistencies because they wanted to disprove the Biblical accounts.

It is interesting that catastrophism, so long out of vogue when it was necessary to destroy the credibility of the creation and flood accounts, has now returned with a vengeance in modern science. The nasty little secret of uniformitarianism was that there are certain geological features that DEMAND a world-wide catastrophe but until recently, nobody dared bring them up. For example, the disappearance of the dinosaurs was a great mystery until just a few years ago. Now it seems, an asteroid hit the earth 65 million years ago and essentially ended all life except some vermin, who surprise, surprise! crawled out of the smoldering carnage and evolved into certain seminary professors! But since the overwhelming majority of Christians have adopted the "scientific" view, creationism is no longer seen as the great enemy. Therefore, we can safely bring certain facts to light that were hidden or ignored for more than a century.

Theological wimps will not wrestle with this kind of information because they just want to be accepted and approved and get their degrees from prestigious universities and go merrily along their way. Theological gimps CANNOT wrestle with this kind of vigorous opposition because they lack the necessary philosophical and intellectual weapons to say why the enemy is wrong. Repeatedly, when I raised the scientific evidence for a young earth with professors who held to some form of theistic evolution in both Christian college and seminary, they replied, "I don't know

about those things, I am only a Bible teacher."Pietism has robbed modern theologians of a comprehensive theology that ties all areas of life together. Therefore, they are handicapped in fighting humanism, simply ceding battlefield after battlefield to the enemy without firing a shot while they retreat into theological irrelevance. It needs to be remembered that it was R. J. Rushdoony who got Whitcomb and Morris's book *The Genesis Flood* into print. Broad evangelicalism simply didn't care about evidence that the Biblical view of creation and the great Flood had a scientific basis because it is simply irrelevant in their emasculated worldview.

Never mind that by compromising with the enemy on this issue, you destroy any validity to the Christian Faith (if you cannot trust God's account of creation, how can you trust him on anything else?). Never mind that by giving up on the first eleven chapters of Genesis you destroy salvation (if there was no literal first Adam, then Christ is simply irrelevant as the Second one). Never mind that by failing to believe, teach and defend the history of the Bible, you make its theology into existentialist nonsense (acceptable because the church has already retreated into pietism, existentialism's illegitimate half sister). No, we must accept the humanists' version because if we stand up in the accredited colleges, universities and graduate schools and affirm the Biblical account, then we will be laughed at, ridiculed, and we might not get that magic degree that promises to open every door.

Thus we trade our Christian heritage for a bowl of left-over humanist porridge. And the irony is, Christians who compromise on this issue are *still* not accepted by the academic community. They laugh at our naiveté and call us to be consistent with our own compromise. If the Bible affirms six-day creation and we reinterpret it to fit modern prejudices, then where else will we compromise? They do not respect us. We are wimps or gimps and moderns never will open their doors to us. But Christians seem to be happy riding in the back of the humanists' academic bus, just so long as they get a seat someplace.

Theological Blackguards

Of course, there is a third category. There are those who are unprincipled blackguards: men who know perfectly well what the issues are, who hate and fear the truth but still choose to identify themselves with the church anyway (I am tempted to say it is because they are not smart or talented enough to succeed in the humanist camp, but then you'd think I was being nasty again!). These men utterly reject our Lord and King, but still make warm, encouraging noises that mislead the elect. They get jobs in our denominational colleges and seminaries and work quietly every year under the guise of "academic freedom"to destroy the Faith of entire generations of young people. And stupid Christian parents send their kids to these schools, join the alumni organization and send in their support checks every year to keep the dear old alma mater in business. And every year, the school becomes more and more apostate, the graduates less and less Biblical. Meanwhile, the deans and presidents tell the parents all sorts of nice, encouraging things about how well the basketball or football team is doing. And as long as they make the state championships, everyone is happy.

Meanwhile, the theological blackguards stay in the background, adopt a smiling face and a pleasant manner and actively seek to destroy the Faith, while Christians pay

them a tenured salary to do so. The theological wimps don't have the guts to correct or stand up to them. The theological gimps don't have the tools to do so. And year by year, our best and brightest are brought to theological ruin.

Every age has its own issues where the culture demands one thing and the Scriptures another. Today, gnosticism is not a major problem, but it was a serious heresy afflicting the patristic church. Arianism is not a direct threat to the church in this age, but in the third and fourth centuries, it almost destroyed orthodoxy. The attacks vary from century to century, but the real heroes are those men who counter a culture at that one point where compromise is so tempting. In our age, I believe there are two issues which demand that we stare the enemy in the eye and say, "Here I stand, I can do no other." Those issues are six-day creation and the role of women in the church. In both cases, the prevailing cultural norms are diametrically opposed to Biblical truth. There is no room for compromise; you either believe the Bible or its adversaries. The temptation to reinterpret Scripture is no solution because reinterpretation destroys the heart of the Faith. And any man who compromises on these issues has just opened the door to heresy, apostasy and cultural irrelevance. It is where the battle is hottest that we must fight the hardest.

It is time for the church to clean house on this issue. We need to fire the wimps, equip the gimps and expose the blackguards for what they are. If a man compromises on the issue of six-day creation, then not only is he unfit for the ministry, but he is also certainly unfit to teach our future pastors in seminary. If one belongs to a church with a denominational college or seminary, then write to the headquarters and find out their official stance. If they weasel in any way, then get out of Dodge, making sure you take your check-book with you. If they cannot take a definitive stand on something as fundamental as six-day creation, then they are unworthy of God's tithe. Who knows where else they are compromising?

Treason is a hard word and not to be thrown out casually. But what do you call a man who sells out his country for personal gain? OK, up the moral ante a bit, a man who sincerely disagrees with his nation's policies and willingly gives aid and comfort to their enemies? Whether he is a self-serving SOB out to line his own pockets, or only an idealistic fool, he is still a traitor. Those who compromise on the issue of creation are selling out God's word. Maybe they are doing so for high and lofty motives, but they are still traitors. Maybe some of them can be won back before it is too late (let us give them every opportunity) but they are still traitors. The humanists have no love or respect for theological traitors. They may use them, but they don't like them.

Therefore, there is no reason for God's people to compromise on this issue. Let us stiffen some backbones, smack some courage into the cowards, and train and equip those who don't know any better. This is war, folks, and the peace and purity of the church are at stake. Here I stand, I can do no other.

The Meaning of "Day" in Genesis 1-2

By **William O. Einwechter** | Sept 1998

Genesis 1:1-2:3 explicitly states that God created the world in six days. A straightforward reading of the Biblical text leads one to believe that the days of creation were six, literal, twenty-four-hour days. Each day is numbered (the first day, the second day, etc.); each day is elucidated by the phrase, "And the evening and morning were the . . . day"; and the creative activity of God on each day is described. In spite of this, the "days" of Genesis 1 and 2 have not always been understood in the church to refer to normal twenty-four-hour days and the doctrine of six-day creation has subsequently been denied.

The Reformers' Understanding of "Day" in Genesis 1-2

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, believed that the world and all that is therein was created at once and not in the course of six days. They taught that God's work of creation took place in a single moment, and that the days of the creation were not literal days. "Augustine understood these days as allegorical representations of angelic cognitions."¹ As Luther explains: "Augustine trifles with the six days in a strange way, making them days of hidden meaning, according to the knowledge of angels, and does not let them be six natural days."² Many in the church followed Augustine in assigning an allegorical meaning to the six days of creation, and it prevailed as a common interpretation of the creation account of Genesis. But with the Reformation and the doctrine of *sola Scriptura* came a return to the grammatical-historical interpretation of the Scriptures. The fanciful exegesis (i.e., eisegesis) of the allegorical method that was often used in the interpretation of the Bible was set aside for a faithful exegesis of the text that focused on the meaning of the words of Scripture according to their ordinary, historical sense. This approach to interpretation caused the Reformers to reject the figurative meaning that Augustine and others had given to the days of creation, and to advocate instead a literal understanding of the six days of Genesis 1-2. Luther states:

But since we cannot understand the details of these days, especially why God wanted to have this time distinction, let us confess our ignorance and not needlessly regard and interpret these words in a figurative sense. So far as the opinion of St. Augustine is concerned, I hold that Moses spoke literally and not figuratively or allegorically, telling us that the world with all its creatures was made within six days, just as the words read.³

"Just as the words read" — this was the perspective of Luther and the other Reformers. Calvin, after asserting that violence is done to the text by the view that the world was made in a moment, and that Moses distributes the work of God over six days for the mere purpose of instruction, upholds the literal meaning of the Genesis account, saying, "Let us rather conclude that God himself took the space of six days, for the purpose of accommodating his works to the capacity of men."⁴ Turretin rejects the allegorical view of Augustine because, "among other things, of the simple and historical Mosaic narration, which mentions six days and ascribes a particular work to each . . ."⁵ The Westminster divines, who held that the true sense of Scripture is not manifold, but one (i.e., the one determined by the grammatical-historical interpretation of the text), make a literal six-day creation

part of confessional orthodoxy by stating that "God created the world and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good."⁶

The Modern "Scientific" Understanding of "Day" in Genesis 1-2

Through the Reformers' insistence on the plain sense of Scripture, the allegorical interpretation of the days of creation was overthrown and the Protestant church understood Genesis 1:1-2:3 to teach that God created all things in six normal days. The Bible said that creation took place over the space of six days, and there was no reason to understand the Hebrew word for "Day" (*yom*) in any other way than its ordinary denotation of an actual day.

But all this changed with the coming of the Enlightenment, Newtonian science, and its stepchild, the theory of evolution. The theory of evolution was a purely naturalistic explanation of the origin of life and of the complex variety of species on earth. Instead of the supernatural work of God in the special creation of all things in six days, the theory of evolution said that all life evolved spontaneously through the processes of natural selection and the survival of the fittest over billions of years. Hence, the theory of evolution was a repudiation of the Biblical account of creation, and the early chapters of Genesis were labeled as "myth." In time, the primary support for the theory of evolution came from the geological record of fossil remains. From the fossil record geologists constructed a geological table, complete with dates and names for various ages, that traced the evolution of life from its lowest forms to man himself. Eventually, the theory of evolution and geological timetable became the unquestioned orthodoxy of science and the view of all "educated and reasonable men."

This created an apologetical problem for the church: How can the Biblical account of creation be reconciled with the "assured results of modern science"? It also produced a problem for evangelical Christians who were scientists and who desired acceptance in the scientific community, yet who also professed faith in the Bible as the word of God. The answer to this dilemma was the theory of theistic evolution. Theistic evolution is a compromise between Newtonian science and the Biblical text. It states that God is the Creator of all things, as the Bible says, but that evolution is the means that God used to bring about the complexity of life and the variety of species. Theistic evolution maintains that both the Bible and modern science are correct; the Bible teaches us the fact of God's superintendence of creation, and the theory of evolution teaches us the mechanism of creation. The view of theistic evolution also seeks to reconcile the Genesis account of creation with the geological record by stating that the six "days" of creation were actually six "ages." Therefore, the days of creation are not to be understood as being literal days, but rather should be viewed as six periods of time (each stretching millions of years), and that the days of Genesis 1 correspond generally to the geological ages. Theistic evolution became very popular both within the Christian scientific community and within the church. It is still widely held today.

Therefore, the confessing church of today finds itself in a similar situation in respect to the Biblical doctrine of creation as did the Reformers: a literal understanding of the Genesis account of the days of creation has been set aside for a figurative interpretation. However, the modern evangelical "day-age" interpretation of Genesis 1-2 is far more serious, in that it gives validation to an alien worldview and

assumes that the Bible should be interpreted in the light of modern scientific views. How should we respond to this attack on the integrity of the word of God and the Faith of the church? The same way that the Reformers responded to the allegorical views on the meaning of the days of Genesis held by Augustine and others: an assertion of the authority of the Biblical text as understood in its grammatical and historical sense.

A Grammatical-Historical Interpretation of "Day" in Genesis 1-2

A grammatical-historical interpretation of the meaning of "day" in Genesis 1-2 is based on three primary considerations: the context, the meaning of the Hebrew word *Yom*, and the teaching of Exodus 20:9-11.

The Context of Genesis 1-2

The purpose of Genesis 1 and 2 is to reveal God as the Creator of all things, including man and man's home, the earth. The Biblical doctrine of creation is foundational to our understanding of God, of man, and of God's covenant with man. The eternal power, wisdom, and glory of God are manifest in the creation account. The absolute distinction between the creature and the Creator is established by God's transcendent holiness. We learn that man is made in the image of God, and that his purpose is to serve and glorify God by taking dominion in the earth. Genesis 3 reveals the Fall, its consequences, and God's purpose to redeem man from sin by the seed of the woman. God's plan involves the choice of one man and his family to be the channel of redemption to all the world and this plan finds expression in God's covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1ff.). The book of Genesis was written by Moses for the sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to explain to them the origin of all things and the basis for God's covenant with them at Sinai.

The context of Genesis 1-2 is the history of the creation of the universe and all things therein. The creation account was originally written by Moses to enable the people to understand the foundation of their Faith and the purpose of God's covenant. As is the rest of the book, it is presented as sober, historical narrative.⁷ Therefore, since Genesis 1-2 is historical narrative, we should interpret the words of the creation account in that light, including the word "day." In historical narrative, we assume the literal, contextual meaning of words unless something in the text makes it clear that a figurative sense is intended. There are no indications in the text of Genesis 1-2 that "day" should be understood in the non-literal sense of "ages." Consequently, the context definitely favors a literal meaning. When Moses wrote "Day" in the creation account there is no reason to believe that either he or the people he was writing to understood the word in any other way than its normal sense of a twenty-four hour day.

The Usage of "Day" in the Hebrew Bible and Genesis 1-2

The Hebrew word that is translated "day" in Genesis 1-2 is *Yom*. *Yom* appears about two thousand times in the Hebrew Bible. It is used to denote: day, *i.e.*, the period of light, as opposed to night; a twenty-four-hour day as a standard division of time; or day, in the general sense of time. Sometimes *Yom* is used with prepositions and qualifying phrases for more specialized expressions of time (e.g., the day of the Lord; "in that day"). In the vast majority of instances when *Yom* and its plural form *yamim* are used in the Old Testament, they refer to literal days.⁸ The

contention that the word *Yom* can refer to a long period of time (such as a geological "age" of a million years or more) is unknown in actual Hebrew usage.

Significantly, the precise meaning of *Yom* in Genesis 1-2 is established for us by God through the use of the qualifying phrase of "evening and morning." Thus the boundaries of time indicated by *Yom* in Genesis 1-2 are fixed as the normal course of a twenty-four-hour day marked by the rising and setting of the sun.

Furthermore, the use of a numerical adjective ("first," "second," etc.) with *Yom* in Genesis 1-2 indicates a specific day. As Whitcomb notes, "In historical narratives the numerical adjective always limits the word to a twenty-four hour period (cf. Num. 7 for a remarkable parallel)."⁹

Thus, the context, the normal usage of *Yom*, the qualifying phrase "evening and morning," and the numerical adjectives all combine to make it certain that *Yom* refers to a literal day, and not an "age" or eon of time. But that is not all. Custance states:

Hebrew has a perfectly good word ('*olam*), for what we mean by a geological age which would surely have been used if this were the intention [in Genesis 1-2]. '*olam* would have been the logical choice, since it means a long period of time with very ill-defined boundaries. It is virtually impossible to think of any way in which God could have made it more obvious that He did not mean ages than by the deliberate avoidance of the word. The text could not have made it clearer than it is that ordinary days are intended.¹⁰

Custance also indicates that in regard to the meaning of *Yom* in Genesis 1-2,

The weight of authority is in favor of literal days. One can scarcely find a single reputable Hebrew scholar who supports the view that the word *Yom* in Genesis can properly be understood to mean anything other than a literal day. Personal correspondence with the heads of the Semitic Departments of a number of universities including Columbia, Harvard, McGill, Yale, Toronto, and Manitoba and the head of Near and Middle East Department of the University of London (England) confirmed in writing that they all believe the word as employed in Genesis 1 can only be taken to mean a period of twenty-four hours. These authorities were asked to express an opinion on purely linguistic grounds without regard to problems this may create in reconciling Genesis with modern geological views.¹¹

All told, the meaning of *Yom* in Genesis 1-2 is clear and unambiguous. It refers to a literal day, and on no account can it legitimately be made to mean an "age." If context, syntax, and lexicography mean anything in interpretation, then *Yom* means "day" in Genesis 1-2.

The Meaning of "Day" in Exodus 20:9-11

The Fourth Commandment provides important confirmation that the days of the creation week were literal days. This commandment reads:

Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea,

and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. (Ex. 20:9-11)

The Fourth Commandment is based on a literal understanding of the seven "days" of the creation week; otherwise, it makes no sense at all. Would anyone actually advocate that Moses uses "days" in two different senses here, and is saying, "Six days shalt thou labor . . . for in six ages (of varying and undefined length) the Lord made heaven and earth . . ."? If the command to man to labor six days and rest one day refers to literal days, and no one disputes that it does, then it follows that the days of the creation week, which are set forth as the basis for man's week, are also literal days. The Fourth Commandment establishes the doctrine that creation took place "in the space of six days," and thus confirms that the days of Genesis 1-2 were normal, twenty-four-hour days.

Conclusion

The teaching of Genesis 1-2 is that creation took place in six literal days. This doctrine was challenged by Augustine and others who held to an instantaneous creation of all things. The Reformers met this aberration by an appeal to the authority of Scripture and a grammatical-historical interpretation of the text of Genesis 1-2. By so doing they restored to the church the true doctrine of six-day creation.

In our day, the doctrine of six-day creation has been denied by Christians who hold to theistic evolution. Their denial is based not on exegetical considerations, but on a desire to reconcile Scripture with the theory of evolution.¹² To accomplish their compromise between the Bible and modern science and its reading of the geological record, they claim that the "days" of Genesis 1-2 are not literal days but really "geological ages." Their attempt to reconcile Scripture with the theory of evolution is a dangerous attack on the Faith and the integrity of Scripture.

How should we meet this attack? In the same way that the Reformers met the false teaching of an instantaneous creation: by an assertion of the absolute authority of Scripture in all spheres of life and knowledge, and by an appeal to the grammatical-historical meaning of the text of Genesis 1-2. The context of Genesis 1-2, the meaning of "day" (*Yom*), and the teaching of Exodus 20:9-11 all point to the fact that the word "day" in Genesis 1-2 refers to a literal, twenty-four-hour day. Hence, the church must confidently assert that God created all things "in the space of six days," just as the words read, and in spite of the claim of modern evolutionary science and of those in the church who have been seduced by it.

Notes

1. Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 3 vols., trans. George M. Giger, ed. James T. Dennison (Phillipsburg, NJ [1688], 1992), 1:444.
2. Martin Luther, *Commentary on Genesis*, 2 vols., trans. J. Theodore Muller (Grand Rapids, 1958), 4.
3. *Ibid.*, 5.
4. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, 2 vols., trans. John King (Grand Rapids [1554], 1989), 1:78.
5. Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 1:444.

6. The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chap. IV., Art. I. This creedal statement on six-day creation was adopted verbatim by the English and American Calvinistic Baptists in the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith, and the English and American Congregationalists in the Savoy Declaration.

7. Arthur Custance asks: "At what point in the narrative [of Genesis] did geological ages end and normal years replace them in the account of events which happened in the first five chapters of Genesis? By the time we reach the sixth chapter we know that the days are real days and real years. Where is the changeover point? It is impossible to find room for its insertion without making nonsense of a narrative which runs unbrokenly from Adam to Noah in a way that is clearly intended to be plain sober human history"("A translation of Genesis 1:1-2:4 with Notes,"in *Hidden Things of God's Revelation*, vol. vii., *The Doorway Papers*).

8. ". . . the normal meanings of *Yom* and *yamim* are 'day' and 'days' respectively. If a parabolic or metaphorical meaning is intended, it is made obvious in the context. In approximately 95% of its occurrences, the literal meaning is intended,"Henry M. Morris, ed., *Scientific Creationism*, General Edition (San Diego, 1974), 223.

9. John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *The Early Earth* (Winona Lake, IN, 1972), 27.

10. Custance, "A Translation of Genesis 1:1 to 2:4,"294.

11. *Ibid.*, 296.

12. Gary North states that theistic evolution is "a sell-out of Christianity to the humanists who run the academic world. The irony is that the humanists regard the whole charade of theistic evolution as either a crude joke or else a self-serving fraud deserving of contempt"(*Political Polytheism* [Tyler, TX, 1989], 15).

The War Against Genesis 1

By **Mark A. Ludwig, Ph.D.** | Sept 1998

Evolutionary Mythology

Many of the world's religions include some story of creation in their mythology simply because where we come from has a direct bearing on how we must live. If man is the fertility god's creation, then he should serve the fertility god. If man is a cosmic accident then he need answer to no one, and he may serve himself. If man is Yahweh's creation, then he should serve Yahweh. If Yahweh is a lawgiver, one must serve him with obedience. If he is merciful, his servant should be merciful, and so forth.

As such, the Biblical creation story has been a bone of contention at least since Christianity began to confront the gods of Greece and Rome in the first century.

In many respects, we have to understand the current evolutionary world view as just this kind of mythology. Operational science makes predictions about how the universe operates. Such predictions can be falsified by experiments. For example, Newton's law of gravitation makes exact predictions about how a body of mass M attracts another body of mass m . For example, it can be used to calculate the trajectory of a ball thrown up in the air. If Newton's law weren't true, one could perform an experiment to demonstrate that fact. In other words, one could throw the ball and clearly see that the predicted trajectory was not the same as the actual trajectory, within some reasonable margin of error. Thus, Newton's law is falsifiable.¹

Current evolutionary "theory" is not capable of making any significant falsifiable predictions. For example, it is utterly incapable of predicting how various organisms will evolve with time, except for the absolutely simplest, most obvious changes. As such, one runs into all kinds of problems when trying to apply evolutionary "science" to artificial genetic self-reproducing systems. For example, modern "theories" don't give the scientist any clue of what to expect in the development of computer viruses.² A computer virus is a self-reproducing entity which passes genetic information (in the form of machine code) from one generation to the next. As such, it should be subject to Darwinian evolution. Will viruses evolve in an unending upward spiral and eventually take over the world's computer systems? Computer professionals do not currently take such threats seriously, although such a scenario is certain if we apply the same kind of reasoning to computer viruses that is applied every day to the real world of carbon-based organisms.

