



#3 – What about Evolution, the Big Bang, and Dinosaurs on the Ark?

An Introductory Note

Of all the topics we are addressing in this class and booklet, this is the one that garners the most controversy. The playing field is divided into multiple camps that feel very strongly and differently about the question, and the camps largely do not get along very well.

On one end of the spectrum is the Darwinian Evolutionists who are working very hard to exclude God in every way possible from their position. Even when



<u>Atheist</u>	<u>Theistic</u>	<u>Old Earth</u>	<u>Young Earth</u>
<u>Evolution</u>	<u>Evolution</u>	<u>Creationist</u>	<u>Creationist</u>
Old Earth No God	God Used Evolution	Old Earth God Made It	6,000 Years God Made It

considering the beginning of the universe, and the amazing amount of fine-tuning of the fundamental laws of Physics and the nature of the Universe itself being fine-tuned for life, they still work ardently to keep God out of the equations.

On the other end of the spectrum, we find the Young-Earth Creationists (YEC) arguing for a very specific interpretation of Genesis, and arguing that they are the only group that actually believes in and defends the Bible. They also add to the Biblical account by arguing for multiple things the Bible does not directly teach (for example: all animals were vegetarian until after the fall, there was no animal death or disease before the fall, no fossils either, all the fossils of the world had to be created by Noah’s flood, all the mountains and basically all the sedimentary rocks were also created by the flood). The Bible does not touch on many of these teachings at all. The Young-Earth crowd represents way over half the evangelical and fundamentalist churches in America. The YEC position is also likely the majority position in Apostolic churches as well.

In the middle, we find the two groups called the “compromisers”. It is up to you to figure out who is compromising. The Theistic Evolutionists (includes the Catholic church and most of the denominations labeled as progressive or liberal) believe that the scientists are right about most everything, and that God must have used evolution. This group generally does not regard the Bible as inerrant (without error) so they easily dismiss the early chapters in Genesis as myth. Many in this group also dismiss large parts of scripture as corrupt or irrelevant to today.

Also in the middle is the Old Earth Creationist group (OEC). This group holds a high view of scripture and openly and aggressively defends the inerrancy of scripture, and holds to a literal reading of Genesis 1. This group also wants to reconcile the other creation accounts and details in scripture with Genesis 1, and believes that science can also reveal details about the creation we should consider (see Psalm 19:1-4).

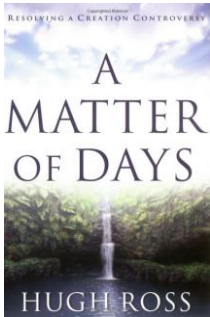
So who is right? It will require more than a couple Sunday school lessons or a short article to really equip you to make that decision. You can talk to a YEC who sounds very convincing. Then talking to an OEC that sounds equally convincing. I am an Old Earth Creationists, so you know which team I am playing for, but I want you to see the bigger picture – there is a lot more at stake than the age of the the Earth.

- I believe you can hold to any Creationist position and be saved. I sincerely believe you can be Young Earth, Old Earth, or even [gasp] a Theistic Evolutionist, and still obey John 3:5 and Acts 2:38 and the rest of the New Testament teachings. Then we can get to Heaven and find out which Creation details we were wrong on.
- If you are not aware of it, you should know there is an “exhaustion” in the church on this topic. Just like the Endtime debate, many people are tired of the disagreement and want to talk about something else – anything else! I don’t blame them. And although I have put a lot of time in this debate, I only get into this topic when requested, or when it ties into something that matters more, like witnessing and Apologetics.
- So here we are in the REACH series, talking about witnessing, and evolution and the age of the Earth does come up. What is the best answer? This is where (I think) this turns into a choose-your-own-adventure.

