



# BIBLE FRAMEWORK

for Worship and Obedience  
in an Age of Global Deception

**Part II:  
BURIED TRUTHS OF ORIGINS**

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## Preface to:

Lesson 1

# A BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK FOR WORSHIP AND OBEDIENCE IN AN AGE OF GLOBAL DECEPTION

## WHY THIS COURSE?

With all the Bible studies, conferences, and special seminars, why should there yet be another course? Good question. Let me explain.

I became a Christian while studying math and science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I quickly became aware of the sharp and total conflict between the biblical worldview and modern culture. Either the Bible was what it claimed to be, the revealed Word of God and therefore the ultimate standard of truth for every area of life, or it was false in its claim and just another ancient book of passing interest.

If the Bible were not the verbal revelation of the Living God, then I could be my own ultimate authority. That sounded like pretty heady stuff until I realized the implications—no objective meaning in life, no transcendental moral guidance or empowerment, and not even solid criteria for deciding truth and falsehood. Another sobering implication would be that the greatest person who ever lived, Jesus Christ, was either a fraud or a fiction.

On the other hand, if the Bible really was what it claimed to be, then my whole life had to be radically corrected. The God of the Bible was graciously calling me to begin a very serious process of working out repentance toward His authority in one area after another at ever deepening levels. He and I had an unavoidable, face-to-face appointment to evaluate permanently my response to His Word.

I couldn't politely receive His story of Adam on Sundays, for example, a story accepted by His Son Jesus Christ, and then turn my back on Him Monday through Friday by embracing the contradicting evolutionary premise in history and science. I couldn't profess real ethical responsibility before His Presence, and then, to deal with personal crises, revert to determinist psychologies wherein I was a passive 'victim' of circumstances. The Bible could not be "compartmentalized" to my private religious experiences. Either it was true for all of life, or it could not be true for any of life. Worship and obedience had to spill over into every area.

Out of my subsequent pilgrimage, including two graduate schools and the challenging experience of ministering the Word of God in a university town, I conceived a particular approach to teaching the Bible. Somehow, in the midst of an exploding amount of information and specialization, the Bible had to be taught so that its total picture was constantly kept in focus over against the ever-present opposition from the world. To show the "big picture", the framework of implications across all domains of life, I developed this course.

This biblical framework course has a unique structure that combines apologetics with elements of biblical and systematic theology. Truths of God and His working are set into their original niche in history to show they are as much a part of reality as any "secular" history or science. In an age when men despair of trying to find sense in life, I have tried to show the inner coherence of God's speech to us. Each part of His historic conversation is linked to every other part and to every truth outside of the Bible. The key to life is "thinking God's thoughts after Him."

This course, however, does not replace traditional Bible study; it is only a tool to integrate them. It does not replace special scholarly investigations of godly men--although it shows how to use an apologetic strategy to isolate and encircle unbelief. Finally, it cannot substitute for worship, praise, and prayer to our Triune God out of a regenerate heart. It can, however, help to start conversations with Him!

This course is a rewritten, updated version of an earlier one published between 1972 and 1980. Christian friends from around the world have asked when it would again be available. As with the earlier version, I was guided by many godly saints of the past and present who were taught by His Spirit, each in their own domain, that the Word of God judges all things. Thankfully, they braved ridicule and sometimes fierce resistance from their colleagues, to obey the Lord of all. My use of their insights, however, is my own, and I accept full responsibility for any misinterpretations or misapplications of their work.

During the past 20 years, the rate of information acquisition has become a deluge. With vastly-improved data interchange, deceptions once kept localized have become global. As we all struggle to stay afloat on a virtual sea of data, much of it deceptively organized against biblical faith, I believe it has become even more vital to integrate our lives with a heart focus upon Him Who was, Who is, and Who is to come. This is the One Who spoke the universe into existence, Who daily directs its journey through time, and Who has repeatedly and publicly spoken to mankind. He alone of all so-called gods has actually done something in history by visiting our planet to save us from our sins. And one day will utter His words of judgment on our response to Him. Let's listen anew, then, to His Word for us wherever we are in this age of global deception.

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## INTRODUCTION

Part II of the Framework course deals with the very foundation of biblical faith--origins. Along with every other historical creed of the Christian Church, the familiar Apostles Creed that all Christians recite so often begins with God as Creator: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." This theme is recited again in heaven at the end of history when God is praised by His creatures: "Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

In this study you will see how the universe around you and even your heart inside you have always borne clear testimony to your Creator. Their testimony is so clear that the carnal mind (being always at enmity with God) has had to suppress this truth to try to avoid responsibility before Him. Thus paganism, whether ancient or modern in form, has a powerful ethical motive in viciously and unrelentingly attacking the first eleven chapters of Genesis as "mythological."

In place of this annoying revelation, the pagan program has always had to invent substitute origin-myths of its own. Only an origin-myth can so clearly express the grand unifying principle of a worldview. All its parts are tied together by a story of how everything "came to be": "gods" or first principles, men, nature, evil, death, life, etc. A story of origins relates living structures to non-living structures; it links observational data and the logic used for data analysis. In fact, an origin-myth shapes the ultimate first principles. Just how profoundly idolatrous such a substitute for the biblical creation narrative really is, and how lethal it is to your spiritual life, you will see in this study.

Bible-believing Christians in every pagan culture have to face the problem of their culture's officially sponsored origin-myth. In the United States and other so-called developed countries today, cosmic evolution has been installed as the undisputable origin-myth to which all must give allegiance. Thousands of dissenting students and their heartbroken parents can testify to the mental and emotional abuse they have received from the education system. Well-educated Bible-believing graduate students and professionals, especially in the sciences, face tenure-denial, termination of grant funding, and editorial rejection of technical papers because of their reluctance to go along with the evolutionary dogma. Millions of tax dollars are used to promote the evolutionary origin-myth as "neutral" objective science when instead it is a speculative model that lies beyond direct scientific verification.

This study should encourage you to reject all such origin-myth indoctrination that so mutilates the Creator's character. Study of origins, you will learn, is not just a matter of digging up buried fossil evidence from the earth; it's a matter of exposing buried (suppressed) revelation in every human heart! Energized by the god of this world and the carnal mind, the pagan program has spread its deception across many disciplines. In the following chapters we must raise very serious conflict with the speculative worldview being taught to us along with the real truths in astronomy, biology, geology, anthropology, and physics.

As Part II of the overall Framework course, the following chapters build upon the apologetic strategy called presuppositionalism discussed in Part I. It prepares you for Part III that deals with the structure of today's civilization and God's intrusion of His redemptive work through Israel. In the following chapters 1, 2, and 3 I discuss the creation event and its implications. Chapter 4 continues our study with the problem of evil and the event of the Fall. In Chapter 5 I analyze the Noahic Flood event as revelation of the historical judging and saving dynamics of God. Finally, Chapter 6 ends our study with the origin of today's civilization in the strange environment of the post-Flood world. Appendices A, B, and C offer more details on some specific topics.

Some suggestions on getting the most out of this material: (1) read repeatedly and thoroughly the Genesis text; (2) use a cross reference study aid to find all references to this part of Genesis elsewhere in the Bible so you can see how other biblical writers understood the text; (3) interact with the exercises and pursue those questions that especially interest you by going to the Appendices and suggested sources for more extensive materials; and (4) when you can in full conscience do it, start using what you learn about God's greatness in prayer and praise to Him.

"Buried Truths of Origins" is dedicated to those seek Him and want to know Him with both heart and mind. A. W. Tozer put it well:

*"Essentially, salvation is the restoration of a right relation between man and his Creator, a bringing back to normal of the Creator-creature relation. . . .God was our original habitat and our hearts cannot but feel at home when they enter again that ancient and beautiful abode" [1].*

To enter again we must embrace our Creator with true faith that He indeed is Who He claims to be in the early chapters of Genesis.

## CHAPTER 1: BIBLICAL CREATION vs. PAGAN ORIGIN-MYTHS

### Lesson 2

When someone talks about the origins question, he exposes his ultimate beliefs, the ultimate presuppositions that take precedence over all else. Therefore, in spite of the apparently bewildering variety of origin accounts in the world, this variety is quickly reduced to two basic types of views. One type are the truly creation stories of the Bible and of some tribal traditions honoring the Creator-creature distinction. The other type are those that deny the Creator-creature distinction, making all reality basically of one kind.

I will show you some examples in this chapter. However, before I do, I want to emphasize how important the origins topic is to one's worldview. You must understand that talking with someone about origins can raise surprisingly strong emotions. You can unwittingly have a conversation blow up in your face and suddenly find yourself in a shouting match. Origins, in a very real sense, is a deeply religious and sensitive subject with most people.

Finally, in this chapter I briefly describe for you the different strategies Christians have used to try to reconcile the biblical creation story with the modern evolutionary view of origins.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF ORIGINS

Whether you look to ancient man or modern man, you see him unavoidably thinking and talking about origins. When the ancient man was praying about crops or telling an adventure story, he did so with images of origins. Modern man, when he is trying to justify space exploration budgets or explaining why his body has certain anatomical features, refers to evolutionary origins almost automatically.

Why is origins always "lurking in the background" of serious conversation? Why is it a "hot button"? Why, for example, do folks who hear about creation-evolution debates so quickly utter personally-judgmental remarks about one side or the other?

#### ***Importance of Origins for Meaning***

Here I must anticipate a little of Chapters 2 and 3 where the relationships of God, man, and nature are discussed. It turns out that man has to get involved with origins whenever he gets seriously involved with the meaning of things in his life. Let's see how this works.

The meaning of a word always involves categories and contextual associations. Let's take the term, dog. Man learns about dogs from seeing or hearing about different kinds. There are terriers, German shepherds, and a myriad of others. Very quickly he somehow is able to define a category of objects called dogs. He learns that Siamese cats or Jersey cows, for example, aren't part of the class called dogs. The concept "dog" has its own classification niche in his thinking.

Involved in this learning process about dogs are many associations. Maybe he was bitten once, or he saw a faithful seeing-eye dog shepherd its owner through a crowded room. Perhaps he had a beloved pet dog that he spent many enjoyable hours with. All these associations of the term "dog" are arranged in his thoughts with their context or place in his life, place in the life of mankind, and place in history.

Some of this structuring process is subliminal. Man may take for granted that terms like "dog" mirror categories that are stable yesterday, today, and tomorrow. If they weren't stable, man couldn't think and language wouldn't be worth learning. Yet whether he thinks about it or not, meaning presupposes that there is a source of stability for each classification known.

Not only must a source of classification stability be presupposed, but this source must extend beyond the very limits of our comprehension in space and time. Since meaning of terms like "dog" involve contextual associations, man must be able to know the immediate context of a term in his experience, to know the more remote contexts in mankind's experiences, and so on in ever-widening circles of context out to the limits of his comprehension.

More details follow in Chapters 2 and 3, but it is enough at this point to say that to have meaning for any part of life there must be meaning to the whole of life. To secure the meanings man needs for the everyday events--rains for crops, why his body is the way it is, etc.--he must reach out to the ultimate context of all, the origin of the world. There is this unavoidable need in his heart to presuppose meaning and stability in the world. Of course, as Bible-believing Christians we know that this need has been designed into the human heart by God. Awareness of the need for preservation of stable structures like dogs is really awareness of His sustaining power (Rom. 1:20). Awareness of the ultimate context of the world through its origin is really awareness of His creative power (Eccl. 3:11; Acts 17:27-28). This state of affairs is especially true in modern science.

### ***Importance of Origins for Meaning in Modern Science***

At the risk of over-simplification, you can view the work of much of science today like that of an author. Just as the author struggles to model in language the concepts he has in his mind about the world, so the scientist

often struggles to model in mathematics the ideas he has of physical reality. Instead of the dictionaries and linguistic structures of the author, the scientist uses special math functions and numerical analysis.

As in language, so in math. To have meaning there must be stability of categories and contextual associations. If I write the simple first-degree equation,

$$y = ax + b$$

there must be constant values for "a" and "b". Without such constants, math as a modeling tool is hopeless. Not only that, rules of operation like addition (" + ") must continue as reliable descriptions of physical relationships. The preconditions for science, like all thought and language, is for a fundamental stability of categories in this world.

Besides this stability of categories, a scientist needs ever-expanding circles of relationships. To explain how a small sub-system works (e.g., a rotating object at 45° North Latitude), he needs to know about interactions between this sub-system and its surrounding environment (e.g., the rotation of the earth, planetary effects, and ultimately intergalactic interactions).

Since a scientific explanation of physical relationships is usually evaluated by its ability to predict system behavior backwards and forwards in time, it follows that success requires mastery of the basic principles that control all relationships. Such principles presumably stem from origins when everything was together--the elementary particles of matter, the first assembling of life, etc. Thus many scientists who want to reduce everything down to physical particles, passionately hope for discovery of the ultimate unifying principle of the universe. This "final theory of everything", it is hoped, will explain the relationship of what they believe to be the four fundamental forces in the world-- electromagnetism, gravity, the weak and strong nuclear forces. To understand their interrelationship, attention is turning back to the Big Bang view of origins when everything is thought to have been altogether. Some scientists are now saying that origins or cosmogony may even "legislate" physics.

To sum up I could put it this way: you can't say anything about anything without saying (by implication) something about everything. The term "everything" points unmistakably to origins. If this is true, then is it possible for anyone to be neutral on the origins issue?

### **No Neutral Ground**

To avoid controversy over origins some people, especially public school policy-makers, adopt different strategies of attempted neutrality. You

$P \rightarrow Q$   
 $\sim Q \rightarrow \sim P$

$P$  = God is Creator of all  
 $Q$  = everything  
 dependent upon God

ought  
 should  
 all  
 always  
 everywhere

can't blame them as they are caught between two sides. On one side are prestigious authorities, the National Education Association hierarchy, ACLU attorneys, and even liberal theologians. On the other side are activist fundamentalist parents and students.

The strategies usually are built upon reasoning like this. The biblical creation story deals with the "who" and "why" questions which are not subject to scientific verification. Thus creationism is "religious". By contrast, the evolutionary origin story deals with the "how" questions which are subject to scientific verification. Thus evolution is "science". Public schools can teach science, but they cannot teach religion because they must be religiously neutral. Therefore, public schools can teach only evolution, not creationism.

Unfortunately for the sake of public education, this strategy rests on a number of invalid premises. Here, however, let's deal just with the idea that you can be religiously neutral. Religious neutrality is not the same as religious tolerance. Tolerance means I tolerate someone who holds an erroneous belief, not that I think his belief and my belief are equally correct. Neutrality, unlike tolerance, insists that all such beliefs are "correct" because in the area of religion there is no true absolute knowledge. Neutrality asserts its own theory of truth: all religious opinion is relative ("that's what works for you"). Confusing neutrality for tolerance is quite common today.

[Lesson 3](#)

The religious neutrality theory says that whether or not the God of the Bible exists and has created the universe is not important to whatever the subject at hand. This statement, it turns out, makes the not-so-hidden, not-so-neutral claim that God could not be the Creator. First, it denies that He could have any fundamental role in structuring the universe (if He did, then He would obviously be important to the subject at hand). Second, it insists that each object in the universe does not bear testimony to Him (otherwise, He would be present in every subject). Third, it elevates above God an ethical standard that justifies ignoring His Presence (we "ought" to think this way and not another way). In short, the neutral theory is not itself neutral and therefore is self-contradictory [1]. I have discussed this before in Part I.

I conclude the matter by enlarging the previous statement.

**You can't say anything about anything without saying (by implication) something about everything, including non-neutral statements about God and origins.**

## Not Neutrality but Tolerance

Origins is a perspective that gives ultimate meaning to everything we can think and talk about. It expresses the ultimate presuppositions of a man's

heart. That is why origins "lurks in the background" of everyday speech. That is why it is such a sensitive subject with most people.

With such volatility, origins is a subject that demands extraordinary toleration to discuss. As Bible-believing Christians we must balance truth and grace. We must respect the Lordship of Christ intellectually by insisting upon His truth. We must state our severe critique of origin-myths that deny Him. Nevertheless, in grace we must tolerate our neighbors who think otherwise--tolerate them as people for whom Christ died even though we sharply disagree with them over the matter of origins.

### **Exercises 1.1.**

1. Explain the logic of Jesus' reasoning from origins in dealing with the divorce problem in Matt. 19:1-12. His opponents set the problem in the context of the Mosaic Law. How did Jesus enlarge the context to get the meaning of marriage?
2. In Acts 14:8-18 Paul faced a pagan mob that had totally misinterpreted his missionary work. How and why did he go back to origins to deal with this situation?
3. In Acts 17:16-31 Paul needed a strategy to communicate the meaning of the gospel in one of the great intellectual centers of the ancient world. How did he reason from origins?
4. Missionaries working with New Tribes Mission in Southeast Asia reported greater success in gospel communication when they began the gospel story with the creation narrative. Why do you think this approach worked better than starting the gospel story with Jesus narrative in the Gospel of Mark?
5. For a few weeks keep a list of places you read or hear references to origins. What subjects are being discussed when references are made to origins?

## **COMPARING BIBLICAL CREATION & PAGAN ORIGIN-MYTHS**

When I once discussed these ideas at a meeting for school board candidates, a well-educated parent said to me that it was hopeless to talk about origins "because there are hundreds of different origins stories from around the world." You will no doubt hear this remark, too. It's a popular maneuver to pigeon-hole Genesis as just-another-among-hundreds-of-other-

stories so it can be dropped from any serious discussion. Let's examine the matter using our presuppositional strategy.

### Comparison of Early Genesis with a Pagan Text

I've chosen the most famous origin-myth known outside of Israel during early Old Testament times, the Babylonian text called Enuma elish. Pieces of this text were discovered between 1848 and 1876 from King Ashurbanipal's Nineveh library (this king lived during the time of II Kings). Later findings suggest the story was composed at least by the time of the Exodus. Dr. Alexander Heidel describes the story:

*Enuma elish is the principle source of our knowledge of Mesopotamian cosmology. . . .*

*Yet, Enuma elish is not primarily a creation story at all. . . .*

*Its prime object is to offer cosmological reasons for Marduk's advancement from the position as chief god of Babylon to that of head of the entire Babylonian pantheon. This was achieved by attributing to him the defeat of Tiamat and the creation and maintenance of the universe. . . .*

*Next. . . Babylon's claim to supremacy. . . was further supported by tracing Babylon's origin back to the very beginnings of time and by attributing her foundation to the great Anunnaki themselves, who built Babylon as a dwelling place for Marduk. . . . Our epic is thus not only a religious treatise but also a political one.[2]*

Note how Dr. Heidel's discussion illustrates the previous section on the role of origins. Like all men, the Babylonians reverted to origin-myths to set the context for important topics. In their case, origins gave meaning to the role of Babylon in history.

Before hastily reading this text, however, you should start with a biblical framework as we learned in Part I. What do you know already about such a text from the biblical perspective? You should remember that the inhabitants of Babylon had to have come from Noah's sons (to be further discussed in Chapter 6 of this study and also Part III). From this fact you can expect that Enuma elish writers may have had access to creation traditions directly from Noah. They did not have to have any contact with Israel.

Biblically, you also know that, apart from the Holy Spirit, any such truths would tend to be distorted and suppressed by the carnal mind that is at enmity with God. Paul says in Romans 1:21 that the pagan mind became "vaporous" in its "dialogues" (reasonings). You would expect to see in ancient pagan origin-myths like Enuma elish pieces of the truth retained that were "acceptable" to the carnal mind. The rest of the ideas that unavoidably manifested the glory of God, I would expect to see radically modified or replaced. Let's see how this works out.



Here are excerpts from Enuma elish from Dr. Heidel's translation. I have separated each excerpt with a dashed line:

*"When above [Enuma elish] the heaven had not (yet) been named,  
(And) below the earth had not (yet) been called by a name,  
(When) Apsu primeval, their begetter,  
Mummu, (and) Tiamat, she who gave birth to them all,  
(Still) mingled their waters together,  
And no pasture land had been formed (and) not (even) a reed marsh was to  
be seen;  
When none of the (other) gods had been brought into being,  
(When) they had not (yet) been called by (their) name(s), and their destinies  
had not yet been fixed,  
(At that time) were the gods created within them. . . .*

-----  
*They lived many days, adding years (to days). . . .*

-----  
*The divine brothers gathered together.  
They disturbed Tiamat and assaulted(?) their keeper,  
Yea, they disturbed the inner parts of Tiamat,  
Moving (and) running about in the divine abode(?). . . .*

-----  
*[Marduk] took from [Kingu] the tablet of destinies, which was not his rightful  
possession. . . .*

-----  
*After he had vanquished (and) subdued his enemies. . . .*

-----  
*Strengthened his hold upon the captive gods;  
And then he returned to Tiamat, whom he had subdued.  
The lord trod upon the hinder part of Tiamat,  
And with his unsparing club he split her skull.  
He cut the arteries of her blood,  
And caused the north wind to carry (it) to out-of-the-way places.*

-----  
*[Marduk] split [Tiamat] open like a mussel into two(parts);  
Half of her he set in place and formed the sky (therewith) as a roof.  
He fixed the crossbar (and) posted guards,  
He commanded them not to let her waters escape.*

-----  
*And a great structure, its counterpart, he established, (namely) Esharra  
[earth], . . .*

-----  
*He created stations for the great gods;  
The stars their likeness(es), the signs of the zodiac, he set up.*

*He determined the year, defined the divisions. . . .*

-----  
*Punishment they inflicted upon [Kingu] by cutting (the arteries of) his blood.  
 With his blood they created mankind;  
 [Ea] imposed the services of the gods (upon them) and set the gods free.[3]*  
 -----

### **Exercise 1.2**

1. **Read this text side-by-side with Genesis 1:1-2:4 and look for similar elements. What is created? How is it created? What is the initial condition? In what sequence are the elements created? Match your observations to specific references in Genesis.**
2. **Again read this text and look for contrasting elements. Who does the creating? What is the initial condition? What is used to create with? What motives exist behind the creative acts?**
3. **What would be your suggested explanation for the similarities you observed in question 1?**
4. **What would be your suggested explanation for the differences you observed in question 2?**
5. **Enuma elish features multiple gods struggling with one another for control of creation and history. How would you describe the difference between this struggling process and Bible passages like Job 1:6-12 and I Kings 22:19-23?**

### **Similarities between Genesis and Ancient Paganism**

When modern scholars first began to analyze ancient pagan texts like Enuma elish, many of them interpreted them from an evolutionary perspective. Because of the similarities they thought they could see a gradual evolution from these earlier, more speculative, polytheistic stories to the later, loftier, monotheistic Genesis. It seemed to be another illustration of evolution's ever upward development. It also "explained" the Bible by showing that it came not from God but from prior pagan stories.

Time proved them wrong. Two major conflicts arose with this evolution-of-religion idea. First, as more evidence of early religious beliefs was found, it showed that the earlier stories were more monotheistic; they "remembered" the existence of a Supreme Being who created all things and were not truly pagan at all. Later stories "forgot" the Supreme Being and replaced him with "the richest and most extravagant rituals, gods and goddesses of the most

varied kinds"[4]. Paganism, in other words, developed later out of earlier Bible-like beliefs. This is opposite to what the evolutionary theory would predict.

A second conflict became apparent when it was discovered that some isolated tribes in remote parts of the modern world had origin stories that were genuinely monotheistic and truly "creationist". These tribes had somehow preserved ancient, pre-pagan beliefs. Since there was no evidence of contact with Christian missionaries, where did such "primitive" tribes get the "advanced" truths seen in Genesis 1? Their pre-pagan concepts are surprising.

Study of African tribal origin stories shows several examples of belief in creation ex nihilo. [5] In North America, "the Wiyot in northern California. . . say: 'The Old Man Above did not use earth and sticks to make men. He simply thought, and there they were.'" [6] In India the Santal people have an oral tradition about "Thakur Jiu" (translated = "Genuine God"). Thakur Jiu created the world and the first human pair Haram and Ayo who fell into sin. [7]

In Southeast Asia the Karen people have hymns in their oral traditions about the eternal Creator, Y'wa, that predate all contact with missionaries:

*Who created the world in the beginning?*

*Y'wa created the world in the beginning!*

*Y'wa appointed everything.*

*Y'wa is unsearchable! . . .*

*The omnipotent is Y'wa; him have we not believed.*

*Y'wa created man anciently;*

*He has a perfect knowledge of all things!*

*Y'wa created men at the beginning. . . .*

*He appointed the "fruit of trial"*

*He gave detailed orders.*

*Mu-kaw-lee deceived two persons. . . [8]*

If these minority examples show nearly a complete survival of an ancient monotheism, then in the majority of outright pagan origin-myths partial survival would be probable. In other words, underlying paganism are buried truths of origins that testify to original revelation passed down through Noah (Isa. 40:21).

### **Contrasts between Genesis and Ancient Paganism**

While there are similar elements found in both the Bible and ancient paganism, the contrasts outweigh the similarities. I want you to notice two major areas of contrast. Refer to your observations from Exercise 1.2 to follow my discussion.

1. Creator-creature vs. Continuity of Being. You observed in Enuma elish that there is no clear distinction between the gods and goddesses on one hand and the material universe on the other. Apsu, Tiamat, and Mummu are

all "water deities". Note the line at the beginning where they "mingled their waters" and the later line where Marduk split open Tiamat and made the sky from her. In the pagan mind, the material world and spirit beings are very closely identified with one another.

Note, too, that from the matter-spirit beings Apsu, Tiamat, and Mummu come forth all the other gods and goddesses. These new-born deities are said to have "disturbed the inner parts of Tiamat. . .the divine abode" as though Tiamat was their home. Paganism thus thinks of everything originating from a chaos, including the gods.

In the Genesis text, however, God is wholly separate from the universe. He is prior to all things. All else originates from Him. They come into existence, not by transformation from His Being, but by His spoken Word they come into existence from nothing (creatio ex-nihilo). There is thus an absolute, transcendental distinction between the Creator and all else.

Over against the Bible's Creator-creature distinction, paganism insists upon the unity of creator(s) and creations. Gods, men, animals, and rocks are all part of the same existence or being. This is the doctrine of the Chain of Being or Continuity of Being, a doctrine you will find lurking in all forms of paganism from ancient times through New Testament times (where it was related to the Gnostic heresy) to modern cosmic evolution. You will hear about this false doctrine again and again in the following chapters. It is spiritual poison.

Implied by the Continuity of Being idea and overtly present in some pagan origin-myths, is the concept of spontaneous generation. Since the universe basically is of one kind, everything within it differs only in degree. Thus the universe has power to bring forth life from non-life all by itself. Man is just a part of Nature. Contrast this situation with the Bible's teaching about non-transgressable boundaries between man, each kind of animal, and each kind of plant (Gen. 1:11-12, 21, 24-25, 27).

An apparent corollary to the Continuity of Being is that the spontaneous transformations take vast amounts of time. Note the line in Enuma elish, "They lived many days, adding years (to days)." Contrast this slowness with the suddenness of God's creative work (Ps. 33:9) done in six days (Exod. 20:11).

The first fundamental contrast between Genesis and ancient paganism, then, is between the Creator-creature distinction and the gradually self-transforming Continuity of Being. That is not all; there is a second, equally fundamental contrast that you must also learn to recognize.

2. Personal Sovereignty vs. Impersonal Chance. In Exercise 1.2, did you observe who, if anyone, was in control? If I had given you the entire Enuma elish text, you would have seen vividly that the creation of the universe was done by a squabbling committee without a chairman! First, Apsu, Tiamat, and Mummu "begat" all other gods. Then Marduk somehow arises and vanquishes the three original water deities.

Dr. Heidel's quote above tells us that the story was, among other things, a political justification for the power of Babylon. Bluntly stated, the story justifies Babylon by showing that Babylon's god, Marduk, could beat up all the other cities' gods! Put in more contemporary language, the story teaches that historical processes going back to origins ordain Babylon's dominance.



see p.129 for full size diagram

Observe carefully what is going on here. If today Marduk beats up all the other gods, what about tomorrow? Will another god, younger and stronger than Marduk, rise up and triumph over him? On the polytheistic basis of Enuma elish what assurance would a Babylonian have about the future? Who is in charge in the final analysis?

The pagan mind, when faced with this dilemma, usually tries to appeal to something "behind" the gods. Note in Enuma elish the reference "[Marduk] took from [Kingu] the tablet of destinies." Later pagans in Greece and Rome spoke of this mysterious, unknowable something in back of the gods as Fate.

Resorting to an unknowable fate, however, doesn't do much. It still leaves one in darkness. Who will dominate the counsel of the gods tomorrow? No one, including the gods, knows! It comes down to what we moderns call Chance. Chance alone is the final backdrop of existence in the pagan view. Of course, this Chance is also impersonal. It is thought of as an impersonal tablet, not a god.

Opposed to this Chance-run, squabbling committee idea of origins, is the Bible's orderly dominance by the one, personal Creator-God over all else. God merely speaks His Word, and it comes to pass (Ps 33:9). God promises Adam that the seed of the woman will bruise the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). History will certainly turn out the way God and God alone says it will. In Exercise 1.2, Question 5, you observed that other beings may be involved in running the show, but the "committee" has an absolute Lord!

To summarize: two fundamental distinctions between Genesis and ancient paganism are, first, the contrast between the Creator-creature discontinuity and the Continuity of Being and, second, the contrast between Personal Sovereignty and Impersonal Chance.

## RECONCILING GENESIS AND THE EVOLUTION ORIGIN-MYTH

Like ancient Babylon, the modern world also has an officially-sponsored origin-myth: cosmic evolution of all things. Although it is expressed in scientific language instead of poetry, evolution shares with ancient paganism the same fundamental concepts of the Continuity of Being and Chance. In fact, you can trace the pathway of these beliefs from ancient time up to pre-Darwinian Europe. The Continuity or "Chain of Being. . . is a notion traceable back to Plato. [It] formed part of the general mental furniture of most educated men from the Renaissance until the end of the 18th century." [9] As Loren Eiseley remarks:

*All that the Chain of Being actually needed to become a full-fledged evolutionary theory was the introduction into it of the conception of time in vast quantities added to mutability of form. . . . The seed of evolution lay buried in this traditional metaphysic which indeed prepared the Western mind for its acceptance. [10]*

Henry Fairfield Osborne, director of the American Museum of Natural History, in the early twentieth century says of this link with ancient paganism:

*When I began the search for anticipation of the evolutionary theory. . . . I was astonished to find how many of the pronounced and basic features of the Darwinian theory were anticipated as far back as the seventh century, B.C. [11]*

Outside of "Christian" Europe, the link is even more clear. "Far Eastern philosophers thought of creation in evolutionary terms. . . . a belief in an inherent continuity of all creation and, second, a reference to the merging of one species into another." [12] Confucianism, Buddhism, Shintoism, and Hinduism all express the ancient pagan beliefs in the Continuity of Being and Chance.