Is this intellectual schizophrenia? The truth is that we do not need evolution to explain the existence of computer viruses because everybody "knows" they have creators. People write computer viruses, so postulating a creator causes no philosophical or religious repercussions. At the same time, evolution is demanded of carbon-based organisms because creation is unpalatable for philosophical reasons.

In the end, we must understand evolution as a scientism, or mythology couched in scientific terms. It is a great tool for explaining away the past because, lacking solid predictive power, it can explain any historic scenario presented for analysis. Once one realizes that evolution is a mythology, one can begin to better understand its

success in the past 140 years. Belief in it has become so widespread, not because of scientific evidence or predictive ability, but because its mythology caters to the wishes of sinful man.

The History of the Evolutionary Mythology and the Deconstruction of Genesis

Evolutionary ideas were born in a society that was formally Christian, but inwardly rebelling against the constraints of Scripture. The nineteenth century was the century of Victorian prudishness, of teetotalers, temperance revivals and a proliferation of quasi-Christian cults which sought a "higher" form of godliness in laws of purely human origin. It was also the century of lewd romanticism, universalism and deconstructionist thought of every kind, ranging from theology to philosophy to government to science.

The Victorian mindset was revealed only too clearly with the anonymous publication of *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*³ in 1844, a book which presented a complete evolutionary world view ranging from cosmology to the origin of man, without the slightest pretense of scientific accuracy. Rather, the author simply engaged in every manner of wild speculation. The book was publicly condemned by biologists, geologists, and theologians alike. However, *Vestiges* became a bestseller overnight, going through ten editions in ten years.

In response to scientific (and even not-so-scientific) challenges to the traditional Biblical view, the deconstruction of Genesis 1 began in earnest. Deconstruction took the form of denying the literal truth of the creation story and turning it into a myth. This program was not carried out by atheists or agnostic scientists, but by so-called Christian thinkers who retreated from literal interpretation in order to accommodate the supposedly indisputable facts.

For example, in 1833 Charles Lyell published his famous treatise on uniformitarian geology, *The Principles of Geology*. Up to that time, geological formations were largely interpreted in terms of catastrophes, the Noachic flood being the most important. Lyell attempted to bring geology into the realm of day-to-day natural cause and effect. His gradualist approach required an immense age for the earth, at least millions of years. As a result, geologists were divided into two camps, catastrophists and gradualists. The catastrophists largely adhered to the idea of a young earth, while the gradualists advocated an old earth.

Once *Vestiges* was published, however, Lyell appeared conservative in comparison. So when Hugh Miller, editor of *The Witness*,⁴ published his *Footprints of the Creator* (1847) as a popular response to *Vestiges*, he appeared to be defending the Faith. However, to Miller, defending the Faith largely meant putting down the evolution of the species, and especially the evolution of man from monkeys. His great objection was rightly that man's soul could not Scripturally be the same as an animal's, as evolution would seem to imply.

Miller had already embraced the idea of a progressive, Lyellian fossil record where the simplest organisms came first.⁵ In both *Footprints* and *Testimony of the Rocks* (1856), Miller held to the idea of the progressive fossil record, but maintained that it did not thereby prove evolution since the fossil record does not

show continuous gradations from one life form into another. Rather, complex life forms appear quite suddenly in finished form.

In effect, Miller was giving both the ordinary believer and the scientist theological room to accept the idea of an old earth and a generally progressive fossil record without discarding his Faith. In so doing, he had to discard Genesis 1 as literal. In place of the Creator of Genesis 1, Miller's God was a God of the gaps, a Creator who, at various times in the long epochs of history, created fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals and, finally, man.

Neither was Miller alone in giving way to science. German higher criticism was invading England at the same time and so-called scholars were actively questioning their Faith in a much broader context than evolution. To put Darwin in context of his times, *Origin of the Species* was published in November, 1859. Another book, not so well-remembered today, *Essays and Reviews*, was published just months later, in February, 1860. *Essays and Reviews*, authored by liberal Anglican clergymen, is generally acknowledged as the "coming out" of higher criticism in England. In a climate of theological upheaval, it is hardly surprising that novel ideas like evolution would find supporters in the church. Indeed, it would appear that *churchmen were more eager to compromise with Darwin than scientists.*

The pattern of scientific "advance" followed by compromising Scripture to accommodate the supposed facts has been repeated again and again from the mid-nineteenth century right up to the present. Roman Catholic scholar Saint Georges Mivart advanced the idea of theistic evolution in a book *The Genesis of Species* and concluded that "Christian thinkers are perfectly free to accept the general evolution theory."⁶ In the same year, the president of Princeton University affirmed evolution in *Christianity and Positivism*.⁷ In 1898 R. A. Torrey hinted that evolution might be true of animals.⁸ In 1907 A. H. Strong wrote that "neither evolution nor the higher criticism has any terrors to one who regards them as part of Christ's educating process."⁹ In 1911 B. B. Warfield said that, while evolution is not a substitute for creation, it can "supply a theory of the method of divine providence."¹⁰ In *The Fundamentals* James Orr defends theistic evolution and calls it "creation from within."¹¹ E. C. Messenger's *Evolution and Theology* (1954), very influential in Roman Catholic circles, argued that Scripture did not conflict with even purely natural evolution. Likewise, Bernard Ramm's *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (1954), very influential in evangelical circles, advocates old-earth progressive creationism or theistic evolutionism. In the more "progressive" extreme, there is the infamous Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), a Roman priest who became one of evolution's most visible, vocal and effective promoters within Christian circles, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. Teilhard de Chardin is notable for his radical evolutionism and absolute statements like "Evolution is a light illuminating all facts, a curve that all lines must follow"¹² and "it is Christ who is saved by Evolution."¹³ This list is a mere sampling of what has passed for theology since Darwin's time.

Meredith G. Kline's Contribution to the Modern Mythology

So theologians, preachers, and Christian scholars have been the forerunners in radically deconstructing Genesis 1 in modern times. That deconstruction continues in liberal circles to this day, as Christians seek to nail the exegetical lid on the coffin

of Genesis 1. An important example is Meredith G. Kline, of Westminster Theological Seminary, Escondido, California. Kline is intent on putting down both the literal Genesis creation week as well as the day-age view, leaving the scientist "free of biblical constraints in hypothesizing about cosmic origins."¹⁴ Kline's deconstructionism is important to consider because it has been accepted and promoted in a number of popular books on creation/evolution for Christians.¹⁵

Kline's argument is that Genesis 2:5 invalidates an understanding of Genesis 1 in terms of sequential events, be they literal days or long periods of time, and demands that it be understood in literary terms, not at all suggesting a sequence of events.

To understand Kline's argument, let us first examine Genesis 2:4, 5. The American Standard Version¹⁶ reads:

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven. And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth: and there was not a man to till the ground.

Working with the ASV, Kline asserts that this verse ascribes the reason for a lack of plants to (a) the lack of natural rain water or (b) the lack of a man to provide some form of artificial irrigation. Kline traditionally divides God's works into those of creation and providence, and then asks the question whether the works of providence were different during the creation week than they were after it. Genesis 2:5, he says, is proof that they were not: "The Creator did not originate plant life on earth before he had prepared an environment in which he might preserve it without bypassing secondary means and without having recourse to extraordinary means such as marvelous methods of fertilization."¹⁷

Now, Kline argues, if the creation week were a literal seven-day week of 24-hour days, such a statement in Genesis 2:5 would make no sense, because it would hardly matter if plants didn't get rain for a fraction of a day on an earth covered with water just a day before.

Alternatively, the day-age theory, in which each day of creation is understood as a long, unspecified period of time, would not make sense because it would require plants to exist without sun or moon for an indeterminately long period of time. That would require some extraordinary biological phenomenon, whereas Genesis 2:5 takes for granted only ordinary phenomena.

This argument is sufficient for Kline, a theologian, to conclude that Genesis 1 cannot, therefore, be understood in literal or even sequential terms. Using the exegetical principle of Scripture interpreting Scripture, he concludes that "the literalness of the sequence is no more sacrosanct than the literalness of the duration of the days in this figurative week."

To further explain the figurative days of Genesis 1 without writing the whole chapter off as mythology, Kline invokes a Gnostic duality in what he calls a "two-register cosmology"(e.g., the supernatural world, or heaven, and the natural world, or the universe). The days of Genesis 1, he argues, refer to heaven's time, and not to any sequence of events on earth. Yet the heart of Kline's argument is still in his exegesis of Genesis 2:5.

Does Kline's reasoning stand up to scrutiny though? If Genesis 2:5 does indeed imply that only the usual means of providence were in operation during the time of creation, then any understanding of creation as a process protracted much beyond a week gets into quick trouble.

In any long-period creation, there would have been a long period after the formation of the earth and the appearance of dry ground during which there were no plants. Bringing Genesis 2:5 into the picture suggests that there were no plants because there was no rain. However, one has to wonder what extraordinary processes could have been at work during this long period to prevent rain on the earth? Likewise, what extraordinary process, in the absence of rain, could have broken down bare rock into the earth required for plant life?

If normal physical processes were operating during the creation period, rains would have begun within a day or so, unless (a) there was no water in the oceans (contrary to Scripture and all scientific evidence) or (b) there was no sun or other strong light source to evaporate the water. Kline properly rejects the idea of a sunless world for a long period of time, simply because if normal physical processes were operating, plants would die without it. Presumably, he would likewise reject a waterless world.

This presents a paradox which Kline seems to have ignored. According to Kline, Genesis 2:5 demands normal physical processes, but no rain. Yet normal physical processes would cause rain in about a day.

The only way to resolve this paradox is (a) to abandon the assertion that Genesis 2:5 demands normal physical processes during the creation period, or (b) to return to a short period of time — about a week — for creation.¹⁸

Neither is this the only paradox Kline faces. Genesis 2:5 ascribes the lack of vegetation to both a lack of rain *and* the lack of a man to till the ground. In his argument, Kline quietly replaces the "and" with an "or" in order to support his naturalistic thinking. Yet the "and" would suggest that man was part of God's providence for the earth, so God did not plant the earth until the man was made, or just before he was made. Again, this leads right back to a very short period for creation. Rather than leaving the scientist "free of Biblical constraints in hypothesizing about cosmic origins," Genesis 2:5 appears to put some rather serious constraints on him.

Given the blatant paradoxes in Kline's thinking, it is amazing his work even made it into print, let alone became as influential as it has been. However, such is the uncritical climate in which we live. An innovator can easily gain the ear of those sympathetic to his agenda.

Can a literal, seven-day creation be reconciled with Genesis 2:5 without appearing ridiculous? That is not so difficult as Kline would have his readers believe. First of all, the King James Version does not press the causal relationship as hard as the American Standard which Kline insists upon. Secondly, Genesis 2:4 predicates the rest of the chapter (and indeed, everything through the end of chapter 4) as being about the "generations of the heavens and the earth." Everywhere else "these are the generations" is used, one finds genealogies. For example, Genesis 5 is about the "generations of Adam" and Genesis 10 is about the "generations of Noah."

The question is, what are the generations of the heavens and the earth? Genesis 2:5 tells the reader plainly: vegetation and man.¹⁹ The next few verses tell how they came to be, as a product of heaven and earth. God watered the earth so it would bear fruit. God made man from the earth and breathed life into him. The rest of Genesis 2-4 further explain the relationship of the man and the ground. The man sinned and the ground was cursed. The man spilled his brother's blood and the ground refused to yield its strength to him.

Thus Genesis 2:4ff is plainly not a step-by-step chronological account of creation (as Genesis 1 so plainly is) but a genealogical account. Thus, verses 5-7 go straight from vegetation to man, not because the animals didn't come in between chronologically, but because the two generational lines of heaven and earth were specially interdependent. Man needs the vegetation to eat, and the vegetation needs man to cultivate it. Likewise, Genesis 2:5 mentions rainfall because, even if God had abundantly planted the earth, watering was necessary for the earth to bring forth succeeding generations of fruit. In conclusion, there is no conflict between a young earth and Genesis 2:5, as Kline insists.

The Danger of the Deconstructionists

The truth is, deconstructionists always run into trouble when they try to interpret Genesis 1 away. In the end, the result is uniformly to promote atheism and unbelief, while diminishing God, God's law-word and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Such deconstructionists are much more dangerous than the ingenuous atheist-scientist, just as poisoned food is much more dangerous than a bottle of poison labeled as such.

Notes

1. Karl Popper originated the idea that a statement must be falsifiable to have scientific content.
2. Mark Ludwig, *Computer Viruses, Artificial Life and Evolution* (American Eagle Publications, 1993).
3. The author, Robert Chambers, revealed his identity years later. He was a respectable Edinburgh businessman.
4. *The Witness* was the official organ of the evangelical secessionist branch of the Church of Scotland.
5. Hugh Miller, *The Old Red Sandstone* (1841) in *Collected Works* (1869).
6. Saint Georges Mivart, *The Genesis of Species* (1871), 279.
7. James McCosh, *Christianity and Positivism* (1871), 37. See also his article "On Evolution" in J. G. Wood, *Bible Animals* (1877).
8. R. A. Torrey, *What the Bible Teaches* (1898), 249.
9. Augustus Strong, *Systematic Theology*, viii.
10. B. B. Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies* (1911), 238.
11. *The Fundamentals* IV, 91-104.
12. Marilyn Ferguson, *The Aquarian Conspiracy* (1980), 50.
13. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Heart of the Matter* (1979), 92.

14. Meredith G. Kline, "Space and Time in the Genesis Cosmogony" *Perspectives in Science and the Christian Faith*, March, 1996.

15. Notably, H. Blocher, *In the Beginning* (1984), C. E. Hummel, *The Galileo Connection* (1986) and R. Maatman, *The Impact of Evolutionary Theory: A Christian View* (1993).

16. Kline insists that the ASV is superior to the KJV because of its translation of the word *terem* as "not yet" rather than "before." Kline claims that translating *terem* as "before" is to "muff" the translation, which simply is not true.

17. Meredith G. Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 20 (1958), 146-157.

18. A third option is possible, albeit intellectually dishonest in the face of Kline's goal of relieving the scientist of Biblical constraints. That would be to deceitfully distance the idea of "ordinary providence" from physical process. The reasoning would be something like this: since there were no plants, no rain was necessary, ergo the ordinary providence of watering plants by way of evaporation and rainfall was unnecessary; hence, the laws which cause evaporation would be unnecessary and therefore inoperative. This would suggest a world where normal physical processes were not operative at all, but they would not violate Kline's thesis because non-operative laws did not contribute to or detract from God's provision for living things.

19. The obvious connection is lost in translation. The original Hebrew says there was "no adam (man) to till the adamah (ground)" making the connection between the ground and the man obvious.

Creating a Controversy

By **Byron Snapp** | Sept 1998

The issue of six-day creation is creating much discussion throughout the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). The denomination was largely formed of churches that exited the Presbyterian Church in the United States (the Southern Presbyterian Church) in the early 1970s. At its first General Assembly (1973 — only 25 years ago) commissioners provided their reasoning for a new denomination: "Deviations in doctrine and practice from historic Presbyterian positions as evident in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, result from accepting other sources of authority, and from making them coordinate or superior to the divine Word. A diluted theology, a gospel tending towards humanism, an unbiblical view of marriage and divorce, the ordination of women, financing of abortion on socio-economic grounds, and numerous other non-biblical positions are all traceable to a different view of Scripture from that we hold and that which was held by the Southern Presbyterian forefathers."¹ The PCA rightly stated that the Bible is "the only infallible and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice."²

Many, therefore, find it surprising that the length of creation days is so controversial. At its foundation, the new denomination adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) and the accompanying Larger and Shorter Catechisms as being the best written interpretation by man of Scriptural teaching. These documents clearly teach that God's creative activity in Genesis 1 spanned six natural days. In the WCF IV:1 we read that the Triune God created "the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days; . . ." "These six days are more specifically defined in Catechism questions and answers regarding the Sabbath day. In each instance the day is defined as having existed "from the beginning of the world."³

This interpretation parallels Scriptural teaching. In Genesis 1, "day" is defined in terms we would expect — evening and morning. Although the sun was not created until the fourth day, beginning with the first day light and darkness are definitive measures of each day. Throughout Scripture, whenever an ordinal or cardinal number accompanies "day" the meaning is always a twenty-four hour day. There is no reason to expect a different interpretation in Genesis 1 when "first day," "second day," etc. are used.

In Genesis 5: 5, Scripture states, "so all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years and he died." Scripture measures Adam's lifespan in terms of years. We should expect the first two days of Adam's life to be included in these years. Seth's days are measured accordingly in Genesis 5:8. Throughout the genealogical account in Genesis 5 the lifespan is referred to as "all the days," "being measured in the number of years that made up the lifespan of the individual. All the days of Seth's life are understood to mean all his days, not all but the first two which were of indeterminate length. The same must be said of Adam's lifespan. Exodus 20:8-11 clearly establishes the fact that man's work week and day of rest grew out of God's week of creation. Jesus treated Genesis 1 and 2 as historical (Mt. 19:4-8; Mk. 10:5-9). Quoting from these first two chapters of Genesis he does not view the first as non-literal and the second as literal. There are no Scriptural reasons for us to do otherwise."⁴

How the Controversy Began

The creation account began to be an issue in the early 1990s within the PCA. In 1991 the General Assembly (the annual meeting of representatives of churches from throughout the PCA) ruled that a man whose "views on creation and theistic evolution were outside our system of doctrine . . . should not be granted the authority to teach in the Church."⁵ In 1997 the General Assembly voted to allow the individual to teach as long as he agreed not to teach on creation.⁶ In 1994 an individual was licensed (permitted to preach in the presbytery's churches) in a presbytery (PCA churches in a geographical region). The individual believed Genesis 1-11 to be, not only historical, but also a Hebrew epic. He denied that the Flood of Genesis 9 was worldwide. However, the man was not allowed to teach his views on creation and the Flood.⁷

More recently another presbytery licensed an individual who believes Genesis 1 is poetic.⁸ I will give only one more example as to the openness of many presbyteries to variant views. In 1995 the General Assembly voted that a presbytery did not have to re-examine a man whom it had accepted and ordained even though his views were stated as follows: "It is not scientifically impossible for God to create the universe in six days since He is omnipotent. The point is that the Word of God does not set out such a scientific plan, but rather emphasizes the unique power of God to create out of nothing and in accordance with His perfect will."⁹

I believe the reader must not overlook the words "scientific plan" in the above quote. I do not know the motive of the individual who used these words. However, the words point to a central issue in this debate. Is Scripture sufficient to interpret itself or must it be filtered through scientific theories? Earlier in this article, I have attempted to summarize the textual and contextual evidence as well as other Scriptural references that define "days" in Genesis 1 in terms of a natural day. This method is also the best for interpreting Scripture. Our Confession of Faith states: "The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly."¹⁰

When Scripture is interpreted accurately there is only one correct interpretation of the creation account. Thus, studying a passage with some ambiguity (such as the meaning of the Hebrew word, *yom* — "day") in Genesis 1, the student of Scripture must look elsewhere in the Bible for passages that provide help regarding the correct interpretation of "day" in the creation account. God has provided such hermeneutical help in Exodus 20:8-11. Scripture is sufficient to provide interpretation for itself. Our understanding may be unclear regarding the meaning of Scripture. Scripture itself is clear. Science must be interpreted by Scripture, not vice versa.

Compromise on Creation

In a recent mailing from Covenant Seminary, the PCA seminary, an explanation of the Seminary's position on creation was given. I will quote in part: "All of our professors affirm that the first chapter of Genesis can be reasonably interpreted as teaching that God's creative activity occurred in six solar days. Not all of our professors, however, believe that this is the best interpretation. Please note that I

have not said that any of our professors deny the facticity or historicity of the Genesis account. All of our professors have committed their lives to teaching the inerrancy of Scripture. Thus, what they are concerned to do is to make sure that they are translating the text as accurately as possible. . . . The consequence of seeking honestly and faithfully to deal with these concerns is that some of our professors hold to the six 24-hour day view of the creation activity. Others hold to longer day theories. One leans to a possible gaps-between-the-days view. This variety of perspectives has always been true of the faculty of Covenant Seminary, because this spectrum of views is not new."¹¹

As Covenant Seminary graduates seek entrance to one of over fifty PCA presbyteries, their view of the creation will surface during many presbytery examinations. Their reception will be varied. No doubt, in some of these regional bodies no cause of concern will be raised. In others a view other than that of six natural days will be seen as an error, but an acceptable one. One presbytery, Westminster (spanning east Tennessee and southwest Virginia) recently passed a Declaration (note the following article) in which it declared that ministers who hold to a gap theory, day-age theory, or a poetic view of Genesis 1 would not be admitted to the Presbytery: "Furthermore, Westminster Presbytery considers that any view which departs from the confessional doctrine of creation in six 24-hour days strikes at the fundamentals of the system of doctrine set forth in the Holy Scriptures."¹²

Such diversity should be unexpected in a confessional church. We can expect such diversity to continue unless our General Assembly reaffirms the clear teaching of our confessional standards as being the best interpretation of the Biblical account of creation.

I recently discussed this issue with a PCA elder in another state. He remarked that these various views on creation were interesting but we needed to be concerned about evangelism. I replied that if we allow Genesis 1 to be interpreted as non-historical, the time will probably soon come when we will discuss whether or not Genesis 3, particularly Adam, is historical. What will that discussion do for evangelism?

Christianity is historical. God has given us an inspired historical account in Genesis 1. There is no reason to try to explain it away. Instead, we need to accept God's account on faith rather than be influenced by scientific theories that mislead misplaced faith in scientific theories regarding origins.

Notes

1. "A Message to all Churches of Jesus Christ Throughout the World From the General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church," *PCA Digest Position Papers*, ed. by Paul Gilchrist, 8.
2. *Ibid.*, 7.
3. See Larger Catechism Q/A 116 and Shorter Catechism Q/A 59.
4. For further study I would recommend, among other books, Douglas F. Kelly's *Creation and Change: Genesis 1:1-2:4 in the light of Changing Scientific Paradigms* (Genies House, Fearn, Ross-shire, Great Britain, n.d.).