For those that want to dig deeper	For those that don't
<p>There are amazing arguments in the Bible and in science that strongly point to God as the creator and verify the Genesis account as trustworthy, but you must know them to use them.</p> <p>So, you need to read and watch YouTube videos, and invest in this area a bit to take advantage of these arguments. You really need to read multiple books if heading this way.</p> <p>If you don't like science much, this might not be the area for you. But if science excites you, even a little, you might find some amazing answers here. I love science, and the time I have spent here has strengthened my faith and only helped my testimony. I am astounded at what the Lord has done.</p>	<p>If you don't want to dig into the debate, then perhaps you shouldn't get too dogmatic and argumentative on the details. I would stay away from the Age of the Earth arguments and stick with general principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God did it. There is too much complexity to believe we came from a series of millions of accidents and random mutations. • Doesn't a Big Bang require someone to start it all? • The Bible is not a mythological story like Santa or Thor or Zeus with soap opera drama between the gods. Read Genesis 1 and compare it to every other creation myth. It is very, very different.

Some Recommended Resources

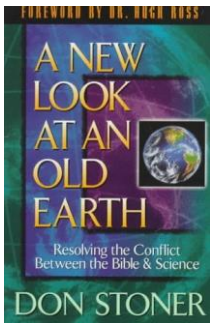
Here are a few favorite recommended resources for those that want to dive deeper into this debate, along with a short description of the material covered in each. These are all Old Earth or Intelligent Design resources. Admittedly, I do not use Young Earth resources any more, largely because their poor scholarship and lack of ethics leaves me unable to trust most anything they put out.



A Matter of Days by Dr. Hugh Ross

2004. Navpress.

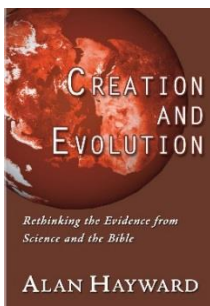
An excellent and approachable summary of the Age of the Earth debate including a lot of scriptural and scientific information. This book is well organized, well written and enjoyable to read.



A New Look at an Old Earth by Don Stoner

1997. Harvest House Publishers.

Probably the best introductory book on the subject of Creation and Evolution. It's hard to find and can best be purchased used on Amazon.com. Stoner does an excellent job laying the foundation for better scriptural understanding of Genesis, although he leaves out some of the other creation texts that shed some light on Genesis 1.

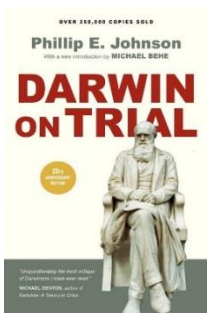


Creation and Evolution: Rethinking the Evidence

from Science and the Bible by Alan Hayward

2005. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

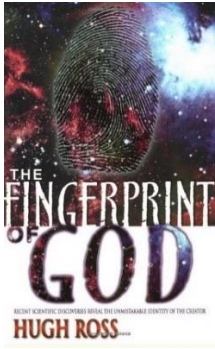
An excellent and more technical description of the debate. Hayward goes deeper into the scientific side while giving a summary view of possible Old Earth models.



Darwin on Trial by Phillip E. Johnson

2010. Intervarsity Press.

This is the classic book on Intelligent Design, reprinted numerous times and possibly still the best summary of the evidence against evolution in the various scientific disciplines. This was the book that launched my interest in this debate. Highly recommended if you are interested in the scientific side of this debate.



The Fingerprint of God by Hugh Ross
1991. Promise Publishing Company.

This is probably a classic among Old Earth books, in that it was one of the first to present scriptural and scientific evidence for the Genesis account that harmonizes Genesis with what Physicists have learned about the Universe.



Ken Ham / Bill Nye Debate on Creation
Hosted by the Creation Museum, Feb 2014
Available on Youtube.com

An interesting experience if you want to see the current status of Creation vs Evolution debate. Bill Nye, a science educator and evolutionist vs Ken Ham, the de facto leader of Youth Earth Creationism. Ken Ham makes some good points, but Bill Nye wisely focuses on the age of the Earth for perhaps 80% of his time. Ham, especially in the Q&A portion, reveals that science, no matter how convincing, will not influence his interpretation of scripture.



