

Have you read....?

From a creationist's book-shelf

In Six Days

Ed. Ashton, New Holland, 1999, ISBN 1-86436-443-2. Symposium by 50 scientists who believe that Genesis is literally true.

It may surprise you that 50 scientific believers in a literal Genesis could be found, but they are all Ph.D's and many of them hold very senior positions. The following is the first essay in the book.

Dr. Jeremy Walter was (in 1999) Head of the Engineering Analysis and Design Department in Pennsylvania State University. He concedes that the classroom plus technological achievements give people the impression that 'scientific' models of origins are correct, while Genesis is a myth (p2). So Dr. Walter begins by taking a look at the nature of science.

Is the earth billions of years old?

We imagine it must be if scientists say it is, but this is to misconceive the nature of science. Actually 'the age of the earth can be neither proved nor disproved by science' (p3).

What is science?

Science seeks to describe the nature and processes of the universe 'through observation, hypothesis and experimental validation' (p3). Certain *philosophical* principles are assumed: 1. The universe is ordered; 2. The law of causality: one cause can have many effects but no effect can be greater than its cause. Note that observation 'is always an action of the present, not of the past' (p3). Moreover observations are always to some degree indirect.

So how old is the earth?

We can only interpret recent observations of present realities. For example, we cannot time light travelling from a distant galaxy: we can only observe its arrival.

Geological formations in western USA.

The prevailing assumption is that vast layers of horizontal sedimentary rocks have taken very long periods in which to form. It is assumed that rates of deposition have always been what they are today. But the catastrophic events following the eruption of Mount St Helens showed that quite possibly

Grand Canyon formed fairly quickly. In other words Mount St Helens demonstrated that 'rapid processes can produce effects commonly believed to require long periods of time' (p5).

Thermodynamics

If the law of causality has any relevance, it tells us that the cause of intelligence, emotion and will must be their superior. Yet naturalistic evolution argues that 'the forces of nature and the passing of time are sufficient to produce the order and complexity of life without any such cause' (p6). Do the observed laws of nature support this claim? Certainly not! The laws of thermodynamics are very relevant to mechanical engineering, so Dr Walter knows something about them!

The 1st law

says that 'no matter or energy is currently being added to the universe' (p7). [The conditions of evolutionary development do not exist.]

The famous 2nd law

says that 'real processes result in a net increase in the 'entropy' [i.e. the amount of energy unavailable for work] in the universe'. The universe will eventually reach heat-death. Remarkably the Bible tells us that the heavens and the earth 'will wear out like a garment' (Ps.102:26). The 2nd law 'essentially precludes the spontaneous development of the earth's ecosystem or life itself' (p7). The historical fact of extinctions shows how many species are unable 'to survive the decay of earth's ecosystem and are eliminated from the planet forever' (p7).

Maxwell's 'Demon'

Is it possible to defeat the 2nd law? In 1891 James Clerk Maxwell imagined a scenario in which a 'demon' controls the passage of individual molecules of gas moving from one chamber to another. Only high-energy molecules are selected! It seems as if the potential for doing useful work has been increased without adding any energy to the system. However in 1929 Szilard showed that dividing the low-energy molecules from the high-energy molecules would consume all the energy saved. There is no way round the 2nd law !

Information

Evolutionists believe that life originated as high fluxes of energy passed through a chemical 'soup'. But life

requires structures of incredible complexity, not just large amounts of energy! Large amounts of energy do not produce structure and intelligence. That must be obvious.

Francis Crick

The Nobel Prize-winner recognized this difficulty. He could see that the complexities of natural systems could not arise through chance, but he wanted nature to preserve beneficial mutations as they occurred. Unfortunately Crick's 'replication mechanism is never identified as anything other than chance' (p9). Knowing the complexity of life, Crick concluded that 4.5 billion years of earth's history was not sufficient to allow life to evolve by chance on this planet. Enter his theory of 'panspermia' - life originated elsewhere in the universe long, long ago! Maybe some foreign civilisation had a space-programme and sent life to Earth?

Why not a Creator?

Why did Crick not turn to Genesis instead of outer-space? After all, he had only dodged one problem by creating another! Dr Walter fittingly quotes a standard text on thermodynamics (Wyllen & Sonntag, *Fundamentals of Classical Thermodynamics* 2nd ed. John Wiley, New York, 1978): 'the authors see the 2nd law of thermodynamics as man's description of the past and continuing work of a creator, who also holds the answer to the future destiny of man and the universe' (p243). We agree entirely!

Underlying Beliefs

The facts of science are the same for evolutionists and creationists. It is over the interpretation of those facts that we differ. It is commonly assumed that 'reality and truth are limited to the empirical and that's man's knowledge and reasoning are our supreme guide' (p11). [We might add that there is absolutely nothing scientific in such an assumption.] Moreover as Dr Walter concludes 'The concept of a living, volitional, personal and loving First Cause is.... completely compatible with both science and the Bible' (p11). To be sure, Biblical faith—like atheism—is not a matter of formal proof, but neither is it a blind leap. Some of the greatest scientists—e.g. Faraday and Maxwell Clerk—have been devout Christian men. Contrary to atheistic propaganda, science on the one hand and Biblical faith and creationism on the other are not incompatible!

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