

IS THE HISTORICAL RECORD OF GENESIS 1-11 ACCURATE?

A BIBLICAL DEFENSE OF A UNIVERSAL FLOOD AND A SIX DAY CREATION

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A BIBLICAL DEFENSE OF GENESIS 1-11

#1 THE CORE ISSUES IN THE CONFLICT (May 14)

INTRODUCTION

From the time of the Apostles, until several hundred years ago, the Church Universal for the most part believed the Bible taught a literal six day creation, an historical Adam and Eve created on the sixth day, and a universal flood. But today many evangelicals have rejected those view as influenced by the scientific presupposition that the earth and the universe are billions of years old, the product of time and chance. Today a few will opt for a (a) *gap theory* between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 to account for this claim of the earth being millions of years old. Some opt for (b) *theistic evolution* (which simply makes God the origin of the Universe) and others (c) *progressive creationism* which attributes to God a series of creations prior to man for as much as sixteen billion years.. But both claim to harmonize their view of God as Creator with the doctrines of uniformitarianism and evolution. To set the stage for this presentation you should know up front I will oppose in particular Progressive Creationism in this new radio series with ***a Biblical Defense of Genesis 1-11 as Historical and Accurate*** and three principles will undergird my position.

First as to how we should regard **scholars**, knowing even biblical scholars are not infallible and without error in their views. According to one report *'only one third of Bible scholars are even professing Christians and only a fraction of those would self-identify as evangelical.'* And of those who are evangelical I am told a vast majority of even Pastors and teachers now reject the view that Genesis One presents a literal six day creation, or even a universal flood, because they want to accommodate what might be called "popular" science. The names on that list are otherwise very orthodox and acclaimed evangelicals and during this series I will not name any of them so as to stay focused on a biblical review of the problem using good hermeneutical principles as to how we should interpret scripture, along with basic logic to see the implications and consequences of misinterpreting and misrepresenting the Bible. So since even Biblical scholars can be in error we won't make them our final authority.

For example **Saint Augustine** from the fourth century was named by TIME magazine to be a *"major, intellectual, spiritual and cultural force"* that continues until today. Will Durant said *"he is the most authentic, eloquent and powerful voice in the age of Faith in Christendom"* His writings are often referred to. He has influenced not only Calvin and Luther but modern day evangelicalism and was in the forefront of combatting the heresies of his day. **But** he was himself guilty of Catholic error in affirming (a) baptism as the means of regeneration, (b) the celebration of the Eucharist as essential to our salvation and (c) Mary was herself as being sinless with no other children even though the Gospels show that is not the case. Now when it came to his views of a literal six day creation, he wrote three commentaries on Genesis and over time his position at times was confusing as he even contradicted himself between a literal and allegorical view. But he was absolutely clear holding to a universal flood and based on the plain meaning of the genealogies believed the earth was only more than 6000 years old. So he was not an *"old-earther"* as some progressive creationists falsely say. But as orthodox as he was on some things, he was not infallible and inerrant in his position.

Then let's fast forward to the Reformation and talk about **Martin Luther**. He was very clear in his views of creation and rejected the idea that the universe always existed. He countered one first century skeptic who even then said *"nothing can ever be created by a divine power out of nothing"* (a direct conflict with the Bible). That man said there were pre-humans and that through *"long generations of physical change (from simple to complex beings) and the present human race was born from these creatures,"* which reminds us nothing is new under the sun. Luther encountered theistic evolutionists in own his day and was adamant *"the first man did not come into existence by a process of generation as reason had deceived Aristotle and the philosophers into imagining"*. He saw no reason to reject Moses use of simple words in accepting a six day creation by God just as Moses said. Genesis One was not any so called *"religious history"* that we could reinterpret to fit our scientific world view and when science was at odds with Scripture he applied the principle of *"Sola Scriptura"* that science that was at odds with

scripture was a false science. As you will see I agree with Luther and when he said *"we know from Moses that the world was not in existence before 6000 years ago"* he put it this way *"if you cannot understand how this could be done in six days then grant the Holy Spirit the honor of being more learned than you are. Since God is speaking, it is not for you to wantonly turn His Word in the direction you wish it to go"* I think that's a warning we should heed. But Luther also endorsed false doctrine when in due time he turned on the Jews from his earlier support of them to years later being an aggressive opponent of them to the point of wanting to set fire to their homes and synagogues. In the process he laid the seeds of anti-Semitism in the German mind that later bore bitter fruit in the Nazi Holocaust. Today many evangelical leaders have forsaken the historical view of Genesis 1-11 and are sending a mixed message regarding inerrancy. While at times I could quote biblical scholar, my arguments will as much as possible be based on consistent and cogent hermeneutics even as some of them have helped me understand.

Second then is how should we regard **scientists**? That depends on what scientist or scientific view you are depending on and they often referred to in the debate as either pro or con regarding our central question. So it will help us put this in perspective if we see how the theory of evolution itself has evolved. According to Luther, philosophers from Aristotle on have proposed an atheistic view of the universe from a philosophical point of view. But then in the eighteenth century on it was proposed as a scientific point of view. In 1830 a Scottish lawyer named Charles Lyle published a book on Principles of Geology and made it very clear, as the saying goes crystal clear, that he wanted to free the science of geology from *"Moses."* His premise was that *"the present is key to the past"* which has become the *"cornerstone of modern geology."* Of course, this was followed by Charles Darwin (the father of modern evolutionary theory) and his views have permeated the scientific establishment ever since. Yet it must be said that Darwin never said evolution was Godless but his followers would and so in the years that came after the Christian community was aggressive in combating this world view. In time many instead formed an alliance with evolution and tacked on God as the author of what we now call *"theistic evolution"* or *"progressive creation."* In the process they turned their backs on the traditional view to say Genesis 1-11 is not strictly historical, which is the core of the debate. So which is our final authority, scripture or science?

This raises another question as to what science are we referring to? Well I think a case can be made that despite factual evidence to the contrary, there exists in the scientific community an unwillingness to accept what I would call evidence to the contrary that God is the Creator of the Universe which means that truth is sometimes trumped in favor of theory. One honest evolutionist admits we shouldn't drag the issue of a Creator into the debate *"because it's absurd and absolutely preposterous to believe that a living cell could come into existence by itself, but notwithstanding I do believe it because I cannot imagine anything else"* Another admits *"that the formation of new species, by any mechanism has never been observed"* This underscores the difference between

what I call “**presuppositional science**” and “**proven science**” And stories can be told whereby the former was made up to appear as the latter. For example those who believe in a pre-Adamic creature tried to provide scientific evidence to prove that point that later turned out to be a hoax. As one author put it “*the evolutionists picture of the fossil record is fabricated and not based on fact.*” Here’s just one example for now. In 1912 Charles Dawson claimed he had found the remains of a pre-Adamic man called the *Hominid* and named the **Pitdown man**. Forty years later the BBC reported it was “*the greatest hoax of the twentieth century*” and others called it “*the greatest example of evolutionary gullibility of the twentieth century*”. A few teeth had been found that were doctored and stained to look old. And that’s only one of several examples.