5. *PCA Digest*, 1973-1993, 427-28.
6. *Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America* (Atlanta, GA, 1997), 211-212.
7. *Minutes of the Twenty-Second General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America* (Atlanta, GA, 1994), 88ff.
8. *The Presbyterian Witness*, Vol. XI No. 4, 22.
9. *Minutes of the Twenty-Third General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America* (Atlanta, GA, 1995), 197.
10. WCF 1:9.
11. "Covenant Theological Seminary '98 - '99 President's Goals and Report Prepared for December 5, 1997 Executive Board Meeting with Revisions From the January 30, 1998 Full Board Meeting by Bryan Chappell"(St. Louis, 1998).
12. *A Declaration by Westminster Presbytery, Presbyterian Church in America*, 3. This Declaration was passed by Westminster Presbytery, April 18, 1998.

A Declaration

By **Larry E. Ball** | Sept 1998

Whereas, the culture in which we live has been permeated with evolutionary thinking which is unbiblical, and anti-scientific theory of origins,

Whereas, The issue of the veracity of God and His Word are under fierce in our day,

Whereas, at the 25th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, the elders refused to uphold the truth of the historicity of the creation account in Geneses 1 and 2,

Whereas, the issue is of such importance not only because the whole Word of God has been "rewritten" by the same hermeneutic method that was condoned as an acceptable view at the 25th General Assembly, but which when applied consistently throughout, the Word of God has been championed to support such heresies as women's ordination, homosexuality, and the denial of the historicity of great foundational truths of the Christian Faith such as the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement and the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Therefore, be it resolved that Westminster Presbytery declares to the world, our denomination, other presbyteries and particular churches, and the various seminaries from which most of our teaching elders graduate, its position that the Bible and our standards teach a six-day creation; with day defined as an approximately 24-hour period of time. Furthermore, Genesis 2 teaches not another creation account but a more detailed account of Genesis 1 regarding the creation of man on the sixth day and the creation of the Garden of Eden.

We hold that the Word of God teaches a 24 hour day because:

- (1) In Genesis 1:14-19, the Lord God describes the function of the sun and the moon to delineate the day from the night, this referring to a portion of a 24-hour period of time.
- (2) Where the recurring phrase "evening and morning" occur in the Scriptures, it always refers to an approximately 24-hour period of time.
- (3) When in other places of the Bible, the term "yom" is used with a numerical adjective, it always refers to a 24 hour day, and when the term "yom" is used in the plural it always refers to 24-hour periods of time.

Furthermore, we reject the following positions as examples of views out of accord with the Scripture which has been carefully and accurately explicated in our standards, the Westminster Confession of Faith, Westminster Longer Catechism, and Westminster Shorter Catechism:

- (1) The "gap theory," which calls for a gap of time before or between the days of creation,
- (2) The so called "day-age theory" which holds that the term "day" in Genesis 1 does not refer to 24 hours, but to long epochs of time,
- (3) The "poetic" view of Genesis 1, sometimes known as the "framework hypothesis" view which maintains that Genesis 1 does not state history but an allegorical or symbolic declaration that somehow God, with the details not being important, created the world. According to this view, the facts and the order of events of creation are obscured by the poetic, illustrative language of the text.

Comments on these views:

Note that there is absolutely nothing in the text to even hint, let alone explicitly declare these views. All through the Scripture the historicity of creation is referred to. Examples include: Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-15, Psalm 33:6-9, Psalm 104:1-6, Matthew 19:4-6, Romans 5:12-21, Romans 4:17, Hebrews 11:3, 1 Timothy 2:11-14, 1 Corinthians 3:8-12, 1 Corinthians 15:21-22,45-47. This teaching does great violence to the clear teaching of Scripture. These views appear to be held merely to seek to accommodate the evolutionary view of origins that postulates millions of years for the earth to appear. If consistently applied throughout the Word of God, this hermeneutic renders Scripture uninterpretable in an objective, meaningful way. These views of Scripture are perpetrated by the neo-orthodox liberals of our day. We repudiate it as heresy. It is the same method of perverting and twisting the Scriptures that has been championed by denominations to "justify": the ordination of women to ecclesiastical office, to commend and approve of homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle, and to permit sodomites to hold ecclesiastical offices. It is the same hermeneutic that has been championed by the liberals of our day to twist the Scriptures to teach that Jesus was not born of the Virgin Mary, that propitiation by the substitutionary atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ is a barbaric relic of primitive man's thinking, and that the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is mythical. Other casualties of this hermeneutic include: Moses being the human author of the Pentateuch, the historicity of the book of Jonah (his being swallowed by a big fish and being in its belly three days and nights), the crossing of the Red Sea rather than the reed sea, the historicity of the ten plagues, etc.

Therefore, Westminster Presbytery does declare and make known to the world and to all churches, especially our own denomination, our churches, our presbyteries, our General Assembly and the seminaries from which our candidates arise, that we will not tolerate these views in any teaching elder seeking admittance to this Presbytery, or any other man seeking to be licensed or to become a candidate for the ministry under care of this Presbytery. Furthermore, Westminster Presbytery considers that any view which departs from the confessional doctrine of creation in six, 24-hour days strikes at the fundamentals of the system of doctrine set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

Adopted at the Spring Meeting of Westminster Presbytery on April 18, 1998.

Attested by

Larry E. Ball [signed]

Stated Clerk of Westminster Presbytery

One Man's Journey to a Proper Understanding of Origins

By **Daniel Lance Herrick** | Sept 1998

Introduction

The editor of the *Chalcedon Report* was my pastor for several years. In conversation with him, I made many allusions to the convoluted path I followed in arriving at my current understanding of Creation and Beginnings. When he planned an issue of the *Report* devoted to Creation, Pastor Sandlin asked me for an account of that path.

This account covers events spanning almost half a century. As I have thought about the assignment for a month or two, various names and titles have come to mind (it took a week of active trying before I remembered the name of J. Frank Cassell, for example). I'm reporting here influences that I now remember as having pushed me in one direction or another. I have not gone digging for the books and reread them to find quotations or make sure the title is correct.

What I'm reporting here are those formative events and influences that I now think exercised a controlling influence on my belief system over the years.

And, of course, I conclude with a statement of what I now know to be right and true and beautiful.

Origins

As a boy in Christian School in the '50s, I carried a copy of *The Scofield Reference Bible*, so the "gap theory" is part of my heritage (see Scofield's notes on the first couple of verses of Genesis¹). But I don't think that was intellectually satisfying, even then.

I saw several Moody "Sermons from Science" movies. "The Prior Claim" was one we saw at Maranatha Baptist Church in Flint, Michigan, way back then. I bought a copy of the book of the same title that went with the movie. Gradual change is a crucial part of most credible theories of evolution and "The Prior Claim" just hammers on the impossibility of gradual change working as an explanation of the origin of living species we see around us.

For example, what partially formed version of the system would have any possible survival value so that an archer fish could use it to get its dinner and thus be selected for development into the current system? This vision system looks through the boundary between air and water and correctly aims a stream of water to knock down an insect. No partially formed version of that system would have any benefit that would cause it to be preserved in the next generation under the presuppositions of natural selection.

"The Prior Claim" presents many such examples for impressionable young minds. I remember the trapdoor spider, the bat's echolocation system, the mammalian eye. (Maybe thirty years later, Michael Denton's book, *Evolution: a Theory in Crisis* does much the same thing for a different audience and from different presuppositions.) Something I read during this period had a footnote that I followed to find and join

the American Scientific Affiliation. That membership went on for many years and I read the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*. More about that later.

Shakings

Every freshman at Wabash College takes a year course in biology. I transferred in as a junior, but had no transfer credit to get me out of the biology requirement. The course was taught by Johnson, Laubengayer, and DeLaney from a textbook they wrote.

That detail — the names on the heavy textbook matching the names on the talking heads up front — carried a lot more weight with me than it was worth.

Creation and religion were not intellectually respectable in that lecture hall or the related laboratories.

I went in understanding that my faith was tied to these "origins things" they were talking about. Johnson succeeded in weakening that connection in my mind. But I eventually integrated things into a system that preserved my Faith while setting aside parts of the conflict.

Sometime during this period I started reading cosmology and cosmogony.² I joined the American Association for the Advancement of Science and read the weekly journal, *Science*, for at least ten years. There were a lot of articles in *Science* on cosmology and cosmogony, stellar evolution. That was during one of the periods when the Big Bang was overwhelming Continuous Creation as the fashionable answer. Somehow I believed that stellar evolution³ was a different kind of issue than biological evolution.

Reinforcement

Summer 1965 I attended the annual meeting of the American Scientific Affiliation, an impressionable kid in a beautiful avenue with a hundred distinguished scientists. The venue was The King's College, Briarcliff Manor, New York. The Manor is a long building built along the top of a ridge. One night there was a thunderstorm that provided ten or twenty minutes of continuous lightning. Almost steady enough to read by. It was a glorious occasion.

J. Frank Cassell was one of those distinguished scientists who were friendly and polite to this hermit. He is an ornithologist.

J. Oliver Buswell led devotions several times. That Bible he pulled out of his pocket was written in Hebrew. He was translating it as he read it to us. I'm sure there were people there who did not notice, but that was a very effective way to make an impression on me.

They were all "Theistic Evolutionists." I came out of that meeting either forming or having formed the accommodation that carried me for perhaps twenty years — obviously God did it and it is not terribly important how he did it.

Also at that meeting I made the connection that led to my joining the faculty of Barrington College in the Mathematics Department a year later. It was there that I met the woman who is now my wife. After we were married, the Biology Department invited J. Frank Cassell to visit Barrington College to do something

academic. He dined at the Herricks one evening. We talked about birds. When I asked him to recommend a field guide, he named *Birds of North America*, "a Golden Book, by Zim."

I still use the copy of *Birds of North America* that I bought after that visit.

Part of the reason for the personal detail in this section is to show that the controlling issues in my accommodation were probably sociological, more than intellectual or based in faith.

I did understand enough philosophy of science at this time to know that when Isaac Asimov wrote about the fact of evolution, he was writing the creed of his religion.

I did enough reading of the Bible to understand the sovereignty of God in the salvation of men, and to be far from satisfied with the charts of God's plan for the ages based on fanciful side-by-side interpretations of Revelation and today's newspaper. But I didn't know about anything else, any alternatives.

The World Is Turned Upside Down

Along in the mid-1980s a Sunday school teacher named Bill Staudenbauer connected me with Reformed writers, starting with reconstructionists, men like R. J. Rushdoony, Gary North, and John Calvin. I read them because it was fun. Eventually I bought a copy of North's *Genesis: The Dominion Covenant*.

The first chapter of that book has a title like *Cosmic Personalism vs. Cosmic Impersonalism* and there is a related appendix dealing with the topic of origins. (The main body of the book intends to stick to the economic implications of Genesis, though a commentary on the first chapter of Genesis can't avoid origins.)

The point of that title is that the Biblical version of The Beginning involves the conscious decisions and actions of a Person. All of the opposing versions of origins involve interactions of pre-existing matter according to currently observed physical laws. No personal force or actor is required.⁴

The thing that Gary North did to me was to just completely destroy the accommodation I had made twenty years earlier.

I bought a set of back issues of the *Journal of Christian Reconstruction*. One issue of the *Journal* is a "[Symposium on Creation](#)." One article in that symposium points out that the study of origins is an exercise in history, not science. The author talks about what kinds of evidence are relevant in the study of an historical event.

The question remains, How did it happen?

Solar systems form out of matter that happened to come close enough together that its mutual gravitational attraction forms a star in the center and some of the material that didn't collapse into the central star becomes planets.

The Sun and the Moon and the Stars were put into place after the plants were created, each of these verbs having a person performing the action.

Is the Bible true? Or is it not?

Calvin's commentary on Genesis has a beautiful treatment of this issue in his discussion of the creation of the plants. Calvin assumes that plants require light. He

says that God created the plants a day before he created the sun in order to show us that his provision of light does not require the instrument that he usually uses to provide us with light.⁵

Epistemology

So what did happen?

God made all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

There are some things that need to be said about the argument over origins.

The study of origins is not science. It is history. It is religion. It is not science. Some of the people who say things about origins are scientists — when they do other things. But when they make declarations about origins they are not doing science.

The kinds of evidence that work for doing history are different than the kinds of evidence that work for doing science.

The Beginning is a unique event. Before The Beginning is a meaningless concept. The physical laws that we observe in operation around us today did not operate before The Beginning. The physical matter that those laws operate on did not exist before The Beginning.

Science is about "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Things that can be observed many times so that we can identify the covenantal patterns that God has promised will be there. Science does not have anything to say about a unique event that occurred exactly one time in the entire history of the universe.

Did you catch that? Science is about deducing laws that can be used to predict and describe events that happen over and over under the covenantal order God established in the last verse of Genesis 8. And science does not have anything at all to say about a unique event that occurred exactly one time in the entire history of the universe.

Notes

1. Scofield suggests that the creation in Genesis 1:1 could be separated from "and the earth was without form and void" in Genesis 1:2 by a great gap of time that made room for anything that modern science could dream up.

2. "Cosmology" and "cosmogony" — English words made by compounding Greek words. Cosmology is the study of the universe, stars and planets and galaxies and nebulae and orbits and solar systems and the life cycles of stars and the life cycles of solar systems. Cosmogony is the study of the origin of the universe including theories with names like "Continuous Creation" and "Big Bang." Continuous Creation says new matter is continually coming into being and always has been. Big Bang says it all started with a single catastrophic event.

3. Stellar evolution is the life cycle of a star. A star comes into being when enough matter agglomerates together and collapses under mutual gravitational attraction until the pressure gets high enough that it gets hot and the nuclear fires start burning. Different size stars (different amounts of matter came together)

follow a different path through their life cycles. Most stages of the life cycle take millions of years with one or two events in the cycle of a star's existence being catastrophic events that take milliseconds or seconds.

4. A gentleman who was kind enough to read the manuscript of this article and comment on it points out that this is not true of theistic evolution — the theistic evolutionist says that God, a person, is involved in the process of evolution; it is just that he did not do it the way he said he did it. (That's not the way my kind critic put it and that's why I am not giving you his name — he would never put incendiary language like that in his own mouth.) As I write this I find it difficult to pay a whole lot of attention to a theory whose lying god gave us the first three chapters of Genesis as a joke after doing things the way the theistic evolutionist says he did. Especially seeing that for many years, I let those theorists persuade me that it did not matter if the divine Author of Genesis was a liar or confused.

5. This is where the theistic evolutionist is forced to join all the other God-denying evolutionists in denying Scripture. There is a fantastic amount of ink spilled in quibbling over what a day is — is it a day or is it a thousand years (actually, they want a thousand thousand years)? Just as the stage magician uses his words and his hands to draw your attention away from where the real action is, so does the "theistic evolutionist." By spending all that time splitting hairs over the meaning of the word "day," they keep you from noticing that they are also saying that God does not know what order he did it in. Genesis says the order is 1) planet earth, 2) geography of the earth, 3) plants, 4) sun, moon, and stars. The evolutionist (even the one who makes up a god to superintend things) says that the sun was giving out light before the seas formed (and some other stars are much older than the sun) and plants and other living things came a long time later, after things cooled down a bit.

Reformed Theology and Six-Day Creation

By **Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., Th.D.** | Sept 1998

As Reformed Christians we have a special stake in the creation/evolution debate. With our high view of Scripture we are pre-committed to the integrity of the word of God in all areas of life. Unfortunately, much of Reformed theology writes off six-day creation as naive fundamentalism or gross bibliolatry. Though most Reformed scholars would decry evolutionism, they often capitulate to the evolutionary elite, being pressured to reinterpret Genesis in order to maintain academic credibility. This is a tragic surrender of orthodoxy to the reigning cultural mythology of our day: chance-oriented, naturalistic evolutionism.

In this article I will provide a summary of the evidence from Scripture and the Westminster Confession which demands a literal, six-day creation position for Reformed Christians who operate under the Westminster Standards. I will also incorporate some subsidiary themes illustrating the necessity of the standard historical-grammatical approach to Genesis. Let us begin with our confessional position.

The Language of the Confession

Some Reformed Christians deny that God created the heavens and the earth in six literal days. This denial brings them into clear contradiction with the Westminster Standards, which teach that the Lord God created the heavens and the earth "in the space of six days"(WCF 4:1; LC #15, SC #9).

It is important to note that here the Confession is not merely picking up the language of Scripture and quoting it, thereby leaving the language open to interpretation. The six-day statement is not a catch phrase. The Assembly very clearly speaks of a literal, six-day creation, when it states in WCF 4:1: "It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days; and all very good."The phrase "in the space of"demonstrates their concern with the temporal time-frame of the creative process.

In so stating the matter, the Westminster divines picked up on the language of John Calvin, who held to a six-day creation: "For it is too violent a cavil to contend that Moses distributes the work which God perfected at once into six days, for the mere purpose of conveying instruction. Let us rather conclude that God himself took the space of six days, for the purpose of accommodating his works to the capacity of men."¹ Calvin clearly had in mind literal days, for he states on page 105 of his Genesis commentary: "I have said above, that six days were employed in the formation of the world; not that God, to whom one moment is as a thousand years, had need of this succession of time, but that he might engage us in the consideration of his works."The language of the Confession and the sentiment of the Westminster divines are so obvious that even detractors from six-day creation have admitted the meaning of the Confession. One such opponent of six-day creation, Edward D. Morris, writes: "But the language of the Confession, in the space of six days, must be interpreted literally, because this was the exact view pronounced by the Assembly."²

The Gravity of the Issue for Presbyterians

This is a serious matter for ministers in confessionally-based Presbyterian churches. The Confession of Faith is historically definitional of Presbyterianism, and must be approached seriously. Presbyterian ministers must "sincerely receive and adopt" the Westminster Standards in their solemn ordination vows. It is apparent that the order and structure of the Confession of Faith are such that foundational issues of major consequence are placed first. The Confession of Faith is not a haphazard collection of doctrinal maxims; neither is it a systematic theological approach to doctrine. Instead it has an essential overall harmony that proceeds along a clear line of development: it first lays down foundational matters, then builds upon those in a logical and coherent fashion. As Philip Schaff notes: "The Confession consists of thirty-three chapters, which cover, in natural order, all the leading articles of the Christian faith from the creation to the final judgment."³

William Hetherington's classic work on the Confession elaborates a little more fully:

The first thing which must strike any thoughtful reader, after having carefully and studiously perused the Westminster Assembly's Confession of Faith, is the remarkable comprehensiveness and accuracy of its character, viewed as a systematic exhibition of divine truth, or what is termed a system of theology. In this respect it may be regarded as almost perfect, both in its arrangement and in its completeness. Even a single glance over its table of contents will show with what exquisite skill its arrangement proceeds, from the statement of first principles to the regular development and final consummation of the whole scheme of revealed truth.... Thus viewed, the Confession of Faith might be so connected with one aspect of Church history as to furnish, if not a textbook according to chronological arrangement, in studying the rise and refutation of heresies, yet a valuable arrangement of their relative importance, doctrinally considered.... A few remarks may be made with regard to the plan according to which the Confession is constructed. A Confession of Faith is simply a declaration of belief in religious truths, not scientifically discovered by man, but divinely revealed to man. While, therefore, there may fairly be a question whether a course of Systematic Theology should begin with disquisitions relative to the being and character of God, as revealed, or with an inquiry what Natural Theology can teach, proceeding thence to the doctrines of Revelation, there can be no question that a Confession of Faith in revealed religion ought to begin with that revelation itself. This is the plan adopted by the Westminster Confession. It begins with a chapter on the Holy Scriptures; then follow four chapters on the nature, decrees, and works of God in creation and providence: and these five chapters form a distinct division, systematically viewed, of the Confession.⁴

In other words, foundational to the "system of doctrine" contained in the Confession and "sincerely received and adopted" by elders in the Presbyterian Church in America (Book of Church Order 21-5, #2) are the first five chapters of the Confession. Note the foundational logic of the Confession: Chapter 1 secures for us the infallible means whereby we know God, his will, and ways, *i.e.*, through Scripture. May we deny that God speaks infallibly and inerrantly in Scripture? May we deny any of the sixty-six books of Scripture? This chapter establishes for us our ultimate authority for framing our system of doctrine: the word of God contained in the Old and New Testaments. All else fails in our doctrinal system if this chapter is

not true. Chapter 2 moves quite necessarily to the nature and being of the God whom we worship and serve. Which elements of our statement regarding the being of Almighty God may we remove? He is our very reason for existence.

Indisputably Chapter 2 must also be foundational to the whole system of doctrine contained in the Confession. Chapter 3 flows quite logically into a consideration of the decrees of God, which explain, uphold, and direct the entire universe. The God whom we worship and serve is a sovereign who planned all things by his eternal decree. This sets Christianity against all forms of unbelief and establishes our reason for serving the Lord God: he is absolutely sovereign. It explains also the rationality, significance, and value of the universe as rooted in the eternal plan of God. Chapters 4 and 5 turn to consider the very creation of the entire universe and all of its elements and the actual outworking of the decree of God in providence. This is the arena in which man will live in the service of God: a God-created, God-governed universe. Nothing other than God himself accounts for the existence and control of all reality. The stage is set for considering the following doctrinal formulations of our faith and practice in the world which God created and governs.

A denial of the Confessional position on creation is a denial of a foundational principle of the Confession and our "system of doctrine." The Presbyterian Church in America deems "the doctrine of creation" to be one of "the fundamentals of our standards" (M19GA 2:479, 481). Not only so, but this denial of six-day creation is also a capitulation to the most significant unbelieving opposition to Scripture and Christianity today, a secular, humanistic-based science that proceeds from a chance oriented universe by means of uniformitarian science (although some state that they do not hold to any form of evolutionary theory).

Scripture and Creation

Any attempt to deny a process of creation involving a series of successive divine fiats stretching out over a period of only six literal days is manifestly contrary to the plain, historical sense of Scripture. The Hebrew word *yom* ("day") in the Genesis 1 account of creation should be understood in a normal sense of a 24-hour period, for the following reasons:

(1) *Argument from primary meaning.* The preponderant usage of the word *Yom* ("day") in the Old Testament is of a normal day as experienced regularly by man (though it may be limited to the hours of light, as per common understanding). The word occurs 1704 times in the Old Testament, the overwhelming majority of which have to do with the normal cycle of daily earth time. Preponderant usage of a term should be maintained in exegetical analysis unless contextual forces compel otherwise. This is particularly so in historical narrative. R. L. Dabney points out:

The narrative seems historical, and not symbolical; and hence the strong initial presumption is, that all its parts are to be taken in their obvious sense.... It is freely admitted that the word day is often used in the Greek Scriptures as well as the Hebrew (as in our common speech) for an epoch, a season, a time. But yet, this use is confessedly derivative. The natural day is its literal and primary meaning. Now, it is apprehended that in construing any document, while we are ready to adopt, at the demand of the context, the derived or tropical meaning, we revert to the primary one, when no such demand exists in the context.⁵

(2) *Argument from explicit qualification.* Moses carefully qualifies each of the six creative days with the phraseology: "evening and morning." The qualification is a deliberate defining of the concept of day. Outside of Genesis 1 the words "evening" and "morning" occur together in thirty-seven verses. In each instance it speaks of a normal day. Examples from Moses include:

Exodus 18:13: "And so it was, on the next day, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening."

