



DEFENDING GENESIS

CELEBRATING THE BEST FROM 40 YEARS OF THE WORLD'S MOST WIDELY-READ
CREATION MAGAZINE



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CREATION MAGAZINE:

40 YEARS OF CHANGING LIVES



By **Carl Wieland**, who founded the magazine in mid-1978.

UPON GRADUATION from medical school in the early 70s, events in my life made the Gospel very real and pertinent.¹ But my evolutionary education was a huge roadblock to becoming a Christian. I was in no doubt that the Bible taught, and Jesus and the Apostles believed in, the recent creation of a perfect world in six real days, each with an evening and a morning—and that a real historical Fall of Adam ruined this perfection. But science was supposedly telling me that the fossils, with all the death, disease and suffering they portray, formed over hundreds of millions of years—thus long before any appearance of mankind. The contradiction was obvious and stark, and attempts to ‘blend’ the two were doomed to failure.

That barrier was removed by reading the landmark 1961 book *The Genesis Flood*, after which I devoured any other creation work I could find. Some questions remained, but I realized that the issue (especially in geology) was not about ‘the facts’ so much as their interpretation. I was ‘set free to believe’, as others have since described their similar experiences to me.

Countering brainwashing

Not surprisingly, I had a real passion to let others know, too, and enthusiastic conversations soon led to speaking invitations. Reflecting on why I was convinced of evolution at about age 10, I realized it was largely the colourful, glossy presentations of evolutionary ‘facts’ in popular magazines. Especially influential, perhaps, were the imaginative drawings of certain ‘apemen’, later virtually all discarded as human ancestors. I saw the need for a glossy, colourful layman’s magazine with articles countering the relentless evolutionary messaging (which has only kept increasing since). But nothing like that was being made anywhere.

So, I thought, why not start one? By 1977, I was part of a small committee comprising the first official creation science organization in Australia,² with memberships trickling in from other parts of the country. Such a magazine could be part of members’ benefits.³

That first issue (then called *Ex Nihilo*, Latin for ‘out of nothing’⁴) was neither glossy, nor colourful. This black-and-white effort was typed, then (with pictures stuck on) photocopied before being collated, stapled, and edge-bound by hand with unsightly black tape. It truly was an ‘ugly duckling’, but the longest journey starts with one footstep, and it *was* a start. Over the years, several have told me how hugely encouraging for them even that first rough prototype was in an evolution-soaked world.

A virtuous circle develops

With intensive ministry in Australian churches by dedicated people, subscriptions grew, though at a snail’s pace for many years. The first time the ministry could afford any colour printing for the mag was in 1981, and then only for the cover. As circulation increased, some ‘spot’ (not full) colour became possible on a few inside pages; then more. And then some *full* colour pages. It became a virtuous circle; the more we could afford to improve its ‘looks’, along with the quality of content, the easier it became to attract and hold subscribers and supporters, which made more colour possible, and so on. Nonetheless, it was nearly 20 years before we managed full colour on every page.

The advances in technology have been enormous, of course. Not that long ago, the text was printed out on long narrow strips, then cut into varying-length pieces by staff and hand-pasted to make the columns. We would have all been stunned to see the typesetting programs taken for granted today, where text

automatically flows into the column spaces, and appears on screen with pictures just as the printed page will look.

Creation magazine now has many tens of thousands of subscribers in over 110 countries worldwide—not to mention the digital option, sharable with several others. But such ‘success’ would nonetheless be fairly meaningless if unaccompanied by that integral part of the ‘vision’ all along; change in many lives. Dr Don Batten, my friend and successor as head of the Australian ministry, in his piece following, highlights the effect the magazine keeps on having, and in increasing numbers.

Feedback fuels perseverance

Suffice to say that with all the difficulties the ministry faced over the years (including more than one nearly-successful attempt to shut it down), it was such *testimonies* as Dr Don provides (of faith strengthened, witnessing empowered, and most encouraging of all, people converted) that kept us going, ‘pressing on’ regardless. They came in by mail, email, by telephone, and in person. It was rare for a CMI speaker at a church not to have at least one person spontaneously approach them about the ministry’s (especially the magazine’s) impact on them.

Perhaps the most important thing to say in response (apart from thanking them for the encouragement), was that their subscription was doing far more than blessing them. By maintaining it and their support in general, another ‘virtuous circle’ operated: the more subs, the more CMI was able to not only keep the information cutting-edge, but, via ministry engagements and more, help spread its message into many other homes, and around the world.

I trust this selection of timeless articles from over four decades of *Creation* magazine will inspire you to keep blessing others with its message. ■

References and notes

1. As detailed in the book *Beyond the Shadows*.
2. The Creation Science Association (CSA) of South Australia. This was later absorbed into a body that had been emerging in the State of Queensland, the Creation Science Foundation (1980). CSF took over the production and distribution of the magazine early on; I then led it from 1987, having moved to Queensland. In the 1990s it changed its name to Answers in Genesis (Australia) and then in 2006 to *Creation Ministries International* (CMI), the Australian arm of a worldwide Federation of CMI sister ministries who all share the same aims, beliefs, website, publications etc. (see creation.com/contact).
3. It was then more of a ‘creation club’ than a ministry, something that quickly showed itself as not ideal.
4. The name made it seem more ‘technical’ than it was, so it was later changed. But since it was already widely loved under the original name, the transition was eased by first changing it to *Creation Ex Nihilo*.