You probably have never seen this link before because modern evolutionists like to deceive you into thinking that evolution is a new discovery of modern science. I want you to note a very important fact: only in the West where the Bible significantly influenced man's thought was there any substantial deviation from the same basic pagan origin-myth. Thus, in terms of basic beliefs, there are not "hundreds" of different origin stories; there are only two kinds--biblical and pagan.

What, then, have Christians done over the centuries when faced with the conflict between Genesis and paganism? I have only enough space to note what has happened over the last two hundred years. There are lessons here to learn from the various strategies that Christians have used in their attempts at reconciliation.

## The Capitulation Strategy

Even before Darwin popularized evolution in the mid-1800s, sizeable segments of the Church had absorbed anti-supernaturalism and had become liberal. They "reinvented" Christianity to fit the new naturalism of their day (old paganism in a new version). They freely speculated, for example, that Moses really didn't write Genesis 1 and 2 as Jesus had insisted (Matt. 19:8; John 5:46-47; 7:19). Rather, Genesis 1 and 2 were two contradictory accounts of creation, one written by an author who called God by the name of Elohim (translated God) and the other written by another author who called God by the name of Yahweh (translated LORD).

1 <sup>st</sup> 3 days	2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 days
Domains of Light & Darkness (Day & Night)	Sun "rules" the Day, Moon and stars "rule" the Night
Domain of sea and atmosphere	Fish fill the sea and birds fly in the atmosphere
Domain of land	Animals fill the land and man rules fish, birds, and animals

[see p.130 for full size diagram](#)

These sort of eighteenth and nineteenth century speculations were later challenged by archeological discoveries of ancient Near Eastern literary works. Discoveries showed that "doublets" like Genesis 1 and 2 were common stylistic features of the ancient world. Just as spiritual readers of Genesis had realized for centuries, the doublet style reflects shifting perspectives, not contradictory accounts (much like modern journalistic style). As the Oriental Lecturer at Liverpool University, Dr. Kenneth Kitchen once wrote, such speculative interpretations of doublets is an "uncritical perpetuation of a nineteenth-century systematization of speculations by eighteenth-century dilettantes lacking. . .all knowledge of the forms and usages of Ancient Oriental literature." [13] Yet today's college and high-school teachers still teach this old liberalism in "Bible-as-literature" courses.

Liberalism thus prepared vast segments of the church to accept evolutionary cosmology in the last half of the nineteenth century when Darwin published his works. Since they no longer accepted the supernatural biblical framework, the fallen nature of man, the deity of Christ, and literal resurrection, liberals willingly capitulated to evolutionary cosmology. Why defend the book of Genesis when spiritually they had already abandoned the God of Genesis?

## The Accommodation Strategy

More conservative Christians couldn't accept the strategy of capitulation because of their loyalty to the God of the Bible. Since they believed God revealed Himself in both nature and in the Bible, they felt that Scripture and science were ultimately harmonious. Unfortunately, the major evangelical leaders in the nineteenth and early twentieth century uncritically accepted the "assured results" of modern scientific cosmology as the final word from nature. They were convinced no radically different interpretations of scientific data were possible.

This step forced them to accommodate evolutionary cosmology by altering traditional interpretation of Genesis. In the very heart of nineteenth century conservative scholarship, Princeton Seminary, the Old Testament professor W. H. Green (1825-1896) wrote a paper called Primeval Chronology in which he sought to defend the Bible's embarrassing "recent" creation of man by opening up gaps in the genealogies of Adam. Dr. Green thought this method would allow enough time to accommodate the increasingly older dates for the origin of man. This accommodation was welcomed by no less than Princeton's eminent conservative theologian, Charles Hodge. Said his son, years later: "I can well remember my father walking up and down in his study when he heard (about it) and saying, 'What a relief it is to me that he should have said that'"[14]

Other re-interpretative devices have been used in the accommodation strategy. Genesis 1:1-3 has been re-interpreted at least two different ways in order to get vast amounts of time for the age of the universe. The Gap Theory interprets verse 1 as original creation separated in time from a subsequent judgment against Satan in verse 2. This approach is discussed in Appendix C where I note in fairness to its proponents that it began long before the conflict with modern evolution. Being already available, it was seized upon as a panacea for the problems between Genesis and science.

Another interpretation of Genesis 1:1-3 increasingly being used in evangelical Bible translations, follows earlier liberal views based upon parallels with ancient pagan origin-myths like Enuma elish. In this approach Genesis describes only a relative beginning: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth when the earth was formless and void. . . ." The traditional doctrine of ex-nihilo creation, in this view, falls away from Genesis 1.

Besides reinterpreting the first three verses of Genesis 1, conservatives have tried to reinterpret the "days", making them either literal 24-hour days of revelation when God revealed the creation story to Moses or symbolic days standing for long ages of time. The great problem with this approach is that the sequence of creative acts in the "day-ages" doesn't correspond with what is needed to successfully accommodate evolutionary cosmology. This tactic usually breaks down after its proponents are forced to further modify the interpretation for each day to get things to fit.

Regardless of the specific tactics used in the accommodation strategy, many Bible-believing Christians, including myself, think it is hopelessly flawed. It continues nineteenth century naiveté about scientific infallibility. It destroys the fall of man as the source of death in the world (making God the direct cause of natural evil). And it undercuts the principle of the



"perspicuity of Scripture", the great Protestant principle that the common believer can meet the Lord in the Bible without an intervening priesthood to tell him what the Bible "really" says. The accommodationists imply that until the nineteenth century "priesthood" of scientists came into being, no believer correctly understood the entire foundational portion of the Bible![15]

### **The Counterattack Strategy**

By the mid-twentieth century a significant number of Bible-believing Christians had become disillusioned with the strategy of accommodation. In the late 1950s and early 1960s great controversy occurred within evangelical ranks about what to do with Genesis. Over a century had gone by, and the conservatives had done nothing except retreat again and again. Many felt if we couldn't interpret the straightforward Genesis narrative any better than that, what were we doing trying to interpret the rest of the Bible?

Outsiders like historian of science, Dr. John C. Greene, noted clearly the problem:

*Maintenance of what these writers call 'verbal inspiration' is likely to prove possible only by continual reinterpretation of the Bible. In the long run, perpetual reinterpretation may prove more subversive of the authority of Scripture than would a frank recognition of the limitations of traditional doctrines.[16]*

Led chiefly by Dr. Henry Morris, then head of Civil Engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, a group of evangelical scientists chose to begin a new strategy. If the Bible could not be "adjusted" to fit evolution, and if it was the Word of God, then the problem, somehow, must be with the scientific interpretation of data. Somewhere in its development largely from within the Protestant Reformation, science had taken a wrong turn. What had begun as fruit of a Christian view of nature, had strangely boomeranged back against the Bible.

The new strategy was a stunning turn-around. Four-hundred years before, the Reformation had firmly established the Bible as the authority in "heavenly" things (e.g., theological doctrines of Christology and Soteriology). Now the Bible was becoming the authority in "earthly" things, too. To prevent the data of the book of nature from being misinterpreted, the new strategy established controls from a comprehensive universal history built from the Bible.

Put another way, this group of Bible-believing Christians embraced a strategy of counterattack against not a detail here or there, but against the entire framework of scientific interpretation! Within recent years, the second and third generations of these "strict creationists" and "young earthers" have begun to produce more and more comprehensive counter-proposals from

nuclear physics to geology to mathematics. In principle, they operate at a presuppositional level, arguing that alien pagan beliefs have contaminated much of modern scientific thought. These insidious pagan beliefs as direct descendents of ancient paganism serve the same old purpose: suppress the truth of God that is everywhere present.

The task, humanly, is impossible to complete. There are no major institutions to help, no source of needed funds, few willing and able laborers, and a vast backlog of already-established scientific paradigms. But is Jesus, Lord? Have we not seen that the Bible stands against all paganism, ancient and modern? Can we look him in the face as we capitulate and accommodate to modern versions of Baalism?

### **Exercise 1.3.**

- 1. Your son returns home from a professedly Christian college campus. He shares with you how his professor assured him he "doesn't have to worry about old controversies between Genesis and science. We moderns have to accept that God must have used the process of evolution to create the world and man. We can believe in Jesus and in evolution." Reasoning from what Jesus and Paul believed about Genesis, show your son that "we can believe in Jesus or evolution". Note: Matt. 19:4-6; 23:35; 24:37-39; Rom. 5:12-14; 8:20-22; 16:20; I Cor.6:16; 11:8-9; 15:21-22, 39-40, 45-47; II Cor.4:6; 11:3; I Tim.2:13-14.**
- 2. From what you have learned in this chapter, summarize the basic nature of paganism. Discuss its beliefs and its motivations. Be careful not to be self-righteous; every believer in his flesh is a pagan, too.**
- 3. Your neighbor asks you how you, as an educated person, can believe in an ancient book like the Bible that is filled with mythology. Outline your response (hint: be careful to question your neighbor on the meaning of his terms).**

### **END NOTES FOR CHAPTER 1**

1. A complete logical proof is given in Vern S. Poythress, "A Biblical View of Mathematics," *Foundations of Christian Scholarship* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1976), pp. 165-168.
2. Alexander Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis* (Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1963 edition of original University of Chicago Press, 1942), pp. 10-11.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-47.

4. Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, trans. Willard Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 93-94.
5. Jerry Bergmen, "Creation and Creation Myths," *Creation Research Society Quarterly* (hereinafter CRSQ), XXX, (Mar, 1994), p. 205.
6. *Ibid*, p. 209.
7. Don Richardson, *Eternity in Their Hearts*, (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1981), pp. 41-43.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
9. D. R. Olroyd, *Darwinian Impact*, (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Highlands Press, 1983), p. 45.
10. Loren Eisely, *Darwin's Century*, (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1961), p. 10.
11. H. F. Osborne, *From the Greeks to Darwin*, (New York: Chas.Scribner's Press, 1929), p. xi.
12. Sol Tax, "Introduction", *Issues in Evolution*, ed. Sol Tax (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 2, 7.
13. K. A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*, (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1966), p. 117.
14. Cited in Arthur C. Custance, *Two Men Called Adam*, (Brockville, Ontario: Doorway Publications, 1983), p. 5.
15. In light of this past history of the failed nineteenth century accommodation strategy, it is sad to see evangelism goback today to this same essential strategy through efforts like that of Dr. Hugh Ross. Ross is popular with well-known Christian organizations and radio programs. One major work by him is *Creation and Time: A Biblical and Scientific Perspective on the Creation-Date Controversy* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1994). An answer to him which I helped advise is Mark Van Bibber and Paul S. Taylor, *Creation and Time: A Report on the Progressive Creationist Book by Hugh Ross* (Mesa, AZ: Eden Publications, 1994).
16. John C. Greene, *Darwin and the Modern World View*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), p. 32.

## CHAPTER 2: CREATION: THE BURIED TRUTH OF WHO GOD IS

Lesson 6

*Someday in the future, believers of all ages and the angels will praise God at His Throne: 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*

Note here that the defining event of all history for revealing Who God is, is the creation event. This praise comes prior to praise for the redemption in Christ (Rev. 5:9-14)! The reason why creation is the defining event instead of the Cross is that redemption would be unimportant if the God Who redeemed were not the Creator. For this reason Paul insisted that the "front end" of the gospel to a pagan society ought always to be creation (cf. Acts 14:15; 17:24; Rom 1:20). How foolish, then, for us in an increasingly pagan society to skip over creation because unbelief in our day has deliberately made it "controversial"!

To learn Who God really is, we must abandon the pagan deceptions surrounding creation. This is no trivial act. It involves changing our most basic presuppositions about the world and who we are. It is repentance at the very bottom of our hearts, minds, and souls. It is the "unburying" of original God-consciousness that has become piled high with debris from this world's wisdom. Only after we confront the God with Whom we have to do, can we understand sin and the need for atonement and resurrection.

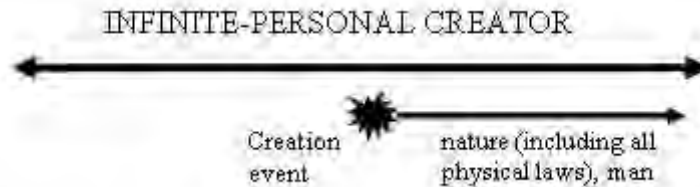
In this chapter, to help in any needed repentance, I am going to clarify further the radical difference between biblical creation and its pagan counterfeits. Then I will address the question of how can we know Who God is, followed by a survey of His attributes He has chosen to reveal to us. The chapter concludes with a brief study of how idolatry gets into our lives.

### THE DISTINCTIVES OF BIBLICAL CREATION

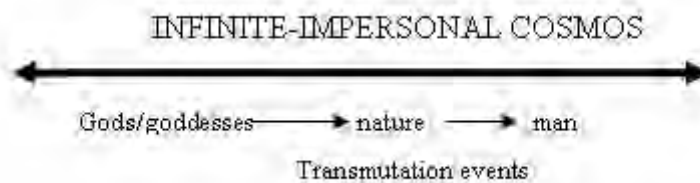
What are the distinctive marks of biblical creation? First and foremost it is ex-nihilo creation. Ex-nihilo means "out of nothing". God created without having to use pre-existing material. There was once nothing beside Him; then He spoke the universe into existence by His Word (refer again to Ps.33:6,9). Something suddenly exists that didn't exist before. And its "cause" was only the spoken Word of God. There is a radical discontinuity.

All pagan myths deny ex-nihilo creation. Remember in Enuma elish how the gods came about by procreation? Procreation is a natural process of producing something from something. These myths all tell stories of transformation of prior existing material. One piece of the universe "causes" another piece. There is a basic continuity underlying whatever change takes place. Let's look at a diagram to see how paganism differs from the distinctive biblical creation.

### Biblical Creation:



### Paganism:



I want you to see more deeply into these differences because very few of us are free from pagan influences. Let's look at three basic questions all men ask: who am I? what is truth and how can I know? how should I live? I want to show you the different answers you get from biblical creation and paganism.

Who Am I? If you study philosophy this area is called metaphysics or ontology. Metaphysics comes from Greek components that mean "above" and "nature", what is the higher understanding of nature? Ontology comes from Greek components that mean "being" and "knowledge", a knowledge of being. To answer "who am I?" you have to deal with the bigger context: what is reality or existence? What is its structure?

In the Bible, reality isn't one thing; it's two things. There are two levels of being: the eternal existence of the Infinite-Personal Creator in His manifold complexity, and the created existence of man and nature that began and continues in utter dependency upon Him. Picture the Genesis 1 narrative in your mind. You see God causing everything to do with man and nature by simply speaking His Word. The universe doesn't come out of His anatomy. He doesn't procreate it. Nor is He fighting with another god in order to create. He just speaks the Word!

What does Genesis 1 tell you that you are? It tells you that your ultimate environment is not DNA molecules nor the laws of physics nor even a warm, fuzzy "Good" principle. Your ultimate environment is a Person Who thinks, talks, experiences emotion, loves, has a sense of art, and appreciates music! Beyond the galaxies is not cosmic dust cloud radiating background energy from a Big Bang; but a living Personal God!

And what does the pagan worldview tell you that you are? It tells you that reality at bottom is one. There is only one level of being. It matters not whether reality is pictured as a vast machine (19th and early 20th century), or as some sort of cosmic organism (ancient paganism and just now returning to popularity). The universe beneath you, above you, in front of you, and behind you is an Infinite Impersonal "It". You and your "personal" nature differ only in degree from It's electrons and protons. In the Chain of Being, your thinking, talking, emotions, loving, and artistic expressions are merely surface appearances on a reality that is basically impersonal. You and other humans are really only person-like bubbles floating for the moment on an impersonal ocean of chance. Ultimately, you and other humans are alone.

### **What is Truth and How Can I Know?**

In philosophy the area of knowing is called epistemology from a Greek word meaning "to know". This area deals with the question, how can we know? What is knowledge? It concerns language and logic. What distinctive answer comes from biblical creation?

In the two-level view of reality, God the Creator thinks thoughts about everything. He created according to a plan (Eph. 1:4-5). Truth is His thoughts! They pre-exist your thoughts. That means you discover truth, not invent it. It also means you can only discover truth that He permits you to (Deut. 29:29; Matt. 11:25), no more. It means your personal relationship with your Creator is directly involved in knowing His thoughts! You and He must be "on speaking terms".

In all the versions of paganism there is no ultimate Personal Creator God. Gods, if existing at all, themselves are surrounded by the same mystery you are. They may know more than you on the Chain of Being, but in the end they, too, are limited. That means you and other beings truly originate thoughts that have no pre-existence. You invent truth, not discover it. In short, you are autonomous. Autonomous comes from two Greek words, one meaning "self" (autos) and another meaning "law" (nomos). You, as a lonely self, determine whatever laws you think about. There is no prior standard of truth.

A severe problem with all this, a problem paganism has never solved in either ancient or modern forms, is how language and logic can be trusted to think about reality with. If you need stable categories and contexts to get

meaning, as I said in the previous chapter, how can this occur if all reality is one? If there is no Personal Creator, there are no pre-existing eternal thoughts that express the plan of the universe. There is no assurance that today's categories will remain tomorrow. There is no knowable ultimate environment, only mystery. A man in his everyday speech may use universal terms ("all", "always", "never", "truth", etc.), but they have no basis. Without the preconditions of knowledge, paganism is what the Bible calls "vanity" (a more modern word would be "speculation"). [1]

### How Should I Live?

In philosophy this area is known as ethics and axiology. It seeks answers to questions like what ought we to do? What is the source of value? To answer the question "how should I live" you have to seek your highest loyalty.

**Don't "buy the question"**

You just learned that in the pagan worldview you are alone and autonomous. That means you have a big problem at this point! With No One there to Whom you are ultimately responsible, you are left on your own. You may do what seems right in your own eyes. The rub comes when you meet another autonomous person who is doing what seems right in his eyes! You could try to attach your loyalty to "society", hoping to convince your doubting heart that at least here you have a standard of right and wrong. Or you could try "mother earth". I discuss these options later in this Part Two and in Part Three.

By now I hope you are beginning to see the distinctives of biblical creation. Only with the creation event do you have the distinctive two-level reality with the eternal, self-contained, infinite personal God as your ultimate environment. Only with ex-nihilo creation do you have a standard of truth and a source of your "oughts".

#### **Exercise 2.1.**

1. In Genesis 3:5 and Isaiah 14:12-14 Satan claimed that humans could elevate themselves upward to become like God. How does this claim imply the one-level view of reality or Continuity of Being?
2. Read Job 38:1-4; 40:1-14; Isa. 40:12-14. How are these texts related to the two-level and single-level views of reality?
3. Re-read Enuma elish and Genesis 1. In Gen. 1 what process does God use to create with? In Enuma elish what process do the gods use to "create" with? Is the pagan process a true ex-nihilo creation? Why not?
4. Explain one major distinctive of biblical creation.

Lesson 7

## HOW GOD CAN AND CANNOT BE KNOWN

Paul tells us in Romans 1 that all men at bottom know God. If they didn't, they could not be held accountable at the final judgment. That judgment is "according to truth" (Rom. 2:2) and falls upon men precisely because they anger God by their deliberate suppression of the truth (Rom. 1:18). Fallen men, of course, deceive themselves into thinking the evidence for God's existence is not clear. By so doing, they think they have a legitimate defense if such a judgment should ever come upon them.

This pagan program of burying God-consciousness resembles a little child who gets mad at his father. The child defiantly shuts his eyes, thinking for a moment that by shutting off his perception he can erase genuine existence. He deludes himself that his father doesn't exist anymore because he can't see him through deliberately closed eyes. Throughout history the Church confronts again and again men who like the child have deliberately closed their eyes because they are mad at their Creator. Of course one day God will rip off the closed eyelids, but by then it will be too late.

Unfortunately, Christians too often have tried to prove God's existence without ever demanding that the child open his eyes. Many of the so-called arguments for the existence of God simply cater to the child's tantrum. They unintentionally encourage the sinful game of pretending God can't be seen. I'll give you an example and then show you how God is known along with the limits of this knowledge.

### Trying To See God without Opening the Eyes

You read in the previous section how paganism answers the three basic questions men ask. In that view, you share the same essential level of existence with God (if He exists). Both of you are ultimately alone, surrounded by the mysterious Impersonal Cosmos run by Chance. In your autonomy you legislate what the universe is like on the basis of your limited experience and reason. And you do what seems right in your own eyes.

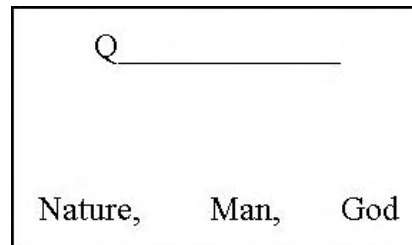
These are the presuppositional "closed eyelids" with which the carnal heart hopes to eliminate God. These "closed eyelids" must be challenged when we speak of God. Are they challenged, however, by the classical arguments for God's existence? Let's look at one.

One classical argument is called the cosmological argument. In its usual form it goes like this: (1) everything has a cause; (2) therefore the universe has a cause; and (3) that cause is God. A common atheistic maneuver around this argument is simply to apply statement (1) to God and continue the reasoning. "Therefore God must have a cause", and so on.



What is wrong here? Look at statement (1). The term "everything" for the atheist includes God and the universe together. The notion of "cause" applies to God and the universe in exactly the same way. Here is that familiar pagan feature again: one-level of existence! It hasn't been challenged. The "closed eyelids" remain in place.

We diagram the state-of-affairs this way:



In the diagram there is some (Q)uality that universally applies to God, man, and nature as though they all share the same kind of existence. The atheist has absorbed the cosmological argument into his pagan worldview by interpreting the terms "everything" and "cause" his way. He has made "causation" a (Q)uality that stands above God, man, and nature applying to all in exactly the same way.

Here is why anti-Trinitarians like Muslims, Mormons, and Jehovah's Witnesses devastate naive Christians. These pseudo-biblical people come with a definition of "threeness" and "oneness" as a (Q)uality that applies in the same sense to God and man. After showing that something cannot be both "three" and "one" in the realm of man, they merely apply the logical conflict to God and thereby "prove" the Trinity doctrine is self-contradictory.

Naive Christians don't see that the pagan presupposition of the Continuity of Being was slipped into the argument's first step when they defined the numerical quality as applying to all reality in the same way. The only way the numerical quality could possibly apply to God and man in the same way would be for God and man to partake of the same level of existence. This pagan presupposition is not challenged.

The Bible warns us not to "answer a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him" (Prov. 26:4). Too often the classical arguments for God's existence amount to answering the closed-eyed pagan according to his false one-level existence presupposition. You become like him. Then you can't answer him when he attacks your belief in the Trinity, in a sovereign God, or in a loving God. Your answer must not be according to folly. You ought not go along with his closed eyes!

## Opening the Eyes to See God

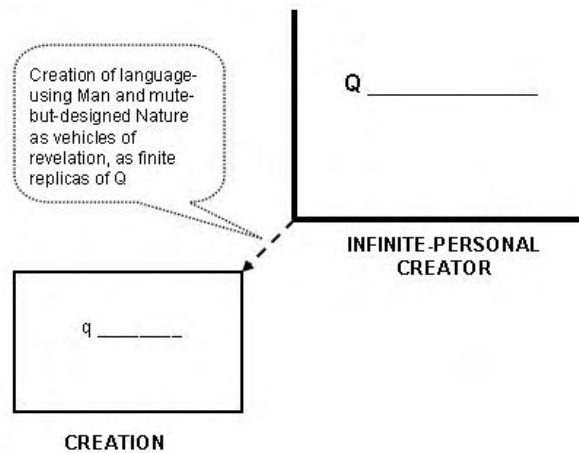
How to know God depends upon Who and What He is. By pretending that the pagan view of origins is correct, you falsify Who and What He is from the very first step. No wonder He can't be known by the usual arguments for His existence!

Therefore you start with God as He is revealed in the creation event--the Infinite Personal God wholly independent of His creation. You and He, therefore, do not share the same basic existence, differing only in degree. You and He differ in kind. Isaiah puts the matter clearly:

*"To whom will you liken me, that I should be his equal?" says the Holy One. . . .The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth. . .His understanding is inscrutable." Isaiah 40:25,28 (NASV)*

His existence sustains your existence. By virtue of the creation event, your ultimate environment is not a cosmic "It"; your ultimate environment is a Person! And His ultimate environment in turn is not some mysterious cosmic Fate or Chance in back of Him. He has no ultimate environment other than Himself!

To know Him, therefore, you must conform to Who and What He is, not to some image of a "possible" god of paganism. Arguments for His existence must also comply with Who and What He is, or they inevitably lead to other gods. Thus we bow our knees and begin with the consequences of the creation event.



Starting from the presupposition of biblical creation, there are two levels of existence so that qualities of God and qualities of the creature are NOT identical. A (Q)uality or attribute of God, is never identical to a corresponding (q)uality in the created universe. The pagan equation,  $Q = q$ , denies biblical creation.

Take the quality of "causation" for example. At the level of the Creator "causation" has its archetypal meaning in the inter-Trinity relationships

whereby the Father eternally gives to the Son all things (John 17:5; Eph. 1:4). At the level of the creation, however, "causation" has to do with dependent rational structures of observed cause-effect. "Causation" at the Creator level is a (Q)uality of the Personal nature of God but at the creature level is a (q)uality of both personal mankind and impersonal nature. "Causation" is not some abstract category standing above both Creator and creature, forcing them both to partake of one level of being.

Biblical creation implies the incomprehensibility of God. Not only are there things He has not and may never reveal to us (Deut. 29:29), but even the things He has revealed to us remain incomprehensible (Rom. 11:33)! His thoughts are not identical to our thoughts (Isa. 55:8). Here is why we worship Him!

At this point the pagan theologian interrupts me, "Ah! With your creation doctrine you have made your Creator unknowable! You admit He is incomprehensible. You therefore agree with us liberal theologians that revelation is impossible. You can't distinguish Christian worship from Buddhist meditation on the great Unknown."

"Not at all," I respond. "It is precisely the creation doctrine that is the basis of revelation. Because God spoke the universe into existence by His Word, it has been structured by His thoughts. We men are shaped by His mind and mouth. Why should He have any trouble revealing Himself to us. . . especially since mankind is 'made in His image'? Unlike the pagan deities who manifested in animals, God selected man for the incarnation of His Son (Heb. 10:5)."[2]

Genesis 1:26-27 informs us that we are the image of God. We are a finite replica of Him. We are not identical to Him, but we are what He would look like if projected down to finite size. (Q)ualities of the Creator appear as finite (q)ualities in the creation. Biblical creation, therefore, gives us the answer to how we can know an incomprehensible Creator. It is not the identity relationship,  $Q = q$ , but a similarity relationship,  $Q \sim q$ .

The liberal theologian, following the pagan program, insists that knowledge be defined as comprehensive: unless man can know God as fully as he knows anything else, he says He, God, can't be known. If you were to agree with this notion, you would be led back to the identity relationship,  $Q = q$ , and on to the one-level view of reality. And finally you would wind up with some form of the pagan origin myth.

To know the God of biblical creation you have to comply with His structures and laws. You have to open your eyes. You have to look at biblical creation. If, instead, you insist on the pagan program of suppressing

God-consciousness, you essentially are shutting your eyes like a child having a tantrum against his father. The "closed eyes" approach, technically, is one way of knowing Him but only as a Threatening and Rejecting Judge. It is knowledge to avoid. You cannot really know Him that way.

To know God as a Loving and Accepting Savior, you must be fully convinced in your heart that it is safe to open your eyes. . . .that the biblical creation event is true. . . .that you are dealing with the Person Himself and not mere propositions about Him. In what follows, therefore, I will try to speak about Him in a way that consciously submits to His nature as Creator.

## WHO AND WHAT GOD IS

Lesson 8

To know God means at least that we can speak of His nature in some way. I showed above that when we speak of (Q)ualities of His nature, we must speak analogically not comprehensively. Let us stand in awe of His incomprehensiveness! Shun the arrogant habit of paganism of "boxing God in" with a humanly-generated universal quality that stands over Him.

C. S. Lewis pictured the situation exquisitely in his well-known children's story, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. When Lucy became aware that she might meet the Christ-figure, the Lion Aslan, she worriedly asked Mr. Beaver whether he was safe. "'Safe?' said Mr. Beaver; . . .Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King.'"[3]

Each (Q)uality or attribute of God we know from creaturely experience with His revelation in the Bible and in the world. Some would call them "anthropomorphisms", analogies with (q)ualities in our lives. To properly honor Him, however, we must hasten to add that the analogies exist only because He created our lives the way He did. The analogies, therefore, go both ways. Creature (q)ualities could also be called "theomorphisms" or analogies with His (Q)ualities.

As an aid in our brief survey of some of God's attributes, I divide them into two classes: those that are less similar to ordinary experience ("incommunicable" attributes), and those that are more similar to ordinary experience ("communicable" attributes). For seeing the "context" of each attribute in your life, read all Scriptures cited.

### Some Incommunicable Attributes

1. The attribute of omnipresence means that God is completely present at every point in space (I Kings 8:27; Ps. 139:7-12; Isa. 41:10; Matt. 28:20). Our experience of instantly imagining ourselves to be at some remote location from where we are is something like His omnipresence. The

(q)uality of space is like the (Q)uality of omnipresence. The creature concept of geometry is a finite replica of the Creator's spatial nature.