Exodus 27:21: "In the tabernacle of meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning before the LORD." R. L. Dabney argues that this evidence alone should compel adoption of a literal-day view:

The sacred writer seems to shut us up to the literal interpretation, by describing the day as composed of its natural parts, 'morning and evening.'... It is hard to see what a writer can mean, by naming evening and morning as making a first, or a second 'day'; except that he meant us to understand that time which includes just one of each of these successive epochs: — one beginning of night, and one beginning of day. These gentlemen cannot construe the expression at all. The plain reader has no trouble with it. When we have had one evening and one morning, we know we have just one civic day; for the intervening hours have made just that time.⁶

(3) *Argument from ordinal prefix.* In the 119 cases in Moses' writings where the Hebrew word *Yom* stands in conjunction with a numerical adjective (first, second, third, etc.), it never means anything other than a literal day. The same is true of the 357 instances outside the Pentateuch, where numerical adjectives occur.

Examples include:

Leviticus 12:3: "And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised."

Exodus 12:15: "Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel."

Exodus 24:16: "Now the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud."

The Genesis 1 account of creation consistently applies the ordinal prefix to the day descriptions, along with "evening and morning" qualifiers (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31).

(4) *Argument from coherent usage.* The word *Yom* is used of the creative days of four, five, and six, which occur after the creation of the sun, which was expressly designated to "rule" the day/night pattern (Gen. 1:14). The identical word (*Yom*) and phraseology ("evening and morning," numerical adjectives) associated with days four through six are employed of days one through three, which compel us to understand those days as normal earth days.

(5) *Argument from divine exemplar.* In Exodus 20:9-11 (the Fourth Commandment) God specifically patterns man's work week after his own original

creational work week. Man's work week is expressly tied to God's: "for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth"(Ex. 20:11). On two occasions in Moses' writings this rationale is used:

Exodus 20:11: "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."

Exodus 31:15-17: "Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. . . . It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."

Dabney's comments are helpful: "In Gen. ii:2, 3; Ex. xx:11, God's creating the world and its creatures in six days, and resting the seventh, is given as the ground of His sanctifying the Sabbath day. The latter is the natural day; why not the former? The evasions from this seem peculiarly weak."⁷

(6) *Argument from plural expression.* In Exodus 20:11 God's creation week is spoken of as involving "six days"(*yammim*), plural. In the 608 instances of the plural "days" in the Old Testament, we never find any other meaning than normal days. Ages are never expressed as *yammim*.

(7) *Argument from alternative idiom.* Had Moses intended to express the notion that the creation covered eras, he could have employed the term *olam*. Even the resting of God on the "seventh day" does not express his eternal rest, for it would also imply not only his continual rest but also his continual blessing of creation, as if sin never intervened: Genesis 2:3 — "Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."

The Uniqueness of the Creative Fiats

Our concern regarding this denial of six literal days also involves a contradiction with the Westminster Standards (WCF Chps. 4 & 5; LC #15 & 18, SC #9 & 11), due to a confusion of the theological concepts of creation and providence. Some argue that Genesis 1 suggests God frequently operated through protracted, providential governance in his creative work, rather than proceeding solely by a series of immediate, instantaneous fiat-acts. This is manifestly contrary to the revelation of God in Scripture, not only in Genesis 1, but elsewhere (e.g., Ps. 33:9; Heb. 11:3). This is a dangerous and unnecessary concession to modern secular-based science. It is not only an erroneous interpretation of the revelation of God, but provides a slippery slope to evolution, opening the doors to progressive creationism, threshold creationism, and, eventually, theistic evolution.

A common means of re-interpreting Genesis 1 is employing what is called the Framework Hypothesis. The Framework Hypothesis works on the assumption of a topical arrangement rather than a chronological arrangement of the material of Genesis 1. It suggests that obvious balance and parallel between Days 1-3 and Days 4-6 is clear evidence of the topical concerns of Moses. The proposed hypothetical, non-chronological framework for Genesis 1 fails structurally and logically. It possesses only an apparent and superficial parallelism, a parallelism that can be equally accounted for by the providential design of God in creation.

Problems with the Framework Hypothesis abound. I will briefly mention just a couple. The Framework Hypothesis expressly and resolutely denies that Moses intended to provide a record of a sequence of chronological creational fiats and events, despite the wholesale structuring of Genesis 1 around a series of specifically enumerated days (first day, second day, etc.). This view argues rather that Moses merely provided a balanced artistic expression of the truth of divine creation *ex nihilo*, without providing any insight into God's *modus operandi* in creation. This dangerous hermeneutic methodology generates serious exegetical confusion regarding the proper approach to historical narrative in Scripture. This is amply illustrated in two main areas:

(1) Framework Hypothesisists confidently interpret Genesis 1 artistically rather than chronologically. This interpretive procedure overthrows the obvious chronological development revealed in Genesis 1. It is a serious methodological flaw in this hermeneutic in that Genesis 1 provides both the revelational foundation to the universe and the world, as well as to the historical revelation of the development of the human race and of redemption in Genesis, which in turn is foundational to the theology and redemptive history of all of Scripture.

(2) Framework Hypothesisists evidence exegetical and theological confusion by allowing that death in the sentient animal kingdom (wherein resides the "breath of life" [e.g., Gen. 6:17; 7:15, 22]) was a part of the "very good" creation order as it originally came from the hand of God (Gen. 1:31). That is, prior to the Fall of Adam and the resultant curse, death reigned among Creation and Scripture both concur that the befalling creation curse resulted in "the bondage of corruption" in "the creation itself" (Rom. 8:21) "which must be taken in the sense of the decay and death apparent even in non-rational creation."⁸

Conclusion

As Reformed Christians committed to the integrity of the inspired word of God, we must hold to the teachings of Scripture, rather than the ever-changing doctrines of man. Genesis is foundational to the whole Bible; Genesis 1 is foundational to Genesis. The issues that hang in the balance are enormous. We should stand — in this area as in all others — with Paul and proclaim, "Let God be true, and every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4).

Notes

1. John Calvin, "Genesis," *Banner of Truth* (1847 translation, 1965 publication), 78.
2. Edward D. Morris, *Theology of the Westminster Symbols*, (Columbus, OH, 1900), 202.
3. Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* [Grand Rapids, 1990], 1:766.
4. William M. Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines* (Edmonton, AB, [1887] (1991), 350, 351, 357.
5. R. L. Dabney, *Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids [1878], 1972), 254-5.
6. *Ibid.*, 255.
7. *Ibid.*
8. John Murray, *Romans*, 1:304.

A Critique of the Framework Hypothesis

By **Frank Houston Walker, Jr.** | Sept 1998

In 1985 the Eureka Classis of our denomination adopted two resolutions regarding the length of days in Genesis one. The first sets forth the position of the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS) on this issue: "The Eureka Classis affirms that God created the heavens and the earth in six normal days which were chronological periods of light and darkness as recorded in the book of Genesis."

A popular alternative to this traditional interpretation of the creation days is the framework hypothesis. Some of the ideas that eventually became part of this theory began to take form among liberal theologians in Germany in the middle of the last century, but Professor Arie Noordzij of the University of Utrecht first used it as an interpretive tool for Genesis one in 1924. Dr. Meredith G. Kline started teaching it at Westminster Theological Seminary (WTS) nearly half a century ago. Through him it has impacted the Presbyterian Church in America, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and other Reformed communions.

The second statement that the Eureka Classis adopted in 1985 addresses the framework view as it was being taught at Westminster. It reads, "That the Eureka Classis, Reformed Church in the United States, register a protest against the teaching at Westminster Theological Seminary in California and Philadelphia which questions the chronological sequence of the six normal days of light and darkness in Genesis one. We believe that this skeptical interpretation of Holy Scripture is dangerous to the faith and theology of the students and to the churches which these students shall serve." Westminster Seminary in California responded with a letter of several pages. The Executive Committee then recommended, inasmuch as the two resolutions quoted above were adopted almost unanimously, that each Consistory write to Westminster to affirm our overwhelming agreement on this issue. Whether any Consistory did so is not stated in the record. The next year the representative of Westminster Seminary in California asked for time to address the Synod concerning this issue. Following this address, the Synod reaffirmed its commitment to the two resolutions of the previous year. Since that time, the Synod has neither amended nor rescinded its position.

A Matter Worth Fighting Over

But is this something worth fighting for? The Southern California Presbytery of the OPC apparently does not think it is. In a debate over the licensure of a man who holds to the framework hypothesis, several commissioners said that they could not see any way that a person coming to Scripture with a Reformed hermeneutic could arrive at any conclusion other than six-day creation, but they did not want to make this a qualifying issue.

The RCUS takes a different view. The length of days is not really the issue. If God had wanted to make the entire universe in two seconds, he could have done so. Augustine thought it was even shorter than this. He could not imagine any reason why it would have taken an omnipotent God six days to do anything. Or if God had wanted to stretch out his creative activity to a hundred million years, that is also within the realm of his power. The issue at the heart of this controversy is not the length of days in Genesis one, but one's view of Scripture. The approach of the

Reformed church historically is grammatical and historical. Our goal is to interpret the statements of Scripture in their historical context. The framework hypothesis, on the other hand, relies to one degree or another on an additional element, namely, genre criticism. Because different rules apply to different genres of literature, the re-categorization of a piece of literature will necessarily cause its reader to ask a different set of questions. When a book begins with the words, "Once upon a time. . .," we do not ask, "When did this take place?" We know that we are reading fiction and questions of history are irrelevant. But when a book begins, "The significance of Einstein's theory of relativity is . . .," history, science, mathematics, philosophy and a host of other subjects immediately raise their heads. The framework hypothesis removes Genesis one from history and reclassifies it as a poetic teaching device. The implication of this is that, although there are certain ideas in Genesis one that are historical (e.g., the creation of the universe), the precise details (e.g., chronology) need not be interpreted in a straightforward manner.

Recently, Mr. Futato of WTS (Escondido) wrote an article to supplement Kline's 1958 article. In this he uses genre criticism to turn the first chapter of Genesis into a polemic against Canaanite Baal worship. This is a reaction to the liberals who often claim that Genesis one is an adaptation of Baal mythology. His evidence for this is far from conclusive. Although it is well beyond the scope of this paper to evaluate his arguments, his paper shows how re-categorizing the genre of Genesis one changes the way we look at it.

The RCUS has considered the literary approach of genre criticism as well. In 1991 the Synod formed a committee to study the doctrine of Scripture as it is taught at WTS (Philadelphia). I was on that committee. My particular assignment was to study the views of Dr. Raymond Dillard. When I finished my report, I submitted it to Dr. Dillard to confirm that I had represented his views fairly and accurately; in fact, to be fair I purposely biased my report in his favor. Though I criticized his views, he admitted that my assessment of his teaching was correct. This report was presented to the RCUS Synod in 1995. I also wrote the conclusion, which begins, "Your committee concludes that there is a cause for concern about various forms of expression used by some professors at Westminster Seminary (Philadelphia), that, at the very least, obfuscate the historic, orthodox understanding of Scripture as defined by the Reformed creeds." The Synod adopted this report. Thus, ten years after defining its position on the days of creation, the Synod expressed its disapproval of the hermeneutical approach that allows one to hold to the framework hypothesis.

It has been said that six-day creation is a test of orthodoxy in the RCUS. This does not mean that we condemn or approve the whole of a man's theology solely on his view of creation, but that a man who holds to the day-age theory or the framework hypothesis holds to a view of creation unacceptable to the RCUS and is therefore ineligible for the office of elder or pastor.

Naturally, those who hold to other views want us to be more tolerant. They argue that the matter is not that clear, that it is a matter of interpretation. The fact is that every doctrine is a matter of interpretation, but this does not affect the fact that each church (denomination) has a God-given responsibility to determine which interpretation it believes to be the teaching of Scripture. We do this with

Christology, theology proper, soteriology, and eschatology. By what logic, then, are we forbidden to adopt a standard concerning the doctrine of creation, especially if that standard is what the church has generally held down through the ages and is the most natural reading of the text?

The Framework Hypothesis

The framework hypothesis holds that the "days" of creation have nothing to do with time, but are "forms" or "images" designed by God to help us understand creation. It is as if a person takes a trip across the United States. When he returns, he arranges his photographs by subject rather than in the order they were taken. Hence pictures of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans are on one page, pictures of the Rockies and Appalachians on another, and the deserts of California and New Mexico on a third. Those who hold to the framework theory find it necessary to interpret Genesis one in this way because they believe that there are certain inconsistencies in Genesis one that compel a non-literal, non-chronological interpretation. Based on these supposed inconsistencies and the parallelism of the days, Genesis one is reclassified as a "literary device," "poetry," or "semi-poetic teaching device," from which we are to draw the conclusion that it cannot be accepted at face value as far as its chronology is concerned.

Here are some of the alleged inconsistencies noted by those who espouse the framework theory: (1) The sun was not created until Day Four (vv. 14-19). Since the sun is the instrument used for measuring "days," there was no way to measure the first three days. How then are we to determine their length? (2) On the seventh day God rested from creation. He has not created anything since then, but has rather taken an eternal delight in his works (as we read in Hebrews 4). Thus, it is held, the seventh day is an eternal day and not a normal day. This at least leaves open the possibility that the other six days may be something other than normal days, too. But the greatest inconsistency, as the framework view holds it, is this: (3) Genesis 2:5, in describing Day Three, shows that God's *modus operandi* during the creation week was ordinary providence. Yet, if Day Three was a literal twenty-four hour day, this could not be, for it is impossible for all the water that covered the earth to have evaporated in that amount of time. However, the problem disappears if Day Three was longer than a normal day.

The poetic structure is fairly straightforward. It is as if there are two sets of days (Days One through Three and Days Four through Six). These two sets of days are actually describing the same creation-events. Days One and Four are the same, as are Days Two and Five, and Days Three and Six:

- Day 1 — light
- Day 2 — separation of water and air
- Day 3 — dry land and plants
- Day 4 — light-bearers
- Day 5 — birds and fish
- Day 6 — inhabitants of dry land (animals, man)

Sometimes it is said that the first set of days portrays the spheres of creation and the second set the filling of the spheres. Others say that the first three days give the kingdoms and the second set the kings of the kingdoms. It would be hard to deny that there is some parallelism here. Is it not part of the beauty of creation?

Early Criticisms

Now, before we consider responses to these matters, there are a few things that I would like to say about the framework hypothesis in general.

First, how many theologians have studied the first two chapters of Genesis over the centuries and have never seen these inconsistencies to be of such a magnitude that warrant a completely new theory of creation? For example, Calvin's comment on Genesis 2:5 shows an awareness of the problem mentioned earlier, but he offers an obvious solution: "But although he has before related that the herbs were created on the third day, yet it is not without reason that here again mention is made of them, in order that we may know that they were then produced, preserved, and propagated, in a manner different from that which we perceive at the present day." Here Calvin assumes that Genesis 2:5 is not a description of Day Three, for, though plants were certainly "produced" and "preserved" during the twenty-four hour period of Day Three, which he firmly believed, it would be quite a stretch to say that they "propagated" in that time. In his commentary on Genesis one, E. J. Young comes to the same conclusion and suggests that the framework theory crumbles when the assumption that Genesis 2:5 refers to Day Three is rejected. To the present writer's knowledge, this argument has never been satisfactorily answered.

Second, the framework approach causes problems for the doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture. This doctrine says that the things necessary for our learning are so clearly revealed that even those of considerably diminished capacity can understand them well enough to be blessed by them. Of course, this does not mean that everything in the Bible is equally clear. If this were true, there would be no debate on many subjects. However, the doctrine of creation is essential for our understanding of origins, the person and work of Christ, regeneration, and the last things, to name a few; and it is referred to time and time again. It seems rather preposterous that only Jews of the fifteenth-century B. C. who may have been considering Canaanite Baal worship and twentieth-century theologians with an enlightened view of language have adequate knowledge to interpret Genesis one properly. The rest of the church throughout the ages has been hopelessly duped by the simple language of the narrative. Even Marcus Dods, a liberal Scottish theologian of the last century, agrees; he wrote, "If, for example, the word 'day' in these chapters does not mean a period of twenty-four hours, the interpretation of Scripture is hopeless."

And finally, there are no clear limits to the framework theory. If the so-called inconsistencies and literary devices warrant a reinterpretation of Genesis one, why not do the same with Genesis three? After all, if a talking serpent is not extraordinary, we would be hard pressed to find something that is. The same problem applies to the Flood and the tower of Babel. The miracles of Christ can be dismissed on the same basis. Young insists that even the resurrection of Christ cannot stand. In fact, this is exactly the approach that the liberals have taken. Once the door is opened, nothing holds together.

Inconsistencies and Poetry?

Now, let us move on to the "inconsistencies" mentioned earlier. I believe that their answers are fairly simple and straightforward. This is why theologians of previous eras were not bothered by them.

Can there be "time" without the sun? While it is true that the first three days had no sun, they were not without light (which was created on the first day) and this light, whatever its source may or may not have been (and certainly we believe that an omnipotent God can create light without a source of light), waxed and waned in periods of "evening and morning." If time is defined as the succession of events, as Augustine said, this certainly qualifies. By the repeated use of this phrase and the ordinals (first, second, third, etc.), the exegetical boundaries of the days of Genesis one are clearly defined. Elsewhere in Scripture, wherever both criteria are used, literal days are in view.

Even the length of the seventh day cannot be denied on the grounds that it was not described as "evening and morning." It differs qualitatively from the other six days, being a day of rest, not labor, and as such would allow an alternate closing. In fact, it seems that the early verses of Genesis two are just as definitive for the length of Day Seven as the other indicators are for the first six days. Notice, for example, that it is called the *seventh day* three times; that is, it is the seventh of whatever the first six were. If the first six days were normal days, the seventh day must be a normal day, too. This is especially so since by Day Seven the sun was in place and operating as the keeper of time. Thus, as far as creation was concerned, Day Seven was exactly twenty-four hours in duration.

As for Genesis one being poetry, it seems that there is an unspoken assumption that literary form and literal meaning are mutually exclusive. This, I believe, necessarily involves an incomplete and defective view of language. But why must we assume that poetry is literally false? Are the Psalms literally false simply because they employ Hebrew parallelism? If so, then every time a man writes a love poem to his sweetie he may actually be telling her how much he hates her. Likewise, the disjunction between literary form and literal chronology cannot be accepted without doing great harm to the Bible. Jean-Marc Berthoud, a Swiss Reformed scholar, says, "What difficulty would it be for [the Author of the Universe] to cause the most complex, refined literary form to coincide with the very way in which He Himself created all things in six days? Artistic form is in no sense opposed to an actual relation of facts, especially since the Author of the account is none less than the actual Creator of the facts which are described in that account. . . ."

As a matter of fact, the parallelism of the creation narrative is not as exact as we are asked to believe. Again, Young deals with this in a rigorous argument covering several pages, but for our purposes I will quote just two paragraphs:

Do the second and fifth days parallel one another? On day two there is a twofold fiat ("let there be a firmament ... and let it divide") and the fulfillment consists of two acts of God ("God made ... divided"), followed by a further act ("God called"). On the fifth day there is also a twofold fiat ("let the waters bring forth ... and the fowl let it fly") and then comes a fulfillment consisting of a threefold creative act of God ("God created ... great whales ... every living thing ... every winged fowl") and this is followed by two additional acts of God ("God saw ... God blessed"). As far as form is concerned, the parallelism is by no means exact.

Nor is there exact parallelism in content. The swarming waters and their inhabitants which were created in the fifth day are not to be identified with the primeval waters of day two. Rather, it is expressly stated that the fish are to fill the waters in the

seas (verse 22), and the seas were brought into existence on the third day. For that matter, if a mere parallel with water is sought, we may note that "the waters" and the "abyss" are mentioned in verse two also.

In a footnote Young says that this is sufficient "to show that the alleged parallelism between days two and five is an illusion." At least it is not complete enough to warrant a theory based on it.

Genesis 2:5

Since Genesis 2:5 is a pivotal passage for defenders of the framework hypothesis, I want to deal with it in greater detail. To repeat what we said earlier: the problem here is that Genesis 2:5 seems to conflict with Day Three. Day Three, if taken literally, pictures the drying up of the land at an abnormally rapid rate, but Genesis 2:5 suggests that God used processes of ordinary providence, including secondary causes (mist, rain, etc.), to make the world.

Mark Futato believes that Genesis 2:5-7 is a "logical, highly structured, and perfectly coherent" presentation of two problems, their reasons and their solutions. The problems are stated in the first half of verse 5: there was neither "wild vegetation" (*plant of the field*) nor "cultivated grain" (*herb of the field*) in the earth. The reasons why these two kinds of plants did not exist are given at the end of verse 5: there was no wild vegetation because *the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no cultivated grain because there was not a man to till the ground*. The solution to the lack of rain, which kept the wild vegetation from germinating, can be found in verse 6: God caused "rain clouds" (Futato's interpretation) to arise from the earth and water the whole ground. The absence of a cultivator is supplied in verse 7, where *the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground*. He concludes that these normal processes (rain and human cultivation) were present during the time of creation since these verses describe the origin of certain plants. In a footnote, he specifically says that "other biblical accounts of creation [Ps. 104:13 and Prov. 3:19-20 in particular, but probably including Job 38-39] ... testify to the presence of rain from the beginning."

It seems that it is the concept of "other biblical accounts of creation" that causes the problem. The assumption seems to be that these other creation accounts diverge from each other so much that we must find a way to harmonize them. But a discrepancy appears only if we treat the other creation accounts as if they were independent of each other. In other words, we must assume the problem in order to find one. This is a clear case of *petitio principii* (begging the question). One would be hard pressed to find any indication of chronological sequence in the other so-called accounts; yet, this is exactly what Genesis one purports to offer. If only one account claims to be chronological, the difficulty vanishes.