Dr Carl Wieland spent over 40 years in active creation ministry, at first part-time while practising medicine in South Australia. Having commenced Creation magazine in 1978, he went on to be Managing Director of the ministry producing it (now Creation Ministries International—Australia), in 1987. He remained in this role, and was a senior editor of the magazine, until he retired in 2015. For more: creation.com/carl-wieland.

CREATION MAGAZINE: *onward!*



Dr Don Batten,
Managing Editor

I COUNT IT as a huge privilege to now be the managing editor of *Creation* magazine. My friend and colleague, Dr Carl Wieland, leaves big shoes to fill. He set an example of publishing integrity that we must strive to maintain so that we continue to effectively equip God's people.

We receive lots of encouragement from *Creation* readers. Their feedback shows that the magazine:

1. **Leads to conversions to Christ.** One of my favourite testimonies came from a man from Gympie in country Queensland, Australia: “I was converted when someone gave me a *Creation* magazine. Then I subscribed for five of my relatives. Four of them have now come to the Lord.” Wow! How many evangelists would love to have those percentages? I remember a man contacting us to share how after years of his wife praying for his conversion, he had finally ‘come through’. His wife would leave *Creation* magazine lying around the house. When she was not around, he would read them, putting them back exactly as she had placed them, so that she would not know that he had been reading it!
2. **Equips Christians for witnessing and evokes confidence.** John, an 89-year-old gentleman, shared with us that a couple of years previously he and his wife were at a meeting for people who spoke the Cornish language when someone asked him, “How is church going?” A young lady seated at their table piped up with, “Nothing in the Bible is true”, and that this had all been proved in a book she had just been reading by one Richard Dawkins. John had subscribed to *Creation* magazine for many years, and he said he refuted every one of her arguments solely using the material he had read in *Creation*. The discussion went for over an hour! She then admitted that John was right! Others seated at the table had gone to church as young people but had not been for many years. At the end of the discussion with John, many of them decided to go back to church, and continue to do so today! And all this because one man had read *Creation* magazines. But note something: John’s experience underlines the importance of maintaining a subscription to be continually ‘topped up’ and fed, keeping up to date; being prepared (1 Peter 3:15).
3. **Provides a straightforward approach to witnessing that anyone can use.** For example, one man shared that, “You make evangelism easy. When I meet someone, I give them a *Creation* magazine, and the next time we meet we talk about it.” Many find it difficult to get a Gospel-focused conversation started; *Creation* magazine provides a ready way, even with people who say they are not interested. I remember a young pastor and his wife in New Zealand who had been witnessing to a policeman friend. The good friend was not at all interested in their ‘religious’ views. They left him baby-sitting their children one evening, deliberately leaving a *Creation* magazine sitting on the coffee table (and nothing else, and no TV!). When they came home he said, “I’ve been reading that magazine like you meant me to; I’ve never read anything like that, do you have anything else like that? They gave him further reading and within two weeks he came to faith in Christ. This is common, to hear about even seemingly resistant people, completely opposed, coming to faith.

4. **Helps protect children in Christian families from losing their way** due to today’s rampant evolutionary indoctrination. Kerry W. shared how, “creation ministries over the years have contributed to our four children, now all married, all walking in the faith with their spouses, and raising the next generation on a creation foundation.” In my own house, my wife and I have been blessed in our three grown children walking with the Lord, and they also benefitted from having *Creation* magazine in the home as they were growing up. It is so colourful that children will pick it up and read the parts that attract their interest, reinforcing to them that the Bible speaks of realities, not just ‘stories’. It’s difficult to turn your back on Christ when you know that what the Bible says is true and really does fit the facts of the real world.
5. **Helps restore those who have lost their way** through evolutionary indoctrination. We have lots of stories of this. John’s account above provides several examples and there are many others. I have met pastors who had been ready to give up pastoring who were restored to a confident faith, getting back into enthusiastic pastoral work.

As Carl has noted, people subscribe to *Creation* from all over the world. Magazine articles have inspired people of other languages to translate them; there are now articles in 40 languages other than English on creation.com, and many of those articles are from past *Creation* magazines.

Keeping up with the times, *Creation* magazine is now available in digital format and when you get your email with the link, you can share it with several others, thus spreading the reach of the message.

With each issue, we endeavour to cover a range of topics so that each issue is to some extent comprehensive in its coverage (and has ‘something for everyone’). This means that a new reader will get something that ‘covers the bases’ in any issue, and articles that will be of personal interest.

Reading this, you are probably a *Creation* magazine subscriber (thank you!). May I encourage you to continue subscribing to *Creation* and sharing it with others? If you are not a subscriber, how about getting on board? As the small sample of stories shared above show, it does ‘a power of good’, and the good will only multiply as people come on board to share the magazine around. We estimate that each printed magazine is read by five people or more and the digital version extends that reach. If we had 100,000 subscribers, that could reach a million people or more with each issue.

