

## ***MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT THE AGE OF THE EARTH AND THE UNIVERSE***

### **1. MYTH: Evolution is the march of science; a belief in recent creation is a holdover from the past.**

**But has recent creation really been disproved?** Solar expert John Eddy has stated:

"I suspect that the Sun *is* 4.5-billion years old. However, given some new and unexpected results to the contrary, and some time for frantic recalculation and theoretical readjustment, I suspect that we could live with Bishop Ussher's value for the age of the Earth and the Sun. I don't think we have much in the way of observational evidence in astronomy to contradict that [emphasis in original]."<sup>1</sup>

**Ussher put the date of creation at 4004 BC. Eddy is therefore saying that nothing in solar data contradicts this.** The only real conflict is between recent creation and evolutionary *beliefs*, not scientific data.

**Indeed, there is really no scientific reason that the entire universe could not be viewed as young.** Evolutionary cosmologist George Ellis has written:

"A modern cosmologist who was also a theologian with strict fundamentalist views could construct a universe model which began 6000 years ago in time and whose edge was at a distance of 6000 light years from the solar system. A benevolent God could easily arrange the creation of the universe . . . It would be impossible for any other scientist on the Earth to refute this world picture experimentally or observationally; all that he could do would be to disagree with the author's cosmological premises."<sup>2</sup>

If it is possible to view the universe as 6000 years old or so, what is keeping many scientists from doing so? Clearly, not scientific data, but only evolutionary *beliefs*.

### **2. MYTH: A fundamentalist view is outdated.**

Gerd Lundemann, a liberal theologian and professor at Gottingen University in Germany, declared that he is an atheist and that **liberal Protestant theologians are really "closet atheists."** He said:

"I don't think that Christians know what they mean when they proclaim Jesus as lord [sic] of the World. That is a massive claim. If you took that seriously, you would probably have to be a fundamentalist."<sup>3</sup>

In other words according to Lundemann, fundamentalism -- far from being outmoded -- is the belief consistent with what Christians say they believe about the Lordship of Christ.

**According to Lundeman's assessment, fundamentalism is about proclaiming Jesus "as Lord of the world," i.e., proclaiming God's power.** Even the Bible starts with this proclamation in Genesis 1, for the ultimate thrust of Genesis 1 goes beyond the mere assertion that God made everything. Though this assertion is historically true, it is also a vehicle for

demonstrating the power of God and His ability to bring about and control any situation He desires. What event could show the reality of the power of God any more than His supernatural creation of the entire universe in a time so short that the human mind simply cannot comprehend how it was done?

**Substituting a long time scale and evolutionary processes for biblical creation totally undercuts the biblical teaching in Genesis 1 that God is all-powerful.** Both the scope of creation (universal) and the time frame for creation (short) render the Creation Week an event which could never be duplicated by any process occurring today.

Glorifying God means praising Him for Who He really is. Christians who claim that God somehow "used" any form of evolution to "create" are diminishing the power of God in their minds, and thus are not glorifying God. This de-glorification of God is rampant in Christian circles today, not to mention among the unsaved who do not acknowledge God's glory at all. Perhaps this is why in the end times the angel of the Lord repeatedly proclaims the doctrine of creation to the entire world.

### **3. REALITY: Neither modern science nor modern theology has disproved fundamentalism.**

The truth is that many people have simply chosen not to believe the Bible, resulting in the displacement of fundamentalism by evolutionism and all of its side effects.

One effect of evolution has been an explosion of activity in "higher critical" studies, in which the Bible is viewed as merely another man-made, error-filled book. One historian has summarized this process of displacement:

"If the biologists, the geologists, the astronomers, the anthropologists had not been at work, I venture to think that the higher critics would have been either non-existent or a tiny minority in a world of fundamentalists."<sup>4</sup> **Thus it is not that fundamentalism has been discredited, but that it was simply replaced by beliefs based ultimately on evolutionary philosophy.**

### **4. REALITY: All evolutionary ages are based on the presumed evolutionary age of the earth.**

For example, the sun is claimed to be old because the earth is old. Solar scientist Arthur Eddington wrote:

"On such an important question [as the age of the sun] we should not like to put implicit trust in [astronomical arguments] alone, and we turn to the sister sciences for other and perhaps more conclusive evidence. . . . The age of the older rocks [of the earth] is found to be about 1,200 million years . . . The sun, of course, must be very much older than the earth and its rocks."<sup>5</sup> **Thus Eddington held up the earth's presumed old age as the yard stick for the sun's evolutionary age.**

Two generations ago, science popularizer George Gamow described the same dependence of solar dating on the evolutionary age of the earth:

"Our sun is now only about 3 or 4 billion years old ..."  
And the reason for this age? - "... since the estimated age of our earth is of that order of magnitude."<sup>6</sup>

In a more recent assessment, astronomer John Fix said, "Geologists have found rocks 3.5 billion years old that contain fossils of marine organisms. These discoveries clearly demonstrate that the Sun has warmed the Earth for at least 3.5 billion years and probably for as long as the Earth has existed."<sup>7</sup>

**The belief that the sun is old is based on the belief the earth is old.**

**5. REALITY: The evolutionary age of earth is based on arbitrary radiometric assumptions.**

Richard Milton, who is not a young earth advocate, nevertheless points out that **the readiness to reject radiometric dates except those giving "expected values" is why various radiometric methods can be claimed to converge** in the "ages" they "measure."<sup>8</sup> Milton wrote:

"Thus the published dating figures *always* conform to preconceived dates and never contradict those dates. If all the rejected dates were retrieved from the waste basket and added to the published dates, the combined results would show that the dates produced are the scatter that one would expect by chance alone [emphasis in original]."<sup>9</sup>

**Thus the apparent agreement of radiometric dates in their supposed confirmation of old ages is due to a selective elimination of radiometric results not supporting the conventional chronology.**

**6. REALITY: The evolutionary age of the earth was not set by radiometric dating, but by consensus.**

Evolutionary scientists have long been "comparing" their opinions "among themselves," which the Bible says is "not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12). For example, **the evolutionary age of the earth was decided before radiometric dating was first used, and even before radioactivity itself was discovered in 1896, as the following statements reveal:**

"The basic time scale has remained unchanged since 1879."<sup>10</sup>

"I wonder how many of us realize that the time scale was frozen in essentially its present form by 1840."<sup>11</sup>

"By the years 1830-1833, when the three volumes of Charles Lyell's great classic *Principles of Geology* were published, the system of sequential or relative dating was well established."<sup>12</sup>

**How can radiometric dating be said to have confirmed the chronology that had already been decided before radioactivity itself was discovered?**<sup>13</sup>

**7. REALITY: The evolutionary age of the earth originated in an anti-biblical agenda.**

Englishman Charles Lyell in the early 1800s succeeded in getting popular acceptance for the idea of an old earth. However, Lyell's true basis for this claim was not science. Lyell's real "hidden agenda" was revealed in private correspondence with colleagues and friends. He wrote that he had "driven" the biblical Flood "out of the Mosaic record."<sup>14</sup>

He also revealed his plan for undermining the Bible. He would not make a frontal attack against the Scripture, but "conceived the idea ... that if ever the Mosaic chronology could be set down [discredited] without giving offense, it would be in an historical sketch ..." Lyell's reference to "an historical sketch" meant a work about "historical geology" written from an evolutionary viewpoint. His well known *Principles of Geology* was the fulfillment of this plan.<sup>15</sup>

**8. REALITY: Even humanists assert that biblical creation is not compatible with evolution.**

There are Christians who defend evolution as a process used by God. They call themselves "creationists." Non-Christian evolutionists, however, generally see clearly the great gulf between Christianity and evolution. For instance, the molecular biologist and atheist Jacques Monod observed:

"Selection is the blindest, and most cruel way of evolving new species ... cruel because it is a process of elimination, of destruction. The struggle for life and the elimination of the weakest is a horrible process, against which our modern ethic revolts. An ideal society is a non-selective society; it is one where the weak are protected, which is exactly the reverse of the so-called natural law. I am surprised that a Christian would defend the idea that this is the process which God more or less set up in order to have evolution."<sup>16</sup>

Yet accommodationist Hugh Ross defends exactly this idea: "Many Christians fear that by believing in a universe and an earth that is billions of years old they must accept a millions-of-years-old history for the human species. ... The troubling issue is not the historicity or recency of Adam and Eve but rather the recency and historicity of the so-called human-like species before them."<sup>17</sup> Ross is here presuming that the very process of evolution, which Monod condemns as a Christian belief, must have occurred.

