

Compromises Of Creation #2

Introduction. A common charge is that creationists are anti-science. There is no truth to this charge. The fact of the matter is, creationists recognize that science deals with present phenomena; this discipline is, by the very nature of its methodology, incapable of determining events and processes that transpired thousands of years ago. For example, it is a scientific fact that water freezes at 32°F. It is not a scientific fact that biological life was "spontaneously generated" a few billion years ago.

Creationists do not reject genuine or proven facts of science. What they do dispute are unsupported theories that have been designed to explain those facts. For instance, it is a fact that there are certain similarities between the bone structures of animals and men. However, it is an unsubstantiated speculation to suggest that this indicates that humans evolved from animals. Creationists are not opposed to true science. Additionally, it is worthy of mention that many of the greatest minds in the history of science have believed in supernatural creation. Men like Newton, Pasteur, Kepler, Lister, Boyle, Pascal, and others -- household names in science -- were not atheists; they believed that science and the concept of creation were quite compatible.

But many brethren have compromised with those who hold theories that the Earth is billions of years old. The mere fact that the Earth might be very, very old is not really the problem. The problem lies in changing the interpretation of the book of Genesis. A literal, historical account is dismissed and a mythical, poetical, or allegorical "story" is introduced. As we have seen and as we will see, this teaching is false. The account of Genesis cannot be changed to accommodate billions of years.

We cannot legitimately convert the lost through the teaching of error. The church will be weakened, and others may be lured into accepting the same error through association with those who believe it and teach it to be true. Furthermore, the person who perpetrated the false teaching has placed his soul, and the souls of those he taught, in jeopardy because of his error.

Tonight we will address the popular compromises made after the creation week in Genesis 1-2. We will then consider the problems with creation compromises. We always want to hold up the integrity of the scriptures. This truth will set us free and it equips us for every good work (John 8:32; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

I. ***After The Creation Week***

- A. If the geological evolutionary time table cannot be placed before the creation week, and it cannot be placed in the creation week, some try the last option and place it after the creation week.

- B. The message of the genealogies in the Bible is that man has been on the earth since the beginning of creation and indicates that that beginning was not very long ago. We know from Jesus and those He inspired to write that Adam was the first man and that Adam and Eve were on the earth at the beginning of the creation (Mark 10:6; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Timothy 2:13). And by putting together the chronological record of the genealogies we can know the approximate age of the earth.
- C. No one denies that it has been about 2,000 years back to the time of Christ. From Jesus to Abraham, it has been archeologically demonstrated to be about 2,000 years. Because of the biblical genealogies, we know that the time period from Abraham to Adam is roughly 2,000 years.
- D. In discussing the genealogical family lines of Genesis, we must acknowledge that the word "beget" does not necessarily refer to a direct father/son relationship. It can and perhaps often does mean "descendant of." There could be some generational gaps in the lineage. Yet, how many could there be? There must be some outer limit on the number of generations that were skipped, lest the entire genealogical concept become meaningless! Arthur C. Custance acknowledges, "We are told again and again that some of these genealogies contain gaps. But what is never pointed out by those who lay the emphasis on gaps, is that they only know of the existence of these gaps because the Bible elsewhere fills them in. How otherwise could one know of them? But if they are filled in, they are not gaps at all! Thus in the final analysis the argument is completely without foundation."
- E. In tracing the genealogy of Christ through Joseph, Matthew lists 40 individuals between Abraham to Jesus (Matthew 1:1-17). In tracing the genealogy of Christ through Mary, Luke lists 75 individuals from Adam to Jesus. According to Luke, Abraham is 55 generations removed from Jesus, and Adam is another 20 generations removed from our Savior. In tracing the genealogy of Adam, Moses lists 9 generations from Adam to Noah (Genesis 5:1-32). Jude acknowledges this chronology by speaking of Enoch as "the seventh from Adam" (Jude 1:14). This only leaves only 13 genealogies that could possibly contain gaps.
- F. Bishop Ussher, making no allowance for any generational gaps in the lineages, calculated that 2,000 years elapsed between Adam and Abraham. According to the Bible, twenty generations are under dispute. How much time can one reasonably insert into these 20 generations? For the sake of argumentation, let's say that each of the 20 generations from Adam to Abraham is separated by 400 years.

According to this timetable, 8,000 years would have elapsed from Adam to Abraham ($20 \times 400 = 8,000$). There is almost universal acceptance that Abraham lived approximately 2,000 years before Christ, and that we live 2,000 years after Christ. Therefore, according to this method of calculation, Adam was created about 12,000 years ago ($8,000 + 2,000 + 2,000 = 12,000$). Therefore, even if we grant that the first 20 generations of Bible history each cover over 400 years, this still does not help those who want to believe in an old earth. Having bought into the standard evolutionary timetable, they need to make that 2,000 years become 100,000 to 250,000 years at its most conservative estimate.