Nevertheless, His omnipresence is not identical to creature space. He is not partly here and partly there. Tozer recalls the experience of a Christian missionary to India:

*Canon W. G. H. Holmes of India told of seeing Hindu worshipers tapping on trees and stones and whispering, 'Are you there? Are you there?' to the god they hoped might reside within. . . .God is indeed there. He is there as He is here and everywhere, not confined to tree or stone, but free in the universe, near to everything, next to everyone, and through Jesus Christ immediately accessible to every loving heart.[4]*

$ax + b = y$   
a, b must be constants

2. The attribute of omnipotence means that God can do anything compatible with His character (Exod. 15:2-10; Pss. 33:6-9; 104; 136; Isa. 41:10; Jer. 32:17,27; Eph. 3:20; Rev. 19:6). Our experience of physical work and personal influence is something like the (Q)uality of His omnipotence. The (q)uality of energy is a finite replica of the Creator's energetic nature.

Yet His omnipotence is not identical to creature energy. He never exhausts His energy and therefore never needs sustenance from outside Himself; His energy is not "conserved" at a set value.

3. The attribute of immutability means that God's character is forever perfectly stable. He is the fixed reference point for all trust, discussion, and measurement (Mal. 3:1-6; Heb. 6:17; Jas. 1:17). Note that this (Q)uality refers to His nature, not to every statement He makes in the Word of God. For example, in Exodus 32:12,14 and Amos 7:3,6, God threatens judgment from which He "repents" (changes His mind) in response to prayer! Our experience of unusually stable and conservative personalities or of what are called "natural laws" and "constants" in science is something like the (Q)uality of immutability. They are finite replicas of it.

Nonetheless, His immutability is not identical to creature stability, natural laws, and constants. His immutability is absolute, never to be overridden. It is also personal, not an abstract "law".

4. The attribute of eternity means that God has always existed; He has no beginning or end (Gen. 1:1 cf. John 1:1; Isa. 43:10; 44:6; Ps. 90:1-4; John 8:56-58; Rev. 1:8). Our experience of historical duration is something like the (Q)uality of eternity. The (q)uality of time or history is a finite replica of the Creator's eternal nature.

Eternity, obviously, also differs from time. God is never "hurried" through rapid historical events; He has had, as it were, all eternity to view what to us is a split-second occurrence. Moreover, He can experience at once all facts and interrelations of facts without becoming enmeshed in a temporal sequence of experiences.

### Some Communicable Attributes

The (q)ualities of geometry, energy, constants, and time are not as personal as choice, holiness, love, and knowledge. Nor are the corresponding archetypical (Q)ualities of God's nature quite so personal either. Let's go on, then, to those attributes more like us as creatures made in His image and therefore more communicable.

5. The attribute of sovereignty means that God personally wills His own nature within the Trinity. His self-will is at once necessary (because of His nature) and free (undetermined by anything outside of Himself). He also wills the kind of creation and history that come to pass. Such will toward the creation is not necessary (didn't have to create) but is free (undetermined by anything outside of Himself). Chance is excluded for He is the ultimate cause of all things (Prov. 16:4; 21:1; Isa. 46:8-13; Rom. 11:36; Eph. 1:11). Our experience of causation in everyday processes around us is something like his sovereignty except that His "causation" is personal, not some impersonal process. Our experience of authoritatively convincing someone else to do something probably is closer to His (Q)uality of sovereignty.

[Lesson 9](#)

His sovereignty is not identical to the kind of "necessity" we observe in creature cause-effect. It cannot be modeled by a notion of physical law, of a robotic system, or by any other determinism. Impersonal determinism is the only way the pagan mind can picture total control because it excludes in principle an Infinite-Personal Creator and the Creator/creature distinction. Learn to rejoice in His sovereign nature without falling into this common trap!

6. The attribute of holiness means that God's character is perfectly righteous and just. By righteous is meant that His moral character is a flawlessly consistent law unto itself. It is the standard throughout the cosmos for what is right and wrong (Exod. 9:27; Jer. 12:1; Rev. 16:5-7). By just is meant that His attitude of judgment upon evil is uncompromising regardless of who might be involved (Deut. 4:24; Ezk. 18:4; Rom. 2:11). Our experience of conscience, moral judgment, revulsion over evil, and need for law is something like His (Q)uality of Holiness.

Yet holiness does not refer to an abstract moral principle beyond God's nature to which He Himself must adhere. He doesn't demand something

because it is "right" in itself; something is "right" because He demands it. Nor does holiness refer merely to God's revealed demands as is often the case with Islam. It refers to His mysterious holy nature from which the demands come.

7. The attribute of love means that God gives to whom He loves. Only with the biblical Triune God can there be an eternal attribute of love in this sense: the Father eternally loves the Son (John 17:24). The (Q)uality of love before creation had a wholly satisfactory object; the universe was not needed for God to gain an object to love. Because there is no such eternal object for love in a non-Trinitarian monotheism like Islam, Allah's love must be downplayed. Toward the creature God has revealed His love supremely in coming to this planet to redeem us (Exod. 20:6; Deut. 4:37; John 3:16). In contrast, Allah remains safely "dirt-free" in heaven. Our experience of the personal and at times passionate love is a finite replica of His love.

The (Q)uality of love, however, cannot be identical with the human (q)uality of love. His love never is contingent upon the object. It never tires of expression. It never becomes a mere principle or a mere emotion.

8. Finally, the attribute of omniscience means that God has total knowledge of Himself as well as knowledge of all creature things, actual and possible (I Sam. 16:7; Matt. 11:21-23; Heb. 4:13; I John 3:20). His knowledge is immediate and perfect. Our experience of being aware that there is a standard of truth, that real knowledge must be somehow universal, that we know by coming to know our mental perceptions of reality, and that we can create in our imagination is something like the (Q)uality of omniscience.

Nevertheless, like other divine attributes, His omniscience is not identical to human knowledge. His knowledge is its own standard of truth, is absolutely universal, is independent of perception and learning, and can cause the truths it knows.

### **Exercise 2.2.**

**1. Select one chapter from any book of the Bible. Prayerfully read it through, asking Him to bring to your mind His attributes revealed in the text. Write out your observations and thoughts in terms of the attributes we have just learned.**

**2. List four "bad" circumstances you have faced. Write out how knowing and trusting God's nature as revealed in attribute "X", "Y", etc., would have made a difference in those circumstances.**

## STAYING OUT OF IDOLATRY

Even after coming to know the God of creation it is altogether too easy to slip back into various types of idolatry. The Apostle John concludes his first epistle with the strange note: "Little children, guard yourself from idols." (I John 5:21) Since nowhere else in this epistle does he mention idols, it challenges the attentive reader to find out what he means. The previous two verses supply part of the answer.

John uses the Greek word alethenos for "true" three times in verses 19 and 20. This word emphasizes the idea of genuineness. The Father and the Son are the genuine God over against false gods or idols. Idolatry is a counterfeit of the genuine. And because it is so much a part of the all-surrounding world-system, says John, Christians must ever be watchful. I conclude this chapter with some thoughts on staying out of idolatry.

### Modern-day Idolatry

Although it would seem we moderns don't worship wooden and clay statues of various gods, we still daily encounter idolatry. In its essence idolatry is simply putting something else in place of God. But there is more to it than that.

Always involved in idolatry are powerful pictures in our imagination. The second of the ten commandments speaks of the "likeness" of any created thing--whether in heaven or on earth--being worshipped and served (Exod. 20:4-5). Moreover, Paul makes the additional claim that whatever the idolatrous image is, it is a direct substitution of God's glorious revelation of Himself in the creation (Rom. 1:23). Idolatrous images are powerful because they "feed" off of the true character of God. They mimic His attributes.

Even as Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving God's Word, the people of Israel quickly sought an idol to provide for their needs (Exod. 32:1-6). Note how Aaron claimed that the new golden calf was the God of the Exodus: "This is your God, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt"(Exod. 32:4). The golden calf took upon itself God's delivering glory.

A recurring form of such images are the ancient astrological signs that show up in modern horoscopes. They have been prominent in pagan thought from Moses' day (Deut. 4:19), through Paul's day (Acts 19:18-19), to the newsstands and "900" numbers in our day. Kenneth Hamilton observes:

*"Just as polytheism continued in an underground form through the Middle Ages and lives on today in modern cults of witchcraft and Satanism, the imagination of Western man was never fully Christianized. . . .The modern*



*idolatrous imagination still refuses to believe that the promises of the living God are sure and that his grace is sufficient for all our needs. It still looks to other powers and other authorities for support and guidance, transferring to them what belongs to the Creator alone."*[5]

The modern world upon closer inspection is filled with idols. There are historicisms like Marxism that mimic God's sovereign plan and seek to explain all things by historical political, economic, social, and military "causes" alone. There are naturalisms like evolution that mimic God's sovereignty and omnipotence and seek to explain all things by natural physical laws. There are humanisms that deify humanity as replacing God's sovereignty and omniscience. There are mammons that value all things in terms of monetary wealth. There are statisms that transfer God's sovereignty, omnipotence, and love to totalitarian civil government.[6]

As if the world doesn't have enough idolatries, our fleshy minds are capable of generating hundreds more: a friend, a family, a marriage, a preacher, a business, a career, etc. Each one serves as a God-replacement that for a while appears to meet our needs.

Most insidious of all is that church traditions and even Bible doctrine itself can be idolized. Paul in I Corinthians 8 warns believers who are more instructed than their peers to be careful. Truth about God is not something that can be crammed into someone's intellect as though it is an abstract piece of data. As I have pointed out above, God's attributes are not abstract (Q)ualities that can be treated independently of one's relationship with God. In his writings Paul reveals the proper strategy for leaving idolatry.

### **How to Get Out and Stay Out of Idolatry**

Put yourself into the position of the weaker brother in I Corinthians 8:7-13. Deep down in the imagination of your heart and mind, you still believe in and fear the power of an idol. In spite of biblical teaching that God alone is Lord (I Cor. 8:4-6), the false "existence" (and powerful influence) of the idol still grips your mind.

Paul's strategy for dealing with this problem is not a direct one. Mere intellectualizing the problem away won't work. Nor is external peer pressure from fellow believers a solution (I Cor. 8:7-13). If you cannot act in faith toward God, stop what you are doing; don't do anything without the inner conviction of truth (Rom. 14:23). To root idolatry out of the heart demands a different approach, an indirect one.

Paul's indirect strategy involves a prayer campaign to God for an enlightening work of His Holy Spirit in the heart. Spiritual truth must be illuminated to the conscience in order for knowledge and belief to occur (Eph. 1:17-18; 3:16-19). Of course, this illumination doesn't occur in a

vacuum. It happens along with constant exposure to the Word of God and its God-given imagery. Apparently this revelational imagery of God's nature expands and "crowds out" the idols. The creation event, it must be remembered, is the defining image of God!

Staying out of idolatry, therefore, requires a stronger and stronger personal relationship with God. You must be willing to worship and trust Him wherever circumstances challenge truth He has shown to your conscience. Your intellectual grasp of His truths will then grow accordingly. A thankful heart, not a Ph.D. in theology, is what is needed to know Him better.

### **Exercise 2.3.**

- 1. List idols that tempt you. Here's how to find them: look at what attributes of His nature that are easy for you to "forget", then examine what imagery fills your mind when you do this "forgetting".**
- 2. Write out Bible verses--either those cited above or ones you find yourself--that speak of His attributes on 3 x 5 cards. Take the cards with you throughout the day. Some believers put a suction-cup hook on their bathroom mirrors so they can memorize verses each day.**
- 3. Pick out a passage of Scripture that worships God because of His attributes (see Psalms for starter) and use a copy machine. Use this copy to mark up and model worship with.**

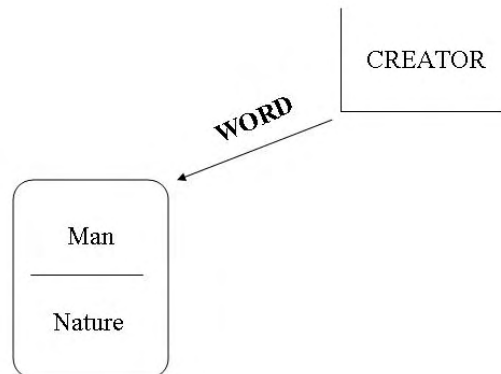
### **END NOTES FOR CHAPTER 2**

1. The theme of the "vanity" of paganism and the carnal mind is expounded in excruciating detail in the book of Ecclesiastes.
2. A deeper treatment of the Creator-creature distinction may be found in the writings of the late Cornelius Van Til such as his Introduction to Systematic Theology and Defense of the Faith.
3. C. S. Lewis, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1950), p. 77.
4. A. W. Tozer, The Knowledge of the Holy (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), p. 81f.
5. Kenneth Hamilton, To Turn From Idols (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1973), pp. 40-41.
6. An extensive study of modern social idolatries is Herbert Schlossberg, Idols Fitted For Destruction (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983).

## CHAPTER 3: CREATION: BURIED TRUTH OF MAN & NATURE

Lesson 10

We've already observed that the event of biblical creation clearly defines the Creator-creature distinction against the pagan Continuity of Being belief. It also opposes paganism with another distinction: the man-nature distinction. As parts of the created universe, man and nature both are sharply distinguished from the Creator, but they are also distinguished from each other. The picture looks like this:



In this chapter I concentrate on the man-nature distinction. This distinction is crucial for everything that follows early Genesis in the Bible. So important is this distinction to God's plan that paganism suppresses it like it does the Creator-creature distinction. In the fleshly mind, these spiritually vital distinctions have been buried underneath the Continuity of Being doctrine. According to that old pagan doctrine, God, man, and nature differ only in degree, not in kind.

### WHAT IS MAN?

Let's begin with man first. The Bible and pagan culture radically disagree on what man is. To see just how radical the disagreement is, I will begin with a look at the biblical narratives of man's creation. Then I will show how man's design utterly sets him apart from all the universe. Finally, I will introduce the concept of "divine institutions"--the fundamental features of human social existence according to God's Word.

#### God's Description of Man's Creation

The "close-up" picture of man's creation is given in Genesis 2:7,15-25. God says He miraculously formed man from the earth. The term "dust" in this context is sometimes interpreted by those following an accommodationist strategy as metaphorical for man's upward development from primates. They think by so doing they can accommodate the Genesis narrative to the evolutionary worldview. Unfortunately for this approach, the term "dust" in

this context is used for literal earth particles of bodily decay after death (Gen. 3:19). Clearly, at death man does not revert back to his supposedly previous primate existence! The narrative, therefore, speaks of a literal, instantaneous creation of man.

If the narrative's literal meaning weren't clear enough from 2:7, it certainly is from 2:21-22. Unlike any other species, the human female is derived from the one original body. This is not an incidental detail; it relates to the entire plan of salvation as I note later. There is simply no room in this narrative for evolution of man from primate. This literal interpretation of Genesis 2 is given in the New Testament (I Cor. 11:6-9; I Tim.2:13-14).

Also note that man is assigned to a task that involves labor and moral responsibility (2:15-17). Such a task requires social intercourse with other human beings (2:18). Accomplishment of the task involves study of nature and linguistic description (2:19-20).

The other narrative of man's creation (Gen. 1:26-30) reports that mankind as male and female is made in God's image. In the ancient world kings would set up images of themselves down among the people for them to worship (see Dan. 3). The images were their glory. Here God sets up an image of himself down at the creature level of existence, not to be worshipped, but to be respected for His glory (Jas. 3:9). This image of God is to rule God's earth by subduing it and filling it by procreation.

God put into these narratives observational data that have immense significance. We are uniquely designed for a glorious role in the history of the universe. Let's look at some key features in man's design.

## The Unique Design of Mankind

Lesson 11

Man's design is fundamentally related to God's plan for the universe. Want a biblically correct "self-image"? Lay hold of these four truths that define the man-nature distinction!

1. Of central importance is the truth that man is an image of God in both body and spirit. This truth is the foundation for all revelation, including the Incarnation of God the Son. Yet it suffers from two opposite distortions. On one hand, there is the distortion of Mormonism which holds to the belief that "as man is God once was, and as God is man one day shall be." Holding to the traditional pagan notion of the Continuity of Being, Mormonism erases the Creator-creature distinction. God the Father, in Mormonism, is not only the archetype of our body but He actually has a physical body Himself (and procreated children with His wives!).

On the other hand, to avoid idolatry Christians usually restrict the "image" to the invisible, immaterial part of man, leaving it utterly unrelated to the form of the body. As John Pilkey writes:

*"No one disputes that the 'image of God' refers to conscience and reason; but the view that this image has nothing to do with the body is profoundly erroneous. . . .because it implies that God, in the Creation, failed to harmonize the form of the body with these faculties. The enemies of Christianity can sense the futility of this theological flaw and have exploited it with profound effect. If the form of the human body derives from any other source except divine faculties, then we might as well say that human form derives from purely casual causes, unrelated to the ideal mind of God. Darwinism is the logical result, namely, that God caused the animal and human forms to occur. . . .without regard to any dimension of His own essence."*[1]

This is not just a neat philosophical point. It has directly to do with the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. When God the Son came into the world, He spoke of the human body to the Father, "A body thou hast prepared for me" (Heb. 10:5). The ancient Church father Tertullian pictured God at creation bending over His clay as He made man:

*"Imagine God wholly employed and absorbed in it—with his hand, his eye, his labor, his purpose, his wisdom, his providence, and above all, his love which was dictating the lineaments of this creature. . . . Whatever was the form and expression which was then given to the clay by the Creator, Christ was in his thoughts as one day to become Man, because the Word, too, was to be both clay and flesh. . . ."*[2]

Thus through a human body God could "fully" be contained (Col. 2:9) and seen (John 14:9). Through a human body, the Son rules forever (Heb. 1:3). Thus in his body and spirit man is a theomorphism, utterly unlike any other creature.

2. Through his body, man rules nature. Unlike bodiless angels, man's spirit directly rules nature beginning with that part of the earth that makes up his own flesh. Thereupon, he can reach out with his brain, mouth, and hands to name nature and subdue it. No one has put this point more succinctly than the Medieval theologian Hugo St. Victor:

*"The spirit was created for God's sake, the body for the spirit's sake, and the world for the body's sake; so that the spirit might be subject to God, the body to the spirit, and the world to the body."*[3]

Man's dominion rule is fulfilled by God only through the Incarnation in Christ (I Cor. 15:24-28; Heb. 2:5-9). At that future day, man's dominion rule will extend over even the angels (I Cor. 6:2-3; Heb. 2:5)! All of nature waits this glorious moment (Rom. 8:19-22).

Before then, however, every man must be spiritually perfected through the exercise of ruling, starting with his own flesh and working outward. Even the sinless Son of God had to be perfected in this manner of exercising human dominion (Heb. 2:10; 5:7-9). In the next section I will use this point in discussing a biblical view of scientific knowledge, and in later Parts of this framework I will show how it undergirds our spiritual growth (sanctification). His dominion role separates man from nature.

3. All humans are made from Adam's single body. Unlike angels, each of whom are individual creations, and unlike animals which were created in male-female pairs, mankind is made from one body. In an absolutely unique way, the woman was taken out of the man. Thus the genetic composition of the human race originated in that body of clay in Eden.

Why the special treatment for man? Because man is central to God's plan of showing forth His glory. God will one day need to save men from their sins. The entire race must be designed to be "redeemable" so that one Savior can somehow die for the many (Rom. 5:12-19; I Cor 15:21-22). The woman must derive from the man if the man is to be the central head of the original human race in sin and salvation. Such racial solidarity marks off mankind from all animals, angels, and pagan concepts of what man is.

4. Man through his spirit chooses, judges, loves, and knows. The creation narratives report that the first man was faced with the moral choice of obedience or disobedience as well as the task of knowing and naming. Far from some grunting primate, the first man was fully capable of rapid learning (Gen. 2:19), conversing with God (Gen. 2:16-17), and singing a love song (Gen. 2:23). These reports have stunning implications!

Choice, conscience, love, and knowing reveal the presence of the human spirit. Man's spirit as part of the image of God is what enables him to be a responsible, conscious knower (Prov. 1:23; I Cor. 2:11). It provides man with these finite versions of God's "communicable" (Q)ualities of sovereignty, holiness, love, and omniscience. Interestingly no one doubts these qualities exist yet they cannot be measured, touched, tasted, or seen--precisely the very same features unbelievers claim make them doubt God's existence!

a. Choice. Because man is created with his own spirit fashioned in God's image, he can never escape the Presence of God in the depths of his heart. He has to submit to Him with a heart of faith and the presupposition of the Word of God, or he has to rebel against Him with a heart of unbelief and the presupposition of autonomy. Here is why man, unlike animals, is held ultimately responsible for his eternal destiny. As the "lord" of nature, man

alone has the (q)uality of choice that corresponds but is not identical to the (Q)uality of God's sovereignty.

Regardless of which response he makes, however, his thoughts and speech will always betray his chosen presuppositions. As manifestations of his spirit, man's thoughts and words reveal its basic orientation toward God. This is why God judges us by our words (Matt. 12:34-37).

b. Conscience. Although man knows that he himself fails, he can never restrain himself from making real moral judgments ("that is wrong", "you ought to. . ."). These judgments are not intended merely as opinions or likes and dislikes; they intend to appeal to some transcendent moral authority. Where is the authority for such judgments? It cannot come from experience with nature because whatever is the state-of-affairs, isn't necessarily what is right. "Rightness" is not an arithmetic mean.[4] Moral authority cannot come from other people or from society. History shows that entire societies are judged as wrong. Only two sources of moral authority for such judgments are available: the self or God. Whichever is chosen, everyday moral judgments reveal the chosen authority of man's spirit.

Moral judgments show the human (q)uality of conscience as derivative of God's (Q)uality of holiness. Being relative to one's spiritual growth and experience of revelation (I Cor. 8:7; Heb. 5:14), man's moral judgments are not always correct in content, but they show inherent awareness of the moral authority of the absolute Person.

c. Love. Another evidence of the human spirit made uniquely in God's image is love. Love requires the existence of another human spirit for it can never be truly exercised apart from a personal relationship. It is not good that anyone be alone, even Adam in Eden (Gen. 2:18). All men acknowledge directly and indirectly throughout their entire life their need to be loved. Simultaneously, all men thrive when they love one another with significant giving of their self. Real love is not limited just to the parent-child or man-wife relationship. Love is the deepest and only authentic motive behind ethics.

Yet the (q)uality of human love can never be identical to the (Q)uality of God's love. God's love depends upon nothing in the universe for it pre-existed creation within His triune nature. Human love, by contrast, remains fragile, always dependent upon creature existence. To exist human love requires an environment in which man's existence is unthreatened so that it is "safe" to give. This environment cannot be supplied by the pagan worldview because it has no Infinite Personal Creator Who loves with sovereignty and omnipotence. Paganism can only produce fear and self-protective schemes.

Real human love, in other words, presupposes biblical creation and sets man off from nature.

d. Knowledge. Perhaps the most studied characteristic of man is his capacity to reason, to think conceptually, and to speak his thoughts in language. While pagan thinkers today try very hard to explain human knowledge on the basis of evolutionary development from animals, the Bible clearly draws a line between man and the animals in this regard (e.g., note use of *aloga* meaning "unreasoning" in II Pet. 2:12). The (q)uality of knowledge emanates from man's spirit and is a finite form of the (Q)uality of Omniscience.

Man's other spiritual features of choice, conscience, and love presuppose knowledge for they could not be exercised without it (Lk. 1:1-4; Jn. 20:31; Eph. 1:17ff). Yet it is also true that correct choices, obedience to conscience, and exercise of authentic love open up knowledge (Jn. 7:17; Eph. 3:17-19). All men take for granted that conscience controls the knowing process whenever they moralize that one is "obligated" to accept the truth once it is known.

Human knowledge is similar but not identical to omniscience. Human knowledge presupposes a standard of truth; omniscience is its own. Human knowledge presupposes universal truths (men use the terms "always", "never", etc., and express their philosophy of life as a totality); omniscience is universal truth. Human knowledge derives from sensory perception and reasoning; omniscience is independent of both. Human knowledge can imagine things to create by various tools (language, machines, etc.); omniscience can create directly. Finally, human knowledge is, in the final analysis, "circular"; it always depends upon presuppositions that control its reasoning.

Central to human knowledge is language. Yet human language is quite limited as anyone knows who has struggled to express an "impression" or "intuition". Over the past century or so, studies have exposed further limitations in human language and the thought behind it. Evidences consist of semantic and logical paradoxes, problems with infinity in mathematics, and multiple geometries each of which is logically consistent but which contradicts the others.[5] Various philosophers and poets in this century have sought to "get beyond" language in ways very similar to anti-rational mysticisms of ancient pagan religions.[6]

As with all the other features of man's spirit, however, language exists at two levels--the level of God and the level of man. Man's language requires for its justification a higher, perfectly rational language or in modern terms, an ultimate "metalanguage", for its validity. Of course, the Bible provides



exactly that in the Second Person of the Trinity as the Word of God Who created, upholds, and constantly directs the universe (Jn. 1:1-4; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2-3; 11:1-3). Since within physical creation only man possesses language and the knowledge expressed in it, the man-nature distinction is shown again.

In both body and spirit, therefore, man is uniquely designed in the image of God and set apart from the rest of the universe. Such a special creature needs special social structures to which I now turn.

## The Divine Institutions

Lesson 12

The term "divine institution" has been used by Christians to speak of those absolute social structures instituted by God for the entire human race—believers and unbelievers alike. Though modern paganism views them as by-products of man's psycho-social evolution, the Bible insists God Himself installed at least three of them at creation.

1. The first divine institution is responsible dominion (Gen. 1:26-30; 2:15-17; Psa. 8:3-8). Although the earth and its produce is the Lord's (Psa. 24:1), mankind was assigned to manage it under God's authority. Man was placed as a derivative "lord". Later, at the fall (see next chapter), this dominion would become perverted but not taken away.

Here is the biblical doctrine of creative labor. The first picture of God in the Bible is as a laborer. He expresses His character in His work ("glorifying Himself") and, as He finishes each part, He evaluates and enjoys it. In similar fashion God assigned labor to Adam. God let Adam investigate and create names for natural objects (Gen. 2:19). In so doing Adam was evaluating (imputing value to) the objects (Gen. 2:20).

Of course, Adam's dominion labor wasn't identical to God's. When he named an object, he wasn't creating ex-nihilo; he was merely discovering something of God's prior creative labor and evaluation (Gen. 2:18). Gary North points out the economic implications of this point:

*"The problem of value is central to the science of economics. Is value determined objectively or subjectively? Is the value of some scarce economic resource inherent in that resource, or is it derived from the evaluations of acting men? In short, is value intrinsic or imputed? . . .*

*How can we reconcile the fact that something objectively good, like the Bible, is worth less in a particular market than pornographic literature? . . .*

*The Bible affirms man's ability to impute value, for man is made in the image of God, and God imputes value to His creation. . . . Men cannot make absolute, comprehensive value imputations, since men are creatures. But they can make value imputations as limited creatures which are valid in God's eyes, and before the rebellion of man in the garden, this is what man did.[7]*

For some today, it is a radical message that labor was instituted before the fall! Labor, whether manual or intellectual, expresses the spiritual character of the soul. It beckons evaluation.

2. The second divine institution, marriage, is defined in terms of the first. The woman was brought to Adam specifically as a "helper". Why did he need help? Because of his calling before God to rule nature. Unlike animals, mankind's so-called sexual differentiation is not merely for procreation; it is also for dominion. The "one flesh" relationship, while truly romantic and sexual, occurs inside the larger context of the first divine institution. Later in this series I point out how marriage under the Mosaic Law included very unromantic, business-like, economic arrangements in order to protect its dominion function. That marriage is the chief means of dominion is seen in the New Testament. The man-woman distinction typifies the Christ-Church distinction (Eph. 5:22-33; Rev. 19:7-8) in which the Church completes Christ in His calling.

Mankind cannot express God's image except as both "male and female" together (Gen. 1:27). This is because God has certain characteristics that are "feminine" in nature (e.g., Matt. 23:37). Moreover, the woman's role as "helper" in Genesis 2:18 is not meant to be a demeaning, secondary one. The term used for "helper" elsewhere is used of God Himself (Exod. 18:4; Deut. 33:7). (Contrary to contemporary propaganda that the Bible is "patriarchal", it reveals the equal value of the woman as no other document in the ancient Near East.)

Undeniably, however, the Bible places emphasis upon the man as the one who receives his calling from God which then shapes his choice of wife. She is not only his needful helper; she is his "glory" (I Cor. 11:7-9). The man defines himself in terms of God and of his wife. Together in a division of labor man and wife separate from their own families to build a new one (Gen. 2:24). Only in a nuclear family, in contrast to an extended family, does a young man have to face full leadership responsibility directly under God.

Opposed to this biblical picture are the usual media male role models of the comical stumbling father-fool or the adventurous, unmarried gun-slinger, both of which emphasize male irresponsibility and immaturity.

3. The third divine institution is built upon the first and second. Marriage normally leads to dominion through a family. In the Bible it is the family, not the individual, that is the basic unit of society (property, for example, is titled under Mosaic Law to families). When God sent His Son, He sent Him not to a church, not to a state, not to an isolated existence; He sent Him into a family.

Note in Genesis 1:28 that mankind was to populate the world, but it was to be done in conjunction with ruling it. In other words, population growth rate should be related to successful rulership. Family and marriage cannot be separated from dominion. Where dominion is perverted and the environment ruined, starvation and poverty follow. Where marriage is dishonored and where families are broken, society collapses. No amount of laws, programs, or "redefinitions" of marriage and family can save the day. To provide for dominion and prosperity God designed divine institutions, and no other social arrangements will produce them.

The family is the human's first school, first church, and first state. As I point out in the next section, man as God's image-bearer has to consciously learn most of his behavior in contrast to animals that possess extensive instinct. The family is the training ground. There man first learns of authority, love, and responsibility. In response to his parents, he discovers humility under authority--either voluntary or enforced (!). To support this family function, the Mosaic Law eliminated children who learned neither (Deut. 21:18-21). A successful society requires successful families.