I trust that you will enjoy (and share!) this compilation of ‘the best of’ *Creation* magazine over the years. Thank-you for being a part of this Gospel enterprise! ■

DON BATTEN, B.Sc.Agr.(Hons.), Ph.D.

Dr Batten worked as a research scientist and consultant plant physiologist and is now the Managing Director of Creation Ministries International in Brisbane, Australia. For more: creation.com/batten.



DID GOD
CREATE OVER
BILLIONS
OF YEARS?
...and why is it important?

OFTEN, PEOPLE challenge biblical creationists with comments such as, “God could have taken billions of years to create, so what’s the big deal about the age of the earth?” Some claim that an emphasis on ‘6 literal days, 6,000 years ago’ even keeps people away from the faith, so “Why place a strong emphasis on something that’s not a salvation issue?”

Surprisingly, we *agree*—to a point. The timescale *in and of itself* is not the important issue. It ultimately comes down to, “Does the Bible actually mean what it says?” The issue is about the trustworthiness of Scripture—compromising with long ages severely undermines the whole Gospel.

The implications of a long-age timescale

Millions or billions of years are never mentioned anywhere in Scripture; the concept is derived from *outside* of the Bible. In his 1830 book, *Principles of Geology*, Charles Lyell, a Scottish lawyer, argued that the thousands of feet of sedimentary layers (laid down by water or some other moving fluid) all over the earth were the result of long, slow, gradual processes over millions or billions of years. He believed that processes observed in the present must be used to explain the geological history of the earth (‘uniformitarianism’). His stated aim was “To free the science [of geology] from Moses.”¹

If we currently see rivers laying down sediment at an average rate of say 1 mm (4/100th of an inch) per year, then a layer of sedimentary rock such as sandstone which is 1,000 meters (3,300 feet) thick is presumed to have taken about a million years to form. This ‘present is the key to the past’ assumption (and its variants) is a cornerstone of modern geology. It rejects the biblical account of a global watery cataclysm. The millions of years assigned to the various layers in the ‘geological column’ were adopted long before the radiometric ‘dating’ methods that supposedly prove them. But here’s the theological problem. These layers don’t just have rocks or minerals in them. They contain fossils—indisputable evidence of death, carnivory, disease and suffering. Some remains have tooth marks in them, and animals fossilized in the process of eating other animals, and suffering from wounds, broken bones, etc. The Bible teaches that these things only began to happen *after the Fall*. But in a secular timescale, these fossils, with their evidence of death and suffering, existed long before any human. The implication of long-age belief is that God ordained death before the Fall of man, contrary to the Bible’s clear

teaching that His finished Creation was good, and it was Adam’s actions that brought death into the world (Romans 5:12).

The god of an old earth

The idea that God used evolution to create has harmful implications for God’s character. Evolution is a random and wasteful process that requires millions of ‘unfit’ organisms to die. Countless transitional forms become extinct and fall aside as casualties in the great march ‘forward’. After this allegedly ‘good’ God-ordained lottery of death finally resulted in humans, the evolutionary view says that God looked at His image-bearers, standing on top of layers of rocks filled with the remains of billions of dead things, and proclaimed His whole creation—along with the evidence of all the death and suffering that went into creating it—to be ‘very good’ (Genesis 1:31).

The gospel of an old earth

Some try to sidestep this issue by saying that the Fall only caused *human* death and disease. But Romans 8:19–22 clearly teaches that the curse of death and suffering following Adam’s Fall affected “the whole creation”, i.e. the entire physical universe.

But even if we set that aside for the sake of argument, there is another problem, because we have human remains ‘dated’ before the biblical date for Adam, which places him in the Garden about 6,000 years ago (see *How does the Bible teach 6,000 years?* p. 28). Many compromising positions see these hominid fossils as ‘pre-Adamites’—soulless non-human animals. But these skeletons fall within the normal range of human variation. And Neandertals, for example, show signs of art, culture and even religion. Recently, the sequencing of actual Neandertal DNA shows that many of us carry Neandertal genes—i.e. we are the same created kind.² To call them ‘non-human animals’ seems entirely contrived to salvage the long-age belief system.

Romans 8:19–20 tells us the *whole* creation groans under the weight of sin and is subjected to futility. And Genesis 3:17–19 tells us that the very





ground was cursed so that it produced thorns and thistles.³ If only a partial Fall occurred, then why will God destroy all creation to bring about a new one instead of a partial restoration? Why not just restore humans if the rest of creation is still “very good”?

Death the last enemy

A central part of the Gospel is that death is the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26). Death intruded into a perfect world because of sin, and it is so serious that Jesus’ victory

over death cannot be entirely manifested while there is a single believer in the grave. Are we expected to believe that something the Bible authors described as an enemy was used or overseen by God for millions of years and was called “very good”?

Christians also have the hope of the Resurrection and restoration of the creation to its original perfect state. The Bible is clear about the New Heavens and Earth as a place where there is no death, no suffering, and no sin (Isaiah 65:17–25; Revelation 21:1–5). But how can this be called a *restoration* if such a state never existed?



