

EDITORIAL

SCRIPTURE ON CREATION

The battle rages today between evolutionists and creationists. A rigorous war is waged to win over your mind on the issue of origins. No doubt you've experienced the pain inflicted by this confrontation. Maybe you have been burdened to actually know how the universe, the world, the galaxy and all that is in them really came into being.

Where did it all come from? How long did it take? When did it begin? How did it begin? These questions could be posed to no more appropriate expert than the only One who was there at the beginning—God. He has not been silent on the subject, so our discussion begins with the Bible. For in Scripture, the Creator himself speaks on the questions of origins.

The Starting Point

Recently, an apocryphal tale appeared about some men who sought to know, “Where did the earth come from?” They compiled their data and fed it into a sophisticated computer. Then with avid anticipation, they pushed the answer button. Lights flashed! Bells rang! Buzzers sounded! The great moment brought forth this printed message, “See Genesis 1:1.”

Admittedly, the story is fictitious but it illustrates a crucial point: God's written revelation demands primary consultation. Natural revelation rightly serves then to affirm what has first been determined from a careful, exegetical investigation of the entire Bible.

Unified Testimony

Even if we did not have the Genesis testimony, the “origins question” would not go unanswered. Specific statements about creation weave their way throughout the course of Scripture. Take a look at this pattern which emerges.

Thou alone art the Lord. Thou hast made the heavens, the heaven of heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all

that is in them. Thou dost give life to all of them and the heavenly host bows down before Thee (Neh 9:6).

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, "I the Lord, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself, and spreading out the earth all alone" (Isa 44:24).

Ah Lord God! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee (Jer 32:17).

. . . you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them (Acts 14:15).

Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands (Heb 1:10).

Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created (Rev 4:11).

For a wider survey, check out 1 Chron 16:25–26; Job 38–41; Ps 33:6; 148:1–5; Prov 3:19; Amos 4:13; Jon 1:9; Zech 12:1; Rom 9:20 and Rev 10:6; 14:7.

The whole of Scripture points to a Person not a process. The parts consistently declare that God created. The incontestable conclusion surfaces that the writers of Scripture believed God to be the first cause of all things. However, for many sincere Christians the question is not "Who?" but rather, "How?" The Scripture is not silent here either.

Direct Claims

In addition to strong affirmations that God created, the Bible also makes definitive assertions concerning the specific nature of the creation. Scripture addresses both the amount of time and the source of material used.

When God (through Moses) wanted to illustrate how the Fourth Commandment of Sabbath rest should be celebrated, He referred back to creation as the model. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Exod 20:8–11).

God's logic flowed along this line—man is to labor for six days (20:9) because it was in six days that the Lord made the heaven and the earth and all that is in them (20:11). Since the days of work were measured in 24-hour segments,

the time periods for creation (which served as the prototype) must also be of equal length. The same logic also applied to the day of rest (20:10–11). Unless days of equal length were intended in both passages, the illustration would have been meaningless.

Secondly, the writer of Hebrews tackles the question of what materials God used in creation. “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible” (Heb 11:3).

There existed no eternal matter. God did not plant a seed that eventually grew into something more complex than itself. If that is hard to believe, then obey the Scriptures—take it by faith for there is the premiere declaration of creation *ex nihilo* (from nothing).

Unmistakably, Scripture asserts that the world we see today was not the result of process in which the world became what it is through lengthy stages of maturity. Rather, the visible came into being from the invisible. And if God is the first cause of special creation, we would suspect that the work bears His signature.

God’s Nature

God’s eternal perfection is assumed everywhere in Scripture. What’s more—the awesome majesty of creation reflects His power and glory and dominion. “The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands” (Ps 19:1).

No mechanistic process of evolution or maturity would form the beginning point to the infinitude and power of God. However, from the beginning, the creature has been without excuse for his ignorance of God since He is clearly revealed in the nature of creation.

You can logically have evolutionary process without God. That is why most evolutionists are atheistic, but God becomes the fly in their ointment of thought. However, you can never have sudden creationism without God. Thus, only in sudden creationism would God’s mark of power be unmistakable from the start. That is why Paul concluded, “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse” (Rom 1:20).

Next, let’s assume for a moment that the world and its inhabitants came into being through process. The more complex would develop (evolve!) out of the simple. Furthermore, most evolutionists would agree that the human race stands as the epitome of the process. If all of that is true, then whatever is the basic nature of man also is basic to the original organism from which man has developed.

This reasoning, however compelling, is rendered untrue by one basic biblical fact. Man was created in the image of God. Therefore, humans could not have evolved into the image of God because there is no time gap between man’s creation and man being made in the likeness of God. It is written, “This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God” (Gen 5:1). Whatever one believes about origins, it is

necessary to postulate that God, in a moment of time, embossed mankind with His image. Process will not account for our unique nature, nor for the fact that mankind has been infected by sin. Thus it is that God sent His Son to redeem only mankind rather than the multitudes of other life forms.

Christ's Earthly Ministry

We could examine no more credible authority on our subject than the Creator Incarnate—Jesus Christ. If anyone can shed some convincing light on this inquiry, certainly the Savior stands as the supreme witness.