This third divine institution, like the first two, also carries over into the spiritual realm. God reveals Himself in family terms--Father and Son. Because man is a theomorphism everything about him and his social existence reveals God's character to him. Precisely because of this fact, the fleshly mind of paganism unceasingly seeks to bury the evidence. Paganism seeks to deny ultimate responsibility and replace it with the concept of victimization. It seeks to deny marriage and replace it with juvenile individualism. It seeks to deny family structure and replace it with every other arrangement imaginable. Yet this entire rebellious program finally self-destructs because God is not mocked: disease, poverty, crime, and death are the unavoidable results.

### **Exercise 3.1.**

**1. Read Job 38:1-3; 40:1-8; 42:1-6 and answer these questions: How does God characterize human knowledge? Would Job have stopped thinking the way he did if God had not initiated the conversation? What is shown here about man's moral judging capacity? How does Job finally respond to God?**

2. **Read Proverbs 1:23. The phrase "pour out my spirit" is often interpreted as referring to some non-verbal, emotional outburst. Yet in this verse "spirit" and "word" are paralleled. Adding insight from I Cor.2:11, what does the Bible tell us about the human spirit and the phenomena of language, thought, and knowledge?**
3. **Using similarity relationships between the (Q)ualities of the Triune Creator and the (q)ualities of man, defend the following two propositions: (1) "only Christianity provides a basis for genuine human love"; and (2) "only Christianity provides a basis for genuine human knowledge."**

## WHAT IS NATURE?

I have shown the human side of the man-nature distinction; now I turn to the nature side. By "nature" I include all of creation that is not man--rocks, water, plants, animals, angels, and stars. The first lesson taught to the first man was that nothing in nature fits his need for a personal relationship (Gen. 2:18-20). In his present mortal state man is temporarily lower than the angels and is confined in some way to the local part of nature which we now call planet earth (Psa. 8:3-8). It is with this local part of nature that I will devote most of our attention.

I will begin with a look at the overall design of nature in distinction from the design of man. Then I will deal with man's relationship with nature through the exercise of his dominion. I will show you four very significant universal limitations on this dominion that doom all carnal dreams of rebellion against God.

### Design of Nature

Old writers of centuries ago used to refer to nature as "dumb" and "brute" to distinguish its essential character from that of man. These writers did not use the word "dumb" like we do today, as a synonym for "stupid". "Dumb" used to refer to the inability to speak thoughts through language, *i.e.*, speechlessness. "Brute" meant without ability to know. These writers, we shall see, were nearer to the truth than they knew.

Whereas Adam could not find a speech-laden, personal relationship with any part of nature, he could and did receive revelation about God from nature. Natural (or general) revelation is spoken of everywhere in the Bible (*e.g.*, Job 38-41; Psa. 19:1-6; Acts 14:17; Rom. 1:18-20). The creation is said to "glorify" its Creator. But if nature doesn't personally speak to us, if it is "dumb", then how can we learn about God from it? How, without language,

can information be transferred from nature to our minds? How does nature "glorify" God?

Nature contains patterns and forms that we recognize as products of a thinking, speaking, spirit-mind, similar to our own. It is precisely the meaning of these patterns and forms that modern paganism (in its evolutionary form) denies by ascribing them to chance. Pilkey notes:

*"The whole point of the Creationist-Darwinian debate is whether the leonine form, for example, originated as a perfect idea in the mind of God or as a casual exercise in feline development. . . .The evolutionary philosophy begins to lose its appeal the instant that a mind begins to suspect that certain visible forms have eternal value.[8]*

The form and behavior of a lamb, for example, instead of being the accidental outcome of chance-driven mutations and natural selection, was purposefully designed to communicate redemptive knowledge to man (note its appearance on the Throne of God in Rev. 5).

Nature, while not originating its own thoughts in speech to us as another person would, is loaded with information from God's thoughts. You can see and recognize this information not only in heavenly patterns (Psa. 19:1-6) and in large-scale animal forms (Job 38-41), but in what has been recently learned about the biological cell and its genetic codes. Note here that I am claiming not merely that forms exist, but that we also recognize that the forms carry a message.

To show the difference between merely saying a pattern is observed and saying the pattern carries meaningful information to our minds, I adapt an illustration from A. E. Wilder-Smith. Imagine looking at a series of apparently random dots and dashes arranged in a sequence. As your eye looks along the sequence, you notice a pattern (. . . \_ \_ \_ . . .). If you are knowledgeable of Morse Code, you immediately see the pattern as containing a message, "S.O.S.", the international sign for help. If you are not knowledgeable of the Morse Code "language", you merely notice an interesting pattern but do not see any message in it. To "get the message" or for the pattern to be meaningful, you and the originator of the pattern must share a common language.[9]

In much the same way nature is filled with forms and patterns noticed by all men everywhere. The Bible insists that such patterns actually are carrying meaningful messages about the Creator. They contain information about His character, that He plans and purposes. They "glorify Him" and "show His handiwork". We "get the message" because the patterns resemble objects we make and think about with our personal spirits acting through our bodies. Our spirits recognize the Presence of Another Spirit Who thinks information-filled thoughts.

Notice I said, natural patterns "resemble" patterns of man-made objects, not that they are identical. Unbelievers often try to oppose the so-called teleological argument for God (argument from design) by citing instances of chaos or apparently useless features. But the Bible doesn't teach that every part of nature can be "read" correctly. Much of nature has been irreversibly damaged by the fall (see Chapter Four). Even some of the parts that weren't ruined by the fall in original Eden, had to be explained directly to Adam using spoken words (Gen 1:28-30; 2:16-17). So nature doesn't always carry a clearly understandable message, but it does carry significant amounts of information about its Maker from His Spirit to our spirits.[10]

Just because the design of nature does glorify God, the carnal mind must somehow falsify it. The information that natural designs convey about their Creator must be shut off. The easiest way to bury this information can be inferred from Wilder-Smith's Morse Code illustration above. By denying (or suppressing or forgetting) the Morse Code language rules, the "S-O-S" pattern loses all meaning. In like fashion, by suppressing the human spirit's sense of eternity (Eccl. 3:11) and the personal God of eternity, paganism shuts off reception of the information coming to it from nature (Rom. 1:21).

However, paganism can never leave matters alone. The suppressed yearning of the human spirit for God can't stand total meaninglessness. Thus it redirects itself and fabricates meaning for all the natural design it observes (Rom. 1:22). It exchanges the information about God attached to natural design for pseudo-information that man's mind makes up and imposes on the forms and patterns (Rom. 1:23).

The design of nature, therefore, is a two-edged sword. On one hand, it is general revelation to all men everywhere of the character of God as Creator and Sustainer. On the other hand, its brightness causes the rebellious to shut their eyes and drives them to idolatry. Man's response to nature's design shapes the quality of his dominion to which I now turn.

## Man's Limited Power over Nature

Lesson 13

Adam's dominion over nature was limited to that part of nature nearby, the earth. Someday his dominion would extend over all nature into the very heavens through Christ, but not yet. Not only was Adam limited as to space, but also as to time. Adam was created mortal, that is, subject to possible death. Compared to the future resurrection body, his original body was mortally vulnerable; he could self-destruct. Here is the physical aspect of man's limited dominion.

Although this physical limit does have an absolute outer boundary (neither Adam nor his progeny could auto-resurrect or ascend to heaven in their mortal bodies), man had plenty of room to expand his dominion. Starting with that part of material nature closest to him, his own fleshly body created from the earth (I Cor. 15:42-49), he could work outward over all the earth. The first divine institution, responsible dominion, is to produce workmanship and projects that God will one day judge the value of. Only if man remains in communication with the Designer of nature, will such dominion produce acceptable fruit.

This strange, provisional status of mankind in mortal vulnerability is vitally linked to the plan of God. If Adam had not sinned he could have lived forever, never having to die. His body cells apparently were like today's one-celled creatures such as the amoeba which, apart from an accidental interference, never have to die a natural death. They simply perpetuate their existence unendingly. Arthur Custance draws our attention to a fascinating implication:

*Adam and Eve had to be created with bodies capable of endless continuance and under no necessity of dying in order that the Redeemer of man's body might Himself likewise be under no necessity of dying, while yet remaining truly representative of man as created.[11]*

Dr. Custance's point is that Christ's death was not a premature death in a body that would have naturally died, but it was a substitutionary death in a body that did not have to die. Christ, in this regard, came into the world in a body like that of the original Adam, a body not subject to natural death. Of course, here is another reason why evolution cannot be reconciled with biblical faith because it insists that death is "natural".

In God's plan not only does a mortally-vulnerable body permit a substitutionary death, but it also allows two additional features of salvation. First, unlike a resurrection body, it permits genuine repentance to take place. Once the resurrection body is given the eternal status of the person is fixed (John 5:28-29). Second, the death of the mortal body rids the saved person of his fallen flesh (I Cor. 15:50-57).

Thus man's dominion is bounded physically by the Word of God. Now I turn to another limitation.

### **Man's Limited Rights over Nature**

Man's dominion over nature is also limited morally. The Bible has a very powerful doctrine of ecology although pagan environmentalists regularly attack the Bible as a chief, if not the source of our present environmental problems. Clearly in Genesis 1:29-30; 2:15-17,19 God determines what Adam "ought" to do with nature. These are morally-based environmental regulations.

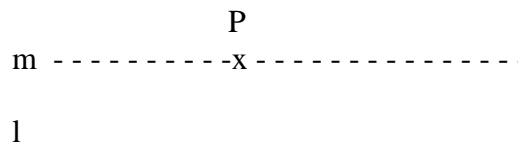
Later in the progress of revelation God gives more such regulations involving limits on working animals (Exod. 20:10; 23:12), on planting the soil (Exod. 23:10-11), on damaging fruit-bearing trees in war (Deut. 20:19), and on killing and capturing animals (Deut. 22:6-7). The moral order is that the Creator is ultimate owner of nature, not man; man is merely an underlord and steward.

Pagan critics of the Bible cannot rightly understand it because of their presuppositional belief in the Continuity of Being. Under this dogma, there is no personal Creator and Source of moral authority over nature. Thus Bible passages like Genesis 1:29-30 are misinterpreted inside the pagan grid as giving mankind autonomous lordship over nature instead of a derivative one. Then the Bible is blamed for justifying arrogant disregard for the environment. Of course, the irony in the pagan position is that it tries to make moral judgments about what "ought" to be done without ever justifying the source of such judgments!

### Man's Limited Knowledge of Nature

Besides the physical and moral limitations on man's dominion over nature, there is the widely ignored mental limitation. Although man as a spiritual knower recognizes some of the information God's Spirit put into the design of nature, man always must live with the Creator-creature distinction. God's Spirit is incomprehensible, and His thoughts toward us and nature are incomprehensible. Man's knowledge of nature, therefore, can never be complete because the ultimate wise plan behind every fact lies nowhere in man or nature itself; it lies with God. Job rightly wrote, "The deep says, '[Wisdom] is not in me'; and the sea says, 'It is not with me.'" (Job 28:14). This mental limitation has two parts: reason and experience.

1. Reason. In my discussion of man's knowledge as a finite version of God's omniscience, I noted the limitations of man's logic, language, and thought. Let's look at one very important example. Every student of plane geometry remembers the "parallel line" axiom. It states that given a line l, and a point P not on that line, there is one and only one line m in the plane of l and P which passes through P and never meets l no matter how far out in space l and m are extended.



Supposedly, all of geometry can be logically deduced given this axiom and nine other axioms. This so-called Euclidean geometry was thought to describe physical nature perfectly.



**either omniscience  
or zero knowledge,  
but not dependent  
knowledge**

Something, however, in this parallel line axiom troubled mathematicians. Unlike the other nine axioms, it asserts a claim about what happens in far off space. Morris Kline explains:

*"What is objectionable about axioms which assert what happens far out in space? The answer is that they transcend experience. The axioms of Euclidean geometry are supposed to be immediately convincing statements about the properties of space. But how can one be sure of what happens millions of miles away?"[12]*

By the end of the nineteenth century mathematicians had devised new axioms that conflicted with each other. One claimed no parallel lines through P and another claimed more than one parallel line through P. With these new axioms, conflicting non-Euclidean geometries were created, having just as rigorous logical structure as the old Euclidean geometry.

The discovery of alternate, perfectly logical mathematical structures that radically conflict with each other exposed the limitations of human reason as a dominion tool. Kline notes the despair that resulted:

*"The appearance of non-Euclidean geometries. . . led scientists to question whether man could ever hope to find a true scientific theory. . . Even more devastating to philosophy was the realization that man can no longer be sure of his ability to acquire truths."[13]*

Such despair, please note, is a paganistic over-reaction to the limitations on reason. Paganism insists on an all-or-nothing agenda. If the carnal mind can't have God-like omniscience, it denies knowledge can exist at all. By way of contrast, the Bible-believing Christian rests in God's omniscience as perfectly rational, not his finite version, and so does not plunge into this sort of despair.

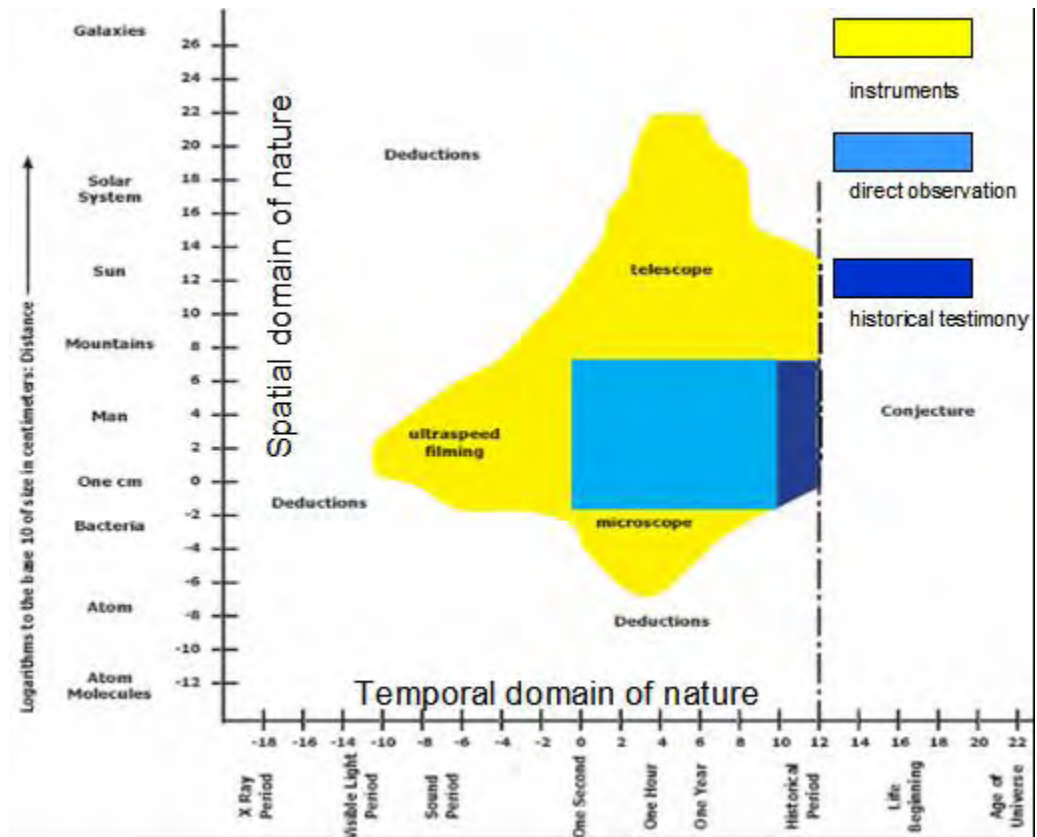
2. Experience. The other part of man's mental limitation is easier to appreciate. As the following diagram shows, regardless of how much man extends his direct observation through instruments and historical observations of the past, his still has limited experience. He can extend his data-collection into space with telescopes and into the microworld with microscopic techniques. He can study very small intervals of time with ultraspeed filming, and, to extend his observation of the past, he must rely on historical records of other men.



See page 131 for full size diagram

The problem is that no matter how many pieces of data and experiences man has (let us call the total "n"), he always faces the next unknown (the "n + 1"th datum). Experience is always local in time and space. In both experience and reason, therefore, man's dominion over nature is mentally limited.

see p. 132 for diagram with comments



To exercise his dominion in a godly fashion, man must submit to the authority of God's directly-spoken Word (special revelation = the Bible). God told Adam how He made the world, what He named in it, and what Adam was to do with it. Because of His plan for man to exercise dominion, we can rest assured that our reason and experience, though limited, is sufficient for the task. Sufficient, that is, if we worshipfully and obediently go about the task. We express our obedience when we proceed intellectually within the biblical framework allowing His interpretation to control our interpretation of nature.

A Special Limitation in Constructing Histories of Nature. Today, of course, a major attack on biblical faith comes from evolutionary cosmology. While I address some details of this question in Appendices A, B, and C, here I provide you with a general criticism that applies to any pagan natural history.

How do you construct a history? Look at the diagram of man's limited knowledge. Past events cannot be directly experienced. They can be known through direct observations of people who were there, or we can make conjectures (speculations) about the past. Note that conjectures are attempts at "universalizing" local experience.

For example, how can man really know which geometry fits nature one billion miles away (universalizing space-wise)? Or how can man really know that radioactive decay constants never change (universalizing time-wise)? There is no direct method of verification! To build natural histories, therefore, the pagan mentality has to set forth carefully-chosen universals or constants such as "c", the speed of light. Unless something is constant there can be no knowledge or history whatsoever (see Chapter 1). The setting forth, however, by definition cannot be on the basis of experience; it has to be by faith.

Now the Bible-believing dominion-man doesn't have to root his knowledge in such hypothetical constants of nature. He locates his constants elsewhere, viz., in the Creator's immutability and omniscience. For example, 5 minutes after God created Adam, how "old" would Adam have appeared to an observer ignorant of God's observational narrative--20 years, 30 years? The "normal" physiological processes weren't constant in this case. They were radically interrupted! But godly knowledge doesn't come crashing down because a hypothetical constant ceased being a constant. Godly dominion locates its immutable foundation in the Creator rather than the creature.

The Bible-believing natural historian is in no hurry to universalize his local experience as the pagan is. When he attempts to reconstruct natural history, he remembers God's question to Job ("where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?"--Job 38:4) and is humbled.

### **Exercise 3.2**

- 1. Re-read Genesis 2 on the creation of both Adam and Eve. Assuming 24 hour days, speculate on the time schedule of the sixth day--the time of creation of animals, of Adam, of the "experiment", and of Eve. Imagine after each creation event, an outside observer is allowed to film for 1 minute. What would be his "interpretation" of the age of the objects in his film? Of the time duration separating each film segment? Why?**
- 2. The creation story says God created animals and plants to reproduce "after their kinds". Are there, on the basis of this text, "constants" that define categories of natural objects? How does the New Testament utilize these categories to teach further truth (see I Cor. 15:35ff)?**
- 3. Develop a personal policy of your own toward living in God's world. What general features should characterize the outworking of dominion over nature in your life? What do you "read" in nature about God's character (for help use Jesus' model in His Sermon on the Mount)? What things in nature prompt you to talk to God?**

### END NOTES FOR CHAPTER 3

1. John Pilkey, Origin of the Nations (San Diego, CA: Master Book Publishers, 1984), p. 257.
2. Quoted in Arthur C. Custance, Two Men Called Adam (Brockville, Ontario, Canada: Doorway Publications, 1983), p. 41.
3. Quoted in Ibid., p. 20.
4. It is a well-known philosophical fallacy that you cannot derive an "ought" statement from an "is" statement. Or as C.S. Lewis put it in his book, The Abolition of Man, you can't get a conclusion in the imperative mood out of premises in the indicative mood. The fallacy still persists in the rationale behind how public surveys are often used to define "correctness".
5. See any good text on the history of mathematics and logic.
6. See Francis Schaeffer's works, especially his book Escape From Reason and How Then Shall We Live.
7. Gary North, The Dominion Covenant: Genesis (Tyler, Texas: Institute For Christian Economics, 1982), pp. 38, 59f.
8. Pilkey, p. 230.
9. A. E. Wilder-Smith, The Natural Sciences Know Nothing of Evolution (Costa Mesa, CA: The Word For Today Publishers, 1984), p. 57. Wilder-Smith has three earned doctorates in the physical sciences and has lectured in prominent universities in the United States, England, and Switzerland. He has some of the best criticisms of evolution from the viewpoint of thermodynamical statistics and information theory.
10. Keep in mind the Creator-creature distinction discussed in Chapter 2. Failure to honor this distinction has been at the heart of failure to properly phrase the teleological argument of God so that unbelievers cannot easily counter it. See John Frame's comments in his Apologetics to the Glory of God (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1994), pp. 105-109.
11. Custance, p. 48f.
12. Morris Kline, Mathematics for the Nonmathematician (New York, NY: Dover Publications, 1985), p. 454.
13. Kline, p. 475.

## CHAPTER 4: THE FALL - THE BURIED TRUTH OF THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

Lesson 14

By this point you are aware of the implications of creation in Genesis 1-2 across all domains of life. The corollary truths of God, man, and nature shape how you ought to think in matters of theology, prayer, worship, philosophy, mathematics, science, economics, labor, marriage, and family living. An obedient Christian cannot confine these creation truths off to the side in some religious closet, nor can he pretend to be "neutral." In each area they compel us to chose between the Word of God and paganism.

I have stressed repeatedly that behind every form of paganism lurks the agenda of the carnal mind that is at enmity with God and cannot be subject to His Word. To justify its autonomy, the carnal mind always seeks some way to mutilate the revelation of God in creation with various idolatries. It must bury every reminder of His Presence with an "acceptable" re-interpretation. If this phenomenon ubiquitously affects all men to some degree, where and when did it originate?



see page 133 for full size diagram

The origin of evil must be included in any story of origins. The conscience of all men everywhere testifies there is a state-of-affairs that "ought" to exist but doesn't. People do things to you that they "ought" not to do. Babies are born with horrid defects in their tiny bodies. Tornadoes, floods, famines, earthquakes, and plagues cause human suffering everywhere. Human language is filled with "ought" statements.

In this chapter I will show you the biblical story of how evil began (the "fall") over against the different story told by the pagan origin myths. To start the chapter I will repeat what I did in Chapter One. I give you an actual example of a pagan origin myth from biblical times so you can see what the carnal mind creates on its own versus what minds sanctified by the Spirit of God produced in the Bible. After noting the similarities and contrasts, I will discuss the implications for our knowledge of God, man, and nature as well as the great human dilemma of suffering.

### COMPARING THE BIBLICAL "FALL" WITH PAGAN MYTHS

Before proceeding, read Genesis 3 and its New Testament interpretations in John 8:44; Romans 5:12-21; 8:18-39; I Corinthians 15; II Corinthians 11:3-4; I Timothy 2:14-15; Revelation 21:1-4; 22:1-3.

Here are more excerpts from the ancient Babylonian myth I cited in Chapter One, Enuma elish, from Dr. Heidel's translation. In this story you

remember the primeval water-gods, Apsu (male) and Tiamat (female). They produced other gods, and after "many years" these progeny began to cause the "parents" problems.

*"The divine brothers gathered together.  
They disturbed Tiamat and assaulted(?) their keeper;  
Yea, they disturbed the inner parts of Tiamat,  
Moving (and) running about in the divine abode(?).  
Apsu could not diminish their clamor,  
And Tiamat was silent in regard to their [behavior].  
Yet, their doing was painful [to them].  
Their way was not good."*

Apsu calls his helper, Mummu, to help him persuade Tiamat that all three of them should destroy the noisy progeny:

*"Their way has become painful to me,  
By day I cannot rest, by night I cannot sleep;  
I will destroy (them) and put an end to their way,  
That silence be established and then let us sleep!"  
As the mother, Tiamat vehemently protested:  
"Why should we destroy that which we ourselves have brought forth?  
Their way is indeed very painful, but let us take it good naturedly!"[1]*

Apsu, however, persisted and announced the coming destruction of the gods. Both he and Tiamat were destroyed instead in the great war of the gods that followed. From these evil gods and goddesses man was created in an environment already afflicted by evil.

Keep this narrative in mind as you consider the modern pagan story of evolution. According to the modern story, evil always existed in some form. Indeed, natural evil in the form of death is the very means of natural selection so essential in the alleged eventual evolution of man. The story of evolution is the maxim "blessed are the fittest, for they shall survive."

### **Similarities with Genesis**

For the same reasons I noted in Chapter One, there some similarities between Genesis and ancient pagan stories. Heidel recounts the Babylonian Adapa Legend in which a half-god, half-man being called Adapa is called to heaven to answer for something he did on earth. While there he is offered "food of life" and "water of life" which, if he partakes of it, will convey to him immortality. He refuses and is sent back to earth to die. Since he was in some respect a representative of man, Heidel concludes that "by refusing to eat and to drink, Adapa missed the chance of gaining immortality for mankind as well." [2]

In modern times the Southeast Asian Karen people cited in Chapter 1 still remember the fall of man in their tradition about the creator "Y'wa":

*"Y'wa formed the world originally.*

*He appointed food and drink.  
 He gave them the 'fruit of trial'.  
 He gave detailed orders.  
 Mu-law-lee deceived two persons.  
 He caused them to eat the fruit of the tree of trial.  
 They obeyed not; they believed not Y'wa. . . .  
 When they ate of the fruit of trial,  
 They became subject to sickness, aging, and death. . . .[3]*

Such parallels with Genesis 3 shows that the Karen people as well as other tribes in ancient times had access to original revelation passed down through Noah (Isa. 40:21).

### Contrasts with Genesis

As I noted in Chapter One, it is the contrasts between Genesis and the pagan stories that show the effect of the carnal mind's re-interpretation of revelation. These contrasts are a virtual study in human depth psychology for understanding how sin works in our hearts.

Earlier we learned that there were two major areas of contrast regarding origins. There was a contrast between the Creator-creature "two-level" view of reality and the pagan Continuity of Being "one-level" view of reality. Then a second contrast was found between the Personal Sovereignty of God and the Impersonal Chance/Fate of paganism. In the matter of the origin of evil there are also two major areas of contrast.

1. Bounded Evil vs. Eternal Evil. In Enuma elish you observed that even the original divine pair of water deities were selfish parents who precipitated the outbreak of evil throughout all the universe. Heidel comments on the Babylonian stories:

*"Of the Babylonians can be said what Cicero has said with reference to the poets of Greece and Rome: 'The poets have represented the gods as inflamed by anger and maddened by lust and have displayed to our gaze their wars and battles, their fights and wounds, their hatreds, enmities and quarrels. . . .' Since all the gods were evil by nature and since man was formed with their blood, man of course inherited their evil nature. . . .Man, consequently, was created evil and was evil from his very beginning. How, then, could he fall? The idea that man fell from a state of moral perfection does not fit into the system or systems of Babylonian speculation." [4]*

Evil, in other words, always has been a part of existence according to paganism. Strictly speaking paganism in the end does to the origin-of-evil question what it does with the origin-of-the-universe question: it never comes up with a true temporal origin! Both the universe and evil somehow always existed.

Moreover, it always will be a part of existence. From Enuma elish to Socrates to Darwin evil is an inescapable component of existence. Thus to escape the horror of an eternal existence with evil, some forms of oriental

religion devised the only conceivable escape: going into a state of "non-existence". Non-existence would be preferable to an existence with eternal evil.

By contrast the Bible insists that both Satan and Adam were created perfect without evil (Ezk. 28:15; Gen. 1:31). Whether Satan fell before God created man or afterward is a debate discussed in Appendix A. In either case, the point remains the same. Neither of these creatures was created evil. Evil according to the Bible had a beginning, and for the redeemed inhabitants of the New Universe (Rev. 21-22), evil will have an end. Evil according to the Bible is bounded or "bracketed." Evil, just like the universe, has a definite temporal origin. Paganism has buried this truth because to admit it would be to admit its own vanity.

2. Responsible Guilt vs. Victimization. Pagan stories like the Adapa Legend try to explain man's suffering and dying on the basis of innocent foolishness or victimization. Adapa unwisely rejected the offer of the "food and water of life". Heidel notes:

*"The problem of the origin of sin does not even enter into consideration. Consequently, it is a misnomer to call the Adapa Legend the Babylonian version of the fall of man. The Adapa Legend and the biblical story are fundamentally as far apart as the antipodes."*[5]

In Enuma elish it was the original divine parents who selfishly abused their children, and mankind merely followed in their footsteps. Since evil was a corollary to existence itself, no personal responsibility for evil's origin is given. Mankind is just a passive victim to what is.

Genesis 3 narrates a different story. The woman when faced with two contradictory claims (from God, "you will die"; from Satan, "you will not die"), sought in the grand tradition of the autonomous mind to be "neutral" and to treat both claims as inherently equal. Thus by treating the Creator's word on the same plane as the creature's word, she immediately denied the Creator-creature distinction. (You will be asked in the following exercise to examine some of the details.) Adam deliberately followed. Both tried to deny responsible guilt for the event when confronted by God. By holding both responsible, God denied the victimization theory.

The attempt by both Adam and Eve to deny responsible guilt is developed in paganism into a virtual art form. Modern paganism continues the victimization tradition by offering elaborate "explanations" to excuse aberrant behavior on the basis of genetics, early socialization, and economic hardships.



### Exercise 4.1

1. If paganism were true, evil would be an inevitable part of existence. What would be some ways you would then have to cope with evil? (HINT: Think about the various ways used by such groups as "Christian Science" and Hinduism.)
2. Assuming Ezekiel 28:14-15 speak of Satan "behind" the King of Tyre in the same way the Messiah is spoken of "behind" King David, what does it tell us about the time of the origin of evil relative to creation? How many times in Genesis 1 is creation called "good"?
3. Study the text of Genesis 3:1-13. Try answering these questions:
  - a. Compare the words of Satan in Gen. 3:1 and of the woman in 3:2-3 with God's words in 2:16-17. List the differences in words and grammatical emphasis.
  - b. What do Satan's words in 3:4-5 imply about God's character? What attributes are denied?
  - c. When the woman decides between God and Satan what has she already done to the authority of God's Word?
  - d. Trace the attempted avoidance of responsibility in the counseling dialogue of 3:9-13.