An evolutionist Anglican priest gave a good summary of what accepting death before the Fall means for Christian theology:

“Death is as old as life itself by all but a split second. Can it therefore be God’s punishment for Sin? ... From the dawn of time, the possibility of life and death, good and evil, have always existed. At no point is there any discontinuity; there was never a time when death appeared, or a moment when the evil [sic] changed the nature of the universe. God made the world as it is ... People try to tell us that Adam had a perfect relationship with God until he sinned, and all we need to do is repent and accept Jesus in order to restore that original relationship. But perfection like this never existed. There never was such a world. Trying to return to it, either in reality or spiritually, is a delusion.”²⁴

This clearly shows the logical end of allowing for billions of years, with or without evolution. Its logical corollary is that there was also evil before the Fall—indeed, there’s no longer anywhere to fall from. And in the process it rules out the hope of a return to a perfect state, since there can be no return to what never was. The Gospel itself has been destroyed in the process.

The effect on the church

A major stumbling block to faith is: “Why does

a good God allow all the death and suffering in the world?” Christians who accept death before the Fall cannot adequately explain the origin of death and suffering as a reaction to human sin. Their ability to defend their faith is severely compromised.

Conversely, believers who have a biblical view of the world’s history have a logical platform for introducing God to people with no scriptural background.

Incidentally, this was precisely the approach that Paul used when preaching to similar Gentile audiences (Acts 14:15–17; 17:23–31).

Most Christian leaders and theologians who lay out their reasons for believing in long ages have to admit that Genesis teaches a straightforward creation in six normal-length days. Unfortunately they accept that science has somehow ‘proved’ millions of years, which is actually not the case.

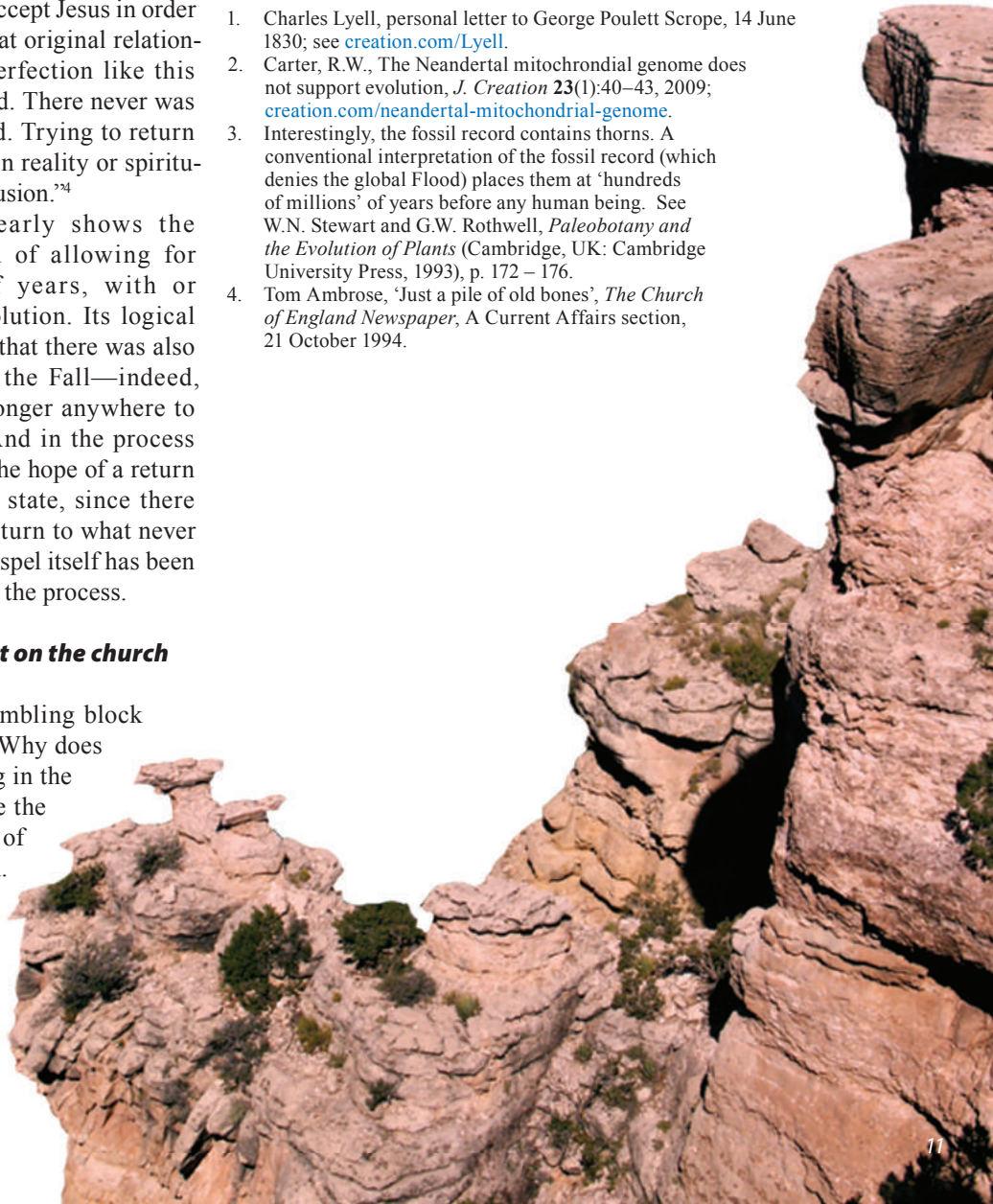
Inconsistent Christianity?