Hugh Ross / Malcolm Bowden Debate
Hosted by RevelationTV.com, May 2012
Available on Youtube.com

I find most debates fail in their usefulness. The speakers tend to almost ignore each other and get bogged down in technical discussion and rarely focus on the significant and critical questions. This debate is a welcome exception in that Hugh Ross (Old Earth) and Malcolm Bowden (Young Earth) really focus on each other's statements and questions and the moderator, Doug Harris, does a great job keeping them on track.

Malcolm Bowden probably isn't the best Young Earth presenter, but unlike Ken Ham and Kent Hovind, he does sincerely and directly interact with Hugh Ross's arguments and attempts to respond to them. Hugh Ross does an excellent job demonstrating his great love for the authority of the Bible and he presents numerous arguments from the Bible in favor of an Old Earth understanding.

A few more resources I haven't grabbed graphics for...

Hidden Treasures in the Book of Job by Hugh Ross

An amazing small study that is much more than a Creation book. This book will challenge you to consider some of the deepest questions in life, answered by one of the oldest books in the world.

Seven Days that Divide the World by John Lennox

Another excellent but more recent creation book that I highly recommend.

Our Origins – Three Dominant Worldviews

<i>Darwinian Evolution</i>	
Summary	The universe was not designed. Life is the result of random mutation and natural selection over millions of years. From goo to you by way of the zoo.
Advocates	Charles Darwin, Richard Dawkins, Stephen Jay Gould, Carl Sagan & the Public School System
What is the Bible?	An almost useless book of myths that causes wars, bigotry and home schooling.
What about Evolution?	The only viable and valid explanation for life on Earth. Evolution is a proven fact.
Age of Earth & Universe?	The Earth is 4.54 billion years old. Universe is 13.7 billion years old.
Where did we come from?	A random and accidental process of mutation and natural selection.
View of science?	Science is the best (maybe only) way to acquire knowledge. Science is defined as excluding God, therefore evolution is the only option.
Favorite Scripture or Quotes	<i>God is dead.</i> - Friedrich Nietzsche <i>Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.</i> - Richard Dawkins

<i>Old Earth Creation (OEC)</i>	<i>Young Earth Creation (YEC)</i>
<p>The Bible and the universe are in perfect agreement in describing our origins. The earth is ancient, but Darwin was wrong and the Bible describes our origins beautifully.</p> <p>Hugh Ross, Gleason Archer, Don Stoner & Scott Lynn</p>	<p>God created the universe and all life on it in less than 144 normal human hours several thousand years ago as clearly described in Genesis 1.</p> <p>Ken Ham, Henry Morris, Kent Hovind (Dr Dino) & Arlo Moehlenpah</p>
<p>The error-free absolute word of God. The only guide & instruction revealing God's will for us.</p>	<p>The error-free absolute word of God. The only guide & instruction revealing God's will for us.</p>
<p>Evolution doesn't work and didn't work. Lacks scientific support and contradicts scripture.</p>	<p>Not enough time for evolution to work. Evolution lacks scientific support and contradicts scripture.</p>
<p>The Earth is 4.54 billion years old. Universe is 13.7 billion years old.</p>	<p>The Earth and Universe are 6,000 to maybe 15,000 years old.</p>
<p>God created humans thousands (not millions!) of years ago.</p>	<p>God created humans, earth and the universe in less than 144 hours, all thousands of years ago.</p>
<p>Although scientists are biased, science largely works as advertised in pursuing knowledge.</p>	<p>Science is largely pursued by godless atheists against the Bible. Science is defined by YECs as only being able to study the present, not the past.</p>
<p><i>Psalms 19:1-2</i> The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handywork. Day unto day utters speech, & night unto night shows knowledge.</p>	<p><i>Exodus 20:8-11</i> Remember the sabbath... six days shalt thou labor... for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth... and rested.</p>

Old Earth Creation (OEC)

Thoughts on the Big Bang?