- G. In order to accommodate the biblical record only as far back as the appearance of man's alleged evolutionary ancestor (approximately 3.6 million years), one would have to place 291,125 years between each of the remaining 13 generations. It does not take an overdose of either biblical knowledge or common sense to see that this quickly becomes ludicrous in the extreme.
- H. The reader may wonder how 55 generations (Jesus to Abraham) could cover 2,000 years while 20 generations (Abraham to Adam) also cover 2,000 years. The answer, of course, lies in the ages of the patriarchs. Because they lived to such vast ages, fewer generations were required to encompass the same number of years. Two questions need to be asked:
1. Who could believe that the first seven of these generations are so exact, while the last thirteen are so inexact? Is it proper biblical exegesis to suggest that the first seven listings are correct as written, but gaps covering more than a quarter of a million years may be inserted between each of the last thirteen?
 2. What good would any of this do anyone? All it would accomplish is the establishment of a 3.6 million year-old Earth; old-Earth creationists, progressive creationists, and theistic evolutionists need a 4.6 billion year-old Earth. So, in effect, all of the insertions of "gaps" into the biblical text is much ado about nothing. While it may be true on the one hand to say that an exact age of the Earth is unobtainable from the information contained within the genealogies, at the same time it is important to note that -- using the best information available to us from scripture -- the genealogies hardly can be extended to anything much beyond 6,000 to 7,000 years. For someone to suggest that the genealogies do not contain legitimate chronological information, or that the genealogies somehow are so full of gaps as to render them useless, is to misrepresent the case and distort the facts.

II. **What Is Wrong With Creation Compromises?**

- A. Compromise carried too far has disastrous results. The verb "compromise" generally is defined as "to adjust or settle by mutual concessions; to come to agreement by mutual concession." The concept of compromise is quite popular in our day. It is used often in social matters, business disputes, foreign relations, political affairs, and various other areas of life. Certainly, not all compromise is bad.
- B. Religious unity was to be based on the fact that God's word (John 12:48; 14:15) is the objective, inspired, inerrant, authoritative source of knowledge (John 17:17; Matthew 24:35; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). When God speaks, that should settle the matter once and for all.
- C. Effecting a compromise of God's word is a favorite tool of the devil. When God specifically told Adam and Eve not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:1-3), who appeared with a compromise for Eve (Genesis 3:4)? Eve capitulated, and convinced Adam to do likewise.
- D. Today, efforts are being made by many within the religious community to compromise the word of God and to "water down" the essence of the biblical message. It is my firm conviction that one of the most serious, and certainly one of the most deadly, is the unrelenting compromise of the Genesis account of creation. Many Christians apparently do not understand that once the first eleven chapters of Genesis are compromised, the remainder of the biblical record soon will be as well. But where, exactly, are such compromises likely to lead?
 - 1. Creation compromise is a prelude to religious liberalism and modernism.
 - a) Few people seem to realize how significantly the influence of Charles Darwin has impacted the modern world. A 1991 Gallup poll suggested that almost half (49%) of the American public, to some extent or another, believed in organic evolution. Amazingly, some 40% of these professed a religious affiliation. In March 2000, the *New York Times* released the results of a poll where 68% said it was "possible to believe in evolution while also believing that God created humans and guided their development."
 - b) The history of the last century has shown over and over that as the evolutionary theory is accepted by a society, faith deteriorates. With the acceptance of evolution, the social gospel is substituted for the gospel of salvation by grace through the atonement of Christ by way of the cross.

- c) For a theistic evolutionist, to generate in people distrust over the reliability of the Old and New Testaments is, in the long run, to affect adversely a person's confidence in God's actions and promises. The Christian is then faced with the problem of having to determine which books are trustworthy and which are not; a burden no Christian should be made to bear.
2. Creation compromise turns the Savior into a liar.
- a) Jesus commented that man and woman had been here since the beginning of the creation (Mark 10:6). If the compromising theories are correct, Jesus is not. Being a member of the Godhead, He is omniscient. Therefore, He had to have known the truth of the matter.
 - b) Peter spoke of Jesus as the One who did no sin (1 Peter 2:22). The writer of Hebrews reiterated that point (4:15). The compromising theories, whether they intend to or not, accuse Christ of lying. Such an accusation, however, is false. And any doctrine that implies a false doctrine is itself false.
 - c) Since Jesus endorsed the Genesis record of the miraculous creation of man and woman, this record is true. If it is not, Jesus is a false Christ. Thus, theistic evolution overthrows faith in Christ, and thereby overthrows faith in the gospel.
 - d) In particular, young people need to know what an espousal of theistic evolution does to Jesus Christ. Jesus went on record as accepting the fact that man and woman were made at the beginning. Evolution does not believe humanity was made but slowly evolved through long eons of time. Jesus said humanity existed from the beginning and Mark has his affirmation of man's having existed from the beginning of creation. If evolution is true, Jesus is proved to be an unreliable witness of the truth.
3. Creation compromise makes man the "naked ape."
- a) In 1967, Desmond Harris wrote a book called *The Naked Ape* which was used to propagate the idea that man evolved from ape-like creatures millions of years ago -- a view accepted by many who seek to compromise the creation account.
 - b) However, many other scientists accept the fact that man is a very recent inhabitant of the Earth. Both positions simply cannot be true so we must decide who we are going to believe.
 - c) If evolution is true, we do not have a unique individual, Adam, but rather a population of emergent humankind. Adam can only be a representative man, a kind of symbol for mankind.
 - d) But Adam was distinct from all the animals he surveyed, and there was no one like him (Genesis 2:20). This is a completely impossible concept under the theory of evolution, where Adam

would have been one of several anthropoid hominids who were approaching the definition of a "human" through a series of mutations. Try as they might, theistic evolutionists and progressive creationists cannot force the Genesis account into agreement with evolution.