All this is to say that Genesis 2:4 ff. is not a second version of the creation narrative. The account of the creation of heaven and earth concludes with Genesis 2:3. Genesis 2:4 begins with the phrase, *These are the generations*. Many years ago, Dr. Young demonstrated that this phrase, which occurs several times in Genesis, always introduces the results of the previous section. Thus, Genesis 2:4 introduces a new section that concentrates on one aspect of the completed creation, namely, the creation of man. It first considers the environment in which man would appear and then narrates the creation of man and his helper. Thus,

Genesis 2:5 is not another explanation of Day Three, but a detailed description of an already created world with specific information relating to man's place in that world.

Genesis 2:5-7 anticipates the story that follows. Its function in the narrative is akin to the heading or subheadings of a newspaper article. That is, they provide the basic story, but the details of that story come in what follows.

The plants mentioned in Genesis 2:5 are the same as those mentioned in Genesis 3:18. In fact, exactly the same words are used for *herb of the field*. Thus, Futato's definition of these plants as "wild vegetation" and "cultivated grain" is essentially correct. But what he misses is that neither of these kinds of plant life grew before the Fall exactly as they grew afterward. When Adam sinned, God cursed the entire world: *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread* (Gen. 3:18-19). Wild vegetation became a hindrance and an annoyance to man; God himself would provide rain to cause it to flourish in man's world. Cultivated grain needed the tireless labor of a cultivator. Fallen man will eat only by the sweat of his brow. No more would Adam and Eve simply reach out their hands to eat the abundant fruit of the Garden of Eden. Genesis 2:5-7, then, helps the reader understand the drastic change that took place as a result of Adam's sin.

Earlier we said that Genesis 2:5 is not about Day Three. Now we see that there is no necessity to go in that direction; the reference to the absence of rain can be interpreted in another way that allows Genesis one to maintain its chronology. There is no need to interpret the days of Genesis one as anything other than days of normal duration as we know them today. In fact, Genesis one does not allow anything else.

Throughout Scripture, creation is spoken of as a six-day event. The clearest of these is the fourth commandment. When Moses gave the law to the Israelites, they knew what days were because they spent many of them out in the hot desert sun making bricks. The fourth commandment obligated them to follow the pattern for labor that God himself established at the very beginning. Now, if the days of Genesis one are not the same kind of days that we know today, then this commandment makes no sense. "God put together six *images* of creation and then rested *forever*; therefore, we must work *six* days and rest one *day*"? This is called the fallacy of equivocation; that is, the meaning of the terms is not consistent throughout the argument.

Kline recognizes the force of this argument, though he obviously does not want to admit it or accept it. He says, "The argument that Genesis 1 must be strictly chronological because man's six days of labor follow one another in chronological succession forces the argument unnecessarily." He does not say why he thinks so, but continues, "The logic of such argument would not allow one to stop short of the conclusion that the creation 'days' must all have been of equal duration and twenty-four hours at that." So it does. Dr. Kline has unwillingly established our case.

This shows something else. Not only is the correct view of creation necessary for sound doctrine, but also for ethics. The framework hypothesis says that God structured the creation account with the six-to-one ratio to lay the groundwork for the fourth commandment to be given later. But if creation did not take place in six

days, why did God find it necessary to make up a story to base the fourth commandment on? Could he not simply have given us the fourth commandment without a reason for it? What motivation is there to obey a God who manufactures reasons for our obedience?

Literal, Six-Day Creation and the Local Church

By **Charles A. McIlhenny** | Sept 1998

The focus of this article is on the work and discipline of the church, *i.e.*, the local congregation in relation to the six-day literal understanding of the creation account. The church's most celebrated day — the "marketplace of the soul," as the Puritans used to say — is the Lord's Day, and its worship is both public and private. The Christian Sabbath, the Lord's Day, belongs to the Lord of the Sabbath. And to speak of the literalness of the Sabbath day presupposes the literalness of the previous six days as well.

I take a literalist position on the creation account not because I like "literalism," nor because literalism is the only logical-rational defense against irrationalism, liberalism, and cultism; nor do I hold it for some unreasoning "fundamentalist" prejudice against secular science. I take a literalist position on creation because upon investigation of the exegetical argument, I found that this view was consistent with the rest of SCRIPTURE, without apologies to science. And the literalist position is also consistent with the Westminster Confession of Faith which states clearly and concisely, ". . . in the space of six days. . ." (Chap. IV, para. 1).

Literalism and the Law

However, I wasn't always a literalist on Genesis 1. The textual stumbling block to my previous belief in the "day-age" theory came from within the 10 Commandments, "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20:11). It could not be ignored in understanding Genesis 1. When that hurdle was cleared by the blast from Moses' interpretation, I accepted the literal understanding of the creation account. Only then does the Genesis account square with the Exodus text and gives me understanding of what the Sabbath means for my life, my family, and the life of my congregation.

The issue of the literalness of the creation account is no slight matter, especially for the life and work of the church. Without the literal, six-day creation, there is no theology to justify the keeping of either the Old Covenant Sabbath or the New Covenant Sabbath, *i.e.*, the Lord's Day. That's the very point of Moses' literal explanation reminding us to keep the Sabbath day.

Before dealing with this literal application for the local church, a brief argument for the perpetuity of the Sabbath command is important. *First*, the text of Deuteronomy 4¹ calls this moral law "his covenant," implying a singular covenant written in 10 "words"² — again reinforcing solidarity of the fourth word/commandment along with the other "words" of the covenant. The fourth word cannot be extrapolated without doing damage to this covenant structure itself. Some have suggested that the fourth word is a ceremonial law in the midst of the moral law. Michael Horton argues that this commandment "belongs" in the ceremonial part of the law "rather than the moral part." But where one would rather relocate this law is irrelevant to the fact that it is NOT in the midst of ceremonies but in the heart of the moral law — within the depths of the 10 words of this singular covenant.

Second, the Sabbath is commanded and hallowed by God as part and parcel of the six previous days of the creation account; it can no more be removed than any other day of the week can be dropped from the creation. It is a "creation ordinance" made for man (i.e., mankind — not Jewish man or Christian man).⁴ There is nothing inherently ceremonial in God's blessing this day; its peculiar ordination as his day of rest transcends the peculiarities of both old and new covenants.

Third, in the light of Mark 2:28 Jesus asserts his Messianic Lordship over the Sabbath day. His reference to the "Son of Man's"⁵lordship extends his Messianic rule over this creation ordinance for purposes of redemptive rulership, not extinction of that day. There's nothing implied in Christ's Lordship to expunge the fourth word from the midst of the moral law.

With the assertion of his messianic Lordship, he introduces us to the New Covenant theocratic kingdom which was about to be inaugurated by his "first day of the week"resurrection. As Messianic Lord, he is not bound to the old ceremonies, nor to the specific "end-of-the-week"mode; but instead makes that commandment serve his new theocratic purposes: resurrection on the First Day of the week — and all for the new theocratic kingdom and church called a new creation.

It is the day of the church, the day in which we do the highest and most sacred recreation: listen to God's word preached. It is the day when the church can insist that all God's people unite for worship and even threaten wrath to those in the covenant community who forsake the assembly of themselves. It is the day most intense in self-sacrifice for the sake of covenant worship. We gather not first for our good, but for God's glory, and then for the welfare of our neighbor. We do not have the right to allow for another day of rest — to accommodate busy work and vacation schedules.

It takes self-discipline to keep the literal regular ratio of six days to one day. It is a spiritual discipline at heart with practical implications of time management. How can the work of the family, the job, the school, the vacation, etc., be accomplished within the interval of six literal days

split up by the Sabbath resting? Does my boss have a right to ask of me seven literal days for his work while the work of worship and fellowship gets shortchanged?

Church Discipline

The proper application of church discipline rests on the literalness of understanding the creation account. If the Lord's Day or the Christian Sabbath (as the Westminster Confession of Faith calls it) is left up to the exigencies of the moment or to individual interpretation, why meet on Sunday? If that were the case, the church could well meet on any day as the holy day of the Lord; in fact, each individual Christian could designate his own holy day, his own personal day of obligation to worship — no organized day of worship could be insisted on. Hence the Christian would not "feel" obliged to gather on Sunday, the First Day of the Week — individualism even as to the day of worship would reign. Sadly, this greatly characterizes the state of the church today.

The time of the worship must be regulated if there is to be unity in the church. Who knows when to worship unless it be determined by God? How would anything get

done in and for service if each member had his own private conviction about his day of rest? The preacher likes Monday; the Sunday school teachers want Wednesday; the janitor organizes for Sunday; and the ladies missionary society suggests any other day, etc. — how do you regulate the organization of the local covenant community. What becomes of the unity of the Body? What becomes of submitting yourselves one to another?

Theological Implications

What becomes of the "first day" expression if not referring to a literal, 24-hour normal or natural day? Without the literal six-day creation, the first day merely becomes a pragmatic convention; it could have been the second day of the week or the thirteenth day of the month. The "first day" could refer to anything; so what if the resurrection was on the first day? If not a natural 24-hour day, it would lose all time reference.

Denial of the literal, six-day creation doctrine, takes the guts out of the literalness of the First Day of the Week, too. Thus the phrase "the first day of the week" becomes merely a convenient expression — merely a colloquialism with no special significance to the "new creation" or "new life" which Christ brought about on the First Day of the Week.

The Fourth Commandment clearly explains the world as created in six days, and that it was God's example of work/rest which became our example: a mandatory, perpetual warrant which carries over into eternity itself — the final Rest. Not all the commandments carry such ultimate blessing as the fourth. The Fifth Commandment, "Honor your father and your mother," is simply commanded, though God does not himself keep it. That commandment finds its end in this life.

In Thomas Shepherd's book, *Theses Sabbatia*, he calls these "days" of creation— "six natural days to labor. . . not artificial, but a natural day, consisting of 24 hours"7 Such literal understanding of the days implies that even as six days are six, full, 24-hours days, so the Lord's Day

is also a full, 24-hour day, not merely the daylight hours, nor a day limited to the set times of worship service, after which I can do as I please for my own pleasure. We have failed to realize it is the Lord's Day, not the Lord's Moment, or the Lord's Hour!

The literalness of the creation account emphasizes that there is a day set aside for works of piety and mercy and for rest from all the other days of labor. Its time and form are decided by God. What is a day of rest if one will not be a day of rest for everyone else? What becomes of a day of rest of one if others do not participate in it as well? True resting becomes such only when everyone else is also morally called to rest on that same day.

The literalness of the six-day creation account also means consecutive days, not merely pictures or "frames" of six "days" in which one may rearrange the days as he sees fit. Every six days there is a rhythm of rest and work; if not literal, it could be rest to any ratio of work and rest — two days of rest with five days of labor or six consecutive days of rest with 40 some-odd days of work, nonstop! God could have constructed it that way and we'd have to live that way, but he didn't. He gave us the regular, clock-like ratio of so much work to just so much rest.

The regular distributed days of work and rest create an equalized society. Everyone is commanded to rest equally so. When Israel was told to gather twice as much manna on the sixth day because there would be none on the seventh day, they'd better know that each day could be equally counted on and that it wasn't figurative or "framed" days. There would be no food on "that" literal next day. Each covenant household gathered for six regular natural days and on that Sabbath day there was no gathering warranted. With the severe penalty for gathering on that day, the pious Israelite had better know how long a day was figurative! Day-age? Or 24-hour natural day? *Or he'd be dead!*

In the Old Covenant, God appointed for his people all kinds of Sabbath days, weeks, months, and years. If you didn't know from God what a literal Sabbath individual day was like, you couldn't know weeks, months, or yearly Sabbaths either! The weekly Sabbaths, as well as yearly Sabbaths, were based on the ordinary, regular, literal-day Sabbath. You knew when you would get your inheritance returned but only by way of literal understanding. Your debt would be forgiven in the seventh year, a Sabbath year, which was predicated on the literalness of that original day of rest in Paradise, as explained by Moses in Exodus 20:11.

The apostle Paul required that the churches lay up in store on the first day of the week; so that he would not have to waste time and effort gathering funds while preaching from church to church. To know what the first day of the week was, demanded a literal distinction of time in order to meet the demands of the apostle:

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. (1 Cor. 16:2ff)

Sabbath does mean rest. The Lord's Day at the local church can be the busiest day of the week; but if carefully arranged need not be so, especially with love-feasts, agape-meals, pot-lucks, etc., congesting the day. Carefully planned luncheons, simple and uncomplicated, can be the order of the Sunday lunch. Preparation must not intrude into prayer or worship time for members. Preparation for meals should be done at home and possibly the night before. Utilizing modern labor-saving devices can save on the excessive labor. Excessive ministry by the faithful few cripples their ability to rest; spread the work: baby sitting, transporting, vacuuming, light-bulb changing, etc. Remember, the most important exercise of the Lord's Day is submitting to his service by the hearing of the word.

According to Hebrews 4:9, "there remains a Sabbath-rest for the people of God" to which we look forward. Each literal Lord's Day reminds us of that future age of eternal rest. The literal Sabbath coming out of six literal days promises a literal and eternal Rest for us in Christ in the future.

Notes

1. "And he declared unto you his covenant which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone" (Dt. 4:13).

2. Literally it is not "10 commandments" but 10 "words" of this singular covenant—one covenant with 10 words. The number 10 having the significance of completeness or wholeness.
3. Michael Horton, *The Law of Perfect Freedom*, ". . . I wish to make the case for my conviction that the fourth commandment belongs in what we call the 'ceremonial' rather than the 'moral' part of the law . . . [The 4th commandment] is no longer binding on Christians," 124-5.
4. Mk. 2:27-28
5. Dan. 7:13-14 where "son of man" takes on new prophetic messianic proportions.
6. Heb. 10:25
7. *Theses Sabbatia*, 218.

Dr. Walt Brown's Hydroplate Theory

By **Martin G. Selbrede** | Sept 1998

[Note by the compiler: After a half dozen editions, Dr. Walt Brown's seminal text, In The Beginning: Compelling Evidence for Creation and the Flood has developed into a mature exposition of an important new approach to the geological sciences. This overview is intended for readers not yet familiar with Dr. Brown's fresh and tightly-argued rethinking of the proper application of Scripture to geology. Although it diverges significantly from the work of other creationists working in the field, Dr. Brown's theory deserves both respect and a full hearing based on its considerable merits. Inasmuch as Chalcedon's commitment to creation science is long-standing — e.g., the inaugural edition of the Journal of Christian Reconstruction was devoted to the topic — it is hoped that a larger audience for these important ideas will be gained by their inclusion in the Report. We thank Dr. Brown for the opportunity to present his ideas to a new audience. — MGS.]

The Hydroplate Theory: A Brief Overview

The hydroplate theory is an alternate explanation of both the events of the Noahic flood, the present-day geological features of the world, and the actual mechanisms that operated then and continue to do so now. It directly challenges the current plate tectonics model of large-scale geology, and it suggests a major revamping of the geological events associated with the flood that God sent upon the world in light of a hard-line exegetical approach to the text of Genesis. It represents, then, a serious attempt at reconstructing the science of geology from the ground up.

Assumptions Undergirding the Hydroplate Theory

There are three assumptions upon which the hydroplate theory is built:

(1) Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas were joined across what is now the Atlantic Ocean, in the position shown in Figure 1 below. The fitting of the continents is not the conventional one, which requires that serious distortions be imposed on the pieces being forced to match up edge-to-edge. Conventional theory, as represented by Edward Bullard's model, requires shrinking Africa by 40%, removing Central America, Southern Mexico, and the Caribbean Islands, rotating Europe counterclockwise while rotating Africa clockwise, and rotating all continents relative to one another, and even the "fit" resulting after all these machinations is poor, as shown in Figure 2 below. The hydroplate model does not try to fit existing coastlines together in a jigsaw puzzle, but utilizes the Mid-Atlantic Ridge as the correct "edge" to be fitted: this results in the best possible fit of the continents.

(2) Ten miles below the pre-Flood Earth's surface were interconnected chambers of subterranean water — containing roughly half the liquid volume of today's oceans. These chambers formed a thin, spherical shell of water with a mean thickness of 5/8 of a mile. This answers to the Biblical "waters of the deep" that burst open during the Noahic Flood. These waters contained enormous amounts of dissolved gases and minerals, particularly salt (NaCl) and carbon dioxide (CO₂). A layer of basalt was situated between these waters and the Earth's upper mantle.

(3) The final assumption of the hydroplate theory is that the pressure in the layer of subterranean water was increasing.

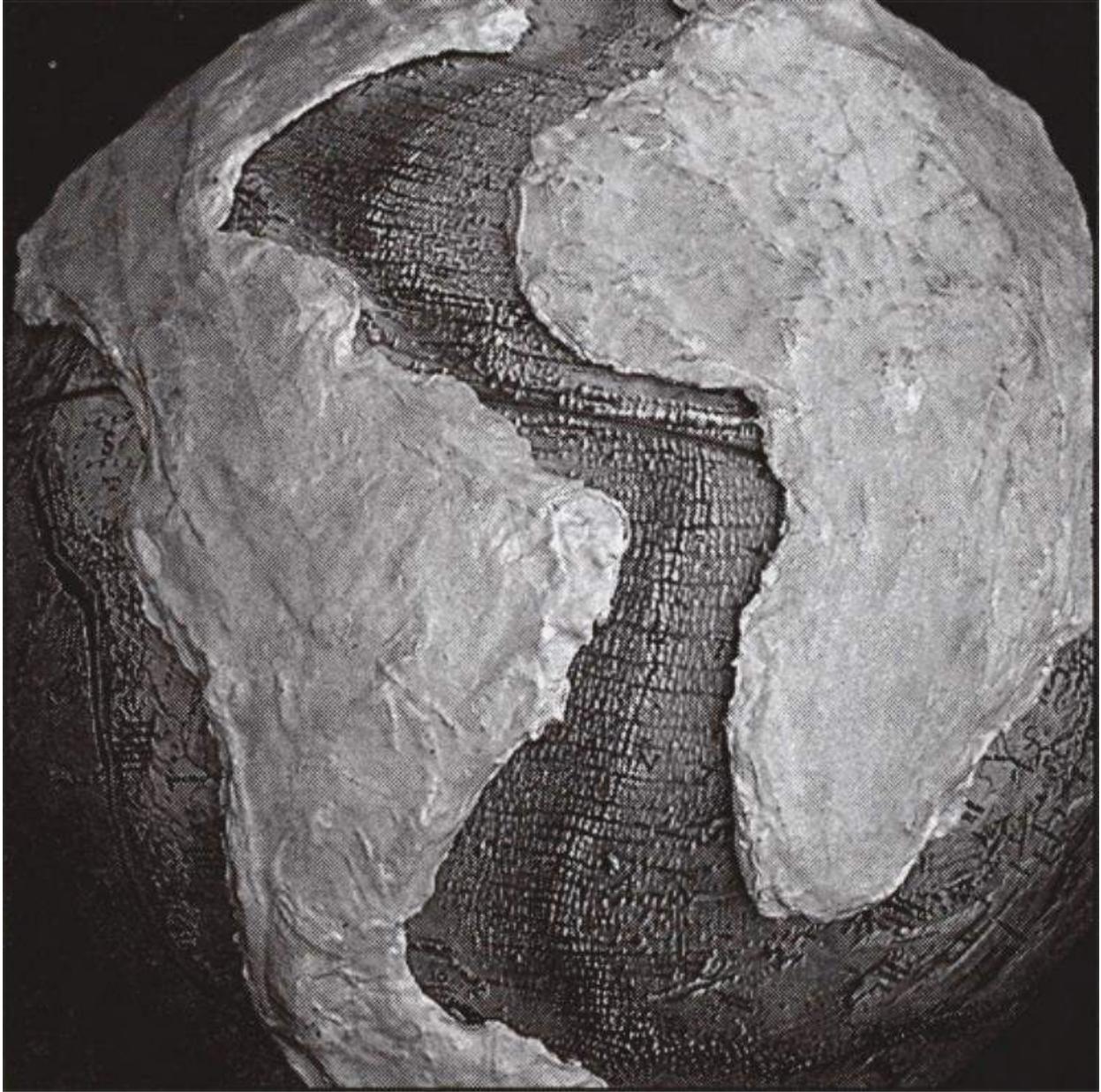


Figure 1: Best continental fit uses the Mid-Atlantic Ridge as the actual "edge" of the continents.



Figure 2. Fitting the continents together as Edward Bullard proposed yields a poor fit in comparison to Figure 1.

18 Geological Features in Search of a Doctrine

There are 18 distinct geological features that cannot be satisfactorily explained by current geological theory, and are accordingly the focus of continuing controversy.

(1) The Mid-Oceanic Ridge, discovered in the 1950s, is a mountain range 46,000 miles long that wraps around the Earth — on the ocean floor. It is formed of basalt, unlike almost all other mountains. The portion running down the center of the Atlantic Ocean, called the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, will be our primary focus. The explanations offered by plate tectonic theory will be shown to be less than satisfactory, whereas the hydroplate theory yields an explanation consistent with the actual features of the ridge.

(2) Continental shelves extend outward from the continents, sometimes for considerable distances, prior to plunging downward into deep sea regions. The boundary is considered to be halfway down the continental slope.

(3) Ocean trenches are long, narrow depressions on the ocean floor. Plate tectonics, which proposes that the earth's crust is composed of roughly a dozen 30-mile-thick plates upon which the continents and oceans rest, treats these trenches as points where a moving plate dives down into the Earth's mantle, a process called subduction. What pushes these 30-mile-thick plates down at such a steep angle, with frictional forces exceeding the strength of rock? Why do seismic reflection profiles show no distortion of the horizontal sedimentary layers in trenches, if they are the point where the proposed plates dive down into the mantle?

(4) Seamounts (submarine volcanos) litter the Pacific floor, some being almost as tall as Mt. Everest — however, there are few seamounts in the Atlantic. If one plate dives beneath another, as modern theory teaches, why aren't seamounts scraped off the top of the descending plate? Hundreds of flat-topped seamounts, called tablemounts, are 3000-6000 feet below sea level. Apparently, wave action planed off their tops. Either sea level was once much lower, or ocean floors were higher, or both — each possibility raises new and difficult questions.

(5) Plate tectonic theory claims that earthquakes occur when plates rub against each other, temporarily lock, and then periodically jerk loose. Why are some earthquakes, many quite powerful, far from plate boundaries? Why do earthquakes occur when water is forced into the ground, after large water reservoirs are built and filled?