While it is possible to be a Christian and believe in an old earth, it would indicate that one has not thought through the consequences. If Genesis is not real literal history, how can one know where the truth actually does begin in Scripture? Today’s ‘science’ also ‘proves’ that men don’t rise from the dead.

Jesus said, “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (John 3:12). And because Jesus clearly believed in a literal historical Genesis, so should we. ■

References and notes

1. Charles Lyell, personal letter to George Poulett Scrope, 14 June 1830; see creation.com/Lyell.
2. Carter, R.W., The Neandertal mitochondrial genome does not support evolution, *J. Creation* 23(1):40–43, 2009; creation.com/neandertal-mitochondrial-genome.
3. Interestingly, the fossil record contains thorns. A conventional interpretation of the fossil record (which denies the global Flood) places them at ‘hundreds of millions’ of years before any human being. See W.N. Stewart and G.W. Rothwell, *Paleobotany and the Evolution of Plants* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 172 – 176.
4. Tom Ambrose, ‘Just a pile of old bones’, *The Church of England Newspaper*, A Current Affairs section, 21 October 1994.



WHAT SHOULD A CHRISTIAN THINK ABOUT **EVOLUTION?**

Prof. J. Rendle-Short

IHAVE every sympathy with those who find this question difficult to answer. In my teens, I believed that creation was true, but during my University years and afterwards I began to compromise. I became a theoretical creationist on Sundays, and a practical evolutionist for the rest of the week. In practice, I thought little about the matter, although it remained a mild irritant in the background. Later I worked out a fairly comfortable position as a theistic evolutionist—that is, I accepted the evolutionary theory as true, but wherever an atheist would write ‘chance’, I would substitute ‘God’ or ‘Providence’. How man and animals evolved, I did not know, but I was certain that whatever means had been used, God was in control. Recently, however, the evidence has compelled me to become a creationist. I say compelled because my whole medical training and indeed all that I hear from day to day in books and the media, shouts evolution at me. It is hard to abandon the thought processes of a lifetime.

This recent change of opinion has not occurred because I discovered creation to be more scientifically credible than evolution. Even convinced evolutionists find it difficult to account for the origin

of the worlds from nothing and of life from primordial slime; they wonder at the complexity and beauty of design in nature, as they often acknowledge by giving the word a capital ‘N’—Nature. I am a creationist because I believe that Creation alone conforms to the total thrust of Scripture as it is unfolded from Genesis to Revelation, and particularly as the Gospel is revealed in the New Testament.

Most devout Christians ask, ‘But does it matter? Why rock the boat? The battle, creation versus evolution, was fought (and lost) by previous generations of Christians. Why bring it up now?’ But it *does* matter, for the following reasons:

(If you are a Christian please ponder this deeply with an open Bible and prayer.)

1. Genesis 1–9 purports to be history rather than poetry or mythology. Writers throughout Scripture, particularly in the Psalms and the New Testament, treat it as history, as did our Lord. Genesis is more quoted in the rest of the Bible than any other book. If the early chapters of Genesis are allegory, what about the walls of Jericho, Jonah and the great fish, the virgin birth, and the resurrection of Christ? At what point do you say, ‘But that I can’t believe?’
2. Unless the world was originally created ‘very good’, it is difficult to



see how man could ‘fall’. From what state did he fall? If Adam was derived from some pre-existing hominoid, then what is the significance of sin? If there was no historic fall, why is there need of a Saviour?

3. Adam was told that the penalty for sin would be death, but what thrust had that if millions of animals, including hominoids, had died over thousands of years? In both Old and New Testaments sin is repeatedly coupled with death: “The wages of sin is death,” (Romans 6:23). Adam’s sin is specifically linked with death in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15. In the latter passage, it is certain that physical death is intended, because it is compared with the indisputably physical death and Resurrection of Christ. If death occurred before Adam sinned the total Gospel is negated, including our hope of the Resurrection.

4. The evolutionary method involving violence, pain and death is totally out of keeping with the character of God as revealed in Scripture. Our God is a God of joy, peace and love. He destroyed the Earth at the time of Noah because it was filled with violence. The LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them” (Genesis 6:7). It is noteworthy that it was the violence of animals as well as man that God deplored.
5. Atheistic evolutionists have difficulty accounting for altruism. Where do love and philanthropy come from in a world evolving by chance mutation and natural selection? Theistic evolutionists have a problem too. If God used the evolutionary method, then He is the author of pain and suffering and evil. God becomes a devil. Only an initially perfect world, created by a loving God but ruined by the entrance

of sin, can account for *both* the good and evil which we find around us.