Hugh Ross defends astronomical, geological, and biological evolution, but insists that Adam and Eve were recent. Other Christians reject biological evolution, but accept cosmic evolution which requires lengthening the days of Genesis 1. However, even this is condemned by humanists, who see the stance of conservative creationists such as those at the Institute for Creation Research as more consistent with Genesis:

"Cheer Number One goes to the creationists for serving rational religion by demonstrating beautifully that we must take the creation stories of Genesis at face value. . . . Many Christians have taken the dishonest way of lengthening the days into millions of years, but the creationists make it clear that such an approach is nothing but a makeshift that is

unacceptable Biblically and scientifically. ... Creationists deserve Cheer Number two for serving rational religion by effectively eliminating `theistic evolution'. ... Creationists rightly insist that evolution is inconsistent with a God of love. ... Three cheers, then, for the creationists, for they have cleared the air of all dodges, escapes and evasions made by Christians who adopt non-literal interpretations of Genesis and who hold that evolution is God's method of Creation."<sup>18</sup>

**9. REALITY: Even non-Christians realize that accommodationism is not legitimate.**

A professed atheist wrote: "When the theory of evolution was advanced, that was the date that the Judeo-Christian religion began the decline in which it now finds itself in the West. The two theories are in point-blank contradiction with each other.

"Any scientists, any educators, any religious persons who state to you that there is no conflict simply want to hang on to both worlds because they have not been able to divest themselves of the infantile belief system which was programmed into them when they were children. They want a foot in each camp [to find acceptance and respect]. Religion is their emotional security blanket. ... They are too cowardly to see [that] religion should be abandoned so they stand there one foot in and one foot out."<sup>19</sup>

**It is safe to say that compromise constructs such as the day-age theory, progressive creation, and theistic evolution find no acceptance in the humanist community.** The only people enamored with such accommodations are compromising Christians.<sup>20</sup>

Even accommodationist Christians realize that reading Genesis in a straightforward manner would disallow any form of evolution. For example, well-known commentator Gleason Archer stated:

"If we were to understand Genesis 1 in completely literal fashion -- which some suppose to be the only proper principle of interpretation if the Bible is truly inerrant and completely trustworthy -- then there would be no possibility of reconciliation between modern scientific [i.e., evolutionary] theory and the Genesis account."<sup>21</sup>

Unfortunately, Archer has chosen to accept the word of evolution in matters pertaining to evolution.

**10. REALITY: There is evidence the days of creation were literal and recent.**

Evolutionist Eviatar Zerubavel wrote: "For those who take the biblical account of the creation both seriously and literally, the length of the seven-day week presents no problem at all. ... It was first practiced by God when creating the universe."<sup>22</sup>

Zerubavel further pointed out that the week is not in any way tied to the lunar cycle:

"Those who believe that our seven-day week has derived from the lunar cycle seem to forget that the latter is not really a twenty-eight day cycle."<sup>23</sup> In fact, the seven-day week

is not related to any celestial phenomena. Astronomer Duncan Steele notes:

"The year, month and day all have clear astronomical bases. Our 7-day week, however, does not have an obvious link with any heavenly cycle."<sup>24</sup> Zerubavel speaks of the week as dissociated from nature.<sup>25</sup> The week is tied to the literal Creation Week. Indeed, the week not only serves as the cycle of work days and rest days, but also commemorates the very Creation Week itself.