The Bible testifies about His involvement in the creation. Scripture makes strong assertions that Christ not merely identified with creation, but actually initiated all of it. “All things came into being through Him; and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being” (John 1:3).

“For in Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him” (Col 1:16). “In these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world” (Heb 1:2).

Most explanations of creation require a significant time interval between the creation of matter and the origin of man. However, listen to Jesus' own teaching, “But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female” (Mark 10:6). Christ's word choice here leaves the interpreter with no other alternative than to understand that man was a part of the creation at the outset, not some subsequent development. Only the model of sudden creationism takes this most determinative evidence into consideration.

Christ's words are convincing, but the significance of His forceful works (the creative miracles) persuades us even more. On one occasion, He created wine out of water (John 2:1–11). Twice He created banquets to feed thousands out of meager handfuls of food (Matt 14:13–21, 15:34–39). In each instance, the miracle occurred apart from a process and without the passing of large time periods.

God gave the disciples a glimpse of Christ's second coming glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. So, He also gave us a look at Jesus' creative power through His miracles. Carefully note that not only was God able to manifest creative power, but He also willed to do so.

End-Time Events

Of all the biblical evidences that point to sudden creationism, the following just might be the most convincing. As we look at how God chose to conclude human history, we will catch a glimpse of how the world most likely began.

Christians hope that their bodies will be resurrected from the grave and transformed to be glorified and incorruptible. We have every reason to expect that the Lord is able and willing to do this (Dan 12:2; John 5:29; Rom 8:23; 1 Cor 15:51–52; 1 Thess 4:16–17) according to the Scriptures. Every Christian's body

will instantly be recreated from the dust of the earth.

This is like the creation of Adam repeated. Only this time, not just one body is created, but literally millions who have trusted Christ as their Savior. Since multitudes will be given recreated bodies in the resurrection, how easy it would have been for God to create just Adam and Eve at the beginning. Thus, it is logically valid to conclude that the greater creative miracle of resurrection parallels the lesser miracle of initial creation. Sudden creationism then stands not only possible but even most probable as a manifestation of God's consistency.

Just as the resurrection of man points to a sudden creation in the beginning, so does the ending of the world. In a rapid exertion of His divine power, God will cleanse and refurbish the cursed earth by fire so that it will become a new earth (2 Pet 3:10–13).

Eternity future will not evolve from the present world. Rather, God will quickly and powerfully bring an end to the present time and usher in the final age. Since God will suddenly reverse the present process, it is reasonable to believe that He initiated the world that now is in the same manner (quickly, from nothing).

Now, having looked at the end, we finally turn back to the beginning. Does Genesis give us any supporting reasons to believe that the earth was personally created by God in a short period of time?

The Genesis Record

The grammar of Genesis provides some convincing evidences. They point to “day” in context as referring to either the period of light within a 24-hour cycle or the entire period of both darkness and light (24 hours). The one exception is “day” in Gen 2:4. However, it is obvious from the context that “day” there refers to the entire period of creation.

Note first that the Hebrew word for “day,” when accompanied by a numerical adjective (e.g., fourth day), is never used figuratively. It is always understood normally.

Next, the Hebrew plural for “day” is never used figuratively in the Old Testament (Exod 20:9) outside of a creation context. We are, therefore, led to believe that it is used in the same way when referring to origins.

Further, the terms “evening” and “morning” are never used figuratively in the Old Testament. They always describe a 24-hour period.

Fourth, God actually defines “day” in Gen 1:5 by designating it as a period of light and a period of darkness. After creating light (Gen 1:3) and causing a spatial separation between the darkness and the light (Gen 1:4), with respect to the earth, God established the light/dark cycle as a principle measurement of time; i.e., one day (Gen 1:5). This light/dark cycle is best understood as one full earth rotation or a 24-hour day.

The grammatical interpretation of Scripture is primary to an accurate interpretation of Scripture. These facts are significant exegetical indicators of the time aspect manifested in creation. They point unquestionably to creation in six consecutive 24-hour days.

Now let's turn our attention specifically to the creation of man. The human

species did not evolve from some lower life form but rather was created by divine fiat (the exertion of the divine will) from lifeless dust (Gen 2:7; 3:19; Eccl 3:20; 12:7). No other explanation of human origins accounts for this clear Scriptural declaration except sudden creationism

Further, the female did not evolve from the male or from any other creation, but was personally fashioned by God (Gen 2:21–23; 1 Cor 11:8, 12) on the same day as man's creation. There were not large gaps of time when woman (a mutation in any other system) came from man. Because male and female came into being in close time sequence, this demands God's creative power as proposed by the sudden creationism model.

With these thoughts in mind, note carefully that one does not have to start with Genesis to understand what the Bible teaches about creation. Having finally arrived here, however, we do see that Genesis confirms the rest of Scripture and adds its own irresistible strength to the sudden creation position.

A Final Thought

The reasoning and conclusions reached here represent the primary biblical evidences which must be honestly faced if the biblical record is to be taken seriously. Any solution to the problem of origins shaped without thorough regard for these evidences is inadequately formed.

Maybe it doesn't take a computer, after all, to solve complex questions surrounding creation. However, we have taken the imaginary computer's suggestion and consulted the biblical record. That is truly the place to begin for all Christians who are seeking to know the truth.

Richard Mayhue
rmayhue@tms.edu