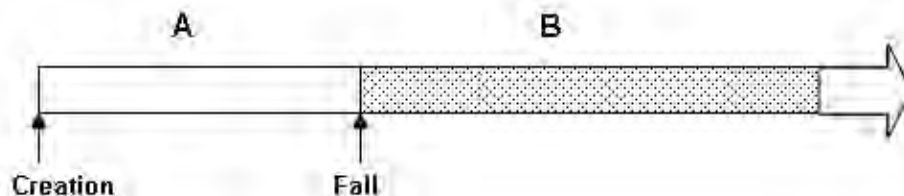
## EVIL UNDER GOD

Lesson 15

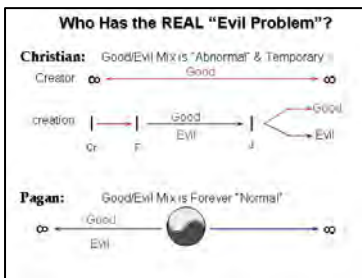
The story of the fall is opposed at every point by the fleshly mind of paganism. I now turn to the first area of this "great debate"--the character of God as Creator of a world that became evil. Over the centuries unbelievers have taken great delight in pointing to what they have convinced themselves is a glaring contradiction between the existence of evil and the existence of an omnipotent, sovereign, and loving God. "Either your God must be loving and powerless," they taunt, "or He is powerful and hateful."

### God and Responsible Creature-choices That Originate Evil

Clearly the story of the falls of Satan and of Adam separate the origin of evil from the origin of the universe. You saw above how Genesis 3 differs from Enuma elish and the Adapa Legend in that the pagan stories really have no origin of evil at all; evil always was there. The Bible insists there was a span of time between the origin of all things and the fall:



In the interval "A", there was existence without evil, something denied in all forms of paganism. This is not speculation. It is true history. So the question, then, doesn't directly concern creation itself. Rather, it concerns post-creation history. Was it "right" for God to have created creatures with responsible choice who, though created without evil, would certainly originate evil after some interval "A" (obviously the God of the Bible wasn't surprised by their choice)?



see page 134 for full sized diagram

God could have created creatures with responsible choice who would not ever originate evil (everlasting "A"). Angels had choice, but not all of them rebelled with Satan. Men had choice, but one (Jesus) did not rebel. Heaven and the New Universe contain responsible creatures without any further origination of evil. Because in the Bible evil is limited under God, the question arises why He did not limit it down to the point of elimination altogether.

### God Trusted Without a Full Answer

In facing a major question about the Christian faith like this one, you must return to the basic procedure you learned in Chapter 1--begin within the biblical framework. How does the Bible itself answer this question? In every major passage that treats the question of why God allows evil and suffering (e.g. Gen. 3; 22; Job; Romans), the Bible never gives a comprehensive, ultimate answer. As John Frame notes, God in each case turns the complaint around as being disobedient, denies He owes us such an answer, and expects us to trust Him that He has a just and sufficient reason.[6]

How can He be so trusted? Go back to the Creator-creature distinction. Remember the relationship between the (Q)uality of omniscience and the (q)uality of human knowledge? Between the (Q)uality of holiness and the (q)uality of conscience? The human intellect and moral sense are similar to God's attributes of omniscience and holiness so that we yearn for a reason and a moral justification. There must be one. The Bible doesn't present us with an irrational, existential absurdity (in spite of some modern theologians' claims).

Nevertheless, the human intellect and moral sense are not identical to omniscience and holiness so that "the" reason and justification, though existing in the Creator, may never fully be grasped by and exist in the mind of the creature. There are, after all, two levels of reality in the biblical worldview. How, then, do we trust Him for such a reason and justification without being able to fully understand it?

We trust His character as He has so far chosen to reveal it to us. When Job finally saw God in Job 38-42 for Who He really Is, he dropped his demand for a reason and a justification (42:1-6). Today, after the additional

revelation since Job's day, you and I have more evidence that God does indeed possess a reason and justification for creating a universe in which responsible creatures would originate evil.

We see Jesus as God Incarnate. Through His behavior we can see more of the character of God. Outside the tomb of His friend Lazarus, Jesus weeps at the consequences of evil (John 11:35). As Francis Schaeffer pointed out years ago, He can be upset at evil without being upset at Himself.[7] Evil truly grieves Him. Moreover, He absorbs evil to Himself and bears its judgment at the Cross to make a way of escape. Whatever His reason for allowing evil, then, God doesn't remain aloof like Allah in Islam but bears the pain along with His creatures. Does this display of His love not attest to the presence somewhere of a sufficient reason and answer to it all?

This action of the Cross, as Frame points out from Romans 3:26, already resolves part of the problem of evil. It resolves the apparent conflict in the Old Testament between the holiness of God and His forgiveness of evil which must have seemed like a logical contradiction:

*"Justice, as defined by the prophets, cannot be merciful, or so it seems. But God does solve the problem, in a way that none of us would likely have expected, in a way that amazes us and provokes from us shouts of praise. . . .Here is the lesson for us: If God could vindicate his justice and mercy in a situation where such vindication seemed impossible, if he could vindicate them in a way that went far beyond our expectations and understanding, can we not trust him to vindicate himself again?"[8]*

In other words, after the display of Jesus and the Cross, can we not trust that He can also resolve the rest of the "apparent contradiction" between His omnipotence and love on one hand and the existence of evil on the other? What further surprises does He hold in store for future history?

In the end, the pagan criticism of God and evil dissolves in its own vanity. By demanding that the Creator submit immediately to the human intellect and conscience, paganism once again has put the Creator and creature on the same level. But once this Continuity of Being dogma is asserted, both intellect and conscience disappear. Finite human knowledge can't support by itself universal truths, nor can the human conscience by itself justify its own moral authority.

The fall reveals that God did not create an evil universe. Responsible creatures, not God, originated evil. God sovereignly bracketed their evil for reasons known fully only to Himself. Yet He came into full contact with the suffering of evil so we are assured that He is the kind of God Who has a sufficient reason and justification for His plan. Until He reveals it, we must trust Him for it.

## EVIL IN MAN

Lesson 16

If evil, then, is confined wholly to the creature and does not touch the Creator, we are left with evil man and evil nature. We must learn well the effect of evil on both man and nature, or else we will never appreciate God's redemptive project. A wrong diagnosis of a disease usually produces a wrong prescription of a cure. Non-Christian and sub-Christian religions inevitably fail because they trivialize evil and end up with a works-based, trivialized salvation.

Follow me as I utilize what we learned about man in Chapter 3. Watch the effect of evil on man's design and on man's institutions! Oh, what we have done with what God created!

### Sin-Damage to Man's Design

We were created in God's image in both body and spirit. Sin has so damaged His image that we are a tragic relic of that great theomorphism we once were. Full restoration to His image in both spirit and body can only come through regeneration and resurrection in His Son.

1. The Body. What happened at the fall to the body? God promised a new thing--death. Man would be torn asunder. His spirit would leave the body, and his body would disintegrate back to the earth from which it was made (Jas. 2:26; Gen. 2:17; 3:19). A sentence of capital punishment has been placed upon Adam and all his progeny corporately. On some long-lived people this sentence may take time just like God's sentence upon Shimei (I Kings 2:37,39 uses the same Hebrew construction as Gen. 2:17), but His countdown never stops until the zero point is reached. Neither physical exercise, vitamins, hormones, miraculous cures, nor any future genetic engineering can ever thwart death.

Death was a new thing added to the original creation. In Adam the body has become abnormal to what it "ought" to be by virtue of creation. Pain and an apparently disturbed metabolism causing "sweat" are never far from daily life. All mankind senses this abnormality. Custance puts the matter well:

*It is an odd situation, this ambivalence we have about the value of the body. Here we have a tumbled-down house for the spirit, which the spirit is nevertheless deeply attached to--so deeply that it faces separation with grave concern.*

Citing Romans 6:6,12; 7:24 Custance continues:

*Hiddenly, our living body is as inwardly diseased as a leper's body is outwardly so. And this is because it has been unnaturally mortalized and is, in fact, already as good as dead. . . .When man dies, he dies an unnatural death, a death which he has been dying all his life. For many this process is*

*delayed in such a way as to conceal the fact of decay and almost to hold out a promise of immortality. But as soon as the spirit departs, the illusion is destroyed. The disintegration of the body is rapid indeed. And it is doubtful if man finds anything quite as distressing to look upon as a decomposing human body. It is a terribly disturbing sight for man. . . .[9]*

So that which God had once created to Incarnate Himself in, we destroyed in disobedience!

2. The spirit. And what happened at the fall to the human spirit? I noted in Chapter 3 that the spirit reveals its presence by exhibiting the God-like phenomena of choice, conscience, love, and knowing. Each of these have been perverted by the tragedy of the fall.

The (q)uality of choice that resembles God's (Q)uality of sovereignty was created so that man as "underlord" could obey with thanksgiving and praise his "Overlord." At the fall it became rebellious and defiant. None of Adam's progeny naturally seek after God (Rom. 3:10-13). All men choose themselves as ultimate authorities, as counterfeit overlords, just as Satan did (Isa. 14:13-14; I Tim. 3:6). To justify this choice they immediately have to pervert the revelation in and around them of the Creator (Rom. 1:21-23). Even while fully knowing such truths, they chose not to welcome them into their heart (Rom. 1:28-32; I Cor. 2:14).

The (q)uality of conscience that resembles God's (Q)uality of holiness remains after the fall within man (Prov.20:27; Rom 2:15; II Cor. 4:2) but becomes what biblical writers call "defiled" and "seared" (I Cor. 8:7; I Tim. 4:2). Moral judgments continue, but now they are no longer directed inwardly. Martin Luther in his commentary on Romans 2 put this point well: "While the righteous make it a point to accuse themselves in thought, word, and deed, the unrighteous make it a point always to accuse and judge others." [10]. After the fall man's conscience is kept from exercising authority over the self. The pagan characteristic "victimization" replaces honest responsibility before God. Of course, this limiting of the zone of conscience immediately dissolves any truly universal moral judgment. The replacement of the Creator and Holy Authority by the self disintegrates the integrity of fallen man's "oughts". Darwin's protagonist, T. H. Huxley, clearly saw the implications of this modern paganism:

*"The thief and the murderer follow nature just as much as the philanthropist. Cosmic evolution. . . is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call bad than we had before." [11]*

The (q)uality of love that parallel's God's (Q)uality of love is radically altered. Instead of loving others out of a secure position under God, man reverts to self-protection. No longer secure because of his guilt before a holy God, man's greatest priority is seeking a replacement security for himself. Other potential objects of his love, creatures of his own kind, become threatening, competing selves that seek their own security at his expense just as he now seeks his security at their expense.

Finally, the (q)uality of knowledge that is a finite replica of God's (q)uality of omniscience turns into a vaporous "vanity" as the Bible calls it. It loses its foundation and all justification. Finite man obviously cannot generate infinite universals ("always", "never", etc.). He no longer can tell whether his thoughts fit real truth in the world or are merely electro-chemical phenomena of his brain. In the pagan perspective Morris Kline rightly asks of his own professional field of mathematics: "Is then mathematics a collection of diamonds hidden in the depths of the universe. . .or is it a collection of synthetic stones manufactured by man. . . ?[12]

So then, both man's body and his spirit were systematically damaged in the fall. None of Adam's progeny have been normal, physically or spiritually, save One. Sin damaged every area of man's original design. Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall, and all of the kings men and their political, economic, and psychological programs cannot put him back together again.

### **Sin-Damage to Man's Institutions**

In Chapter 3 we spoke of three social structures of man--responsible dominion, marriage, and family--that God instituted at creation. With the fall so damaging to man, it is to be expected that each of these institutions would reap the sad results.

1. The first divine institution of responsible dominion became perverted but not taken away. Instead of a peaceable, godly dominion over all the earth under God and His Word, man fights and claws his way to a counterfeit dominion built of his own works (cf. Jas 4:1-4). Note two aspects of this perversion.

One aspect is quantitative. Production from the rebellious ground costs far more; it is radically less efficient, yielding instead of easy harvests of sweet fruit the unintended "thorns and thistles" after hours of "sweat" (Gen. 3:17-19). Not only is the ground out of control, but man's social behavior is out of control. Unrestrained perverted addictions thwart every attempt to control them (Rom. 1:24-32).

A second aspect of perverted dominion is qualitative. In a previous section we saw that labor invites evaluation or imputation of value by a

person ("pricing"). God's imputation is objective and absolute; society's imputation is subjective and relative. At the fall, man's value-system changed. Ever since man prices his work based upon his own autonomous judgment—evil becomes good and good becomes evil.

2. The second divine institution of marriage received very severe blows from the fall. Instead of harmonious teamwork in dominion, competing rivalry occurs. The man is cursed in his job as provider; the woman in her role as mother (Gen. 3:17-19 vs. 3:16). The man must exert great effort to lead over against his wife's tendency to control him (note Gen. 3:16b parallels the Hebrew construction in 4:7b). The man can look elsewhere than his wife to satisfy him (Prov. 5:18-21), while the woman can exert tremendous pressure through nagging and resentment (Prov. 19:13b; 21:9). Divorce is an all-too-common post-fall feature (Matt. 19:3-9).

3. The third divine institution of family, like marriage, experienced the devastation of the fall as the history of the first family reveals (Gen. 4:8ff). The parents can neglect their responsibility to train their children for God, either by being overbearing and unfair (Deut. 21:15-17; Eph 6:4) or by being too lenient (I Sam. 2:29; 3:13; Prov. 13:24; 14:18; 22:15). The children can rebel by disrespecting the fundamental authority of the parents (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 21:18-21; Eph. 6:1-2).

When faced with the corruption in each of these social structures, fallen man responds in several ways. One way is to reinterpret the struggles with sin in terms of economics (Marx's "class war") or of race (white and black racists) or of psychology (Freud and others). Another cope-out is to abandon the institutions themselves as outdated, arbitrary social "conventions" that need "re-engineering". All such responses, however, are costly failures to the societies that try them. In the end, they reflect the pagan mindset that denies the responsibility of the fall and the abnormality of evil.

### **Exercise 4.2**

- 1. State in your own words how the Bible does not deny that there is a just and sufficient reason for the presence of evil in history.**
- 2. State in your own words how there can be a just and sufficient reason for evil without man knowing it.**
- 3. List evidences in biblical history that God is not aloof from man's suffering under evil.**
- 4. Get a copy of the Genesis 3:14-19 text and mark by each verse comments that point to implications in as many areas of life as you can think of.**

## EVIL IN NATURE

Lesson 17

Evil permeates both sides of the man-nature distinction. When Adam fell, God cursed the ground because of his sin, a fact crucial to Paul's exposition of the resurrection hope in Romans 8:18-23. Evil damaged nature as it did man.

### Sin-Damage to Nature's Design

While it is still true after the fall that nature reveals its Creator, it is also true that much chaos has come into the message. Nature has become abnormal. There is now natural evil: storms, earthquakes, plagues, and famine. Nature even pollutes itself! Gases and vapors from natural decay pollute the atmosphere. A classic example is the Los Angeles basin. Long before the automobile and white man's industrialization, native American Indians referred to the area as "the place of the burning eyes". It seems that trees growing in the basin area secreted a volatile organic compound that strongly irritated human tissue.

Paganism interprets such natural evil as a normal occurrence. The pagan mind cannot imagine nature without evil in it. Evil has always been and will always be. Thus evolutionary theory relies on natural evil (struggle for survival) to bring forth life. That, says the pagan, is the message of nature.

Once this "revelation" is accepted, a counterfeit moral code quickly arises. For example, Sir Arthur Keith, a British anthropologist who had just survived Hitler's bombing of Britain could write these amazing words in 1947: "To see evolutionary. . .morality being applied to the affairs of a great nation we must turn to Germany of 1942. We see Hitler devoutly convinced that evolution produces the only real basis for a national policy." [13] American business tycoon John D. Rockefeller made the same inference: "The growth of large business is merely survival of the fittest. . . .This is not an evil tendency in business. It is merely the working out of a law of nature." [14]

Sin-damage to nature confuses the creation message in many of its parts. Chaos and apparently useless features appear in enough places that Christians' argument-from-design (teleological argument for existence of God) is difficult to state precisely. Nature is not normal, and therefore does not perfectly reveal God's original workmanship. [15]

### Sin-Damage to Man's Rule over Nature

You saw above that sin damaged man's first divine institution of responsible dominion both in its extent and in its quality. Let's look further at this damage. Strangely, the cursing of nature has had some beneficial results for man in his fallenness. We are forced to work together to produce whether

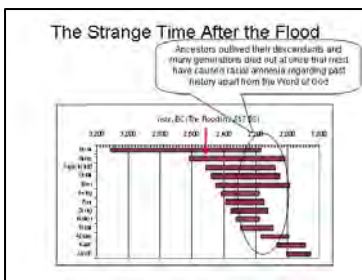


we like it or not. A number of other effects also follow. North makes very insightful observations:

*"There are no free lunches in a cursed, scarce world. . . .Given the perverse nature of man, a less productive world is a necessity. Having to work is. . .a way of draining energy that might have been put to perverse ends. Men have less free time to scheme and pillage. They have less strength. . . .An expenditure of time, capital, and energy in increasing the productivity of the land could not be used simultaneously in order to commit murder and mayhem. . . .The curse of the ground is also a blessing for the ground. Men in a scarce world must treat the creation with care if they wish to retain the productivity of the ground.[16]*

Again the pagan mind can't interpret the situation correctly. Thinking evil has always been part of existence; the carnal mentality sees labor as inherently toilsome with no higher calling. From ancient Greece to many in America's present labor force, work (especially "blue collar" work) is treated with derision and avoidance where possible.

The biblical Christian, on the other hand, knows that labor was the first occupation of God and of man. A creative person cannot help but labor over nature to produce worthwhile fruit. He knows that the thorns and thistles in every job are not what labor is all about. They are merely abnormalities added because of sin. Later in this series I will show how the spiritual life closely parallels physical labor. We struggle with that part of nature closest to us--our flesh--to bring it into subjection under Christ that His fruit, and not thorns and thistles, might be produced. Sadly, Christians often drift into pagan modes of thought, looking for some "secret" that will subdue the flesh without labor (note God's words to Cain in Gen. 4:7).



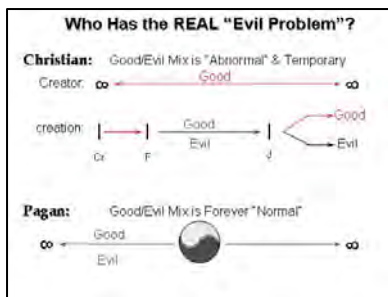
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## LIVING WITH EVIL: BASIC COPING STRATEGIES

I now turn to the practical matter of living with evil. You have read and understand the implications of Genesis 1-3 across all areas of life. As with the creation event, so with the fall event: you and I are driven to choose between the Word of God and the carnal thoughts of paganism. Perhaps the worst conflict lies in the area of living with sorrow, hurts, sickness, death, and natural catastrophes. To cope with such evil in everyday life, you already have developed some sort of "semi-automatic" strategy. Is it compatible with worship and obedience to the Lord?

### Pagan Coping Strategies

Because the carnal mind cannot be subject to God, it buries the key truths of the fall: (1a) evil is bounded and abnormal; and (2a) responsible guilt for its origin rests upon us. In their place the carnal mind substitutes falsehoods:



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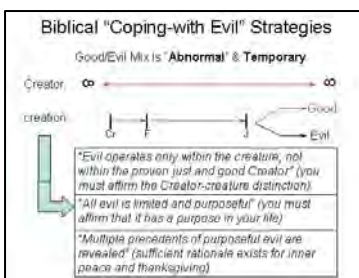


The average pagan finds it a lot easier to "eat, drink, and be merry" as Paul acknowledged (I Cor. 15:32). Once the horror of living with evil forever is faced, the coping strategy of choice is some form of anesthesia: alcohol, drugs, sexual or musical ecstasy, and finally suicide. This pagan tendency toward a clear and deliberately chosen strategy of hopelessness was foreseen by Solomon (Ecclesiastes) and repeatedly mentioned by Paul (I Cor. 15:17-19,32; I Thess. 4:13).

Lesson 18

## Biblical Coping Strategy

When God met Job, He did not coddle him, pat him on the head, and say, "poor boy" (Job 38-42). Why was God seemingly so uncompassionate? When God took Paul through his grief over seeing his fellow Jews missing salvation in Christ, He led Paul to an almost fierce awareness of His total sovereign power (Rom. 9). Why not a little more gentleness?



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The answer lies in the very nature of suffering. Suffering with evil shocks us because of its very abnormality. We weren't created for a fallen world. In suffering our emotions are already highly charged. Our minds, therefore, are most vulnerable to the Evil One and least able to subdue our flesh. We need to meet God anew in all His glory. The biblical coping strategy, therefore, has a deliberate structure.

1. Back to basics. In suffering we face the destruction of creation itself due to sin--both man and nature. We can't deny evil; we can't deny our conscience; and we can't accept the Absurd. In our shocked state, we must be jerked sharply away from self-pity (victimization) and autonomy, or we will quickly find ourselves defaming God's character. Go back to the basics of the Creator-creature relationship. Does He have a plan in His omniscience for you that your mind may not now know much about? Is His sense of justice better or worse than yours?

2. How much limit on evil now? Instead of asking, "how can a loving God send people to Hell or have evil like this go on?", ask another question: "how can a just God send people to heaven and give a gracious respite from immediate judgment right now?" Instead of why there is so much suffering, why is there so little of it, given the fall's real existence? Remember that the cry to end evil, is a cry for final judgment! Do you really want that in light of the need for more people to come to repentance (II Pet. 3:9)? The argument here is an argument over where God ought to set the limits on evil. Shall the creature instruct the Creator?

3. Patterns of suffering. The Bible points to definite patterns of cause-effect in suffering. By studying these patterns you may find it easier to trust Him with suffering in your life. The patterns of suffering reveal enough design to point to the existence of an overall plan on His part. Unlike the

dilemma of atheist Kaufmann who can only suggest a let's-pretend-there's-meaning strategy, you have available in the Word of God assurance that every detail of your suffering has a purpose, whether God chooses to share it with you or not.

Remember all evil originated through creatures' rebellious choices; evil wasn't there at creation. In both angelic and human spheres evil can be traced back to responsible post-creation choices that had suffering consequences. All suffering, therefore, has an aspect of directness for its origin. Yet not all suffering is due to the immediate choices of those afflicted.

For example, what did an infant do to deserve to suffer and die in infancy, or what did we do as unbelievers to merit God's "wake-up" call to salvation? Jesus warned in John 9:3 against falsely concluding that suffering is always in a simple one-to-one relationship to the sufferer. There is an indirectness, too, in suffering whereby it is an "interference" into a person's life and is not directly "asked for". The patterns of suffering, therefore, which follow are divided into direct and indirect categories. Some apply to all men; other apply to only unbelievers or believers.[20]

## **DIRECT SUFFERING PATTERNS**

(Clear consequences of creatures' choices)

1. General existence of sickness & death (physical and spiritual): law of Gen. 2:17 was disobeyed by Adam and Eve and consequences spread throughout world (Rom.5:12-14; 8:19-23); the "fall event" vindicates God's Word as reliable. Applies to all men.
2. General existence of "self-induced misery" (intensified physical, mental, and spiritual deterioration): law of Gal. 6:7 works out through the first divine institution of responsible labor; continued rebellious living yields corrupt fruit of foolishness showing again that God's Word stands (Rom.1:24-32; Eph. 4:17-19). Applies to all men.
3. General judgment pattern on nations and families: law of Gal. 6:7 works out through the third and fourth divine institutions (see Chapter 6 for fourth divine institution); preserves opportunities for repentance among those inside these nations and families (Exod. 20:5-6; Num. 14:18; Acts 17:26-27). Applies to all men.
4. Eternal existence of Hell and Lake of Fire: Justice of God originally directed against the fall of angels but which a man comes to share through Adam's fall, if he never responds to God's grace in this mortal life (Matt.

25:41,46; Rev.20:10-15); provides for a permanent exclusion of evil from the new universe to come. Applies to unbelievers only.

5. Judgment in Mortal Life of Believers: God the Father disciplines every believer as a spiritual parent when he rebels against His authority; warning to confess sin and be restored to fellowship (I Cor.11:29-31; Heb. 12:5-13; Rev. 3:19-20); can include physical death; can work simultaneously with authorized church discipline (Matt. 18:17-18; I Cor. 5:1-5). Applies to believers only.

6. Judgment after Resurrection of Believers and Denial of Rewards: Jesus Christ evaluates fruit of believers whether produced in obedience to His Spirit or produced in the energy of the flesh (I Cor. 3:10-15; II Cor. 5:10-11; II Tim. 2:11-13). Applies to believers only.

## **INDIRECT SUFFERING PATTERNS**

(God personally intervenes but not as a direct consequence of some particular choice by the individual)

7. Evangelistic "Wake-up Call": specially designed suffering can shock arrogant unbelieving self-confidence in pagan idolatries and self-righteousness (I Sam 5; I Kings 18:21-40; Jonah 3; Acts 9:1-9); provides an extra opportunity for repentance unto salvation independent of choices of unbeliever. Applies to unbelievers only.

8. A "Nudge" to Spiritually Advance: specially designed suffering to immunize against arrogant autonomy and protect a sense of dependency upon God's grace (Deut. 8:2-6; Psa. 119:71,75; II Cor. 12:1-10; I Pet. 1:5-9; 5:5-10); provokes growth and preparation for coming service to others (II Cor.1:4-7). Applies to believers only and to the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 2:10; 5:8).

9. Evidence for Evangelization of Unbelievers: specially designed suffering to convince unbelievers of the reality of the gospel (I Tim. 1:16; I Pet. 2:12-3:17). Applies to believers only and to the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:13-18).

10. Evidence for Edification of Believers: specially designed suffering to convince other believers of the adequacy of the gospel (II Cor. 1:5-15; 4:7-18; Heb. 12:1). Applies to believers only and to the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil 2:5-9; I Pet. 2:21-23).

11. Evidence in the Unseen Angelic Conflict: specially designed suffering that has unknown (to us) ramifications in the angelic conflict between God and Satan (Job 1-2; Lk. 22:31-32; I Cor. 6:2-3; 11:10; Eph. 3:10). Applies to believers only and to the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 4:1-11; 26:53-54).

Here, then, I have sketched eleven distinct patterns of suffering, each of which reveals that the limits of evil are very carefully controlled with a real purpose. Now, let's go to the last element in a biblical coping strategy.

4. A faithful worship and obedience. The goal of the biblical strategy toward evil is an inner peace that comes from looking at your Lord and knowing, really knowing, He has a perfect plan for you. But you can't get this quiet conviction "that all is well with my soul" by thinking and reacting with the carnal mentality. As long as there lurks in your heart the notions that evil is a never-ending mystery, you will always be tempted to think of yourself as an innocent victim. You will frantically search for an autonomous coping strategy based upon hopelessness, mostly likely some anesthetic to dull the soul-pain.

The Word of God calls to us not to try to blank out the mind, not to go to sleep, and not to be drunk with wine. Our perfect role model, the Lord Jesus Christ, when faced with suffering always concentrated His mind away from all distractions. Until He settled the matter before His Father, He avoided normal daily food (Matt. 4:2), sleep (Matt. 26:40-41), and medicine (Matt. 27:34). Once He could faithfully worship and obey, then He resumed as much normalcy as possible under the circumstances (Matt. 4:11; 27:48).

We are spiritual creatures, and we must resolve issues with God to restore a clean conscience and a true faith. In the struggle with evil, whether directly a clear consequence of our bad choice(s) or indirectly a not-so-clear "intrusion" into our lives, we ought not to rest until we can handle it by faith. Unlike those without hope, we don't turn off our minds and flee to some irrational anesthetic. We flee to our Creator and Savior honoring His character by trusting its love and power over all evil.

### ***Exercise 4.3***

**Either look up all the verses cited in the eleven patterns of suffering, or develop your own references.**

**END NOTES FOR CHAPTER 4**

1. Alexander Heidel, The Babylonian Genesis (Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1963 edition of original University of Chicago Press, 1942), p. 19.
2. Ibid., p. 124.
3. Don Richardson, Eternity in Their Hearts (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1981), p. 78.
4. Heidel, p. 125f.
5. Ibid., p. 124.
6. For an excellent discussion of the problem of evil with a lot of Scriptural material, see John M. Frame, Apologetics to the Glory of God (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., 1994), Chapters 6 and 7 with Jay Adams' response in Appendix B.
7. Francis A. Schaeffer, He Is There and He Is Not Silent (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1972), p. 32.
8. Frame, p. 184.
9. Arthur C. Custance, Two Men Called Adam (Brockville, Ontario, Canada: Doorway Publications, 1983), pp. 116-118.
10. Martin Luther, Commentary on Romans (trans. J. Theodore Mueller, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1976), p. 52.
11. Quoted in Cyril Bibby, T. H. Huxley (New York: Horizon Press, 1960), p. 58f.
12. Morris Kline, Mathematics for the Non-mathematician (New York: Dover Press, 1985), p. 545.
13. Sir Arthur Keith, Evolution and Ethics (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1947), p. 28.
14. Cited in R.E.D. Clark, Darwin: Before and After (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967), p. 106.
15. See discussion of how failure to take seriously the effects of the fall into setting up the argument from design hurt 19th century apologetics in John C. Hutchison, "Darwin's Evolutionary Theory and 19th-Century Natural Theology", Bibliotheca Sacra (Vol 152, No. 607, July-Sept 1995), especially

page 354.

16. Gary North, *The Dominion Covenant: Genesis* (Tyler Texas: Institute for Christian Economics, 1982), p. 115.

17. Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston: First Church of Christ Scientist), p. 243.

18. Keith, p. 49.

19. Walter Kaufmann, *The Faith of a Heretic* (Garden City: Doubleday [Anchor ed.], 1963), pp. 165, 166.

20. Much of the concept of these patterns of suffering were given to me by R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Christian Suffering* (Houston, TX: Bible Ministries, 1987).