The greatest single proof science has found to show we have a **beginning**. The Big Bang begs us to recognize that the God of the Bible created this universe and humanity for a purpose. We are not an accident.

How long is a Genesis 1 day?

The Hebrew word for day (yom) carries multiple meanings including a longer definite period of time. There are numerous excellent scriptural reasons to believe in days of much longer length in Genesis 1-3.

Did humans live with dinosaurs?

Nope. God created all the dinosaurs 230 to 100 million years ago and allowed them to go extinct. Supposed footprints of dinos and humans together are not true. Animal extinction is even describe in Psalm 104:27-31.

Flood issues?

The flood was a worldwide event that judged humanity for their wickedness and destroyed them all as described in Genesis. The flood was destructive to existing mountain ranges and the fossil record. ***OECs are split on whether the flood was global or just universal.***

What about the Genesis 3 Judgments?

Adam died in the “day” he ate the fruit. The curse of death was directly tied to access to the tree of life and had nothing to do with animal death or carnivores. The curse on the ground was agricultural in nature and tied to weather patterns and was removed after the flood.

Biggest Issues (Negatives)

- Local vs Global Flood.
- Confused at times with Theistic Evolution.
- Multiple Interpretation Frameworks for Gen 1 causes some confusion when considering this position (Gap Theory vs Day Age vs Others).

Young Earth Creation (YEC)

An invention by godless atheist scientists.

The only reason to believe in the Big Bang is to support belief in an old universe and Evolution.

A day is a day is a day which is 24 hours long or a reference to daytime. Allowing anything else destroys the credibility of the Bible.

Yes, they were mentioned in the Bible (Job 40-41) and were on the ark with Noah. To suggest that God created animals that died before Adam's start goes against the scripture that says the creation was "good".

The flood was global, destroying all land based life on Earth. It also created most or all of the fossils on earth, most or all of our coal and petroleum supply and most of the geologic record including the Grand Canyon and all our mountain ranges.

The curse radically changed life on earth and the laws governing the Universe. It introduced death to humans and animals and introduced decay and possibly the 2nd law of thermodynamics. **Animals did not eat animals until after the fall or the flood.**

- Awful beyond words scholarship in citing & abusing traditional scientific literature.
- Massive scientific evidence for an ancient earth.
- Core teachings not found in the Bible. They come directly from Seventh Day Adventist visions.

My Story

I grew up outside of church or avoiding church, but all that changed when my brother “found Jesus” at an Apostolic Church in Michigan. Visiting in February 1992, I was skeptical, but encountered God for the first time and He filled me with His spirit in an Acts 2 experience. I was baptized in the name of Jesus that day and finished my senior year of high school a changed person. I moved from New Jersey to Michigan to attend college and began growing as a Christian. I’ve always loved science, so as a young Christian, I was stunned to see the huge divide between Darwinian evolution and Bible teachings. I started reading Creationist literature in 1992 and haven’t stopped in the decades since.

I started reading only Young Earth literature, and grew quite convinced and proficient at explaining the Young Earth position. I started giving talks on Creation and Evolution at youth services, high school Christian clubs and church services. I enjoyed it so much, I decided to see more of the evidence for myself. Finished with my Bachelors in Computer Science, I enrolled in a Master’s Program at Eastern Michigan University in the Physical Sciences. It was a degree for educators, and it allowed me to study almost anything I wanted in Biology, Chemistry, Geology, Physics and Astronomy. I found a practically tailor-made program for seeing actual data for evolution.