4. Creation compromise makes man rise, not fall.
 - a) One of the most serious problems with theistic evolution and similar compromises is the doctrine of the fall of man into sin. If evolution is true and if a man evolved from lower forms of life, whether through a mechanical process as Darwin proposed or through acts of God in accordance with theistic evolution, there was no first man who stood distinctly separate from the animal kingdom, but merely a gradual blending from animal to man.
 - b) Without an Adam and Eve, it follows that there was no fall of man as recorded in Genesis. But the atonement of Christ is based upon the fall of man as a real historic event. If evolution is true, then, no historic fall of man occurred, and thus no Redeemer is needed to save us from our sins.
 - c) If we are not a fallen people, unable to save ourselves, but a product of our animal ancestry, gradually improving and moving toward perfection, Christ was only a martyr, a good man ahead of His time but not the Savior, the Redeemer.
5. Creation compromise creates multiple contradictions.
 - a) It would take a veritable encyclopedia to list the many contradictions between the various creation compromises and the Genesis account of origins.
 - b) While it is impossible to discuss each, the following list, combined from a variety of sources, is offered:
 - (1) Genesis states that light existed before the Sun was created (1:3, 16), while evolution contends that the Sun was Earth's first light.
 - (2) Genesis declares that water existed before dry land (1:2, 6, 9), but evolution alleges that the first waters seeped out of its interior to form the oceans.
 - (3) Genesis teaches that the first forms of life upon the Earth were plants (1:11), whereas evolution argues that first life forms were marine organisms.
 - (4) Genesis says that fruit-bearing trees existed before fish were created (1:11, 20), but evolution contends that fish evolved before fruit-bearing trees.
 - (5) Genesis states that plants came into being before the Sun (1:11, 14), but evolution suggests that the Sun was burning millions of years prior.

- (6) Genesis reveals that living creatures were created according to individual groups, and thereafter each reproduced after its own "kind" (1:11-12, 21, 24-25). According to evolution, all organisms derive from a common source.
6. Creation compromise is a prelude to the loss of a person's soul.
- a) The degree to which a person's faith is affected by compromise of the Genesis account of creation depends upon a number of factors. The effects of theistic evolution on a man are profound. His personal religious standards, his zeal for teaching Christ as his Savior, and his belief in the absolutes of the Bible are all weakened. One who doubts Genesis will not be the same man he once was.
 - b) Martin Lings once wrote that more cases of loss of religious faith are to be traced to the theory of evolution than to anything else. Why is this the case? It essentially boils down to a conflict between God-centered religion and creature-centered religion.
 - c) Any sort of religion which denies the Creator the place of absolute primacy and sovereignty in the Universe, which prescribes limits of His action or power or which seeks to judge His deeds or His word at the bar of human reason, is fundamentally a system of evolution. The Universe or some aspect or component of it is held to be the focus of ultimate truth and the idea of God is accommodated, if at all, in some derivative place in the system.

Conclusion. An 18-year-old son comes back home, having completed the first few weeks of classes at the university where he went after his high school graduation. Upon his return home for the weekend, he boldly proclaims to his parents, "I thought you'd want to know. I don't believe in God anymore." Put yourself in the place of those two parents for a moment. Can you imagine the shock of hearing those awful words? This young man had been a truly wonderful son. He had been a genuinely faithful Christian. But he now had returned home from college a self-avowed atheist. When his parents asked the obvious question he casually replied, "I no longer believe in God because I have seen the compelling evidence for organic evolution that was provided by the professor in my required biology class -- evidence which proves that we have descended from ape-like creatures millions of years ago. Evolution is a scientific fact. Belief in God is a myth for those who don't know any better." And so, another soul has been lost to compromise.

It is so very sad to see, in this pilgrimage we call life, people of obvious talent and ability who could have been such a blessing to so many, yet who have become counterproductive to the cause of truth because of

their compromising positions on certain issues. These people could have influenced numerous souls for Christ -- in this generation and in those yet to come -- had they simply retained their faith in the Bible and stood firmly upon its doctrinal statements.

It is my earnest desire that perhaps something I have said today might serve as a warning to Christians regarding the terrible consequences that arise from creation compromises. We simply cannot cry "peace; and there was no peace" (Ezekiel 13:10). What will the church of the future be like if the errors of theistic evolution, progressive creationism, and other such compromises are tolerated?

I am deeply indebted to Bert Thompson for the use of his material.