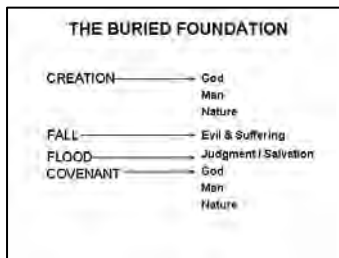


## CHAPTER 5: THE FLOOD: THE BURIED TRUTH OF DIVINE INTERVENTION

Lesson 19

The biblical explanations of creation as the true origin of order and goodness and of the fall as the origin of chaos and evil are incomplete without a further element. Granted that evil is a post-creation "add-on" effect originated by the creature and limited by the Creator, is there any final escape from the consequences of the fall? Does the Absurd ever end? Does God ever expose more of the rational and just plan we believe He has? In short, is there salvation from evil?

Of course in searching for some sort of salvation, the pagan mentality cannot be so focused on God. Having replaced the God of the Bible with the Continuity of Being that forever contains evil, unbelief is left ultimately with some form of anesthesia as the only tool to relieve the horror of an evil existence. Whatever salvation that is possible on the pagan basis, must be a "do-it-yourself" salvation dependent upon man.



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In this chapter I turn to the Bible's answer to a fallen world that suffers the consequences of bad choices. Instead of relying upon man's works, the Bible insists that salvation must come through divine intervention. Such an intervention is seen in next cosmic event recorded in the Word of God after the fall: the cataclysmic flood of Noah's day.

You must appreciate the cosmic dimensions of this flood story and its spiritual and moral background so I deal first with the interpretation of Genesis 4-8. Then I move on to outline the shape of the biblical doctrines that lie at the heart of the gospel--the concepts of real judgment and real salvation. To prepare for this study, please read Genesis 4-8 and its New Testament interpretations in Luke 17:26-27; Heb. 11:7; I Pet. 3:20; II Pet. 2:5; 3:5-7.

### THE DISTINCTIVES OF THE BIBLICAL FLOOD

Just as the creation narrative in Genesis 1-2 conflicts radically with the officially-sponsored origin myth of evolution, the narrative of pre-flood humanity and the flood cataclysm also conflicts with prevailing notions of geological history. For similar reasons, therefore, Christians have tried the same three strategies to attempt reconciliation between the Bible and pagan thought on the flood matter: capitulation, accommodation, and counterattack.

Those who have capitulated over the matter of Noah's flood do with Genesis 6-8 what they do with Genesis 1-2. The biblical flood story is just a

Jewish version of ancient mythological flood stories. Because this form of unbelief replaces the authority of biblical historical revelation with the authority of man's speculative mental powers, they have no need to be concerned over the historical integrity of the text.

Those who try to accommodate the Genesis text to whatever happens to be the current speculative model of earth history interpret Genesis 6-8 as referring to some sort of local flood in the Mesopotamian Valley which left one or several of the Tigris-Euphrates flood strata. Some accommodationists hold that the flood did literally destroy all humanity in Noah's day but only because all humanity were locally confined to the Mesopotamian Valley area. Others hold that the flood did not destroy all mankind, only those in Noah's immediate vicinity.

In 1961 Whitcomb and Morris wrote their highly controversial book, The Genesis Flood (hereinafter TGF). They argued against the accommodationists that normal interpretation of the Genesis text did not support a local flood. The Scripture, they insisted, presented a flood of global proportions. If this interpretation collided with everything we "know" about earth history, then there must be something wrong with our model of earth history. One infuriated evangelical critic responded:

***"Those who dwell inside the house of geological science have been in the process of remodeling it continuously ever since it was built. Now Henry Morris and John Whitcomb have come along insisting in the name of the Master Architect that the whole thing is on a shaky foundation and must be bulldozed to the ground. Detailed plans for the fine new edifice which should be built in its place, they claim, were found by them in the pages of the family Bible." [1]***

From the last 30 years of debate between the counterattacking young-earth, strict creationist movement spearheaded by Whitcomb and Morris and the accommodationists, it has become obvious that how one interprets Genesis 6-8 is vitally related to how one interprets Genesis 1-2. If the flood was local, for example, then geological strata with its fossil remains of dead animals must be due to natural processes dating from before mankind. The chronology of Genesis in this view is very long with the days of Creation Week being either symbolic or long ages of time.

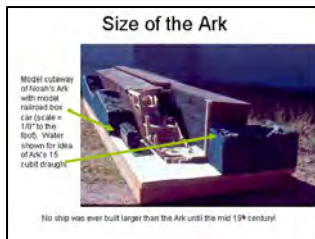
On the other hand, if the flood was truly global and earth-transforming, then the strata can be attributed to a post-creation, post-fall event what happened recently. In this view the chronology of Genesis can be short with literal 24-hour days in the Creation Week. Thus the flood-caused contrast with modern earth-history models is so radical that literal days in Genesis 1-2 are no extra shock. Because I believe the flood event is so crucial for our understanding of God's salvation, I will now point out four distinctive

features of Noah's flood that imply its global nature and the magnitude of God's judging and saving work.

1. The Depth-Time Distinctive. Prior to TGF most discussion about whether or not the flood was global or local centered upon the relative ambiguity of the Hebrew word for "all" (kol). Whitcomb and Morris, however, pointed out that the details given in Genesis 7:19-20 implied a global flood regardless of how the reader interpreted "all":

***"If only one (to say nothing of all) of the high mountains had been covered with water, the flood would have been absolutely universal; for water must seek its own level--and it must do so quickly!"[2]***

TGF changed the argument from one over the adjective "all" to one over specific textual details and their implications. Let's look at the logical implications of the so-called "depth-time" details in Genesis 7:11-8:13.

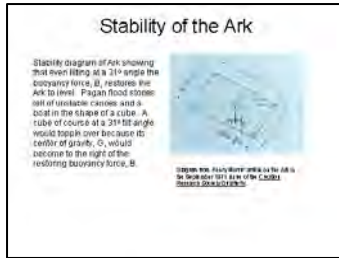


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Clearly the flood event lasted one year (Gen. 7:11 cf. Gen. 8:13). Whatever the extent of the flood--whether global or local--the waters remained at a certain depth for many months. What depth? Genesis 7:20 reports that the waters were 15 cubits (over 20 feet) above every hill. Most interpreters take this measure to refer to the draught of Noah's Ark, i.e., it floated over every obstacle without grounding on anything. So we conclude, without deciding about what "all" means as to geographical extent, that the waters covered every hill and mountain for one year in whatever area the flood occupied.

Next, we come to the term "under all the heavens" (Gen. 7:19). A check of occurrences of this phrase elsewhere (Deut. 2:25; 4:19; Job 28:24; 37:3; 41:11; Dan. 7:27 and 9:12) shows that it never refers to an area smaller than several hundred miles wide. Given such a minimum area, where in the Middle East can one place the flood without including at least some points of land several thousand feet above sea level? And if these points must be covered for many months, the flood must have been global. Thus the details of the text directly imply a global flood regardless of the usage of the term "all" in a relative sense in other places.

2. The Ark's Distinctive Size, Design, and Purpose. A simple check on the dimensions of the Ark that God gave to Noah in Genesis 6:14-15 shows that it was enormous. In TGF there are calculations that show it was equal in size to modern ocean-going vessels. Its volume was so great that it equaled the volume of 522 railroad stock cars! TGF authors show that pairs of each species of animal living today would fit in far less than 100 railroad stock cars.[3] Why this enormous size if the flood were only local?



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Not only was the Ark huge, but its design was very distinctive compared with the "arks" of pagan flood-myths. Pagan stories tell of different boats with odd shapes varying from perfect cubes to rafts. None show any sense of hydrodynamical stability to keep from capsizing in rough water. Morris has shown with standard hydrodynamical equations that the Genesis 6:14-15 dimensions imply very great stability against capsizing.[4]

Another detail reported in the Bible's flood story is how the Ark was sealed. It was covered inside and outside with some sort of pitch called by a name in the Hebrew that is related to the word for "atonement" (Gen. 6:14). After the Ark was loaded, there is the strange text that reads: "And the LORD shut him in" (Gen. 7:16). Quite in contrast to Hollywood movies like "The Bible" that show Noah shutting the side door with a pulley contraption, the Bible reports that an unusual sealing took place directly by the hand of God.

The purpose of the Ark can be more readily appreciated today than ever before because of our new realization of genetic science. The taking of pairs of every "kind" of animal saved a selected gene pool of animal life. Man as lord of creation who was to rule the earth (Gen. 1:26-28) was used by God as the vehicle for saving the gene pool of the entire animal kingdom. The Ark salvation of the animal kingdom was the greatest ecological act of human history. Incidentally, this detail also shows why the Bible allows for so-called microevolution or adaptive diversification. Every variation of animal today came from the Ark's gene pool of original pairs. Such adaptability reveals the efficiency of God's creation design so that the entire gene pool could be collected in a relatively small volume.

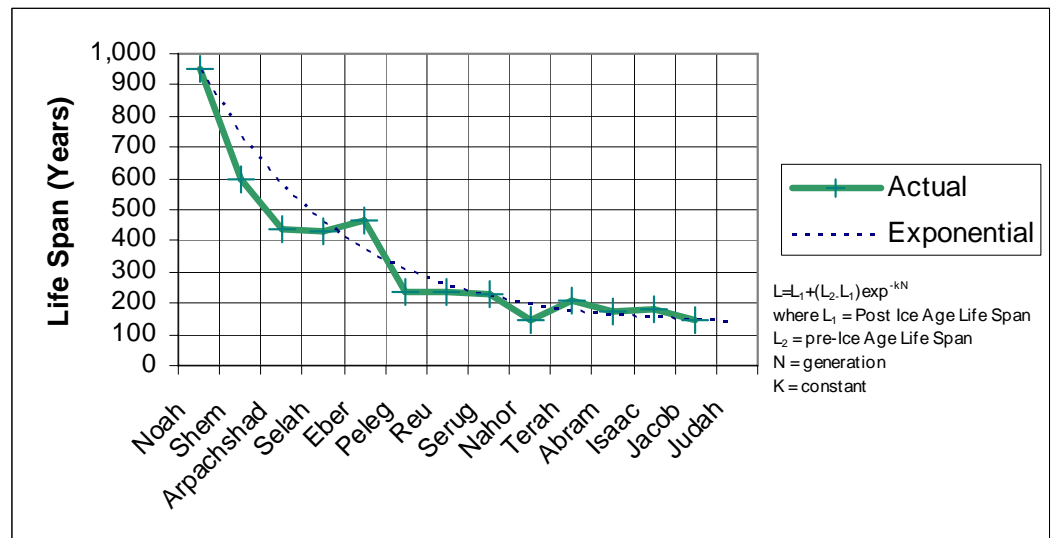
3. The Distinctive Commentary of Peter. Overlooked in most of the global-local flood debate is the commentary of the Apostle Peter. TGF authors brought Peter's comments on the Genesis flood narrative back into the discussion, and I know of no critic who has ever answered them. Peter must have been heavily influenced by Jesus' use of the flood as a picture of the future judgment (Luke 17:26-27). He wrote of it as an illustration of baptism and resurrection (I Pet. 3:20).

His most incisive comments are given in II Peter 3:4-7. He begins by warning his readers against the old pagan notion of the continuity of nature in verse 4, that man can universalize his finite, local knowledge of natural processes. No, says Peter, nature has been structured by God for his future acts of judgment. In verses 5 and 7, he distinguishes this present world ("the heavens and the earth which are now") from the antediluvian world ("the heavens were of old and the earth. . ."). By using the vocabulary of Genesis 1:1 ("heavens and earth"), Peter teaches that the flood event marked off two eras of history for not only the planet earth but also the entire heavens!

Peter, in other words, interprets Genesis 6-8 as referring to a truly cosmic cataclysm. Far from minimizing it as the accommodationists do, he makes it appear even greater than it appears at a first reading of Genesis. He speaks of the "world that then was" in verse 6 as being completely destroyed. Then he moves on to speak of the final days of judgment upon this present universe. It is the universe, not just planet earth, that suffers from the past flood intervention and future fire intervention. If with the accommodationists you make the flood a local Mesopotamian Valley overflow, then consistency would require you to minimize the coming future fiery judgment with all its details in the book of Revelation.

4. The Distinctive Features of the Antediluvian World. A careful reading of Genesis 4-9 will show several geophysical features of the pre-flood world that sharply contrast with the present environment of this planet. Before the flood both man and nature differed radically from present man and nature. So great are the differences, so distinctive does this strange world of Genesis 4-9 appear to modern eyes, that many unbelieving scholars have called this pre-flood world a "mythical land" in a "mythical age".

Here are some observations straight from the text. Foremost among the differences are the phenomenally great lifespans of man before the flood (compare Gen. 5 and 11). Using simple curve fitting techniques with the life



(Diagram courtesy of Stephan Esmond, PE)

spans given in the biblical text, you can observe the significant change that happened with the flood. Engineering and science students will recognize the familiar "exponential decay curve" form here, a form usually seen when a physical system transitions from one steady-state to another. No mere Mesopotamian Valley inundation or local calendar change could cause this effect! Something radical happened to human physiology. Not only man but nature, too, was different.

Observe the description of the garden of Eden in Genesis 2:8-15 and 3:24. Note that the garden is "in" a region called Eden. Inside this region a "mist" would periodically rise from the earth and water the "whole ground" (2:6). The Hebrew word here for mist is not well defined; cognate usage suggests another translation--a spring bubbling up from the ground. Trace where the water goes: four rivers diverge from out of Eden with some names Noah and his sons apparently used to name our postdiluvian rivers and land areas. Rivers only diverge from mountainous areas. Eden must have been at high altitude (cf. Ezek. 28:13-14). And the source of water was not rain, but apparently a subterranean fountain (Gen. 2:5-6). This strange hydrologic cycle of artesian wells supplying the major river systems (rather than rain) appears again in the New Earth to come (Rev. 22:1-2). The Bible student can't help recalling the imagery of eternal life as a "well of water springing up" (John 4:14).

Another feature of nature is the shift in climate. While no rain occurs before the flood (Gen. 2:5-6), storms of all sorts become a normal occurrence afterward (Gen. 8:22; 9:14-16). These observations recorded in the biblical text have a remarkable physical consistency that belies all attempts to label them as mythological speculations. The optics of a rainbow require water droplets of a size sufficient to fall out as rain. The first occurrence of a bow would be consistent with no previous rain. A first occurrence of seasonal temperature differences would be consistent with a prior calm climate with no strong winds and small temperature contrasts. (In Part III of this series I discuss a possible scenario for the early postflood climate which explains the evidence for "ice ages" and termination of the so-called prehistoric plants and animals.)

A straightforward interpretation of Genesis 4-9 continues the tension begun with Genesis 1-3. This narrative simply defies all attempts to accommodate it to modern historical science. The flood event was a massive discontinuity in universal history. It was a total intervention. Modern historical science, following the skeptics of Peter's day (II Pet. 3:4), insists upon ultimate continuity and freedom from any such disturbance in what is called "natural law".

Either the Bible or modern historical science is very, very wrong. A further defense of a literal interpretation of Genesis may be found in Appendix A; the conflict with biological evolution in Appendix B; the conflict with cosmic evolution in Appendix C; and the conflict with historical geology in Appendix D. In all cases you must be aware of what I spoke of in the very first chapter and of what we have learned through the events of creation, fall, and flood: two very distinct mentalities exist among men--pagan and biblical--and these mentalities affect every area of thought including the language of science and history.

## GOD'S INTERVENTION OF JUDGMENT AND SALVATION

Lesson 20

From these very early foundations come the primary revelation of how God intervenes to damn and to save. These two opposite works always occur together. You will never see one without the other because both are necessary to separate man and nature from the domain of evil. Evil can never be brought along into the permanent Presence of God; it forever must be excluded. The obvious problem in salvation is how to exclude evil without excluding creatures who have sinned. How can God separate corruption from incorruption?

The pagan mind of rebellious flesh can't correctly diagnose the problem. By "forgetting" creation, paganism substitutes an idolatrous Continuity of Being in which both "God" (if acknowledged at all) and man are encased in an ultimate mystery which neither can fully understand nor control. By "forgetting" the fall, paganism renders evil unavoidable and man irresponsible. Out of this confusion any talk of salvation must remain trivial. Any proposed salvation is merely a relative thing: more good works than someone else; less pain with whatever the gimmick than without it; etc. There is no intervention from "outside" because there is no outside from which salvation could come. Thus all non-biblical religions never fundamentally deal with salvation.

To make as clear as possible the biblical view of judgment-salvation, I turn to five characteristics found in the Noahic flood event that re-occur again and again with every saving work of God throughout history. Master these pictures, and you will know the gospel as never before!

Lesson 21



see p. 132 for full size slide

1. Grace before Judgment. Prior to the flood judgment Noah's generation had received the clear warnings of Enoch (Jude 1:14-15). For about a century this generation had seen Noah building the Ark and preaching righteousness (Gen. 6:3; cf. II Pet. 2:5). God never intervenes without graciously providing an adequate warning. The first occurrence in the Bible of the word grace, in fact, is in Genesis 6:8. Grace is the temporary extension of His eternal attribute of love into an evil environment.

Here is a vital principle in God's economy. Grace is only the temporary extension of His love, not an eternal extension. Grace is as "abnormal" as evil is. His permission of evil is limited. Eventually, the limit is reached. When that day comes, the day of grace is over. No further opportunity to repent and believe is left (II Pet. 3:9 cf. Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27). In that day God's justice will be acknowledged (Rev. 16:5), and the "problem" of evil will go away because evil will go away.

The assurance of this future judgment added to our knowledge of the creation and fall provides a powerful framework for faithful living. Evil can now be seen as limited at both extremes--the past and the future. Whatever the purposes of God in making use of the evil which the creature started (remember the eleven patterns of suffering in the last chapter), it is not because He is impotent or negligent. It has much to do with His love toward those creatures for whom He has provided salvation from evil. Picture Noah's generation hearing and seeing the message of the Ark and coming judgment for insight into God's gracious extension of his love!

2. Perfect Discrimination. A second characteristic of God's intervention work is His ability to discriminate perfectly between those to be saved and those to be condemned. In the Genesis flood story, only those who responded to Noah's preaching were saved. As Peter observed:

*"[God] preserved Noah. . .with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly. . .The Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment." (II Pet. 2:5b,9)*

Divine intervention, then, is not a statistical approximation, nor is it an indiscriminate catastrophe upon numerous innocent victims. After all, judgment is an act proceeding out of His attribute of holiness, the archetype of the conscience and human moral judgment. It should not surprise us to find that His judgment is sharper and more discerning than the most careful moral judgment any man could ever make.

You must see that the judgment-salvation intervention of the flood and of the last days is not like ordinary mishaps of natural evil today. These are special acts of God with clearly miraculous features. They dramatically show how He can surgically cut out all evil when He so chooses. Think of the eight people riding out the flood cataclysm inside the Ark while millions perished outside in the rising waters for a vivid picture of the discriminating holiness of God.



3. Only One Way of Salvation. No characteristic of biblical salvation is more debated and mocked by pagans than the insistence that one and only one way of salvation exists. Of course this mockery is consistent with the entire pagan story because salvation within paganism is a small, relative triviality. On such a basis there ought to be an entire cafeteria of salvations, not just one.

On the biblical basis, however, the nature of salvation must be a radical divine intervention because of the situation of the fallen creation. Any salvation plan must come from the One Who originally created the universe prior to evil's origin; it must come from "outside". Thus the design of the Ark was directly revealed to Noah from the Omniscient One Who knew more about naval design than any human expert (Gen. 6:14-16). Only God is qualified to design a plan sufficient to save from the judgment He Himself is about to bring forth.

Eight people were saved only because they were in the divinely-designed Ark that would not capsize in turbulent water. The entire gene pool of man and land animals was preserved only because the Ark volume was large enough to hold them. How could Noah or anyone else speculate on a future discontinuity in the history of the universe accurately enough to design any other way of escape? The one way of salvation had to cope with geological upheaval, turbulent flood waters on a global scale, survival of a gene pool adequate to populate the next world, and correspond in design to the ultimate saving work of Christ. Limited human knowledge is utterly incapable of creating a way of salvation from such a complex of factors none of which had yet been experienced. In modern terms, the Ark had to be designed to meet things outside of man's "event horizon."

4. Replacement of the Whole World. Biblical salvation is often confused with subjective religious experience. It often is seen by the pagan world as no more than an interesting psychological phenomenon not at all unique to Christianity. If you will let it, the flood event will demolish that erroneous thinking in your heart.

You saw in both Peter's commentary and the various reports in Genesis 1-9 that the entire cosmos was changed. For Peter there are two entirely different universes--before and after. The planet's geography, climate, and biological ecosystem were radically changed. The psychological state of the eight passengers on the Ark was only a tiny part of the whole.

The reason, of course, is that biblical salvation is realistic salvation grounded upon the truth of what evil has done in the universe. Biblical salvation is built upon the events of creation and fall. For the Christian creation and sin's damage exist throughout the physical environment as well

as throughout the psychological environment. Real salvation, therefore, must deal with both. It would be no salvation at all if it did not deal with the eradication of evil "as far as the curse is found". Here you observe the omnipotence of God at work.

5. Appropriation by Faith. Only if you grasp all that has gone before about God's judgmental and saving intervention will you heartily conclude that you can only partake by faith and faith alone. If and only if there is the Creator-creature distinction so that He is "outside" . . . ; if and only if the creature originated evil in a fall that has spread everywhere. . . ; if and only if God's intervention involved His divine attributes at every point. . . then faith is the only means a creature has of appropriating His saving work. Mix yourself up on any of these prior truths, as paganism and Christian heresies do, and you will try to add your good works to the package.

Noah had to respond to God's "abnormal" extension of His love toward an evil world by believing it enough to start preparing (Heb. 11:7). He had to respond to God's holiness by preaching righteous standards over against his world's evil standards (I Pet. 2:5). He had to respond to God's omniscience by following God's design when he was building the Ark (Heb. 11:7). He had to respond to God's omnipotence by letting God bring the animals to him and leaving the shutting of the Ark to God (Gen. 6:20; 7:16-17).

Noah did not try to use his human love and pity for his neighbors and the environment; he trusted in God's love. He did not make his own moral judgments over who should and who should not be saved; he trusted God's holiness. He did not use his knowledge as the final criteria in designing the Ark; he trusted in God's omniscience. He did not attempt to meet the evil of his day by his own energy; he trusted God's power to destroy it. At point after point Noah believed God.

This does not mean that his faith was perfect. Imagine as the first rain fell and as the Ark lurched loose from its mooring Noah and his family questioning whether it would be sufficient. Their subjective faith might fail momentarily, but did that jeopardize their objective safety once they were in the Ark? Did their inner psychological state affect their external safety from the flood? Once in the Ark their faith affected only whether they would ride the flood waters with relaxed confidence or tense fear and worry. It did not affect their safety or their destination!

The saving work of God, then, must be responded to by faith in order for it to remain the work of God. Any addition of human works merely confuses the issue and is wholly useless anyway. And what is the object of this faith? God Himself, the Infinite-Personal Creator over all. Such faith must not be

confused with your psychological state or your emotions, although obviously it ought to affect them. True faith issues forth, not from an emotional feeling, but from a conviction that the God of the Bible with all of His revealed attributes is there, calling to you.

When God intervenes to judge and to save, these five characteristics are usually quite obvious. Learn them well. You will appreciate the gospel so much more and will anticipate its completion with the return of Christ to judge the world.

Sadly, the very evidence of God's first cataclysmic intervention in Noah's day lies buried underneath mankind's feet in most places of the earth. The thousands of feet of sedimentary rock, full of the signs of violent death, are like the layers of unbelief in the human heart that hide revelation of God's "ever working power and godhead" (Rom. 1:20). Faced with both evidences of God's intervention, the pagan mind of flesh keeps on insisting upon the "safe" Continuity of Being (II Pet. 3:4).

### **Exercise 5.1**

- 1. State the arguments for and against a global flood interpretation of Genesis 6-8.**
  
- 2. Numerous parallels exist between Noah's family "in" the Ark and New Testament believers "in" Christ. Look at the following suggestions and elaborate on what you observe; add your own suggestions.**
  - a. The word "pitch" (Gen. 6:14) is closely related to the word "atonement" (Lev. 17:11).**
  - b. The Lord shut in Noah's family (Gen. 7:16); the Holy Spirit seals (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30).**
  - c. The flood waters saved Noah and judged the ungodly; the future resurrection saves believers and damns unbeliever (John 5:28-29).**
  - d. The flood and baptism seem closely related in the New Testament (I Pet. 3:20-21).**
  
- 3. If you are interested in the scientific problems of Genesis 1-9, look at Appendices B, C, and D.**

### **END NOTES FOR CHAPTER 5**

1. Walter R. Hearn, "Review of The Genesis Flood," Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation, XVI, No. 1 (March, 1964), 29.

2. John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris, The Genesis Flood (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1961, p. 1f.
3. Ibid., p. 69.
4. Henry M. Morris, "The Ark of Noah," Creation Research Society Quarterly, VIII (Sept., 1971), 142-4. Critics of the Bible love to mock the Ark story by citing alleged problems of eight people trying to care for "millions" of animals with their special diets and excreta. Recently a seven-year study has been published giving a detailed response to all of these sorts of arguments by John Woodmorappe, Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study (El Cajon, CA.: Institute for Creation Research, 1996).

## CHAPTER 6: THE COVENANT: THE BURIED TRUTH OF THE NEW WORLD

Lesson 22

After the mighty intervention of God in the global flood, the "saved" world that resulted was a radically new heavens and earth. Thus in Genesis 1-9 we are given a mini-panorama of cosmic history: creation, fall, judgment/salvation, and the new world. Please note that the entire creation, both man and nature, is involved at each step. Salvation does not concern just Adam, Eve, and Noah's family and their "religious experiences"; it concerns the very structure of the physical environment in which they lived.

Individual, personal salvation in the Bible is inextricably linked to cosmic salvation. As goes man, so goes nature. Man sins; nature is cursed. Man is saved; nature is transformed. The resurrection of Christ is the first piece of the coming resurrection of all mankind--some to life, some to damnation. Following the same man-nature pattern, the universe, too, will be "resurrected" and re-created as Peter taught (II Pet. 3:7-13; cf. Rev. 20-22). Learn to see your personal involvement in the God's grace as part of the larger picture!

In this, the last chapter of Part II of the Biblical Framework course, I complete the foundational portion of biblical history that the pagan mind has buried to avoid all serious contemplation. From the creation to the origin of what we now call "the cradle of civilization" is a historical period visible outside the Bible only in a greatly mutilated form as man's "mythical past" or in a completely reinterpreted form as man's "evolutionary development". The truth is that our present civilization arose from the (then) new world of Noah's family. To understand its most basic structure, you must see it as it was in the beginning.

After the flood God spoke again to Noah. He spoke in terms of a world-wide covenant that grounds all things upon personal promises and sacrificial atonement. After studying the structure of this covenant, I will explore the implications for our physical environment and how the carnal mind has transformed His covenantal promises into impersonal "natural law". Finally, I note the expanded responsibility given to the saved human family in this new world. To prepare for this study, please read Genesis 8-9 and Psalm 104.

### GOD'S COVENANT WITH THE NEW WORLD

Although sin and the curse remained, the new world was given security from a repeated flood intervention. Once judged and transformed, it would never be so threatened again. Here is a preliminary and partial picture of the

ultimate cosmic salvation yet to come. Judgment and deliverance will be final, never to be repeated again. And the basis of such security is clearly the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the Cross mirrored in the structure of God's covenant given in Noah's day.

The covenant of Genesis 9 is the first mention of a covenant in the Bible. A covenant is a contract. Contracts in the ancient world were made between families (Gen. 21:22-24), between nations (Hos. 12:1), or between a monarch and his subjects (II Sam. 5:3). Although covenants (or treaties) have been widely used in history, the father of American biblical archeology, W. F. Albright, makes the stunning observation: "Only the Hebrews, so far as we know, made covenants with their gods or God." [1] Why do contracts between God and man occur only in the Bible? (Even today this amazing fact is remembered in the title "testament" given to the Bible.)

Only the Hebrews had preserved for them the full revelation of the infinite-personal Creator that kept the Creator-creature distinction and absolute personal sovereignty. As we noted in Chapter 1 above, the universal pagan tendency was to lose hold of these truths and replace them with the Continuity of Being and impersonal chance. With whom would pagan man have a contract—a god or goddess who might be overthrown tomorrow? To have any such divine-human contract, you have to have a sovereign, omnipotent, Creator over all.

The preconditions for a contract between God and man include not only the Creator's attributes but a relationship that must be verified with a witnessed record of compliance to specific terms. People and nations make contracts and treaties when either there has been a ruptured relationship in the past or there is a threat of discord in the future. Thus the covenant form was introduced with Noah, not Adam. Only after the fall and the flood could the necessity of a covenant be appreciated. This first covenant mentioned in the Bible is a sort of verifiable "peace treaty" made after God's triumphant war over evil. From this point on, He is known as a "covenant-keeping" God Whose behavior can be verified by actual historical record.

Let's look at the covenant structure to see what it speaks about God and our relationship with Him. There are at least four parts to biblical covenants: the parties, a signing, legal terms, and a founding sacrifice.

### **1. The Parties to the New World Covenant.**

The covenant of Genesis 9 is made not only with Noah but with all of his descendants, the entire human race that came after him (Gen. 9:9). This means that every tribe and nation on earth is related to God through this covenant by virtue of their physical descent from Noah's family. Thus Paul

in his evangelism to Greeks used this "Noahic" covenant relationship as a stepping-stone to the gospel (Acts 17:26).

Every nation and tribe has its past history anchored to biblical revelation through Noah. Gentile Job and his friends remembered this heritage (Job 22:15-17; 26:10-12; 38:8-11). Isaiah insisted that a line of unbroken revelation had always been present (Isa. 40:21) and that this covenant is archetypical of all future promises of God (Isa. 54:9). As late as the Exile, Ezekiel remembered Noah as one of three great saints known to the nations (Ezk. 14:14,20).

Unlike later covenants, however, this covenant was not made with only humankind; it was made with all animals, too (Gen. 9:2,10,16,17). The original creation order of man and animals is re-established in the new world. Animals as well as men are addressed by God in specific terms discussed below.