Further, "Many disparate civilizations have, for unknown reasons, assumed beginnings of time occurring a few thousand years B.C.," and even more specifically, "within a few centuries of 4000 B.C."<sup>26</sup> **The straightforward explanation of this fact is that the world began at creation only a few thousand years ago, not scores of thousands, let alone millions or billions.**

**Notes**

- 1 Raphael G. Kazmann, "It's About Time: 4.5 Billion Years," *Geotimes*, Vol. 23 no. 9, 1978, p. 18. It should not be concluded that Eddy really believed the sun to be young; in fact he was calling for a more objective defense of the conventional chronology.
- 2 George F.R. Ellis, "Cosmology and Verifiability," *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society*, Vol. 16, 1975, p. 246. Ellis is a practicing Quaker and may be a Christian, but he nonetheless holds to an evolutionary cosmology.
- 3 Gerd Lundemann, quoted in Moody Adams, *How the Clinton Clergy Corrupted a President*, Olive Press, 1999, pp. 193-194. The "fundamentals" of the Christian faith include biblical doctrines such as (1) the divinity of Christ; (2) His virgin birth; (3) the shedding of His blood and His death on the cross; (4) His bodily resurrection from the dead; (5) the inspiration of the Bible; and (6) the infallibility of Scripture. Each of these doctrines affirms the power of Christ to save the soul eternally. Faith in Christ alone for personal salvation cannot be exercised if one consciously rejects these fundamental doctrines. The term "fundamentalism" is a useful descriptive term to signify a non-negotiable belief in these fundamentals, and that is the meaning here.
- 4 F.M. Powicke, *Modern Historians and the Study of History: Essays and Papers*, Odhams Press, London, 1955, p. 228.
- 5 A.S. Eddington, *Stars and Atoms*, Macmillan, 1929, p. 96.
- 6 George Gamow, *One, Two, Three ... Infinity*, Mentor, 1953, p. 301.
- 7 John Fix, *Astronomy*, WCB/McGraw-Hill, 1999, p. 386.
- 8 Richard Milton, *Shattering the Myths of Darwinism*, Park Street Press, 1997, p. 49.

**10** Stephen Rowland, "A New Shirt for Carl," *Science* 83, Vol.4, May 1983, p. 80.

**11** Edmund M. Speiker, "Mountain-Building and the Nature of the Geologic Time-Scale," *Bulletin of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists*, Vol. 40, August 1956, p. 1803.

**12** J. Henry, "An Old Age for the Earth Is the Heart of Evolution," *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, Vol. 40 no. 3, December 2003, p. 21.

**13** G.G. Simpson, *Fossils and the History of Life*, Scientific American Library, 1983, p. 58.

**14** K.M. Lyell (ed.), *Life, Letters and Journals of Sir Charles Lyell, Bart.*, John Murray, 1881, vol. 1, p. 253.

**15** *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 271.

**16** "The Secret of Life," interview with J. Monod, Australian Broadcasting Commission, June 10, 1976; in Ken Ham, *The Lie: Evolution*, Master Books, 1987, pp. 74-76.

**17** Hugh Ross, *Creation and Time*, Navpress, 1994, p. 10.

**18** A.J. Mattell Jr., "Three Cheers for the Creationists," *Free Inquiry*, Vol. 2, Spring 1982, pp. 17-18.

**19** "Genesis and Evolution," *American Atheist*, Vol. 30, January 1988, p. 7. Answer by editor to a question posed by O. Hambling.

**20** For a refutation of progressive creationism and other accommodationist concepts, see J. Henry, "A Critique of Progressive Creationism in the Writings of Hugh Ross," *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, Vol. 43 no. 1, June 2006, pp. 16-24; J. Henry, "Did Death Occur Before the Fall?: A Further Critique of the Progressive Creationism of Hugh Ross," *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, Vol. 43 no. 3, December 2006, pp. 160-167.

**21** Gleason Archer, "The Meaning of *Yom*," *Christianity Today*, October 8, 1982, p. 44.

**22** Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Seven Day Circle: The History and Meaning of the Week*, Free Press, 1985, p. 6

**23** *ibid.*, p. 9.

**24** Duncan Steele, *Marking Time*, Wiley, 2000, p. 73.

**25** Zerubavel, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

**26** Steele, *op. cit.*, pp. 135, 40. Steele is in fact an atheist (p. 111) with no interest in showing that the universe is young. He is merely stating the facts as they are.