(6) Plate tectonic theory gained acceptance when an important discovery of the 1960s was misinterpreted. People were told that paralleling the Mid-Oceanic Ridge are bands of ocean floor that have a reversed magnetic orientation. At a few places, the pattern of "reversals" on one side is almost a mirror image of those on the other side. This suggested that the magnetic poles of the earth reversed in the distant past, and that molten rock spreading away from the ridge solidified, took on the earth's current magnetic orientation, and moved outward from the ridge like a conveyor belt.

This story is inaccurate. There are no magnetic reversals on the ocean floor, and no compass would reverse direction if brought near the supposedly "reversed" bands in the Atlantic. There is, however, a fluctuation in magnetic intensity (see Figure 3 below). Someone merely drew a dashed line through these fluctuations and labeled everything below this average intensity a "reversal." The false but widespread notion is that these deviations from the average represent the magnetic field from millions of years ago. This faulty understanding has prevented the formulation of a better explanation for these magnetic anomalies, including the added consideration that many of these bands are not parallel to the ridge, but perpendicular to it and lined up with fracture zones, contrary to plate tectonic predictions.

(7) Submarine canyons are often much larger than those found on the continents. One is three times deeper than the Grand Canyon, another is ten times longer (2,300 miles). Many of these V-shaped canyons are extensions of major rivers. How did they form? What force could gouge out a network of canyons 15,000 feet below sea level?

(8) There are surprisingly large amounts of coal in Antarctica, as well as fossilized tree trunks of considerable size. Was it once warm enough for trees to grow in

Antarctica? If it was, how could so much vegetation grow where it is night 6 months of the year?

(9) How does an ice age begin or end? As glaciers expand, they reflect more of the sun's radiation away from the earth, lowering global temperatures and causing even further glacier growth: a cycle that should continue until the entire globe is frozen. Conversely, if glaciers diminish, as they have in recent years, the earth should reflect less heat, warm up, and melt all glaciers forever.

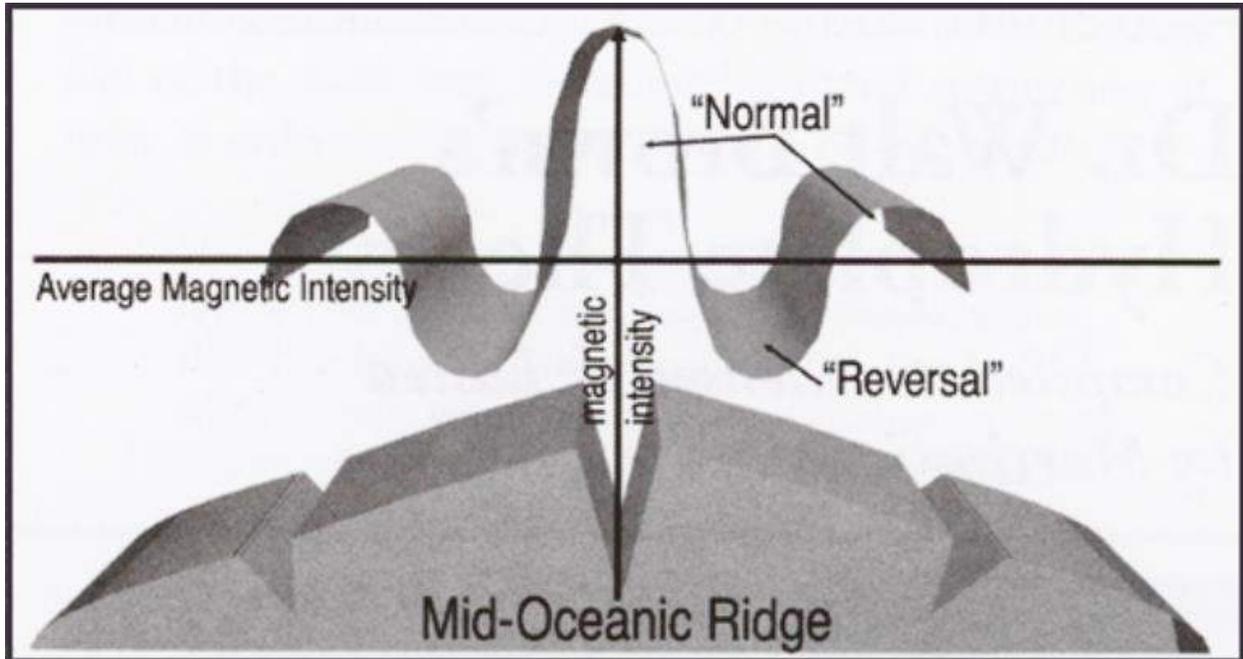


Figure 3. Magnetic anomalies. Notice the wide fluctuations in magnetic intensity as one moves across the Mid-Oceanic Ridge. The so-called "reversals" are simply regions of lower magnetic intensity.

(10) Some fleshy remains of about 50 mammoths and rhinoceroses have been found frozen and buried in Alaska and Siberia. One mammoth still had identifiable food in its mouth and stomach. To reproduce this result today, one would have to suddenly push a well-fed elephant (dead or alive) into a very large freezer and turn the thermostat to -150°F . This alone would prevent residual heat and gastric acid from destroying the food in the stomach, as well as explain why food would still be in the creature's mouth.

Today the average January temperature in Siberia is -30°F : how did huge herds of these mammoths thrive at these temperatures, let alone find water to drink? Or were the Arctic regions much warmer in the past?

(11) How did the mountains form? Major mountains are usually crumpled like an accordion (see Figure 4). What force could push a long, thick slab of rock and cause it to buckle and sometimes fold back on itself without crushing the end being pushed? Even if the sediments were squeezed and folded prior to hardening, what squeezed them?

(12) Large blocks of rock called overthrusts present a similar problem: such blocks are thought to have slid over other rock for many miles. Why overthrusts occur has never been adequately explained. Anything pushing a large slab of rock with

enough force to overcome frictional resistance would crush the slab before it would move. Although appeal is sometimes made to the pore pressure of water in the rocks providing the requisite lubrication to enable the sliding to take place on a downhill slope, not enough water resides in rocks today to make this possible, and over-thrusted blocks are not on slopes.



Figure 4. Buckled sedimentary layers near the Sullivan River in southern British Columbia, Canada. Although textbooks refer to some uplifting force forming such mountains, it is clear that these strata were formed by a horizontal compression.

(13) Erupting lava usually exceeds 1800°F. Where does it come from and why is it so hot? The standard explanation is that magma originates in hot pockets called magma chambers at depths of about 60 miles. But how could magma escape to the surface? At depths greater than 4 or 5 miles, the pressure is so great that all empty channels through which magma might rise should be squeezed shut. Even if a crack could open, the magma must rise through colder rock — the magma would tend to solidify and plug up the crack.

The two deepest holes in the world are on the Kola Peninsula in northern Russia and in Germany's northeastern Bavaria. Drilled to depths of 7.5 and 5.6 miles respectively, neither hole reached the basalt that underlies the granite continents. Deep in the Russian hole, to everyone's surprise, was hot, flowing, mineralized water (including salt water) encased in crushed granite. Why was the granite crushed? In the German hole, the drill encountered salt-water-filled cracks throughout the lower few miles, with salt concentrations twice that of sea water. Surface water cannot migrate below about 5 miles because the weight of the overlying rock squeezes shut even microscopic flow channels. Although geologists are mystified by the presence of this deep salt water, the hydroplate theory resolves the mystery.

(14) Had the earth ever been molten, denser materials would have sunk toward the earth's center, and lighter ones floated to the surface. One should not find dense

metals like gold at the earth's surface. No suggested transport mechanism satisfies all the requirements of this problem (e.g., volcanos transport material to the surface, but gold is not concentrated around volcanos). Even granite, the basic continental rock, is a mixture of many minerals with varying densities. If one melted granite and slowly cooled the liquid, the granite would not reform. Instead, it would become a layer cake of minerals sorted vertically by density. In other words, the earth's crust appears to have never been molten.

Geothermal heat measurements vary widely across the globe, and tend to challenge both the "molten earth" model and the idea that billions of years of cooling have transpired. What, then is the source of geothermal heat and why do the measurements associated with it ("temperature gradients") fluctuate so widely?

(15) Limestone (calcium carbonate, CaCO_3) presents a challenge to modern geology: there's too much of it based on the processes currently proposed to synthesize it. Most limestone is in extensive layers, tens of thousands of square miles in area and hundreds of feet thick, much of it quite pure. Under the Bahamas, the limestone is more than 3 miles thick! The presence of pure limestone, without the impurities that tend to drift in, argue for its rapid burial. Today, limestone forms either by precipitating out of sea water or by organisms taking it out of sea water to produce shells. In either case, oceans supply limestone sediments. The oceans already have as much limestone in them as they can possibly hold. Therefore, where did all the limestone come from, especially its calcium and carbon, which are relatively rare outside of limestone?

(16) Metamorphic rock presents enigmas of its own. Marble, a metamorphic rock, forms when limestone is heated beyond 1600°F and squeezed at a confining pressure corresponding to the weight of a 23-mile high column of rock. Such metamorphic rocks are formed in the presence of water, often flowing water. What could account for the extreme pressure, temperature, and abundance of water?

Mt. Everest being only 5.5 miles high, it is difficult to imagine mountains 23 miles high, but modern geologists who think in terms of millions of years don't see any difficulties here: the metamorphic rock is slowly transported from many miles under the surface up to where we can find it. However, this explanation ignores the water issue: surface water cannot seep any lower than about 5 miles, and even at a 5 mile depth it does not flow. Where did the flowing water come from at the requisite 23-mile depth?

(17) Plateaus are relatively flat regions of large area that have been uplifted more than 500 feet relative to their surroundings. The standard model cannot explain their formation — the only explanation offered thus far invokes slow moving "convection currents" in solid rock some 30 miles below the surface sweeping enormous amounts of light rock from an unknown location and depositing it underneath the plateau. The Colorado plateau would require 2,500,000 cubic miles of granite to have been so transported, while the Tibetan plateaus would require 25,000,000 cubic miles of granite to have been swept under the region. In both instances, it is difficult to understand how this process deposited the granite in so uniform a layer, yielding a flat plateau of considerable extension (750,000 square miles of plateau in Tibet, for example). The source for this granite is even more troubling: the place from which this light rock originated should have been turned

into an enormous geological depression, but no such predicted features have ever been observed on the earth.

(18) Thick layers of salt are buried up to several miles below the earth's surface, sometimes in layers 100,000 square miles in area and a mile in thickness. Large salt deposits are not being laid down today. What concentrated so much salt? Sometimes a salt layer bulges up several miles, like a big underground bubble, to form a salt dome. Surprising large salt deposits lie under the Mediterranean; some have estimated that the Mediterranean must have evaporated 8-10 times to deposit so much salt. Although this estimate is probably low, the more damaging question is why each alleged refilling of the Mediterranean didn't dissolve the salt residue left from the previous evaporation cycle.

Hydroplate Theory: Initial Proposals

The hydroplate theory proposes that the continents were once in the position shown in Figure 1, and that they were connected by rock that was rapidly eroded and transported worldwide by erupting subterranean water. Most of the earth's sediments were formed from this eroded rock, which was once situated in the space between the continents in Figure 1. The continents quickly slide (rapid continental drift) east and west from what is now the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and came to rest in their present positions.

Evaluation Criteria for Geologic Models

Three criteria should govern the evaluation of any proposal in the hard sciences: process, parsimony, and prediction. A proposed process may have a host of collateral implications and consequences: if these are absent, or contradicted by the data, the initial proposal is thereby weakened. A proposal should invoke the principle of parsimony: the minimal use of assumptions (particularly ad hoc assumptions to "save the theory"). A scientific model should make confirmable predictions to provide a means by which it may either be strengthened or falsified in light of an ever-increasing amount of physical data.

Inasmuch as the event being described by the hydroplate theory is unrepeatable, it is necessary that certain assumptions be invoked (the three laid out at the beginning of this discussion). From that foundation, the events as detailed within the theory follow in logical succession and are described below.

The Hydroplate Theory: Events

The **Rupture Phase** of the Noahic flood began as increasing pressure in the subterranean water stretched the overlying crust, just as a balloon stretches when the pressure inside it increases. Eventually, this shell of rock reached its failure point. Failure began with a microscopic crack. Stress concentrations at both ends of the crack resulted in its rapid propagation at about 2 miles per second, nearly the velocity of sound in rock. The crack followed the path of least resistance, generally along a great-circle path. The ends of the crack, traveling in opposite directions, circled the earth in several hours. The initial stresses were largely relieved when one end of the crack ran into the path left by the other end. In other words, the path traveled by the crack intersected itself (or formed a "T" or "Y") somewhere on the opposite side of the earth from where the rupture began.

As the crack raced around the earth, the 10-mile-thick "roof" of overlying rock opened like a rip in a tightly stretched cloth. The pressure in the subterranean chamber immediately beneath the rupture suddenly dropped to almost atmospheric pressure, causing water to explode with great violence out of the ten-mile-deep "slit" that wrapped around the earth like the seam of a baseball.

All along this globe-circling rupture, a fountain of water jetted supersonically into and above the atmosphere (Figure 5 below). The water fragmented into an "ocean" of droplets that fell to the earth great distances away. This produced torrential rains such as the earth has never experienced. Some jetting water rose above the atmosphere where the droplets froze. Huge masses of extremely cold, muddy "hail" fell at certain locations where it buried, suffocated, and froze many animals, including some mammoths.

The **Flood Phase** ensued as the extreme force of the 46,000-mile-long sheet of upward-jetting water rapidly eroded both sides of the crack. Eroded particles (or sediments) were swept up in the waters that gushed out from the rupture, giving the water a thick, muddy consistency. These sediments settled out over the earth's surface in days, trapping and burying many plants and animals, beginning the process of forming most of the world's fossils.

The rising flood waters eventually blanketed the water jetting from the rupture, although water still surged out of the rupture. Global flooding occurred over the earth's relatively smooth topography, since today's major mountains had not yet formed.

The temperature of the escaping subterranean waters increased by about 100°F as they were forced from the high pressure chamber. The hot water, being less dense, rose to the surface of the flood waters. There, high evaporation occurred, increasing the salt content of the remaining water. Once supersaturated, salts precipitated into thick, pasty layers. Later, the pasty (low density) salt was blanketed by denser sediments, creating an unstable arrangement of heavy material over lighter material. A slight jiggle will cause a plume of the lighter layer below to flow up through the denser layer above. In the case of salt, that plume is called a salt dome.

The pressure of the water decreased as it rose out of the subterranean chamber. Since high pressure liquids hold more dissolved gases than low pressure liquids, gases bubbled out of the escaping waters. This process occurs when a can of carbonated beverage is opened, releasing bubbles of dissolved carbon dioxide. From the subterranean waters, the most significant gas was carbon dioxide. About 35% of the sediments were eroded from the basalt below the escaping water. Up to 6% of basalt is calcium by weight. Calcium ions in the escaping water, along with dissolved carbon dioxide gas (carbonic acid) caused vast sheets of limestone (CaCO_3) to precipitate as the pressure dropped.



Figure 5. Fountains of the Great Deep bursting forth.

The flooding uprooted most of the earth's abundant vegetation. Much of it was transported by the flood's currents to regions where it accumulated in great masses. Some vegetation even drifted to the South Pole. Later, during the continental drift phase, buried layers of vegetation were rapidly compressed and heated, precisely the conditions to form coal and oil. The flood phase ended with the continents near the positions shown in Figure 1 (viewed from space) and Figure 6 (viewed in cross-section).

The **Rapid Continental Drift Phase** develops as a consequence of the slight elasticity of compressed rock. The deeper the rock, the more tightly compressed is the "spring." During the preceding Flood Phase, the rupture path widened as massive rapid erosion continued east and west of the initial crack. Eventually the eroded region was sufficiently wide that the compressed rock beneath the subterranean chamber was on the verge of springing upward. Centrifugal force is greatest at the equator, providing a slightly greater "outward tug" on the compressed rock where the rupture crossed the equator. The 46,000-mile-long rupture only crossed the equator at two places: one, in what is now the Pacific, and the other, in the Atlantic. However, the Atlantic location lies along the equator for 2,000 miles. Its length and location, then, caused the initial instability to occur there. As the ridge rose, it lifted adjacent material just enough to cause it to become unstable and also spring upward. This process continued all along the path of the rupture, forming the Mid-Oceanic Ridge. (See Figure 7 below for an illustration of the principle involved.) Also formed were fracture zones and the strange offsets the ridge makes along fracture zones. Soon afterward, the magnetic anomalies developed.

The ridge rose several miles and elevated the granite plates along the flanks of the ridge. As the plates rose, they began to slide downhill. The plates were well

lubricated by subterranean water still escaping from beneath them. They slid east and west, because the Mid-Atlantic Ridge extends north and south.

Continental plates accelerated away from the segment of the Mid-Oceanic Ridge now called the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. As they did, the Atlantic Ocean basin opened up. Eventually the drifting (actually accelerating) continental plates (or **hydroplates**) ran into resistances of two types. The first happened as the water lubricant beneath each sliding plate was depleted. The second occurred when a plate collided with something. For example, India literally collided with Asia, and the western coast of North America collided with a rising portion of the Mid-Oceanic Ridge. As each massive hydroplate decelerated, it experienced a gigantic compression event — buckling, crushing, and thickening each plate.

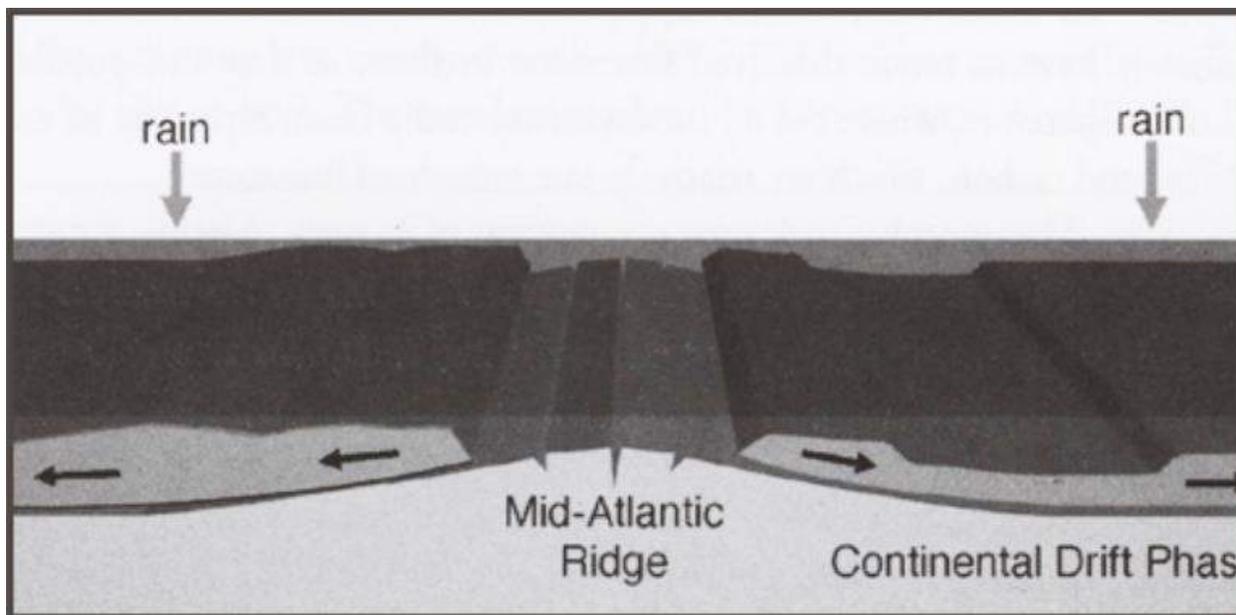


Figure 6. Transition point between the Flood Phase and the Continental Drift Phase. The rupture line becomes the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.

Buckling occurred in the thinner portions of the hydroplates. Crushing and upward buckling formed major mountain ranges. As explained earlier, the forces for this dramatic event could not be applied to stationary (static) continents resting on other rock. The force was dynamic, produced by rapidly moving hydroplates riding on lubricating water that had not yet escaped from below them.

Naturally, the long axis of each buckled mountain and each trench was perpendicular to its hydroplates motion — or parallel to the portion of the Mid-Oceanic Ridge from which it slid. Thus, the Rocky Mountains, Appalachians, and Andes have a north-south orientation, The Himalayas have a northwest-to-southeast orientation because their hydroplate slide from the Mid-Indian Oceanic Ridge.

Friction at the base of skidding hydroplates generated immense heat, enough to melt rock and produce massive volumes of magma. In some regions, the high temperatures and pressures formed metamorphic rock. Where this heat was intense, rock melted. This high pressure magma squirted up through cracks between broken blocks, producing other metamorphic rocks. Sometimes it escaped to the earth's surface, producing volcanic activity and "floods" of lava outpourings,

such as we see on the Columbia and Deccan Plateaus. This was the beginning of the earth's volcanic activity.

Other magma collected in pockets, now called magma chambers. The volcanic activity surrounding the Pacific Ocean, the so-called "ring of fire," corresponds to the leading edges of the hydroplates where compression and crushing would have generally been the greatest. The heat remaining today is called geothermal heat.

As the continents rose out of the water, and mountains formed, some subterranean water also flowed up into the cracks in the crushed granite. This is what was encountered in the deep holes drilled in Russia and Germany. We can now understand why the salt concentration in these cracks was about twice that of sea water. The preflood seas, which had little dissolved salt, diluted by about half the equal volume of salty, subterranean water that gushed out during the flood. Salty water that did not escape, therefore, has twice the salt concentration of today's oceans.

The **Recovery Phase** followed the compression event, which entailed the receding of the flood waters as the mountains were buckled and folded up from the leading edges of the sliding hydroplates.

Simultaneously, the violent force of the upward surging subterranean water was "choked off" as the plates settled onto the floor of the subterranean chamber. Without sinking hydroplates to produce the high pressure flow, water was no longer forced up through the rupture. Instead, the deep basins between the continents became reservoirs into which the flood waters returned. These deep reservoirs were initially part of the basalt floor of the subterranean chamber, 10.75 miles below the earth's surface. Consequently, sea level immediately after the flood was several miles lower than it is today. This provided wide land bridges between all continents, facilitating the migration of animals and people for perhaps several centuries. Drainage of the flood waters down the steep continental eroded deep channels which today are called submarine canyons.