## **2. The Signing of the New World Covenant**

Each covenant is signed by the parties responsible for carrying out its terms. In the instance of the covenant in Noah's day, God alone signed it, not the other parties. God alone is making the promises, and God alone is responsible to be faithful to it. His "signature" is a manifestation of His glory throughout all the earth to every nation: the rainbow (Gen. 9:12-17).

As I mentioned in Chapter 5, the origin of the rainbow after the flood has great significance. The rainbow testifies to a fundamental change in the earth's climate, but it does more than that. The optical phenomena we call the rainbow is actually a limited version of the glory of God surrounding His throne. Ezekiel reports rainbow-like quality of His throne's glory (Ezk. 1:28) and so does the Apostle John (Rev. 4:3).

The significance of the rainbow, then, is that it reveals some of the glory of God Himself! It was added to the new world that survived the flood judgment as a sign of His Presence in a new way. Analogously, in the final New Universe to come, His Glory will be so great that there will be no need for sun or moon (Rev. 21:23).

## **3. The Legal Terms of the New World Covenant.**

What did God promise that would be open to verification? The legal content given was that neither the earth nor the animals nor man would ever again be judged by a global flood (Gen. 9:11,15-16). In the section below I will show just how vast the implications are for the physical universe. This promise expresses the total sovereign omnipotence of God over all the universe, including all chaos and natural evil.

It is against this backdrop that God is trusted more than idols by the saints throughout the rest of the Bible. From the standpoint of believers who lived after Noah, this covenant promise to contain the threatening powers of nature became amalgamated with God's original creation work. In Psalm 104, for example, His creating work (104:3-5), the flood judgment (104:6-9), and His providential rule (104:10-30) are all intermingled in praise to God and His judging work (104:1-2, 31-35).

Through Isaiah God speaks of His saving work being as reliable as His promises in this covenant (Isa. 54). The covenant given to the new world in Noah's day was a basis and foreview of the ultimate covenant of peace with the redeemed forever (54:9-10).

In Psalm 29 we see the point very clearly. Even the angels are called to join in praise to God (29:1-2). God's glory centers in this psalm in His voice (note the many references). His Word dominates all things, including the flood cataclysm (29:10). And the conclusion of the matter? He will bless His people with peace (29:11). Viewed in the light of these Old Testament passages Jesus' calming of the storm on the Sea of Galilee takes on deepened significance (Mark 4:35-41).

The terms of this first covenant point to God's ability to save us and establish us in peace forever. The metaphorical implications are powerfully helpful to encourage us in the Christian life.

#### **4. The Founding Sacrifice of the New World Covenant**

The last characteristic of the covenant structure is that it is founded upon a blood sacrifice. Noah was instructed to take aboard the Ark seven of the clean animals for sacrifice instead of just a pair as he did with all the other animals (Gen. 7:2-3). These especially-selected animals would have to be preserved in spite of their immediate usage in sacrificial worship. After the flood Noah built an altar for sacrifice to the Lord (Gen. 8:20). By the expression "the Lord smelled the soothing aroma" we understand His satisfaction (propitiation) with this sacrifice. Only after this event, does He establish His covenant.

Biblical covenants are with fallen men so they necessarily must be established on a graciously-supplied, founding sacrifice. No biblical covenants are bloodless. Man's righteous acts are thereby excluded as the basis of relationship. The covenant of Noah's day dramatically reveals that the preservation of all life, including the life of unbelievers, is due to an atoning work. Here you see a foreview of the atoning work of Jesus Christ as the basis for every blessing fallen man enjoys (I Tim. 4:10).



### Exercise 6.1

1. Go back and review the pagan texts we studied in Chapters 2 and 4. Try to devise what a covenant would look like between the pagan gods and man. What problems arise?
2. If biblical covenants establish a framework of verifiability (that is, the behavior of the parties involved is to be checked), what implications does this principle have about every historical text in the Bible?

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE COVENANT FOR NATURE

Lesson 23

God's covenant with the new world concerns nature as well as man. The natural environment of this world is often used as the source of metaphors about spiritual truths. The Psalms, for example, use the imagery of the storms of life much as we still do in our language (Ps. 32:6; 124:4-5; 144:7). The sea is used as a picture of unstable humanity, vulnerable to any wind of spiritual influence in Daniel 7. Use of the sea/flood metaphor carries meaning inherited from this covenantal arrangement in Noah's day. So what do we learn about our natural environment from Genesis 8-9 that informs later metaphors?

### Nature Is Bounded By the Word of God

A covenant is open to verification. God's new world covenant promises that natural environmental processes will behave in certain ways and not other ways. All mankind will be able to check this behavior. Verification of this covenant verifies God's faithfulness to His Word which then becomes the basis of all future covenants (Isa. 54:9). Either His Word must control all natural processes, or the rest of the biblical revelation is meaningless.

You learned in Chapter 3 the biblical view of nature. The biblical view of nature differs radically from that of paganism in both its ancient and modern forms. Paganism always attempts the impossible. It tries to universalize local knowledge without any logical justification for doing so. Scientifically-derived natural histories have to lay out a set of constants (basic physical laws, speed of light, logical rules, etc.) in order to build themselves. On what basis?

Paganism, both ancient and modern, inevitably transforms the Creator-creature distinction and God's Personal Sovereign rule into some sort of Continuity of Being and Impersonal Chance. Of course, the doctrines of the Continuity of Being and Impersonal Chance are claims to universal knowledge. Yet on neither basis is there room for establishing true universals which are the preconditions for any knowledge!

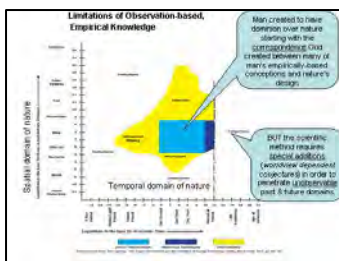
The biblical view of nature resolves the problem of universals and constants in the immutability of the Creator. God's mind, not man's, is the source of rationality. With the New world covenant we learn more details of this biblical view of nature. Now we have not only the abstract idea of natural constants, but we are given concrete specific constants open to observational verification. Clearly, His spoken words establish universal natural boundaries. No promise of immunity to global flooding on planet earth will work unless every part of extra-terrestrial space is under control of the Promiser.

If, for example, God was like some local pagan deity and controlled momentarily only the earth, He could not guarantee that some extra-terrestrial force would not interfere with the earth and cause a global flood. An asteroid from beyond the earth could pass by causing a gravitational tide sweeping all land under water. Mere local control is insufficient so the covenantal promises must actually be true universals valid throughout all the universe.

However, while God's covenantal promises are spatial universal constants, they are not temporal universals. They are valid for post-diluvian history only. They apparently did not hold for the antediluvian world, nor will they hold for the Eternal World yet to come. Between the flood and the return of Christ there is a certain boundary on geophysical processes that cannot be violated.

It is just at this point that we escalate the battle with paganism. Paganism as the product of the carnal mind at enmity with God can't stand awareness of His sovereign, omnipotent Word. It thus substitutes for the present experience of geophysical stability the idol of what is called "natural law." Paganism here uses the metaphor of human legislation to name its apostate attempt at getting universal constants. Not only does paganism err in converting God's personal Word into an impersonal process, it errs in thinking that these present processes have operated and will operate in much the same way forever. Peter paraphrased this idolatry as the belief "that all things continue from the beginning of creation" (II Pet. 3:4).

In short, the covenant of Noah's day challenges every pagan view of nature because it insists that the real "universal" is not some metaphorical natural law but the Word of the personal Creator. It thus frustrates modern methods of creating natural histories all of which try to universalize local human experience and reason without justification. Let's look at some of the specific promises made in this covenant to contrast them with the natural law proposal of paganism.



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## The New Heavens and the New Earth

When I argued for the global flood interpretation of Genesis 6-8 in Chapter 5, I noted that the antediluvian world distinctively differed from the present one. The heavens, as well as the earth, were changed according to Peter's interpretation. The involvement of the heavens, as I just pointed out above, should not be surprising to anyone who is aware of the interaction between the earth and the rest of the universe. To radically change the earth without also changing the rest of the universe would be impossible.

The heavens now support the "no-global-flood" earth. Astronomical bodies will never interfere with the earth in such a way to cause global flood-tides. Any such disturbing activity will be suppressed. Genesis 8:22 specifically claims that daily and seasonal cycles will continue. All of these promises require boundaries on the movement and changes of every astronomical body, boundaries which form the core of all astronomical observations today.

The earth itself has radically changed. Instead of the strange hydrologic cycle involving artesian-like wells and diverging rivers from the highlands of Eden (see Chapter 5 discussion), we have widespread precipitation and a different river/continental configuration. (The present Tigris and Euphrates river systems must have been named from the antediluvian rivers by Noah's family after leaving the Ararat highlands.) Something about the new terrestrial climate profoundly lowered human longevity as noted in the last chapter and likely had a similar effect throughout the biosphere. All mankind now lives in a new geophysical/biochemical steady-state bounded by God's verbal promises.

## Spiritual Lessons from the Physical Environment

The introduction of the rainbow with its beautiful optical phenomena brands the present terrestrial atmosphere with the mark of God's throne, a constant sign to all of Noah's descendants everywhere. This divine "signature", by differentially refracting white light into many colors, physically demonstrates how the watery elements of judgment only serve to bring out new aspects of God's glory!

When later Scripture utilizes metaphors of storm and flood, it does so with the understanding that these manifestations of natural evil are so under God's personal, sovereign control that they can't help but bring out more revelation about Who God is. A stunning example occurred when Jesus stilled the Sea of Galilee storm with a mere spoken word. The Galilean storm only served to reveal the greater glory of the God of Noah as the Incarnate One. With a mere word, He can still the spiritual storms in our hearts today.

God promised that the post-flood world would not suffer any further cursing (Gen. 8:21). Natural evils that now occur--storms, floods,

earthquakes, disease--are outworkings of the fall and after-effects of the flood. They are not further cursings by God. Mankind now lives in a stable environment compared to the past and to the future transformation yet to come. There is a "Noahic order" to our environment that empirically testifies to the covenant-keeping Creator Who sits on the Throne. Now is the time to trust in His demonstrated trustworthiness.

### Exercise 6.2

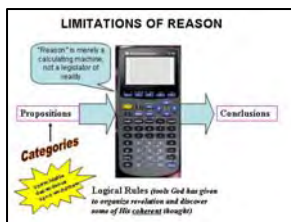
1. The covenant implications for nature spell out a biblical alternative to the modern methodologies for constructing natural histories. Before reading Appendices B, C, and D, see if you can figure out what it is. How should one proceed who wants to reconstruct the past history of geophysical systems? What do you start with? Why? How far can this biblical method be taken? What are its limits?

2. After working with question #1, pick some area of natural history you are interested in, say biology or geology. From what you have read in this area, how does modern paganism start out? Why? How far can this pagan method be taken? What are its limits?

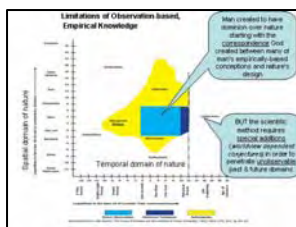
Lesson 24

3. This series of studies has the objective of furthering "worship and obedience in an age of global deception." What have you learned about the deception of the pagan mind? What specific examples from modern thought can you now give to Paul's words in Romans 1:21-23?

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE COVENANT FOR MAN



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see p.132 for full size slide

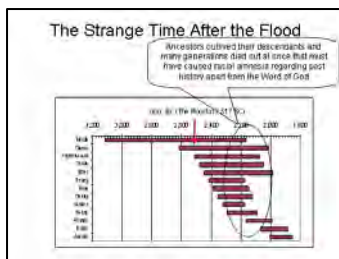
Although it spoke to the natural environment, God's covenant with the new world centered, of course, upon man. Man alone among all other creatures is theomorphic. I pointed out in Chapter 3 that man is uniquely designed. He is an image of God in both body and spirit. Through his body man rules nature. Through his spirit he communes with God and other persons. His spirit possesses characteristics such as choice, conscience, love, and knowledge that are finite replicas of God's divine attributes.

As a descended progeny of Adam, all men share in special social structures which in Chapter 3 I called divine institutions. Far from mere arbitrary social conventions, these divine institutions have had revelatory functions from the the first moment of man's creation. We studied three—responsible dominion, marriage, and family--that were given in Genesis 1-2.

In Chapter 4 I discussed how the fall ruined man's design and his divine institutions. We have become abnormal in every way, requiring a salvation so radical it can truly be called a re-creation. We need both regeneration of the spirit and resurrection of the body. These saving actions, however, do not change the basic thrust of man's original design and purpose. Salvation is not an end in itself; it is to enable man to fulfill his original purpose as the lord of creation. Let's look at the interpretive problem of understanding how Noah's family started our present civilization. Then I will show how God empowered them to do just that.

The Interpretive Problem of Understanding How Noah Founded of Present Civilization. When Noah, his family, and the animals which were saved along with him stepped into the new heavens and earth, they were to start anew what had begun in Eden. Only this time from the very beginning there was full knowledge of good and evil, of the effects of sin, of God's wrath and judgment upon it, of His gracious deliverance of those who trust Him with their lives, and of the need for a sacrifice that pleases Him (Gen. 8:20-22).

It is very hard for us who have been raised with strong pagan influences in historical interpretation to even imagine the basics of what Noah and his family accomplished for us. One scholar who has studied Noah's contribution to the origin of civilization intensively for over 30 years is Dr. John Pilkey, professor of English literature at Los Angeles Baptist College.



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Pilkey has gone back to a Bible-based historical school of scholarship known as the "euhemerist movement" that flourished in Europe from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. Euhemerist scholars sought to interpret ancient history through the eyes of Genesis 9-11. They believed that stories of pagan gods were actually garbled tales of the civilization-founding activities of Noah and his sons.

If you remember the graph in Chapter 5 of the longevity-decline of man after the flood, there is a striking anomaly in it. During the decline in longevity between Noah and Abraham, grandfathers outlived their grandsons--a never-to-be-repeated experience in human history. This strange era, the euhemerists believed, was the key to understanding how ancient civilization "exploded" into view. It also furnishes the clue to deciphering the tribal myths found around the world.

If there were only a few centuries between Noah and Abraham, then ancient civilization in Egypt and elsewhere must have been established rapidly. Such rapid development of society could only have occurred if there was brilliant (Pilkey calls it "charismatic") leadership--architects, engineers, farmers, and political leaders--who spread out quickly into the earth to

subdue it. Pilkey notes that such a brilliant core family behind the rapid origin of our civilization is inconceivable to modern man. We cannot accept the total "godlike" authority that would have been required for such a project because of our democratic ideals:

*"Noah's family has not been clearly conceptualized because there is something truly frightening about such a family to scholars of the modern democratic era. . . .The fear of falling victim to merciless despotism is the democratic soul of evolutionary thought, which refers the origin and maintenance of civilization to gradual or powerless processes rather than to charismatic power. A fourth millennium Pharaoh Menes is a harmless cipher; a third millennium Pharaoh Menes is part of a sublime and terrifying spectacle. The latter chronology implies that Noah's family were empowered to build world civilization overnight. . . .*

*As democrats, we reserve the right to paint emperors in our own image. We do this at the risk of fulfilling the prophecy of Jude who warned that some of us would deny the 'monos despotes' Jesus Christ, through a popular distaste for despotism in general. Prior to the democratic revolutions of the later eighteenth century, scholars found it easier to think clearly about Noah than they do today, despite our advantage in positive evidence. . . .[2]*

To think clearly about Noah starting civilization in the new heavens and earth, means that we can understand the nature of what the Bible calls the "cosmos"--the spiritual and physical order in human society. It all began with saved people delivered from a damned world, and yet it has become something evil in its very structure. Pilkey notes:

*"By viewing Noah as a mere survivor of the Flood rather than a builder of nations, we have not only neglected his 350-year postdiluvian lifetime, but have ignored those spiritual ideas which made the gentile world just that, a designed cosmos. . . .*

*In estimating the spiritual worth of Noah's cosmos, we are faced with the striking fact that its gentile populace, if not the cosmos itself, will survive all subsequent judgments into the millennium and eternal state . . . .On the other hand, the prophecy of Daniel 2:44 reveals that this cosmos, as the seat of political authority, must be destroyed. Gentile political power must yield to the Messiah of Israel and, in doing so, will extinguish a peculiar regime dating back to Noah's postdiluvian lifetime."[2]*

The interpretive challenge to a modern Bible-believing Christian is how to bring his thoughts of history under the obedience of Scripture. In previous chapters we encountered matters of philosophy, language, psychology, and science; now we encounter matters of history. Just how could Noah's family have built present civilization with only a few centuries of effort?

## The Re-installed Divine Institutions

When God made His covenant with the new world, He restated the role of mankind in language similar but not identical to that of Genesis 1.

### 1. The First Divine Institution (Responsible Dominion):

Compare Genesis 1 and 9:

#### Genesis 1:28-30

"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

#### Genesis 9:1-4

"Be fruitful and multiply and and fill the earth.  
And the fear of you shall be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given.  
Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you as I have the green plant.  
Only you shall not eat the flesh with its life, that is its blood."

Institution	Creation	Fall	Post-flood
Responsible dominion	channel of spiritual growth & reign under God	spiritual growth under conflict	spiritual growth under conflict, 90% reduction in lifespan
Marriage	channel of spiritual growth & propagation of race	husband & wife each suffer separately & conflict together	husband & wife each suffer separately & conflict together
Family	channel of spiritual & cultural growth	dysfunctional	dysfunctional
Civil authority to take life	—	—	given to fallen man

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Then God said, "Behold, I have given every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you."

Besides the obvious re-installation of man's dominion over the earth, there is a new theme of living creatures' fear of being eaten by man. The "Noahic new world order" is a carnivorous one. Nevertheless, as God bounded post-flood nature by His Word, so He bound post-flood man by His Word. Man is not to callously eat flesh with the blood still in it. There are bounds of respect for life that must be observed.

A hunter friend of mine, after studying this passage, told me how it changed the way he hunted. The act of draining the blood from a carcass made him much more aware of the sacrifice that had just been made in order for him to eat. Precisely. The new world order was grounded upon post-fall realities. In exercising dominion from this point forward man is forced to acknowledge his dependence upon substitutionary death. Others must die, that he might live.

God wants us to respect the life that is given up and acknowledge that it is His, not ours. Genesis 9:4 limits our claims on animals when we kill them for food. The only exception is given by Jesus thousands of years later when He said not only to eat His flesh but also to drink His blood (John 6:53-56). His life is wholly given to us in an act so unique that the Church was

commanded to remember it always. Apart from this unique exception, however, man is limited to the flesh, not the blood.

Even this dietary detail of Scripture is challenged by paganism. Over against the Bible's dietary practices of beef, lamb, and fish consumption, paganism often claims that meat-eating is harmful and that vegetarianism should be the norm. The Apostle Paul, however, writes that such vegetarian claims are demonic in origin (I Tim. 4:3). At least one Christian medical counselor reports that vegetarianism seems to be associated in occult religion with heightened spiritist capacities. She has suggested that with the diminished vigor of post-flood human bodies, there is a need for concentrated protein in the diet to endure spiritual conflict.[3]

Not only is man's daily bodily life to be sustained by substitutionary death, but the earth beneath his feet with its fossils speaks of death. Oil as fossilized animal remains is today consumed for energy everywhere. Modern civilization from Noah is built in manifold ways upon death that it might have life. This aspect of the present age is revelatory of God's workings. Paganism rushes in to suppress all awareness of our need as fallen creatures to "feed" on the life of others. Such revelation is too preparatory for the gospel!

2. The Second Divine Institution (Marriage): With the command to multiply and fill the earth God reassured the Noahic order that marriage was to continue. The four men and women who were saved by the Ark brought all the genetic material for the present human race. All racial diversity observed today comes from the DNA of Noah's family. Some scholars think that racial diversity began with the new world for the same reason that striking diversity seems to have occurred in the animal kingdom. From horses and cattle to dogs and cats there has been obvious diversification from the original Ark pairs. Whether this diversification was carried potentially by the Ark inhabitants or was multiplied by post-flood environmental factors is not known.

The occurrence of antediluvian geographic names in the old four-river planetary hydrologic system (Havilah and Cush in Gen. 2:11,13) which occur again in the new post-flood world suggests that perhaps racial diversity did exist prior to the flood. Pilkey has suggested that the four wives in particular may have come from four regions of the old earth. They would have then brought more racial diversity than might be accounted for from Noah and his sons alone.[4]

Whatever role the four women played in repopulating the earth, they were God's chosen co-workers with the four men. Dominion cannot occur without both man and woman working together. Living for many centuries in bodies far more powerful than their children, these four couples pioneered the origin

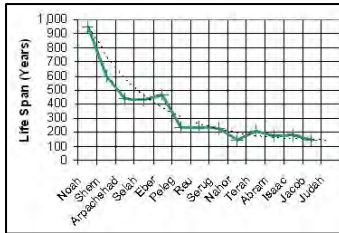


of today's civilization. They transferred all records written or oral of God's Word to our post-flood society. They were the conduit of antediluvian technology--architecture, music, metal-working (see Gen. 4:17-22).

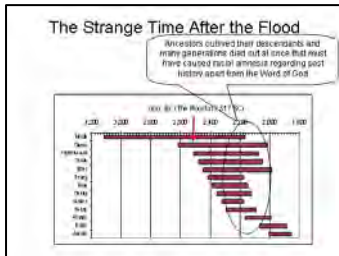
Lesson 25

3. The Third Divine Institution (Family): Along with responsible labor and marriage, the God re-installed the divine institution of family in Noah's day. In Chapters 3 and 4 I noted that the family was created as the basic social unit that exercises dominion but that after the fall it was corrupted. Instead of harmony and a training ground for authority, love, and responsibility, it became a chaotic association that produces rebelliousness, insecurity, and blame-shifting. This tension between how it "ought" to function and how it actually functions was carried into the new world.

Noah's family as the saved social unit was to fill the new earth and rule it. This pioneer family would have enormous power in a way no other family has ever had or ever would have. Due to the declining longevity curve, Noah's family could dominate their weaker children for several generations. The three sons--Shem, Japheth, and Ham--founded all the nations and racial sub-groupings of our present civilization. In Section III of this series I will show in more detail from Genesis 10 and 11 how these three sons shaped history as we know it.



see p.75 for full size diagram



see p.135 for full size diagram

Out of this first post-flood family arose 70 nations (Gen. 10). This pattern of 70 nations was designed by God to anticipate the pattern of 70 sons of the redeeming family of Jacob (Deut. 32:8). Each of these 70 nations carry inherited characteristics from one or more of Noah's three sons. They would do so according to God's purposes for history.

As physically and culturally powerful as it was, however, the Noahic family from the very beginning was spiritually flawed. You glimpse evidence of this flaw in Genesis 9:20-27. Through a fruit of his dominion over the earth, Noah became drunk. One of his sons then dishonored his father. And Noah delivered a prophetic oracle to his sons that outlined all of subsequent human history.

In a microcosm this family incident revealed the spiritual conflict of all postdiluvian civilization. Unlike a pagan story that would feature the founding "god" or king with all of his power and glory, the Bible balances Noah's titular position with his fallen nature. Wine as a fruit of dominion can provide the blessing of happiness and health to man (Ps. 104:15; Isa. 25:6 cf. Jn. 2:1-11; I Tim.5:23), but there are limits on its use (Lev. 10:9; Prov. 31:4-7; Eph.5:18). Dominion requires wise knowledge, and wise knowledge requires obedience to God's interpretation of all things. Man's knowledge, no matter how extensive, forever remains but a finite replica of God's

omniscience. Wine as part of creation, to be used wisely, must be interpreted by what God says about it.

Paganism exalts the carnal mind. Not wanting to be submissive to God's authoritative knowledge, it always attempts to go its own way. Man, it is claimed, should be free to use the creation whatever way he wants to. Does he produce wine? What a wonderful anesthetic for all the suffering in a fallen world! So paganism thanks the god Dionysius for its intoxicating "saving" qualities. By contrast, the Bible treats it soberly as just another part of creation that must be used with wisdom.

Moreover, the biblical narrative reminds us that the founding family also experienced rebelliousness against norms of the conscience. In dishonoring his father by gazing at his nakedness rather than covering him and by brazenly talking about it to his brothers, Ham showed character traits that he would pass on to his descendents. These traits would come to full fruition in one of Ham's sons, Canaan, and his "nation". As Allen Ross writes:

*"As a part of the theological justification for Israel's subjugation of the Canaanites, this passage had great significance. . . .The Torah warned the people of the exodus about the wickedness of the Canaanites in terms that call to mind the violation of Ham (Lev.18:2-6). . . .The constant references to "nakedness" and "uncovering" in this passage in Leviticus, designating the people of Canaan as a people enslaved sexually, clearly reminds the reader of the action of Ham, the father of Canaan. No Israelite who knew the culture of the Canaanites could read the story of their ancestor without making the connection." [5]*

By revealing this flaw in civilization's founding family, the Bible warns us that the cultural glory of the Noahic cosmos lacks spiritual life. Mighty though the Noahic nation builders might be, impressive though their technological accomplishments appear, they were still fallen men in absolute need of spiritual salvation. Not only would their diet require the sacrifice of life, but descendents who unrepentantly followed in sin would themselves be sacrificed. Ham's sin nurtured in Canaan demanded that Canaan be one day exterminated. The Noahic family of nations would have to pass through a future purging of all unbelief, a purging yet to come on a global scale with the return of Christ.

The New Divine Institution. When God re-installed the original divine institutions of Genesis 1-2 after the flood, He added a new one:

*"And surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.'" Genesis 9:5-6*

God transferred to man the responsibility to exercise kingdom authority which today we call "civil government." The source of civil authority is the responsibility to express the wrath of God over destruction of human life with capital punishment.

If an animal's life was to be honored during the eating of meat (Gen. 9:4), then man's life as a replica of God was even more deserving of honor. Whether an animal or another man took a human life, restitution of life for life had to be made. The new heavens and new earth were to be a place where God's image was to be honored. As Creator, God set the theomorphic image of Himself at the creature level just as ancient kings would do (cf. Dan. 3). He expected that image to be honored by every creature, including man himself.

Prior to the flood, human life apparently was left at the mercy of men and angels without kingdom authority. The first murderer, Cain, could not be executed apparently because of lack of this authority (Gen. 4:15). Execution, however, could be done by at least some angels: the angelic guards of the garden of Eden bore the sword (Gen. 3:24). Evidently, the angels and men became corrupted together and anarchy reigned prior to the flood (Gen. 4:23-24; 6:2-5; cf. I Pet. 3:18-20; Jude 6(?)).

After the flood, however, God clearly gave kingship authority to man expressed in his responsibility to exact life for life. A new dispensation in human history had begun; man's dominion was expanded. This new divine institution, unlike the previous three, was a post-fall social structure. It deals with the reality of evil. The civil sword is a ministry of God expressing wrath upon those who practice evil (Rom. 13:4). It is an outer, partial supplement to man's inner conscience (Rom 13:5).

This heightened responsibility which was transferred to Noah's family reveals more about how much man truly is the finite replica of God. The function to rule and judge belongs to God. In Psalm 82, therefore, human rulers are called "gods" in spite of their fallen natures. In the future the redeemed and resurrected saints will judge the angels (I Cor. 6:3) and, with Jesus, shall rule "with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26-27). The present "installment" of this future kingdom authority is this civil government responsibility given through the new world covenant.

The institution of kingship authority was remembered by ancient man. Pilkey writes:

*"The Sumerian king list attests to the [new dispensation of human government], claiming that 'kingship descended from heaven' after the Flood. This descent of power was far more like the Christian Pentecost than*

*we imagine. Its universal gentile symbol was the 'Ka' sign, the pictographic image of a man with arms upraised at the elbows."*[6]

This memory, however, was quickly distorted by the ever working pagan agenda. Under this program man must be the highest authority. God's sign of His throne glory in the rainbow overhead must be ignored and "reinterpreted". Physical and cultural glory of the flesh must eclipse the spiritual concerns of man. Kingship is thus "explained" in ancient paganism as coming from Fate and the gods or in modern paganism as deriving from man-made voluntary covenants or the majority vote of the moment.

The fleshly mind's hatred for this new world order under God shows itself in many ways. With some, it's a lust for the pre-flood anarchy without the "oppressiveness" of civil government. Of course, civil government is vexing to us because it is a post-fall institution that points to our rebelliousness. With others, it's a revulsion over military, police, and capital punishment responsibilities. Even Christians join in the hatred for this fourth divine institution by agreeing that capital punishment is barbaric, unnecessary, and unjust. Let's review the biblical case for capital punishment.

Institution	Creation	Fall	Post-flood
Responsibility/dominion	created of godhead gives to man above: God	fallen: given order: correct	fallen: given order: correct to be restoration in present
Marriage	created of godhead gives to man possession of man	fallen: to have man: nature & correct together	fallen: to have man: nature & correct together
Family	created of godhead gives to man possession of man	fallen: to have man: nature & correct together	fallen: to have man: nature & correct together
Civil authority to take life	—	—	given to man: man

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Three objections are usually brought against capital punishment in both its domestic form (executions) and its foreign policy form (just war): (1) it doesn't deter evil; (2) it cannot be administered justly (the poor are less able to defend themselves); and (3) it is sub-Christian ethically. In reply it can be argued that: (1) it would deter evil if it were conducted as God intended with fair and speedy purpose; (2) it was given for a fallen world, so obviously God believes it is necessary, justly carried out or not (He foreknew, for example, of the death of His own Son through a miscarriage of justice when He established it); and (3) it is directly sanctioned by Jesus and the apostles for the present time until Christ returns to take over its administration Himself as the Son of Man (Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 3:14; 22:35-38; Acts 25:11; Rom. 13:1-4; Rev. 19:17-21). Of course, no one likes capital punishment, but the issue is what God has installed and assigned for our present, fallen civilization deriving from Noah and the covenant.

