

Ten Basics To Know About Creation #1

Introduction. There are two fundamentally different, and diametrically opposed, explanations for the origin of the Universe, the origin of life in that Universe, and the origin of new types of varying life forms.

Every Christian who stands unashamedly on the authority of God's word should be ready to show how the Bible unlocks our understanding of the world. Yet certain questions seem to stump Christians. Thankfully, when you accept the plain teaching of scripture and build your thinking upon it, the basic answers are quite simple. These two lessons are going to examine the nuts and bolts of the answers to ten of the most-asked questions that confuse Christians.

I. ***Six Literal Days***

- A. Did God create the whole universe, including the original plants, animals, and first two people (Adam and Eve) in six, literal 24-hour days? Or did creation take place over millions of years?
- B. To answer that, we should remember that the original readers of Genesis were not scientists or Hebrew scholars. Instead, they were former slaves -- mostly uneducated -- on their way to Canaan. The fathers were commanded to teach their children (Deuteronomy 6:1-7), so the Hebrew language in Genesis 1 must have been very clear to the common people, even to children.
- C. When we look carefully at Genesis 1, in Hebrew or even in English, it is clear that God created everything in six, literal 24-hour days.
 1. We are told that He created the earth in darkness and then created light. Then He called the light "day" and He called the darkness "night."
 2. Then He said (in the original Hebrew) "and [there] was evening and [there] was morning, one day." He repeated the same statement at the end of the second day through the sixth day.
 - a) Everywhere else in the Old Testament, when the Hebrew word for "day" appears with "evening" or "morning" or is modified by a number (e.g., "sixth day" or "five days"), it always means a 24-hour day.
 - b) On the fourth day God further showed that these were literal days by telling us the purpose for which He created the sun, moon, and stars -- so we could tell time: literal years, literal seasons, and literal days.
- D. Also in Exodus 20:8-11 God commanded the Israelites to work six literal "days" and rest on the seventh because He created in six "days" (using the same Hebrew word).

II. ***Radiometric Dating***

- A. God's word unmistakably teaches a young Earth and Universe. God has ensured the accurate recording and preservation of His eyewitness account of the earth's history, which Jesus Christ and the apostles endorsed as straightforward historical narrative repeatedly during their ministry (Mark 13:19; Acts 14:15; Revelation 10:6).
- B. God took great care to include the vital chronological details of the Universe's creation in six days, as well as the unbroken genealogies from Adam to Jesus (Luke 3:23-38).
- C. Contrary to scripture, many geologists claim that radiometric "clocks" show rocks to be millions of years old. Radiometric dating is the process of estimating the age of rocks from the decay of their radioactive elements.
 - 1. There are certain kinds of atoms in nature that are unstable and spontaneously change (decay) into other kinds of atoms.
 - 2. For example, uranium will radioactively decay through a series of steps until it becomes the stable element lead. Likewise, potassium decays into the element argon.
- D. There are several assumptions that must be made in radiometric dating.
 - 1. However, to read any clock accurately we must know where the clock was set at the beginning. It is like making sure that an hourglass clock was set with all the sand in the top bowl at the beginning. No geologists were present when the earth and its many rock layers were formed, so they cannot know where the radiometric clocks were set at the beginning.
 - 2. Also, we have to be sure that the clock has ticked at the same rate from the beginning until now. No geologists have been observing the radiometric clocks for millions of years to check that the rate of radioactive decay has always been the same as the rate today. To the contrary, we have impeccable evidence that over a billion years worth of nuclear decay has occurred very recently, between 4,000 and 8,000 years ago.

III. ***Variety Within Created Kinds***

- A. Our world is filled with a tremendous variety of life, and its origin is no mystery. The Bible says God created every living kind on days 3, 5, and 6 of creation week. Ten times in Genesis 1 the phrase "according to its [or their] kind" is used in connection with different types of plants and animals. The word "kind" is used again in Genesis 6:20 when God instructed Noah to take two of every kind of land animal onto the ark; and in Genesis 8:19 God commanded these animals to reproduce after the Flood.