Hydroplates rested on some parts of this basalt floor, while water covered other portions. Since the thickened hydroplates applied greater pressure to the floor than did the water, the hydroplates depressed the basalt floor downward over the centuries. The material the sinking plates acted caused the deep ocean floor to rise. (Imagine a water bed suddenly covered by two adjacent plates. The denser plate will sink, tilting the other plate.)

As sea level rose in the centuries after the flood, animals were forced to higher ground and were sometimes isolated on islands far from our present continental boundaries. Classic examples of this are the finches and other animals Charles Darwin found on the Galapagos Islands, 650 miles off the coast of Ecuador. Today, those islands are the only visible remains of a drowned South American peninsula. Darwin believed the finches were blown there during a giant storm. (While some may believe that story, it also requires that both a male and female finch ended up on the same island, or at least one pregnant female.)

The more sediments continents carried and the thicker continents grew during the crushing of the compression event, the deeper they sank. This gave rise to changing depths of the crust-mantle interface called the Mohorovicic Discontinuity

(or Moho for short). This explains why continental material is so different from oceanic material, and why the Moho is so deep beneath mountains and yet so shallow beneath the ocean floor.

Over the centuries, new mountain ranges and thickened continental plates settled slowly to their equilibrium depth. Sinking mountains increased the pressure under the crust on both sides of mountain ranges. Consequently, weaker portions of the overlying crust fractured and rose, forming plateaus, even on the ocean floor. In other words, as continents and mountains sank, plateaus rose. This serves to explain the seemingly strange aspects of plateaus noted earlier. It also explains why plateaus are adjacent to major mountain ranges. The Tibetan Plateau is next to the most massive mountain range in the world — the Himalayas, while the Colorado Plateau is next to the Rocky Mountains and the Columbia Plateau next to the Cascades.

Drainage of the waters that covered the earth left every continental basin filled to the brim with water. Some of these postflood lakes lost more water by evaporation and seepage than they gained by rainfall and drainage from higher elevations. Consequently, they shrank over the centuries. A well-known example was former Lake Bonneville which became the Great Salt Lake.

Through rainfall and drainage from higher terrain, other lakes gained more water than they lost and thus overflowed their rims at the lowest point. The resulting erosion at that point on the rim allowed more water to flow over it. This eroded the cut in the rim even deeper and caused even more water to cut it faster. Thus, the downcutting process accelerated catastrophically. Eventually, the entire lake dumped through a deep slit which we today call a canyon. These waters emptied into the next lower basin, causing it to breach its rim and create another canyon, like falling dominoes. The most famous canyon of all. Grand Canyon, was caused primarily by the dumping of what we will call Grand Lake. It occupied the southeast quarter of Utah, parts of northeastern Arizona, as well as small parts of Colorado and New Mexico. Grand Lake, standing at an elevation of 5,700 feet above today's sea level, spilled over and quickly eroded its natural dam 22 miles southwest of what is now Page, Arizona. In doing so, the western boundary of former Hopi Lake (elevation 5,950 feet) was eroded, releasing waters that occupied the present valley of the Little Colorado River. In just a few weeks, more water was released over northern Arizona than is in all the Great Lakes combined.

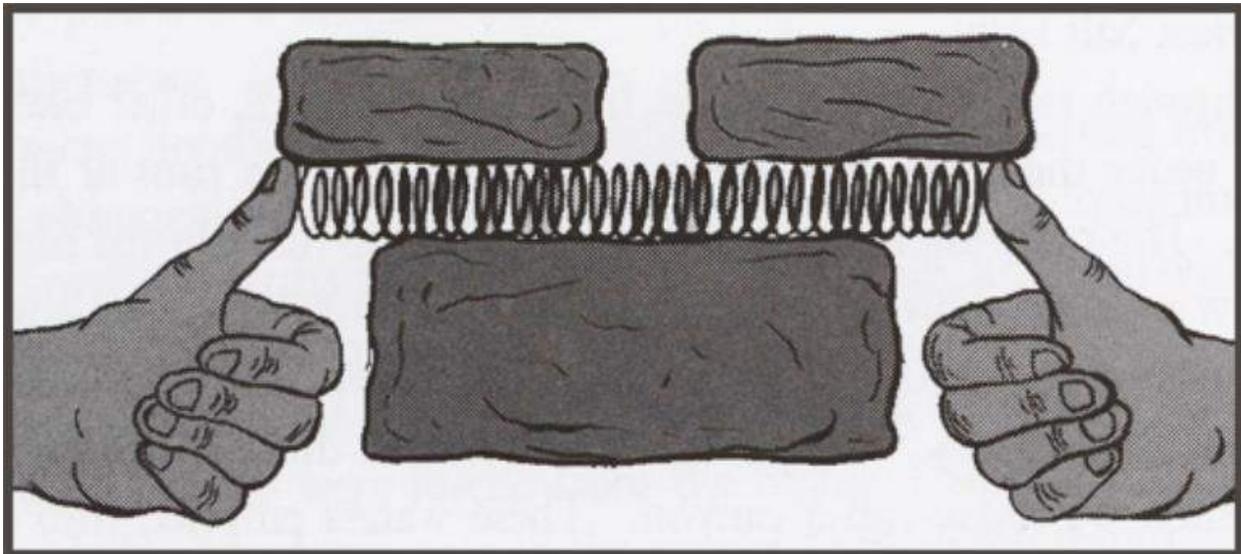
With thousands of large, high lakes after the flood, and a lowered sea level, many other canyons were carved. Some are now covered by the raised ocean. It appears likely that (1) the Mediterranean "Lake" dumped into the lowered Atlantic Ocean and carved a canyon at the Strait of Gibraltar, (2) the Black Sea carved out the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and (3) "Lake California" filling the Great Central Valley of California carved a canyon (now largely filled with sediments) under what is now the Golden Gate bridge in San Francisco. **PREDICTION 1: The crystalline rock under Gibraltar, the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and the Golden Gate bridge is eroded into a Y-shaped notch.**

Shifts of mass upon the earth created stresses and ruptures throughout the solid earth. This was especially severe under the Pacific, since the major continental plates all moved toward it. In regions now occupied by ocean trenches, gravity-

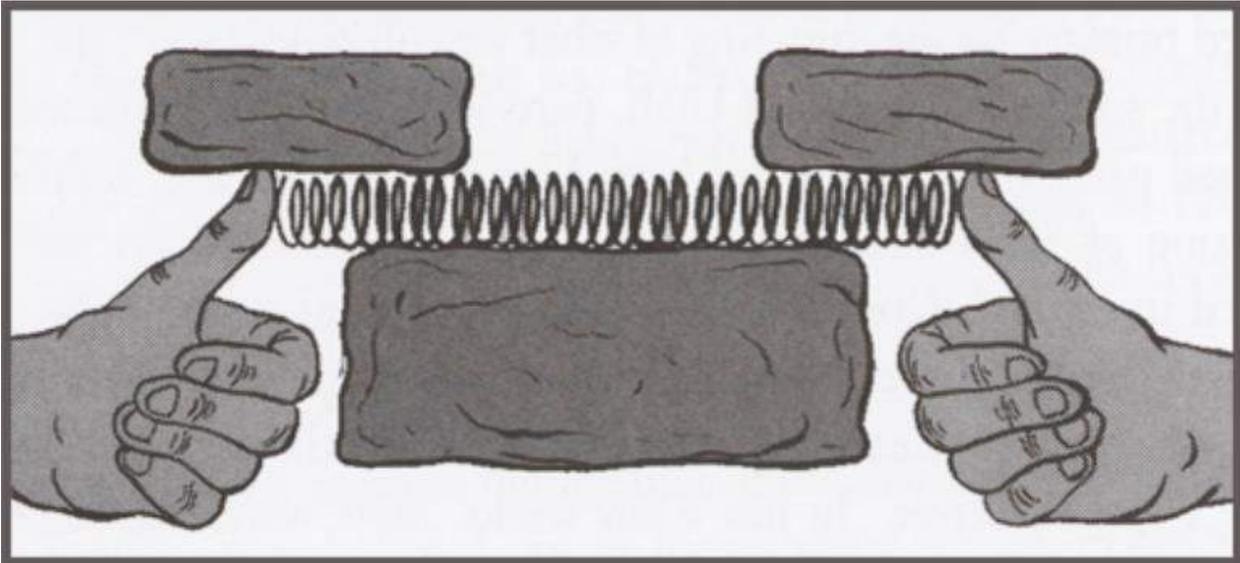
driven granite plates were warped downward by movements, throughout the inner earth toward the rising Atlantic floor on the opposite side of the earth.

Surrounding the Pacific is a region called "the ring of fire," the highest concentration of volcanic activity on earth. However, within "the ring of fire," hidden on the floor of the Pacific, is past volcanic activity and lava flows of a much greater magnitude. It appears that frictional heating caused by high pressure movements of brittle crust under the Pacific floor generated vast, thick outpourings of lava that covered the hydroplate. Thus, the floor of the western Pacific is littered with volcanic cones composed of minerals that are typically found in granite and basalt. Continental crust has been discovered under the floor of the northwestern Pacific. **PREDICTION 2: A mile or so under the entire western Pacific floor will be found a granite hydroplate.**

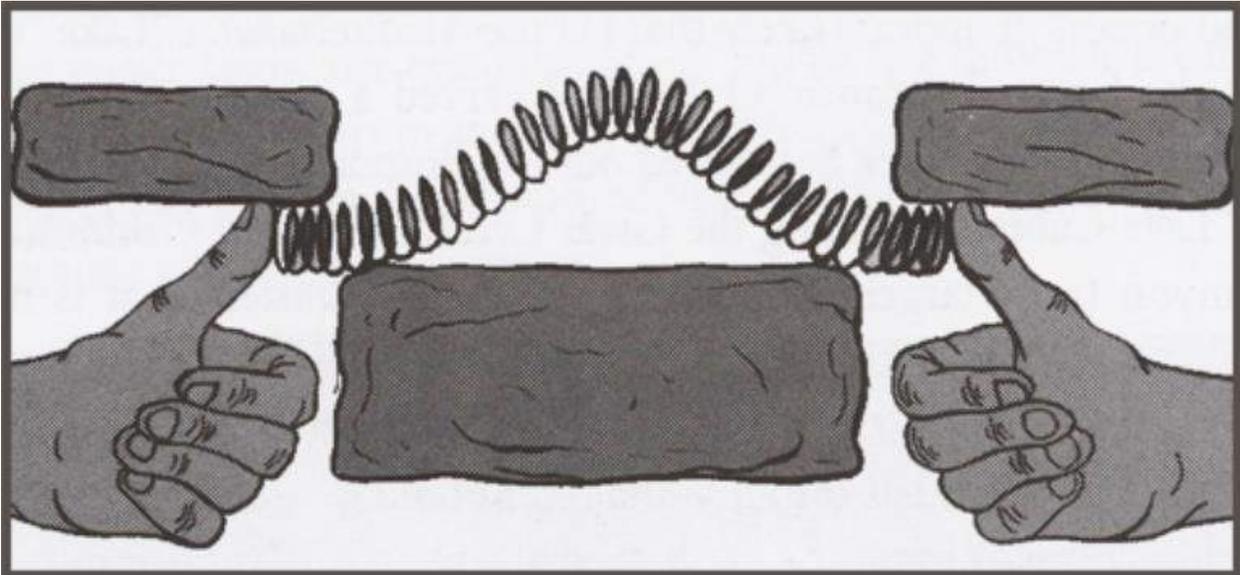
The beginning of earthquake activity also coincided with the end of the flood. Rock was buckled down into regions of higher temperature and pressure. Some minerals that compose a large fraction of the mantle undergo several types of phase transformation; that is, their atoms rearrange themselves into a denser packing arrangement when the temperature and pressure rise above certain thresholds. For example, olivine (a prominent mineral in the mantle) snaps into an atomic arrangement called spinel having about 10% less volume. The collapse begins at a microscopic point and creates a shock wave. A larger pocket of rock, that is already sufficiently heated, then exceeds its pressure threshold. The resulting implosion is a deep earthquake. Over the many centuries since this worldwide cataclysm, the downbuckled rock has slowly heated up, and it periodically implodes.



a) A spring, compressed by your hands, is enclosed by rock.



b) The spring remains aligned and compressed as the gap between the rocks widens.



c) When the gap reaches a certain critical width, the spring suddenly buckles upward. Now consider thousands of similar springs lined up behind the first spring - all repeating steps a-b in unison. Newly exposed coils are soldered to the coils of the adjacent springs. The unbuckling of any one coil will cause adjacent springs to become unstable and buckle up themselves. They, in turn, will lift the next coil, and so on, in ripple fashion.

Figure 7a-c. Spring Analogy Relating to the Development of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. The rocks represent the regions adjacent to the widening gap eroded by the escaping subterranean water.

The reverse process, sudden expansion, occurs at the uplifted Mid-Oceanic Ridge. There, some minerals slowly swell and rearrange themselves into a less dense packing arrangement. The swelling at the ridge and the shrinking at the trenches cause the skin, of the earth to slide in jerks along its "near-zero-shear-strength surface" 125 miles below the earth's surface. Earthquakes also occur under hydroplates wherever there has been a large, vertical displacement.

Shallow earthquakes involve a different phenomenon. The following may explain what happens. Trapped, subterranean water, unable to escape during the flood, slowly seeps up through cracks and faults formed during the compression event. The higher this water migrates through crack, the greater its pressure is in comparison to the walls of the crack trying to contain it. This tends to spread the cracked rock and lengthen the crack. (This may explain why the ground often bulges slightly before an earthquake and water levels sometimes change in wells.) Stresses build up in the crust as the Mid-Oceanic Ridges swell and trenches contract. Once the compressive stress has risen enough, the cracks have grown enough, and the degree of frictional locking of cracked surfaces has diminished enough, sudden movement occurs. The water then acts as a lubricant. (This explains why frictional heat was not found along the San Andreas fault.) Sliding friction almost instantaneously heats the water, converts it to steam at an even higher pressure, and initiates a runaway process called a shallow earthquake. This movement of the remaining subterranean water produces imbalances and partial voids which trigger even deeper sudden movements. **PREDICTION 3: Moderately deep holes, drilled along major faults in populated regions, will provide an easy escape for seeping, high pressure subterranean water near the hole. Shallow earthquake frequency in the region will diminish. Of course, stresses will continue to build up, but some of that energy will be dissipated by the flow of deep viscous rock. Bleeding off subsurface water will reduce the runaway effect caused by the frictional heating of the lubricating water. Sudden increases in the water's depth in many of these holes may serve as a precursor to shallow earthquakes.**

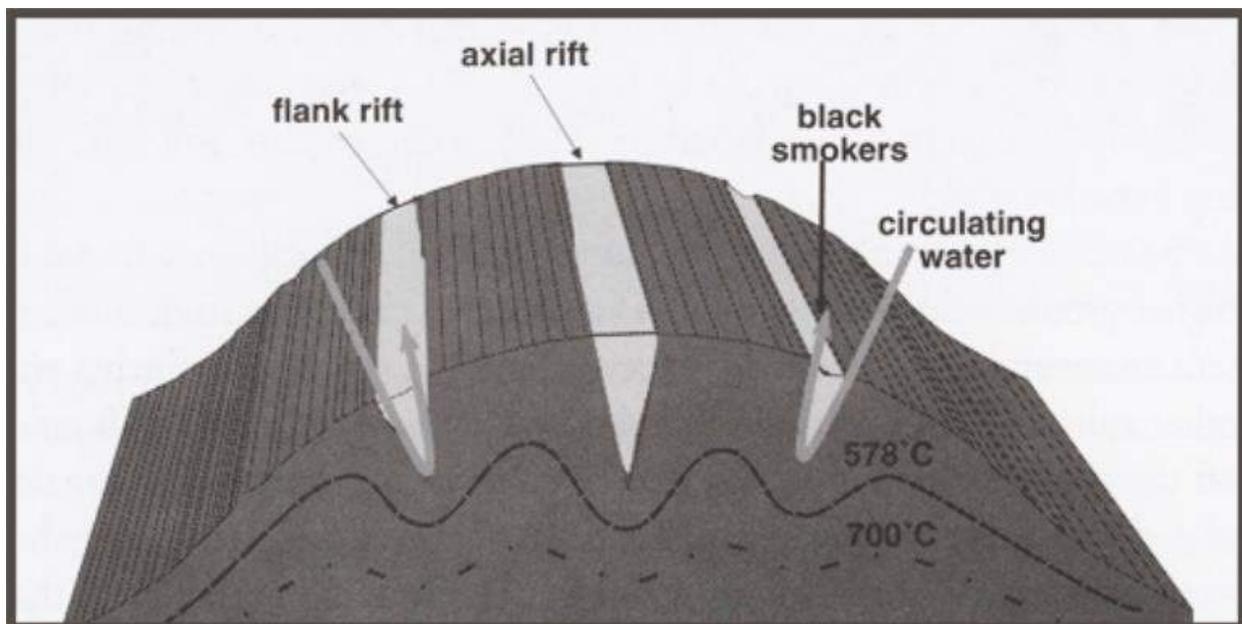


Figure 8. A magnetic material will lose its magnetism if its temperature exceeds a certain value, called the Curie point. The Curie point for basalt is near 578°C. Cooling the walls of the cracks in the Mid-Oceanic Ridge lets magnetization arise in bands near the crack. No reversal is involved.

Frictional heating at the base of sliding hydroplates and in movements within the rising ocean floors produced warm oceans, high evaporation rates, and heavy cloud cover. The elevated continents, which required centuries to sink to their equilibrium

level, were consequently colder than today. Volcanic debris and heavy cloud cover shielded the earth's surface from much of the sun's rays, producing the ultimate "nuclear winter." At higher latitudes and elevations, such as the newly elevated and extremely high mountains, this combination of high precipitation and low temperatures produced very heavy snow falls — perhaps 100 times that of today. Large temperature differences, between the cold land and warm oceans generated high winds that rapidly transported moist air up onto the elevated, cool continents where heavy snowfall occurred, especially over glaciated areas. As snow depths increased, periodic and rapid movements of the glaciers occurred in "avalanche fashion." During the summer months, rain fell instead of snow, causing the glaciers to partially melt and retreat, thus marking the end of that year's "ice age."

Many seamounts grew up to the surface of the lowered ocean, where their peaks were eroded and flattened by wave action. These flat-topped or truncated cones are now called tablemounts. Their eroded tops are several thousand feet below today's sea level. Sea level continued to rise as glaciers melted and retreated to their present positions. Glacial retreat continues today.

The Significance of Liquefaction

Liquefaction is a poorly-understood phenomenon. We will first consider liquefaction on a small scale. After understanding why it occurs, we will see that a global flood would produce massive liquefaction on a worldwide scale. Finally, a review of other poorly-understood features in the earth's crust will confirm that global liquefaction did occur.

Examples of Liquefaction

Quicksand is a simple example of liquefaction. Quicksand is sand up through which spring-fed water flows. The upward flowing water lifts the sand grains very slightly, surrounding each grain with a thin film of water. This cushioning gives quicksand, and other liquefied sediments, a spongy, fluid-like texture.

Contrary to popular belief, someone stepping into quicksand does not sink out of sight forever. They will quickly sink in — but only so far. They then will be lifted, or buoyed up, by a force equal to the weight of the sand and water displaced. The more they sink, the more they will be lifted. Quicksand's buoyancy is almost twice that of water, because the weight of the displaced sand and water is twice that of water alone. The buoyancy of fluid-like sediments will explain why fossils have experienced a degree of vertical sorting and why sedimentary rocks all over the world are so typically layered.

Once we understand the mechanics of liquefaction, we can identify situations where liquefaction would have occurred massively and continuously for weeks or months — all over the earth.

Visualize a box filled with small rocks. Shaking the box will cause the rocks to settle into a denser packing arrangement. Repeat this thought experiment, only this time all the spaces between the rocks are filled with water. As you shake the box and the rocks settle into a denser arrangement, water will be forced up to the top by the weight of the falling rocks. If the box is tall so that many rocks fall, the force of the rising water will increase, and the topmost rocks will be lifted by water pressure for as long as the water flows.

This is similar to an earthquake in a region having loose, water-saturated sediments. Once upward flowing water lifts the topmost sediments, the next level of sedimentary particles no longer has the weight of the topmost layers pressing down on them. This second layer can then be more easily lifted by the force of upward flowing water. This in turn unburdens the third layer of sediments, etc. The particles are no longer in solid-to-solid contact, but are now suspended in and lubricated by water, so they can slip by each other with ease.

Wave Loading: Three Examples

As you walk barefooted along the beach, each ocean wave comes in, and water rises from the bottom of your feet to your knees. When the wave recedes, the sand beneath your feet becomes very loose and mushy, causing your feet to sink in. This is a small example of liquefaction which everyone has experienced. At the height of each wave, water is forced down into the sand. As the wave returns to the ocean, the water forced into the sand gushes back out, lifting the topmost grains and forming a mushy mixture.

During storms, high waves have caused liquefaction on parts of the sea floor. This has resulted in the failure of pipelines buried offshore. As a large wave passes over a buried offshore pipe, the water pressure increases above it. This in turn forces more water into the porous sediments. As the wave peak passes and the trough approaches, the stored, high-pressure water in the sediments begins to flow upward. This lifts the sediments and causes liquefaction. The buried pipe, in floating upwards, breaks.

On November 18, 1929, an earthquake struck the continental slope off the coast of Newfoundland. Minutes later, transatlantic phone cables began breaking sequentially. The exact time and location of each break were recorded and are known. It was reported to have been a 65 mile-per-hour current of muddy water that snapped 12 cables in 28 places as it swept 400 miles down the continental slope from the earthquake's epicenter. (This is known as the "turbidity current" explanation for the cable ruptures, a large area of study within geology.)

The problem with this alleged 65 mph muddy flow is that even the best nuclear-powered submarines cannot travel that fast, and that the average slope of the ocean floor in that area off the coast of Newfoundland is less than 2 degrees. Also, some broken cables were at a higher elevation than the ocean floor nearest to the earthquake. It seems more likely that a large wave (tsunami) radiated out from the epicenter. Liquefaction, occurring below the expanding wave, left segments of the transatlantic cables without support, causing them to snap.

The important fact to distill from all these examples is that liquefaction occurs whenever water is forced up through loose sediments with enough pressure to lift the topmost sedimentary particles.