6. The origin of many basic doctrines can be traced to the first chapters of Genesis. For example, it is impossible for the narrative of the creation of Eve and out of Adam—woman out of man—to be anything other than fanciful mythology or historic truth. At least seven fundamental Biblical doctrines are linked with the last three verses of Genesis 2, the passage which recounts the creation of Eve:

If Eve was born *per via naturalis*, from some pre-existing animal, then all these doctrines are based on a misleading myth.

Relationship between man and woman

1 Corinthians 11:3, 8, 9; Ephesians 5:22-24

Women in the church

1 Tim. 2:11-13

Marriage as one man and one woman

Matthew 19:4-9

Divorce

Matthew 19:7-10

Sexual immorality

1 Corinthians 6:16

Husbands to love their wives

Ephesians 5:28-31

Christ’s love for His body the Church

Ephesians 5:25-32; 1:22, 23; Col. 1:15-18, 24

7. The Judeo-Christian pattern of one day’s rest in seven follows directly on the fact that the God created the world was created in six days and rested on the seventh (Genesis 2:2, Exodus 20:11).
8. Evolution (including presumably theistic evolution) is a continuing process. Darwin’s book, *The Origin of Species*, was subtitled, *The preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life*. Evolution provides the scientific orthodoxy for the philosophies of fascism, racism, apartheid, and communism.
9. Evolution lowers man from the ‘image of God’ to the level of an animal. Why

then should he not behave as one, in his own life and towards others?

10. The longevity of Adam, Seth and others (Genesis 5) can be nothing but mythology if evolution were true. Primitive man rarely lived much beyond forty years.

Conclusion

A Christian has the following options:

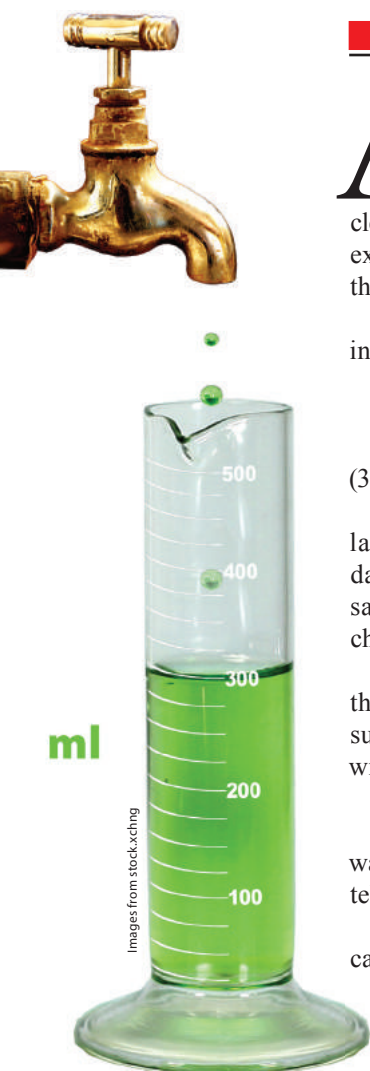
1. To assume that Genesis 1–9 is allegory, myth or poetry not to be taken literally. But if so, what do we do with the rest of the Bible? Why stop there?
2. To hold on to both creation and evolution and try to reconcile the two. This state is unstable and readily leads to liberalism.
3. To ignore the Old Testament and make an existential leap to a shallow believism.
4. To accept that “by faith we understand that the worlds were made by the word of God” (Hebrews 11:3). Only in this, the scriptural way, do we find release from the tensions of the conflict. ■

PROFESSOR JOHN RENDLE-SHORT (1919–2010), A.M., M.A., M.B., B.Chir., M.D. (Cantab.), F.R.C.P., F.R.A.C.P.

Dr T. (Tyndale) John Rendle-Short was Foundation Professor and for 24 years Head of the Department of Child Health in the University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, and a Member of the Order of Australia for his pioneering research in infantile autism. From its founding in 1980, he was for many years also the chairman of the board of the organisation that later became Creation Ministries International (Australia). For more: creation.com/professor-john-rendle-short.



HOW DATING M



Tas Walker

ADDRESSING THE students, I used a measuring cylinder to illustrate how scientific dating works. My picture showed a water tap dripping into the cylinder. It was clearly marked so my audience could see that it held exactly 300 ml of water. The diagram also showed that the water was dripping at a rate of 50 ml per hour.

I asked, "How long has the water been dripping into the cylinder?"

Immediately someone called out, "Six hours."

"Good. How did you work that out?"

"By dividing the amount of water in the cylinder (300 ml) by the rate (50 ml per hour)."

"Excellent," I said. "See how easy it is to calculate the age of something scientifically? Every dating method that scientists use works exactly the same way. It involves measuring something that is changing with time."

People began to relax once they understood that the science of dating is not so difficult. Then I surprised them, "The problem is that six hours is the wrong answer."

They look puzzled and disbelieving.

"I set this experiment up and I can tell you that the water has only been dripping for *one* hour. Can you tell me what happened?"

After they had composed themselves, someone called out, "The tap was dripping faster in the past?"

"Perhaps," I said.

"The cylinder was nearly full when you started?"

"Maybe. But can you see what you are doing?" I asked. "In order to calculate an age

you made assumptions about the past. You assumed the rate had always been 50 ml per hour and that the cylinder was empty when it started. Based on those assumptions you calculated the time of six hours."