- B. What does the word "kind" mean? Since two of each kind of land animal (and seven of some) were brought aboard the ark for the purpose of preserving their offspring upon the earth (Genesis 7:2-3), it seems clear that a "kind" represents the basic reproductive boundary of an organism. That is, the offspring of an organism is always the same kind as its parents, even though it may display considerable variation.
- C. Dogs, for example, exhibit tremendous variety. Yet diverse breeds of dogs can produce offspring with each other -- indicating that all dogs are of the same kind. Dogs will not interbreed with cats because they are a different kind. Modern breeding research therefore confirms the biblical concept of animal and plant kinds.
- D. Researchers have found that "kind" is often at the level of "family" in our modern classification scheme (Life, Domain, Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, and Species). For example, zebras, horses, and donkeys all belong to the family Equidae and can mate with each other to form hybrid animals such as mules (from a horse and donkey) and zonkeys (from a zebra and donkey).
- E. God placed the potential for tremendous variety within the original created kinds. This original variation, altered by genetic mutations and other mechanisms after the fall of man (such as natural selection), led to the diversity of living organisms we see today.

IV. ***Uniqueness Of Man***

- A. Perhaps the most offensive feature of evolutionism to Bible-believing Christians is the belief that humans have evolved by natural processes from apes or ape-like creatures. In the evolutionary view, man was not the goal of evolution but a mere happenstance.
 - 1. This stands in startling contrast to the biblical declaration that humans were specially created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-28).
 - 2. Far from being an evolutionary descendant of the beasts, man has been given dominion over them. Jesus directed our attention to Genesis 2:24 in Matthew 19:4-5, thus showing the uniqueness of man.
- B. Since God did not create any "apemen," it should come as no surprise that it is quite easy to distinguish humans from apes, whether as fossils or living.
 - 1. While there is an underlying anatomical similarity among all mammals, a child can be taught to recognize the difference between an ape skull and a human skull.

2. If you look at the skull from the side, for example, the human skull has a vertical face with protruding nasal bones, but the ape skull has a sloping face with flat nasal bones.
- C. But it is not the biological differences that definitively set man apart from the beasts. Rather, the mind and soul of man and his God-given ability to communicate with our Creator distance him from the beasts (Ecclesiastes 3:21; 12:7). Thus it is only mankind that is invited to join Paul in declaring the benefit of the gospel (Romans 1:16).

V. ***Distant Starlight***

- A. The Bible states that God created in six days, and its genealogies clearly indicate that this took place only several thousand years ago. But some people reason, "Has not science demonstrated that it would take billions of years for the light from the farthest galaxies to reach the earth? Does this not disprove the Genesis account or force us to interpret the words differently?" Not at all. It is very arrogant to assume God could not do what He said He did simply because we cannot imagine how.
- B. Certainly one of the most amazing, time-defying, mature miracles of God's creation was the creation of the heavenly bodies on day four (Genesis 1:16, 19). God had previously made light (intrinsic light) on day one; on day four He made the generators of light.
 1. Just as God could produce a fruit-bearing tree on day three without a seed, He simultaneously and supernaturally made their light to appear on Earth.
 2. God had a purpose for creating the heavenly bodies, and He made them so that man benefitted from them without having to wait for their light to reach Earth.
- C. One of the most overlooked assumptions in most arguments against the Bible is the assumption of naturalism. Naturalism is the belief that nature is "all that there is."
 1. The Bible is clear that God is not bound by natural laws (they are, after all, His laws). We cannot assume that past acts of God are necessarily understandable in terms of a current scientific mechanism, because science can only probe the way in which God sustains the Universe today.
 2. It is perfectly acceptable for us to ask, "Did God use natural processes to get the starlight to earth in the biblical timescale? And if so, what is the mechanism?" But if no natural mechanism is apparent, this cannot be used as evidence against supernatural creation. So, the unbeliever is engaged in circular reasoning when he uses naturalism to argue that distant starlight disproves the biblical timescale.

D. Ironically, the Big Bang has a light-travel time problem of its own. Known as the "horizon problem," the Big Bang is unable to get light from one side of the universe to the other within its own billions-of-years timeframe. To alleviate this problem, Big Bang supporters must arbitrarily add more hypotheses which have problems of their own.

Conclusion. Today, the concrete data points strongly in the direction of God (cf. Psalm 14:1). Creation is the simplest and most obvious solution to the puzzle. Many scientists see the extra-scientific implications of intelligent design and they do not like where it is leading.

The purpose of science should be the search for truth, not merely the search for naturalistic explanations. The great scientists of history never thought science's job was to come up with some sort of self-sufficient explanation for nature. This is a recent innovation, and not a good one -- especially in light of discoveries during the last 50 years that have pointed in the exact opposite direction.