Starting with Biology 105 and working upwards into graduate courses in Biology, I found that everything I had read about Darwinian evolution was quite true. It was taught as fact, but in reality, evolution only works if you start with a naturalistic worldview. So if you declare that God cannot exist, and then ask how we got here, then evolution is the best guess so far. This might satisfy the atheists, but defining the terms to exclude God up-front and then concluding there is no creator, is hardly impressive or scientific. Throughout my classes, and in private discussions with professors in their office, I found that evolution was largely supported by philosophical necessity, antidotal stories and shaky evidence. In several cases, my biology professors agreed that a lot of the supposed evidence had major issues, although most every one of them was still an evolutionist. As I considered the evidence, I found I just do not have enough faith to believe in evolution.

I found a different reception in the Earth Science, Physics, and Astronomy departments. I started as a Young Earth creationist, but when I met with professors privately to ask questions about the age of the earth, or radiometric dating or the magnetic field decay or the decline in the speed light, they were quite happy to answer my questions and provide numerous examples that easily disproved and completely shattered my Young Earth ideas. It became increasingly difficult to read some of the statements I found in Young Earth Creationism literature¹:

“...there is no sound physical evidence that the earth is very old... The only real evidence for a long history of the earth is its necessity to support the evolution model.”

¹ *Scientific Creationism* by Henry Morris. 1974. Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego. Page 149.

Considering the overwhelming mountain of scientific observations to the contrary, **I finally concluded that any Young Earth Creationists who makes such dogmatic claims must either be grossly ignorant of the facts or so deceived by their loyalty to their interpretation of the scriptures, that they are unable to accept any evidence to the contrary.** I found it even more disturbing that these dogmatic and untenable assertions came not from the fringe, but from the leaders of the Creationist Movement. The preceding quote is from Henry Morris, often called the “Father of Modern Creationism”².

I began researching original sources in Young Earth Creationist writings. It was an interesting step. Frequently, the authors cite other Young Earth books as evidence against the age of the earth. Whenever I discovered a reference to an original source from an accepted scientific journal or author, I would locate the original and evaluate the information for myself. What I found was disturbing. The Young Earth Creationist author would consistently quote out of context and use statements to form a misleading and inaccurate picture of science.

I’ve since grown to understand that Young Earth Creationism was one of only several positions held among Christians. They consistently present themselves as the only real position that a Bible believing Christian might hold, but I have found numerous excellent and amazing Christians that disagree, including academically recognized scientists and theologians. Admittedly, Young Earth Creationism does seem to influence the majority of churches in America, but their arguments are not nearly as Biblical as they claim.

Young Earthers claim that their position is the only one that comes from a plain reading of scripture, but their core teachings are completely missing from scripture. They teach that God originally created all the animals as vegetarian, including Lions and Cheetahs. They teach that no animals died in any way until after the fall of Adam and Eve. They teach that there was a radically altered creation as a result of the curse on the ground in Genesis 3:17. Supposedly, after the curse, many animals became carnivores, and God made or changed new animals, introducing tapeworms and parasites and possibly even the 2nd law of thermodynamics. Finally, they teach all the fossils and almost all of the thousands of feet of sedimentary rock that covers our continents were deposited by Noah’s flood. None of these statements are even remotely supported by scripture, and some of these ideas directly contradict multiple passages of scripture. You will have the chance to evaluate these claims for yourself in this study.

Since being challenged by the evidence, I went back to the word of God and was stunned at the beauty and majesty of the creation accounts. The Bible accurately describes the Big Bang, the expansion of the universe, the ordered steps of our planet’s origins and the world we live in today. If you will consider the creation accounts in Genesis, Psalms, Job and elsewhere, you will find an amazing and scientifically consistent testimony of a Creator that made sense for every generation. The Biblical creation accounts and the scientific consensus of billions of years are not incompatible, but complimentary.

I created this Bible study as an attempt to survey all of these creation accounts and present an integrated creation narrative. I want the scriptures to determine our beliefs, not the philosophies and ideas of others. I hope you’ll enjoy this journey, I certainly have.

² *Biblical Basis for Modern Science* by Henry Morris. 2002. Master’s Books. Back cover.