Liquefaction During the Flood

The flooded earth would have had enormous, unimpeded waves, especially tidal waves caused by the gravitational attraction of the sun and moon. Today, most of the energy in tidal waves is dissipated as they reach coast lines, but a flooded earth would have no coastlines, so that much of the tidal energy would be carried around the earth to reinforce the next tidal wave. Under these conditions, tidal wave

heights of almost a hundred feet have been simulated by computer. (Today the average amplitude is a mere 30 inches, with some notable exceptions due to bay shape.) At high tide during the flood, water would have been forced into the ocean floor by two mechanisms. First, water is slightly compressible.

At high tide, water in the saturated sediments below the wave is compressed like a spring. Second, at high tide, water is forced, not just down into the sediments below, but laterally through the sediments, in the direction of decreasing pressure. As the tidal wave diminishes, and the local pressure is reduced, that compressed water reemerges as upward flowing water.

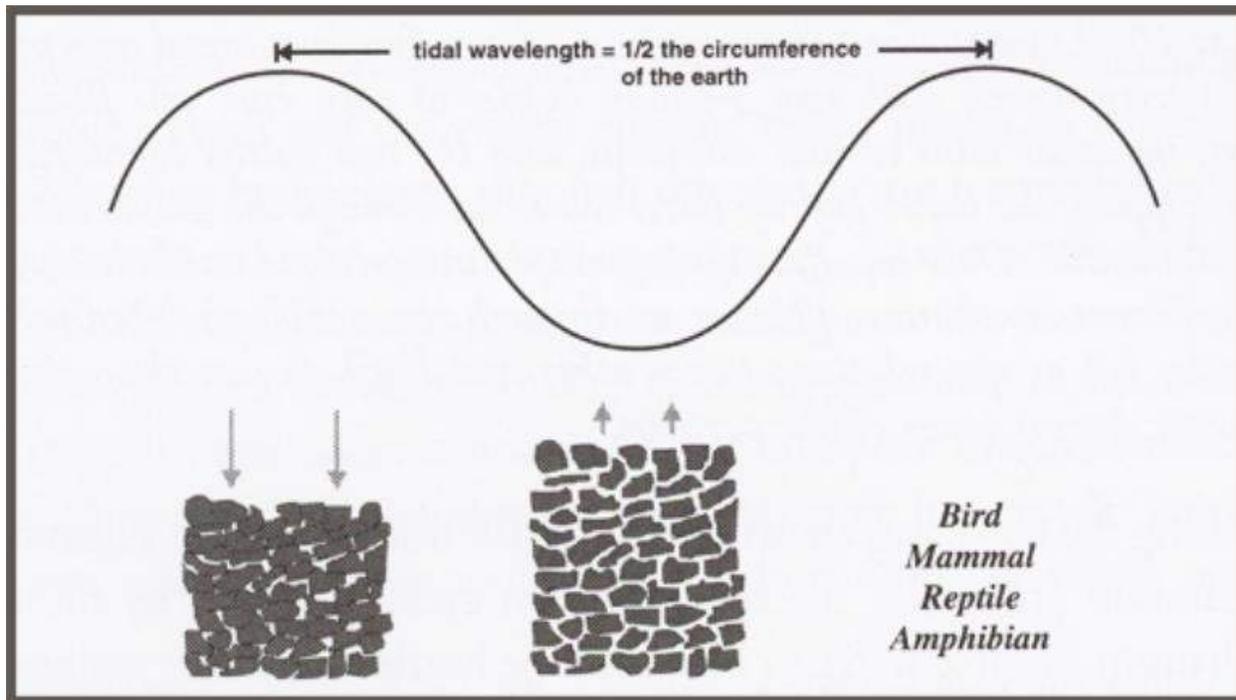


Figure 9. Global Liquefaction. The liquefaction cycle begins at the left with water being forced down into the sea floor at high tide. During the next 6 hours, as low tide approaches, that stored water is released. As it flows up through the sea floor, the sediments are lifted, beginning at the top of the sedimentary column. Once liquefaction begins, lighter particles are free to move up and denser particles to move down. This sorting occurred for many hours each day and for many days. Not only were sedimentary particles sorted into vast, thin layers, but also sorted were dead organisms buried in the sediments. In one experiment by Dr. Leonard R. Brand, a bird, a mammal, a reptile, and an amphibian were buried in thick, muddy water. Their natural settling order was as shown above. This happens to be "the evolutionary order," but, of course, evolution did not cause it.

Throughout the flood phase, a liquefaction cycle must have taken place every 12 hours and 25 minutes, the length of today's tidal cycle. Half the time, water would have been pushed down into the sediments, being stored for the other half-cycle, the discharge half, in which water would flow upward. Only during part of this discharge half would the water's upward velocity have been sufficient to cause liquefaction. When it did, many interesting things would happen. (See Fig. 9 in particular.)

Water flowing up through a bed of sediments with enough velocity will lift and support each sedimentary particle with water pressure. Rather than thinking of the water as flowing up through the sediments, we can think of the sediments as falling through a very long column of water. The slightest difference in a particle's density, size, or shape will cause it to fall at a slightly different speed than an adjacent particle. Therefore, these particles are continually changing their relative positions until the water's velocity or pressure drops below a certain value or until nearly identical particles are adjacent to each other and "fall" at the same speed. This provides sorting which accounts for the layering that is so typical of sedimentary rocks. Such sorting explains why several investigators have observed horizontal strata in large mud deposits from local floods. Liquefaction created the layering effect.

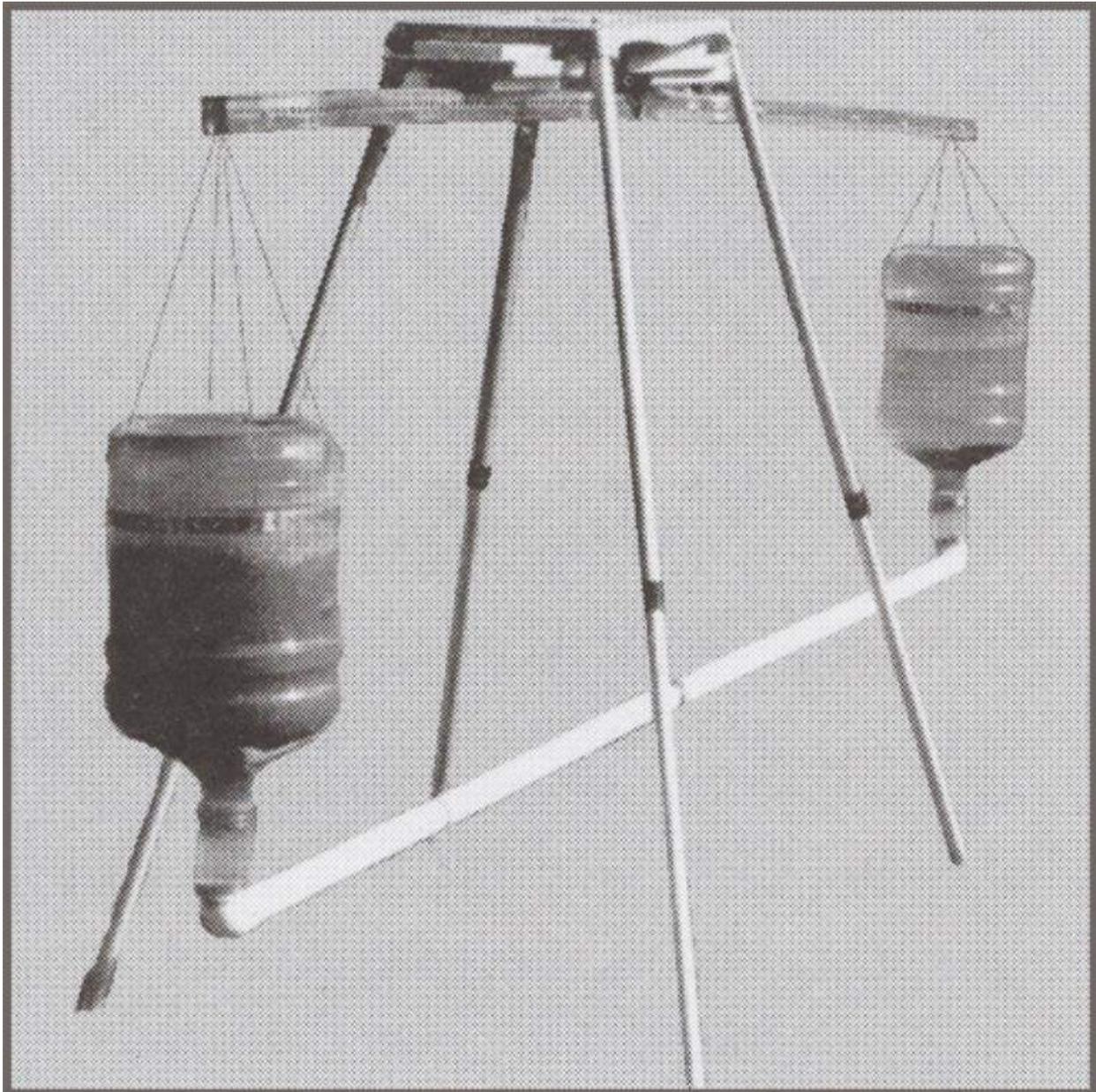


Figure 10. Liquefaction Demonstration. A ten-foot-long metal arm pivoted like a teeter-totter, with two 5-gallon bottles at each end, one filled with water, the other with various sediments, and the two bottles connected by a pipe. Tipping the water

end up forces water up through the sediments in the opposite bottle. Once liquefaction begins, plants and dead animals buried in the sediment container will float up through the sediments. Sedimentary particles fall or rise relative to each other and begin to sort themselves out into ever sharper layers of like particles.

Using the apparatus shown in Figure 10, it is possible to illustrate key liquefaction principles. Each liquefaction cycle simulated by tilting the mechanism to force water to flow into the bottle containing various sediments caused the sediments to sort into clearly defined layers. The longer liquefaction is continued, the sharper the boundaries became between different sedimentary layers.

Another important phenomenon observed in this apparatus is called **lensing**. Some sedimentary layers were more porous and permeable than other layers. If water could flow more easily through a lower layer than it could through the layer immediately above it, a lens of water would accumulate at their interface. Water lenses were usually at small angles to the horizontal. In such lenses, the water always flowed uphill.

During the flood, liquefaction probably lasted for many hours twice a day. In a liquefaction column, many thick water lenses would have formed. Organisms would have floated up to the lens immediately above. Those of similar size, shape, and density (usually of the same species) would have been swept at similar rates along a nearly horizontal channel and spread out for many miles. Water's buoyant force is much less than that of liquefied sediments, so water alone would have been less able to lift dead organisms into the denser sedimentary layer immediately above the lens.

Once the liquefaction phase of that cycle ended, the lens would disappear. The layers would settle tightly together, leaving fossils of one species spread over a wide surface which geologists would call a **horizon**. Thousands of years later, this would give most investigators the false impression that the species died long after the layers below it were deposited and long before the layers above it were laid down. When a layer with many fossils covered a vast area, it would be mistaken as an extinction event or, perhaps, as a boundary between geologic periods.

The liquefaction model accounts for many geologic features that strain the prevailing evolutionary models. The vast areas covered by sedimentary layers of extremely uniform thickness and high purity is best described in terms of liquefaction. Some features that would appear to be inexplicable in terms of modern geologic doctrine are predicted in the liquefaction model (e.g., the absence of meteorites in deep sediments is consistent only with a rapid deposition of all the sediments in accord with this outline).

Liquefaction and hydroplate theory interlink, inasmuch as the hydroplate model provides raw sediment to sort as a result of the rapid erosion of material east and west of the initial rupture. All the material in the gap between continents shown in Figure 1 became water-borne sediment subjected to waves and tidal action during the flood.

Liquefaction During the Compression Event

While liquefaction operated cyclically throughout the flood phase, it acted massively once during the compression event, at the end of the continental drift phase.

Visualize a deck of cards sliding across the table. Friction from the table acts to slow the bottommost card. That card, in turn, applies a decelerating force on the second card from the bottom. If none of the cards slip, a frictional deceleration force will finally be applied to the top card. But if a lubricant somehow built up between any two cards, the cards above the lubricated layer would not decelerate, but would slide over the decelerating cards below.

Similarly, the decelerating granite hydroplates acted on the bottommost sedimentary layer riding on the hydroplate. Each sedimentary layer, from the bottom to the top, acted in turn to decelerate the topmost layer. As each layer decelerated, it was severely compressed. This is analogous to suddenly squeezing a water-saturated sponge. The sediments were forced into a denser packing arrangement, freeing water in the process. Angular sedimentary particles also broke as they were crushed together. As the broken fragments settled into the water-filled spaces between particles, more water was released. The freed water was then forced up through the sediments, causing massive liquefaction.

As the deceleration (and thus compression) of the sedimentary column increased, the layers became more and more fluid. Eventually, a point could be reached where the sediments were so fluid that slippage occurred above a given level, as in our deck of cards. Below that level, compression and liquefaction would have been extreme. Fossils below that level would have floated up and collected at this level where sliding took place. This compression event liquefaction era leads to a startling — and significant — result.

The lowest of these levels appears to be the Precambrian-Cambrian interface. The Precambrian, where it exists, is famous for being a thick sedimentary layer containing almost no fossils. Fossils suddenly begin to be found just above the Precambrian-Cambrian interface at the beginning of the Cambrian. Evolutionists interpret the Precambrian as representing 90% of all geologic time — a vast lifeless period, they believe, because fossils are almost never found in Precambrian sediments. Again, the thickness of sedimentary layers is mistakenly associated with passing time.

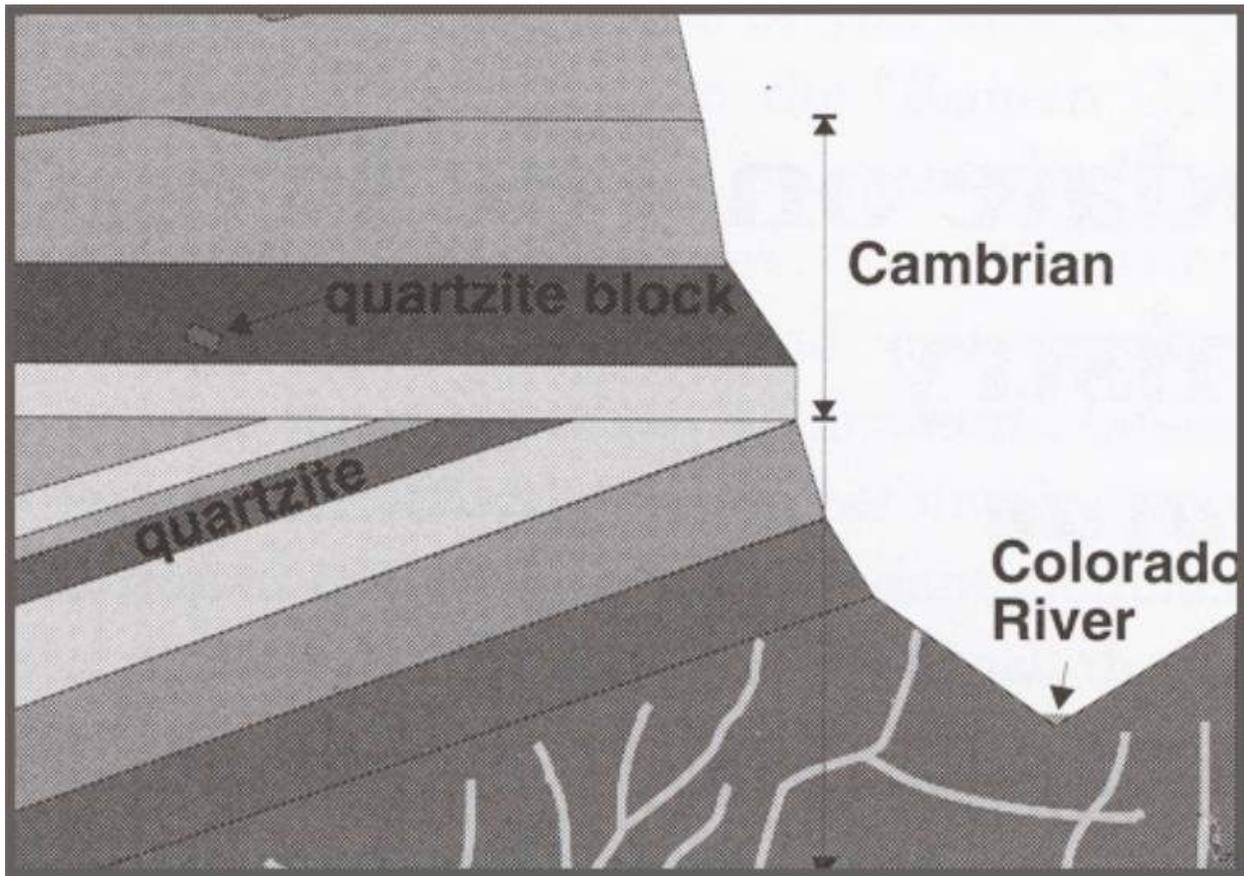


Figure 11. Grand Canyon Cross-Section. The tipped and beveled layers are part of the Precambrian. The beveled plane is sometimes called The Great Unconformity.

In the Grand Canyon, the Precambrian-Cambrian interface is an almost flat, horizontal surface that is exposed for 26 miles above the Colorado River. The layers above the interface are generally horizontal, but the layers below are tipped at large angles, and their tipped edges are beveled off horizontally. It appears that, as slippage began during the compression event, the layers below the slippage plane continued to compress to the point where they buckled. The sliding sedimentary block above the slippage plane beveled off the layers that were being increasingly tipped. See Figure 11.

The conjunction of the hydroplate theory's compression event with the phenomenon of liquefaction offers a clear explanation for the virtual absence of fossils in the world's so-called Precambrian geological layers. Liquefaction as it was driven by globe-encircling, self-reinforcing tidal waves prior to the receding of the waters, operating twice a day over a sufficient period of time, effected a high level of sedimentary sorting and fossil sorting. The causes proposed by this model account for the many effects seeking explication. Although the theory is by no means complete, it appears to have met the initial evaluative criteria better than its evolutionary counterparts. Where it differs from prevailing creationist geology, it is hoped that it has done so justifiably, in the interest of a better handling of both the Scriptural and scientific data. The author acknowledges a debt to the many pioneering creationists who've gone before, and who continue to develop the implications of this field.

Limitations of this Condensation

In this short space, not every detail could be elaborated. Fuller explanations, with detailed technical notes, are to be found in the source volume. *In The Beginning*. Some topics warrant entire chapters in themselves (e.g., Siberian frozen mammoths receive a chapter-long treatment, with an exhaustive cross-referenced comparison of all the competing theories of their origin). The volume includes a compendium of creation-oriented ammunition on many topics. The hydroplate theory constitutes the second of three major subdivisions of the work. Christians serious about creation and the flood would do well to add this volume to their libraries. The Center for Scientific Creation markets a videotape, *God's Power & Scripture's Authority*, that covers the topics mentioned in this article.

The Hydroplate Theory and the Scriptures

The ultimate court of appeal for any theory remains the Holy Bible. How does the hydroplate theory stand when summoned before Its bar? Does it reflect scriptural teaching? Does it do so better than the well-known interpretations with which we've become accustomed over the years? This, more than the theory's accord with the scientific evidence, is the pivotal matter to be judged.

Scripture appears to support the contention that there were large quantities of subterranean water in the ancient past. "He has founded it [the earth] upon the seas..." (Ps. 24:2) "He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deeps in storehouses..." (Ps. 33:7 — a storehouse is a closed container, possibly the interconnected chambers of the hydroplate theory.) "He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters..." (Ps. 104:3) "He spread out the earth above the waters..." (Ps. 136:6) "The earth was formed out of water and by water." (II Peter 3:5).

These subterranean waters burst forth bringing on the flood, "...the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. And rain fell..." (Cen. 7:11-12 — the sequence of these two events [the bursting open of the fountains of the great deep, and the opening of the floodgates of the sky] is in cause-and-effect order in the hydroplate theory, in parallel with Cen. 8:2 and Prov. 3:20.) "...the sea...bursting forth, it went out from the womb; when I made a cloud its garment..." (Job 38:4-11) "...the channels of water appeared, and the foundations of the world were laid bare..." (Ps. 18:15) "...the deeps were broken up and the sky dripped dew..." (Prov. 3:20).

After a time, the avalanche of water ceased, but the waters continued to rise. "And the rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights." (Cen. 7:12 — the terra for rain is not the one used for normal rain, *matar*, but rather *geshem*, the most violent and deadly rain, in keeping with the violence of the floodgate terminology and the violent bursting open of the fountains of the great deep.) "And the water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days...and at the end of one hundred and fifty days the water decreased." (Cen. 7:24, 8:3 — the rain ended after 40 days, but the floodgates weren't closed until 150 days had passed and the waters had covered the highest mountains.)

Mountains dramatically formed as the flood waters receded, "...the waters were standing above the mountains. At Thy rebuke they fled; at the sound of Thy

thunder they hurried away. The mountains rose; the valleys sank down to the place which Thou didst establish for them. Thou didst set a boundary that they [the water] may not pass over; that they may not return to cover the earth." (Ps. 104:5-9 — God, by raising the mountains and draining the water into enormous basins, thereby created a boundary that the waters could never again pass over. The sound of His thunder may correspond to the ear-shattering sounds attending the compression event and the violent creation of the mountain ranges from the decelerating hydroplates, although this association is speculative.)

Some subterranean water still remains, *cf.* "...the water under the earth" (Ex. 20:4). Continent-sized plates, settling onto the floor of the subterranean chamber, would trap water in the irregularities at the interface. Such trapped water under continents seems to explain mysteries associated with shallow earthquakes and why deep drilling has intersected "hot flowing water" that is too deep to have seeped down from the earth's surface.

Dr. Walt Brown and the Center for Scientific Creation

Clearly, only a tiny portion of Dr. Brown's creationist magnum opus could be presented here. The original book is accessible to both lay people and technical readers (who will spend much of their time poring over the extensive notes sections and technical appendices).

Chalcedon supports the continued application of the Scripture to every scientific discipline, including historical geology. Dr. Brown's insights are fresh and provocative. An able debater and lecturer, he can be reached at <http://www.creationscience.com>. Write him care of CSC at 5612 N. 20th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85016 USA.

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