They nodded.

"You were perfectly happy with that answer. Not one of you challenged it." They agreed.

"Then, when I told you the correct answer, do you realize what you did? You quickly changed your assumptions about the past in order to agree with the age I told you."

Every scientist must first make assumptions about the past before he can calculate an age. If the result seems okay then he will happily accept it. But if it does not agree with other information then he will change his assumptions so that his answer does agree.

It does not matter if the calculated age is too old or too young. There are always many assumptions a scientist can make to get a consistent answer.

Suddenly, the lights went on. My audience saw, in a nutshell, the way dating methods work.¹ Scientific dating is not a way of measuring but a way of thinking.

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ETHODS WORK

HOW IT WORKS IN PRACTICE

A layer of volcanic ash in East Africa, called the KBS tuff, became famous through the human fossils found nearby.¹

Using the potassium-argon method, Fitch and Miller were the first to measure the age of the tuff. Their result of 212–230 million years did not agree with the age of the fossils (elephant, pig, ape and tools) so they rejected the date. They said the sample was contaminated with excess argon.²

Using new samples of feldspar and pumice they ‘reliably dated’ the tuff at 2.61 million years, which agreed nicely. Later, this date was confirmed by two other dating methods (paleomagnetism and fission tracks), and was widely accepted.

Then Richard Leakey found a skull (called KNM-ER 1470) *below* the KBS tuff, a skull that looked far too modern to be 3 million years old.

So Curtis and others redated the KBS tuff using selected pumice and feldspar samples, and obtained an age of 1.82 million years. This new date agreed with the appearance of the new skull.³ Tests by other scientists using paleomagnetism and fission tracks

confirmed the lower date.

So, by 1980 there was a new, remarkably concordant date for the KBS tuff, and this became the one that was widely accepted.

Which illustrates that, contrary to popular belief, the dating methods are not the primary way that ages are decided. The dating methods do not lead but follow. Their results are always ‘interpreted’ to agree with other factors, such as the evolutionary interpretation of geology and fossils.

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Replica of skull KNM-ER 1470



Slaying yesterday's Dragons

 Robert Carter

DARWINISM AS a science has been evolving. That is, it has changed from its original concept and continues to change. It would do us well to pay attention to the latest trends so as not to be caught arguing against yesterday's theory. When Charles Darwin initially postulated that all living species could be traced back to a single common ancestor, he suggested the mechanism causing these changes was natural selection.¹ That was in 1859. Later, he backed off from his initial hypothesis and suggested that other forms of selection (e.g., sexual selection²) were not only involved, but were more important. Worse, not knowing anything about genetics, he came up with and strongly promoted a Lamarckian³ idea that the environment caused changes in organisms which were then inherited by their offspring. This was contradicted by his contemporary,

Gregor Mendel, who published the laws of genetics⁴ in 1862, but that was the state of evolutionary theory at the close of the 19th century.

More changes occurred when genetics was finally brought under the Darwinian umbrella in the early 20th century. This involved a wholesale rejection of much of Darwin's later writings and eventually led to the 'Modern Synthesis' of evolution, genetics, and population genetics under which most biologists today were trained. This 'gene-centric' view dealt with populations and gene pools, ignoring the fact that the individual (a complex combination of traits) was the unit of selection and not individual genes. Proponents of this view also ran into mathematical difficulties⁵ early on, but these were pushed aside by further speculation that most of the genome was junk DNA.⁶

Now that we have entered the 21st century, things are changing once

again. As we have learned more about genetics and the inner workings of the cell, neo-Darwinism (another name for the Modern Synthesis) is having to adapt. Evolutionists have had a difficult time explaining incredibly complex systems like the human genome, and the naturalistic origin of life flies in the face of all known laws of physics, chemistry, genetics, probability, and information theory. The idea that most of our DNA is 'junk'⁶ is now untenable. The mathematical difficulties discovered decades ago are only getting worse as our understanding of life becomes more and more complex. What is an evolutionist to do?

Thomas Kuhn, a famous philosopher of science, said that scientific revolutions occur every several generations. When a new theory rises to the top, it is



promoted heavily. The next generation of scientists runs with it, often using it as a basic assumption of how things work. Eventually, however, enough cognitive dissonance⁷ is raised, especially among the younger scientists who often find older ideas unsatisfactory, that a wholesale turnover of ideas occurs. For example, the phlogiston theory of combustion once ruled academia, but a few experiments in the late 1700s put an end to it. Another revolution occurred in the 1960s when plate tectonics suddenly replaced a geology based on static continental blocks. A scientific theory tends to have

a certain amount of inertia and it takes a considerable effort to change it once it is established as a ruling paradigm, but it *can* change.

Will another revolution occur in evolutionary theory? Probably so, and we can see early rumblings of it already. This is not to say that lots of scientists are going to become biblical creationists, but that there are a significant number of people in science who are less than satisfied by mainstream ideas of how evolution works. We can see young scientists pushing the pagan-esque Gaia hypothesis⁸ and others talking about nebulous self-organizing

properties supposedly inherent in matter that drive evolution inexorably forward.⁹ There is a Kuhnian¹⁰ revolution in the works, no doubt. The movers and shakers of the new revolution, though, are leaving mathematics and population genetics (because these failed Darwin and because the problems have not been resolved by neo-Darwinism, i.e. the Modern Synthesis) and are turning to more philosophically speculative ideas.

Things are shifting under our feet. We need to be careful not to be caught slaying yesterday's dragon. Yet, the new trends within science do not necessarily

require a different type of counter-argument. Interestingly, I find myself arguing population genetics as a cogent weapon when confronted by these newer ideas. I find myself talking about what we *know* about physics and chemistry and how that contradicts all ideas about the physical origin of life from non-life. I find myself saying that what we have discovered through experimental science argues against there being any inherent property in matter that would drive it to spontaneously form high-level organizational structures, let alone codified information strings.¹¹ It is as if they are suddenly admitting to a 'Darwin of the Gaps' model of evolution while we creationists stick to empirical science, and I find this ironic, even oddly humorous.

Although evolutionary theory is threatening to change its basis, the argument has not really changed all that much. Why is this?

Because evolution is a smokescreen for a raging spiritual battle. The *how* of evolution is really not all that important, and evolutionists will readily shift their beliefs about the mechanism behind it, often using these shifts to claim science is self-correcting. The alleged *fact* of evolution, however, must be defended by its adherents at all costs, because there is no escape from accountability to a Creator unless nature made itself somehow.

Although this shift away from neo-Darwinism is certainly not yet the majority view, it is a rapidly popularizing trend within science. It seems, therefore, as if the big question we are going to face in the future is similar to one faced when trying to share the Gospel with the new generation of public school kids (you know, the ones that could not say that taking down the Twin Towers was an act of evil men). That is, how do you talk to a science buff who has left empirical science and whose mind is full of philosophical speculation?

In short, there is, to this point, no coherent science coming from this new paradigm of neo-pagan metaphysics with nature as a self-creating

entity, demonstrating that the battle is really being waged at a deeper philosophical level. Therefore, the creationist arguments that have been developed over the past several decades remain relevant and powerful. Resources like *The Creation Answers Book*, creation.com, *Journal of Creation* and *Creation* magazine are still the best sources of information one can use to prepare a defence, for there is nothing truly new under the sun. ■

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THE PITCH FOR NOAH'S ARK



 Tas Walker

MANY GEOLOGISTS claim that Noah could not possibly have built the ark in the manner described in Genesis. They argue that pitch could not have been used to cover the ark and make it waterproof. Pitch, they claim, is derived from oil or coal, and if coal did not form until during the time of Noah's Flood, he could not possibly have covered the ark with pitch.

For those who are not geologists, pitch is a black glue-like substance left behind when coal tar is heated or distilled. It belongs to the same family of substances as asphalt or bitumen. Today, it is largely produced by heating coal. Most modern geologists know of no other source for it. But coal tar and petroleum are not the only source for pitch. Anyone who takes the time to consult a reasonable dictionary of geology will find that pitch can be extracted by distilling or heating wood. In fact, prior to the rise of the petroleum and coal industries, this was exactly how pitch was made.

For at least one thousand years, the pitch-making industry in Europe flourished. It was the pitch from this industry which assisted in the construction of those great wooden sailing ships which figured

so prominently in European history. Pitch making was a skilled trade, and many European surnames bear testimony to that fact today. In Polish, the word for pitch or tar is 'smola'. Any Polish telephone directory displays names such as Smola, Smolander, Smolen, Smolenski and Smolarz. These surnames simply mean 'the man who makes pitch'.

Likewise in Germany, the word for pitch is 'Teer', and it appears in names such as Teer and Teerman. Even the English have families whose name is Pitcher, Tarrier or Tarmen, to mention but a few. These all indicate that the trade of manufacturing pitch was extremely common throughout Europe.

So how did they make pitch before the growth of the petroleum and coal industries? Their first step was to obtain resin from the pine trees which at that time grew in dense forests throughout Europe. A herringbone pattern of cuts was gouged into the tree trunk and as the resin ran down the grooves it was collected in a pot at the base of the tree. Pine resin is still collected in this way in Poland, the Ukraine, Russia, Finland and other European countries where pine forests are still to be found.

When the resin had finished flowing, the trees were chopped down, covered in soil or ash, and burned slowly to produce a lightweight black pure form of carbon called charcoal. The last step in the process of making pitch was to add the powdered charcoal to the boiling pine resins. Different proportions of charcoal would produce pitch of different properties. It was this pitch which was used to waterproof the large ocean-going wooden ships. In my opinion, it is no coincidence that pitch today can be extracted from coal, much of which in Australia shows evidence of having been formed from pine tree debris.

Now, while I cannot say for sure that Noah obtained pitch for the ark exactly in this fashion, it does illustrate that you don't have to be able to extract either oil or coal from the ground in order to make pitch. Anyone who had cut down as many trees as Noah and his helpers for the manufacture of an ocean-going ark would certainly have found out about tree resins. If Europeans had a well-known and widely used method of making pitch before the discovery of petroleum, obviously Noah could also have had the same satisfactory way of waterproofing the ark with its covering of pitch. 