Kingship and capital punishment go together from Noah on through the establishment of the Messianic kingdom to come. Capital punishment reveals the restitutionary nature of justice which I will develop further in Section III of this series. It provides the framework for the Cross of Christ and the atonement for sin. Kingship rule anticipates the coming Son of Man who will reign over all the nations to finally establish the Kingdom of God physically as well as spiritually. Anarchists, humanist opponents of capital punishment, and pacifists are, therefore, in principle rebels against God's Word.

The new world of Noah's day was given a specific design through the covenant. It was a new beginning for all of creation--man and nature alike.

Its characteristics remain with us today: a specific geophysical structure, a carnivorous change in human diet, and the presence of civil government. Post-flood civilization is a relatively stable environment that is sustained by death. To bemoan the alleged "failure" of this design is to blame God for what man is responsible for. Any failure of modern civilization is not due to human physical and intellectual domination of nature or to the institution of civil government. It is due to the outworking of the spiritual flaws inherent in the first family. And the solution to modern ills is not trying to re-create pre-flood conditions of "getting back to nature"; it is through the spiritual struggle to purge sin from our hearts as God supplies His grace.

### **Exercise 6.3**

- 1. How do the four events of Genesis 1-9 form a group that shows the basic outline of cosmic history?**
- 2. If paganism distorts God's covenantal rule over nature with the concept of "natural law", how does it distort the history of the origin of modern civilization? Why does paganism do this?**
- 3. Compare and contrast biblical and pagan views of civil government. Explore their radically different views of authority: where it comes from, what controls exist for it, and why there always seems to be "power struggles".**

### **END NOTES FOR CHAPTER 6**

1. William F. Albright, Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1968), p. 108.
2. John Pilkey, Origin of the Nations (San Diego, CA: Master Book Publishers, 1984), p. 3f.
3. Rebecca Brown, He Came to Set the Captives Free (Chino, CA: Chick Publications, 1986), pp. 184-7.
4. While Pilkey has brought about brilliant insights into the origin of the nations, he also strangely insists that observed racial diversity could not have been brought about within monogamous marital ethics. He believes "marital irregularities" consisting of "polygamous concubinage" and "sibling incest" were necessary to generate the present human race. While such irregularities might have occurred, to say they were necessary demeans the design of the second divine institution as sufficient to generate the race.

5. Allen P. Ross, Creation and Blessing (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), p. 218f, 217.
6. Pilkey, p. 6.

# CONCLUSION

Lesson 26

Is God, then, Who He claims to be in the early chapters of Genesis? Is He the infinite-personal Creator of all things in both heaven and earth, immaterial and material? Is He the source of language and logic? Has He designed man and nature in specific ways? Was the universe at one time free of evil, death, and suffering? Has there been a cosmic judgment/salvation in past history? And do today's social institutions owe their origin to His Word?

Or is modern paganism correct in claiming that early Genesis is "mythological"? Would any god, if he (or she) existed, only be a sort of superman/woman inside an unknowable, mysterious universe? Is language and logic merely the result of chemical actions in the human brain? Is man merely a section in the great Chain of Being? Is what is called evil an inherent characteristic of existence? Are today's social institutions purely arbitrary conventions that can be radically re-engineered by man?

These are two radically-conflicting origin stories. One is the historic biblical one; the other, in its modern evolutionary form, is the officially-sponsored myth of nearly every developed country today. Well-endowed with tax dollars, the evolutionary origin-myth assaults the credibility of the Christian gospel. It renders the Bible as just a religious story book. Christian experience is interpreted by it as a mere subjective opinion. And if you want to succeed in academia today, you're expected to acknowledge it as the only rational view of reality possible.

Shall I Bow To My Creator?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>YES!</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ancient monotheism</li> <li>- ancient Israel</li> <li>- Bible</li> <li>- Fundamentalism</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>CREATOR/creature</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- God if man / nature</li> <li>- everlasting distinctions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>PERSONAL SOVEREIGN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ultimate responsibility</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NO!</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ancient myths</li> <li>- eastern religions</li> <li>- western philosophy</li> <li>- modern theology</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Continuity of Being</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- nature &gt; gods &gt; man</li> <li>- transmutation / evolution</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>IMPERSONAL FATE / CHANCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ultimate victimization</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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THE BURIED FOUNDATION

CREATION	God
	Man
	Nature
FALL	Evil & Suffering
FLOOD	Judgment / Salvation
COVENANT	God
	Man
	Nature

see p.133 for full size slide

Divine Institutions in Early History

Institution	Creation	Fall	Post-flood
Responsible dominion	channel of spiritual growth & reign under God	spiritual growth under conflict	spiritual growth under conflict, 90% reduction in response
Marriage	channel of spiritual growth & propagation of race	husband & wife each suffer uniquely & conflict together	husband & wife each suffer uniquely & conflict together
Family	channel of spiritual & cultural growth	destructive	destructive
Civil authority to take life			given to taken man

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Bible-believing Christians, however, know that all spiritual truth begins with belief that "God the Father Almighty" is "Maker of heaven and earth." We must strive, therefore, to put the world around us within the context of the Biblical view of reality rather than putting the Bible within the context of the pagan worldview. The four events and the associated revelation which we have studied in this Part II of the Framework course will give you the tools to do just that.

Instead of letting the powerful Word of God lose its force by being "absorbed" into the framework of unbelief, you ought to be able to "absorb" unbelief into the framework of the Word. You've been exposed in these chapters to many areas of life where the conflict rages: language, logic, mathematics, geology, physics, sociology, psychology, and history. Now you must learn to "bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5) wherever you are.

Perhaps by God's grace you will be lead to expand truth by rightly ordering observational data and logical analysis in your area of expertise. May the God of the Bible be so glorified!

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The events of creation, fall, flood, and covenant narrated in Genesis 1-9 provide enough material to start our imaginative and creative thought processes. Try matching some of the details of the Genesis narrative below with the listed situations where the Word could be used to interpret and control them.

see Appendix E  
on p. 129 for all  
slides referenced  
in this review

*a plague of a highly-contagious disease*

*Noah's lapse in drunkenness and nakedness*

*legalization of homosexual marriages*

*God speaking light into existence*

*literary criticism of the Bible*

*God's curse upon the ground*

*trying to test whether Christianity is true*

*God's death sentence on man*

*central planning of just and fair prices*

*decline in longevity after the flood*

*attacking technology as civilization's enemy*

*divine institution of marriage*

*a tragic accident that appears meaningless*

*God naming His work before Adam existed*

*racism*

*divine institution of family*

*lack of sense of authority in young people*

*divine institution of responsible dominion*

*"religion" is a private matter of the heart; not something that matters in the physical universe*

*Adam as the original DNA source; Noah's family as the intermediate source*

*human growth hormone therapy as the hope of abolishing aging*

*Eve's indecision over whether God or Satan was right in their opposing claims*

*grand theory of the universe based upon behavior of light energy*

*Creator/creature distinction and man as God's image*

2. Try to tell the story of Genesis 1-9 from memory.



## APPENDIX A: INTERPRETING GENESIS 1-11

Lesson 27

Genesis 1-11 provides the foundation of the rest of biblical revelation because it tells the Judeo-Christian origin story. As I noted in Chapter One, origin stories are absolutely necessary for man to give meaning to life. They are unavoidable in everyday thought and speech. No one can speak about anything without saying (by implication at least) something about origins.

Modern Christians find an obvious tension between the story of Genesis 1-11 and that told by the evolutionary origin-myth. To relieve this tension some Christians hope that an accommodation strategy exists whereby the Genesis text can be made to say what evolution is saying. This appendix will review why the accommodation strategy is a dead end. It has been tried again and again over the past several centuries with no success.

### HERMENEUTICS AND PRESUPPOSITIONS

The way you interpret literature shows the way you think about language and reality. Critical views of the Scripture generally come from a pagan view of language. As I pointed out in Part I of this course and again in Chapters 1-3 of this Part, language is the tool God and creature-spirits made in His image think and communicate with. On the presupposition of the Bible, language and knowledge have real justification.

The Second Person of the Trinity is called the "Word" showing how important language is in the biblical worldview. God's omniscience and His Word are the archetype, or ultimate metalanguage, that support human language. Thus the Genesis 1-11 text is not a mystical symbolism lacking inherent truth. Nor is this text about something that cannot be clearly communicated and understood by man made in God's image.

On the biblical presupposition it is God's own story to us about how He created all things in and around us. It establishes the original context of key biblical concepts and doctrines. It is intended to distinguish the Creator from the creation over against all forms of paganism, ancient and modern. It is intended to tell us about our first biological parents, about how evil--natural and human--came into existence, and about the rule of God in the present universe. Only with such a clear origin story can we remain free of idolatry and love Him with all our heart, mind, and soul.

Readers of Genesis 1-11 who share its worldview have had no great difficulty interpreting the text over the centuries. The clarity of this text as well as all the Bible is central to Protestant faith: the doctrine of the

perspicuity of Scripture. No intervening priesthood is necessary to understand what God is saying in all matters basic to the faith. Surely, the foundations of revelation in Genesis 1-11 are basic to the faith. Christians must, therefore, view with skepticism claims that it has been profoundly misunderstood for nearly nineteen centuries until modern natural historians have "enlightened" us.

### **TRADITIONAL INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS 1-11**

Authors of the rest of the Bible continually refer to these chapters as literal, straight-forward history. From Genesis 1:1 and subsequent quotes of God's creative speaking the world into existence, John derives the Trinity (John 1:1-3). The six days of creation are reiterated at Mt. Sinai in an obviously literal way (Exod. 20:11). Jesus speaks of both accounts of man's creation as constituting one event (Matt. 19:4-6). Paul utilizes the distinct biological "kinds" as models for profound qualitative differences in God's eternal plan of salvation (I Cor. 15:21-47). An obvious symmetry exists between the miraculous origin of the creation and the miraculous recreation (Rev. 21-22). Many references exist showing that the people mentioned in Genesis 1-11 were considered real, historical persons by other biblical authors (Isa. 54:9; Matt. 23:35; 24:37-39; Luke 3:38; Rom 5:12-14; I Tim. 2:13-14; I John 3:12; Jude 11, 14-15).

Are Christians to suppose that Jesus and other biblical personages were naive and lacked the modern "insight" we do in our day? Or said more bluntly, they were completely wrong about the origins and early history of the universe and man. Of course, if they were wrong in these earthly matters open to verification, then they would be completely untrustworthy in heavenly matters of relationship to God (John 3:12; I Cor. 15:32). Throw away an inerrant Genesis text, and you also throw away the New Testament.

Often accommodationists claim that many of the Church Fathers held to allegorical interpretations of the creation story. This is a false claim. While a few wandered around in the pagan philosophical climate of their day, most Church Fathers clearly mentioned literal events such as stars being created on the fourth day. Moreover, the vast bulk of Church leaders in the Reformation and afterward held to a literal Genesis text.[1]

The reason the traditional interpretation has remained so conservative over the centuries is because of the interrelated structure of Genesis 1-11. Literarily and theologically, the Genesis story is a coherent unity.

### **THE INTERRELATED STRUCTURE OF GENESIS 1-11**

To tamper with the traditional interpretation in one chapter quickly yields absurdities in another. For example, a favorite place to re-interpret is the six-

day creation sequence. Hoping to gain badly-needed time, accommodationists urge various proposals about the days' duration. Since stars and sun weren't created until the fourth day, they argue that the days can't be literal 24-hour days. Why not? Is time dependent upon a clock? Or could there have been a 24-hour pulsing-cycle in the cosmic light of the first day? Also, almost unnoticed in this argument is the self-refuting reliance upon a literal interpretation of the creation of stars on the fourth day!

The far-reaching results of such a literary maneuver are also largely unnoticed. By expanding the days, all critical evaluation of paganism's habitual long-chronology is wholly abandoned. Geological and anthropological history are accepted uncritically. The next features that go are the genealogies of Adam and the catastrophic global nature of the flood. Now a whole set of interpretative compromises have to be made, including a reinterpretation of New Testament commentary on Genesis by Jesus and the Apostles.

Not only the literary structure disintegrates but serious theological errors arise. The Creator-creature distinction is threatened by an eternal universe. The man-nature distinction dissolves into the same Continuity of Being. Natural evil is either no longer considered evil, or it is due directly to God's creating activity. Man is no longer the cause of the curse upon nature (cf. Rom. 5:12; 8:20-21); God is its direct cause. God's goodness thus becomes indefensible with this approach.

More seriously, man's intellect is thereby granted a pretended autonomy from God's Word. He can interpret reality apart from submission to verbal revelation. In this view general revelation in nature not only can but must be interpreted without reference to the special revelation God has given in Scripture.

The inter-locking structure of Genesis 1-11, then, makes it difficult to accommodate modern paganism without throwing the text out completely and without undermining biblical theology. Such has been shown time and again during the last several centuries. Let's look at three specific places where accommodationism most frequently focuses.

## ACCOMMODATIONIST FOCAL POINTS

The Days of Creation. A traditional area of focus is trying to get more time in the Genesis text. The six days are made into "ages", turned into days of revelation, or simply interpreted figuratively. Support for the figurative view includes other uses of "day" throughout the Bible as well as the events of the sixth and seventh days. Adam, it is claimed, would have required a

long time to name the animals God brought to him. And the seventh day's cessation of creation work extends into the present.

Against this approach are the stubborn facts that whenever units of measure such as "day" are used with ordinal numbers ("first", "second", etc.), they point to literal usage. Even Hosea 6:2 (the only so-called exception to this rule in the Bible) may well be a prophecy of Jesus' resurrection. Where else is the "scripture" Paul refers to in I Cor. 15:4? With each day summarized by the phrase "there was evening and there was morning" and with the interpretation given in Exodus 20:11, the accommodationist approach has to strain the normal use of language. Even the oft-cited quote by Peter (II Pet. 3:8) from Psalm 90 occurs in a context of units of time (90:10).

The sixth and seventh days are interpreted as normal days in their context. Adam with a mind undamaged by sin would have had no problem naming the selection of animals of the field that God brought to him for the purpose of showing him the necessity for a human helper (Gen. 2:19). God ceased from His work of creation on the seventh day, but history is filled with His subsequent works (cf. John 5:17).

Adam-to-Abraham Genealogies. Older accommodationists used to try to find gaps in the genealogies between Adam and Abraham, hoping to fit the [then] hundred-thousand year duration hypothesized of mankind's history. Such an approach strained the language both in requiring thousands of years between each name and in ignoring the set formula used to construct the genealogies ("X lived M years and begat. . . Y and the days after he begat Y were N years. . . .And all the days that X lived were M + N years"). If this approach strained the language in the past, today with mankind's history supposedly millions of years duration it makes a complete mockery of literary interpretation.

Pre-Genesis 1 Existence. Recent accommodationism has tried to adopt modernist renderings of Genesis 1:1-3 so as to allow vast ages for the universe prior to the work of Creation Week. The supposedly sinister quality of a watery chaos and darkness in Genesis 1:2, in this view, points to a prior existence for the universe. The sense of Genesis 1:1-3 is rendered something like "when God began to create, the universe was in chaos and darkness. . .", i.e., Genesis 1 speaks of a relative beginning only, not an absolute ex nihilo creation of all things.

This maneuver suffers from the same faults of the previous ones. It avoids the interpretation given to this text elsewhere in the Bible. John 1:1-3 certainly has this passage in mind and speaks of an absolute beginning in the very terminology of Genesis 1:1. This maneuver also lands itself in unbiblical theology. The central distinguishing mark of biblical faith is the

Creator-creature distinction which is undercut in this approach. The universe is seen, in this view, as pre-existing along with God which then makes the "creation" work of the six days not creation work at all. The contrast between paganism and biblical faith becomes blurred at the very starting point.

The meaning of "without form and void" has been shown from Isaiah 45:18 to be "uninhabitable". After the initial ex-nihilo creation in Genesis 1:1, the universe was not yet finished. The Spirit of God was already at work in it, and God named the darkness along with the light (Gen. 1:5). He is clearly the Creator of all things not just those details mentioned after Genesis 1:3 (cf. Isa. 45:7). To cite the supposedly sinister nature of Genesis 1:2 as a reason for excluding it from God's creating activity is simply to confuse "darkness" as a symbol for evil with "darkness" as a physical description.[2]

The accommodationist strategy has won widespread allegiance of neither believer nor pagan. It hasn't accomplished what it set out to do: relieve the tension between the Genesis text and the officially-sponsored origin-myth of today's society. The tension remains; it is real and unavoidable. Precisely because of this failure, the modern creationist movement arose. It is not that modern creationists are naive and unaware of the history of the interpretation of Genesis. Rather, they know very well this history and because of it have turned to a new strategy of counterattack. They seek to further a more sanctified and biblical view of human knowledge.

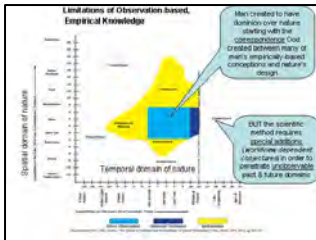
### END NOTES FOR APPENDIX A

1. A compact review of the interpretation debate is given in Mark Van Bebber and Paul S. Taylor, Creation and Time (Mesa, AZ: Eden Productions, 1994). This small volume I mentioned in Chapter 1 rebuts present-day accommodationists in evangelical circles.
2. A recent review article with detailed bibliography on this controversy is Mark F. Rooker, "Genesis 1:1-3--Creation or Re-creation? Parts 1 and 2," Bibliotheca Sacra Vol. 149, (Jul-Sep and Oct-Dec, 1992), Nos. 595-6, pp. 316-23, 411-27.

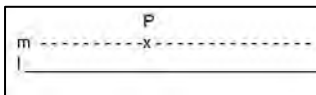
# APPENDIX B: BIOLOGICAL NATURAL HISTORY: CREATION VS. EVOLUTION

Lesson 28

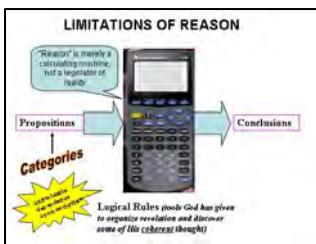
Natural history is man's attempt at telling the story of natural development over time. It is one of the tasks dominion man seeks to do. As a dominion work it depends upon the limitations of man's reason and experience--subjects discussed in Chapter Three. I pointed out there that reason is a limited tool. It can supply logical rigor to our thinking, but such rigor can show us reality only if our categories and logical rules fit reality. I also pointed out in Chapter Three that our experience as finite creatures is very limited. We cannot extend our experience backwards in time beyond human observations except by speculation and conjecture.



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All attempts, therefore, at writing natural histories must cope with man's limited reason and experience in space and time. Either God's revelation of the origin and destiny of nature is accepted as reasonable and as empirically-observed data, or it is not. Presuppositionally, a decision has to be made: which will be the final reference point--the Word of God or the thoughts of man?

In the biological realm the battle between biblical faith and paganism is wrapped up in the creation-evolution controversy. This appendix discusses the deep structural difference between creationist and evolutionary views of natural history. From this vantage point, I discuss why evolutionists can debate conflicting theories of evolution while insisting upon the fact of evolution with such minimal evidence of its occurrence. I conclude with a brief survey of the evidence supporting biblical creation.

## STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CREATION AND EVOLUTION

The idea of evolution did not begin with Darwin. In Chapter One I pointed out that it derives from the ancient pagan doctrine of the Chain of Being. Paganism always idolizes the creation as a substitute for the Creator. Ancient paganism conceived of origins by a process of procreation and transmutation. Nature is invested with the divine attributes of eternity and omnipotence. Form derives from chaos, information from non-information, mind from non-mind, and life from non-life. Nature spontaneously organizes itself. Neither the Creator-creature nor the man-nature distinctions are accepted.



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The structure of the evolutionary idea thus differs remarkably from that of creation. Within creationism the doctrines of God, man, and nature developed in the previous chapters clearly establish inviolable categories. There is a two-level view of being, not a single-level one, with the creature

derivative of the Creator. Unity and diversity are equally ultimate, present at the Creator level in the Trinity and present at the creature level in the similarities and diversities. Information, language, and thought are present at the Creator level in omniscience and present at the creature level in man's mind. Life is created from non-life by the Creator's Word.

In the biological realm, creationism asserts the inviolable nature of the created "kinds". These groupings of life forms are zealously guarded throughout the Bible. As mighty as the creation's procreative power is, it cannot override these barriers. Not only homosexual transgression of the gender difference was opposed (Lev. 18:22) but bestiality was specifically penalized (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15-16). Sexual aberrations such as these are more than simple lust-patterns; they are expressions of paganism's hostility to the God of the created categories. Based upon creationism's protection of the kinds, the Bible expounds salvation in creationist terms. Salvation is not gradual transmutation through good works but sudden recreation through regeneration and resurrection.

Of course as a pagan vanity, the evolutionary view suffers from the same fatal weakness that all paganism suffers; it fails to justify itself. Evolution holds that the human mind that has conceived the idea of evolution is merely a phenomenon of homo sapiens' brain cell activity. If human brain cell activity alone produces ideas like evolution, then how do we know such ideas fit reality (maybe they're nothing more than hallucinations)? How can the evolutionary idea of the mind justify construction of universal statements such as "all reality is evolving"?

The usual answer by evolutionists is that we observe in our [limited] experience that evolution is true, whether we can explain the mind or not. That evolution has occurred is a fact; how it happened is a matter of scientific inquiry. This ploy raises the issue of what part, if any, of the evolutionary idea is fact?

### **THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION AND THE SO-CALLED FACT OF EVOLUTION.**

Evolutionary biologists can debate vigorously among themselves alternate theories to account for the so-called fact of evolution. None of those biologists, however, can question the fact of evolution itself and retain their credentials in their profession. By "fact" they mean that all life forms have derived by procreation and transmutation from an original primitive life form. All life is ultimately a continuum. Observed differences and diversities are superficial.[1]

But is this continuum really such an undebatable fact? It can be defended only by using some sort of argument like this: (1) common features are

observed in all life forms (e.g., cell and genetic structures); (2) other features are common to subsets of life forms (e.g., skeletal patterns); (3) such common features show a common code or genetic information shared universally or in sub-groupings; (4) the various sub-groups of life forms can be classified on a scale of ascending complexity; (5) codes and genetic information can only be carried from one life form to another by procreation with differences accountable by transmutation; and (6) therefore all life forms are related by procreation.

A little-recognized fallacy lies hidden in statement (5). Statement (5) is a tautology because it asserts what it is trying to prove, viz., that procreation and transmutation alone can account for all similarity relationships. Why is that obvious? Why is common design by a common Creator excluded from consideration here? Statement (5) is tautologous because it philosophically excludes any other explanation.

Thus the so-called "fact" of evolution upon closer inspection is not a fact in any observable sense. It is a philosophically-informed interpretation of classification. That life forms can be classified on a scale of ascending complexity is an observable fact. That this classification could only have resulted by procreation and transmutation is not an observable fact. This last claim is a speculative deduction.

So we return to the previous question: how does evolution justify itself? If it is not really a "fact" in the normal sense of the word, how can the human idea of evolution be trusted? On the evolutionary basis human thought is nothing more than brain-cell activity. Why should such electro-chemical activity yield reliable universal concepts about all reality? At the very basic starting point, evolutionary theory fails to provide itself with a foundation. What, then, are the evidences of natural biological history?

## **EVIDENCES SUPPORTING BIBLICAL CREATION**

Much literature has become available in the last twenty years reporting on the accumulating body of evidences to support biblical creation. Here is a brief survey of the important categories of such evidence.[2]

1. Design and Information Theory. For many years Bible-believing Christians have insisted that there is order in nature--designs that point to the Creator's wisdom. That life forms can be classified is a fact that is interpreted by creationism as evidence of a common Creator, not evidence of common descent. Such highly-ordered structures as the cell and its constituents reveal a design imposed upon nature by Intelligent Omniscience from outside nature.

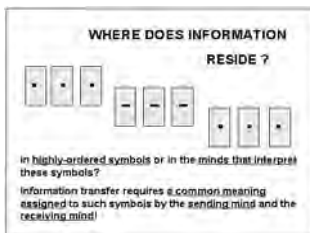
Dr. A. E. Wilder-Smith has noted that such design cannot come from matter spontaneously. While random processes can produce limited



structures by chance, they cannot produce genuine information such as that which codes biological life-forms. Using an analogy to a book, Wilder-Smith shows that the natural laws of paper and ink do not produce meaningful print. Meaningful words are created with paper and ink by an "outside" mind that structures them. The result is a message in a book that is understandable to another mind sharing the same language. The idea communicated from the author's mind and to the reader's mind is distinct from the paper and ink components of the book.

Biochemical genetic structures function similarly to a printed page. There is a plan or design communicated from one cell to another that is distinct from the DNA molecular structure. Such a plan no more arose from the DNA than a book's story arose from paper and ink. Wilder-Smith notes that this distinction between an intelligent message or design and its physical carrier is precisely what evolutionary scientists today use in trying to discern signs of extra-terrestrial life in radio-noise coming to the earth. He writes:

*"It would be interesting to suggest to practitioners of ETI [Extra-terrestrial Intelligence] research the following experiment: instead of listening to their radio telescopes searching for non-random sequences issuing from the far galaxies as an index of ETI, they might take a look into a suitable mount on an electron microscope focused onto suitably prepared genetic code sequences. . . . When the ETI expert has thus convinced himself that the genetic code shows non-random sequencing governed by a language convention determining a synthetic organic chemical message, what must he conclude? [3]*



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Of course the creationist knows very well the source of the genetic code's message: the spoken word of God that created the various kinds of life forms.

2. Artificial and Natural Selection. Darwin saw what carefully-guided artificial selection (breeding) accomplished in changing life-forms. He then extrapolated the concept to account for unlimited change in life-forms. Given enough time, he argued, small changes induced by naturally random events could account for vast changes.

Actually what all selection shows is that the Genesis kinds exist and remain stable. A selective process cannot create; it can only select from among a set of choices that already exist. Breeders intelligently guide the selection process artificially in order to produce biological traits they want. Such traits already exist in the genetic material. Natural selection, operating randomly and unintelligently, also selects pre-existing traits. In the end of both processes, the broad categories of life-forms remain intact. The created kinds with all their potential traits continue since the day of creation.

Such adaptation can be called "micro-evolution". It is an ability that God built into His creatures to adapt to changing environments. After the flood, for example, plants and animals had to adapt to the new world and do so fairly rapidly. This limited change, however, cannot be cited as "proof" of large-scale, macroevolution.

3. Mutation Effects and the Fall. Evolutionists have tried to use the process of random mutations to create new things. The trouble here is threefold. First, most mutations are bad. They resemble mistakes in a computer program: small disruptions fatally end the program. Over any lengthy time period, the bad mutations would overpower any good mutations. Second, if such mutations are too small in their effect, they don't help. What good is 10% of an eye? The supposed evolutionary advantages wouldn't begin to occur until a wholly functioning entity were completed. Third, if such mutations are required to be too large, they can't be produced by random chance processes. How likely would it be for a complete 100-line computer program to arise by auto-organization without a pre-existing program?

Mutations must be seen in the light of the fall. Nature has become abnormal in the biblical view. Structures wear out and fall apart. Far from being a creative process, mutational activity is most likely a destructive after-effect of the fall.

4. Systematic Gaps in the Fossil Record. Natural history writing must rely on either human observations of the past, God's observations of the past, or mute records in nature. The pagan mind quickly eliminates God as a data source so it builds exclusionary rules against the biblical narrative and its remnants in tribal memories. Then, because paganism infers descent from classification, the evolutionary worldview cannot conceive mankind existing back when lower life-forms were evolving. Thus human observations are thought to be irrelevant to the question.

What is left is the fossil evidence buried in the earth. Surely, if the evolutionary idea of the Continuity of Being is correct, there ought to be clear evidence of simpler forms of life transitioning into more complex forms. But what is shown by the fossil evidence? The fossil record shows very little change in the various kinds of plants and animals. Entire groups "suddenly" appear with no transitional forms from simpler groups. The variations that do appear seem to occur within major groups.

Some so-called transitional forms are claimed such as Archaeopteryx being a transition from reptile to bird and various "ape-men". The problem with such examples is that only bone structure is available and often not much of that. So systematic are the gaps in the fossil record between major kinds that evolutionists themselves have argued that evolution occurred in "spurts". It did nothing for millions of years and then suddenly some

catastrophe or other caused a rapid quantum-jump in evolutionary progress. These jumps were too rapid for the fossil record to capture. Thus the fossil record does not confirm evolution as Darwin himself had hoped.

From the biblical viewpoint, the fossil record is obviously a post-fall product. Death came through Adam's fall. Fossils, therefore, derive from events happening after creation. The prime candidate for a cause of fossil-bearing rock is the flood. Other events also may have contributed. That involves geological natural history, a topic I discuss in Appendix D.

To write a natural history is extremely difficult. But for the pagan who at the very starting point excludes all data available from God's Word, the task is hopeless. Biological history necessarily deals with instantaneous creation by divine fiat, effects of the fall, effects of the flood, and mechanisms of adaptation designed into plants and animals. The full story has never been told within a biblical worldview. And because creationists have been cut off from necessary research funding, it is not likely to be told in the foreseeable future.

In the meantime, however, discoveries and research that have been done support the biblical position quite well. The concept of separate kinds has survived all breeding experiments and fossil digs. New discoveries of genetic structures show far more of God's design than ever was known before.

### END NOTES FOR APPENDIX B

1. A crucial discussion of all of the philosophical background involved is Mortimer J. Adler, The Difference of Man and the Difference It Makes (Chicago: World Publishing Co., 1967). Another work on the history of pagan thought prior to Darwin is Henry Morris, The Long War Against God (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989).
2. Readers are urged to consult Bible-believing sources of materials such as the Institute for Creation Research in San Diego, California and the Creation Research Society. New materials are coming out all the time. In this appendix I can only outline the general topic. Also keep in mind the presuppositional nature of all argument which is explained in Part I of this series.
3. A. E. Wilder-Smith, The Scientific Alternative to Neo-Darwinian Evolutionary Theory (Costa Mesa, CA: The Word for Today Publishers, 1987), p. 122.

## APPENDIX C: PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL NATURAL HISTORY: IS THE UNIVERSE THOUSANDS OR BILLIONS OF YEARS OLD?

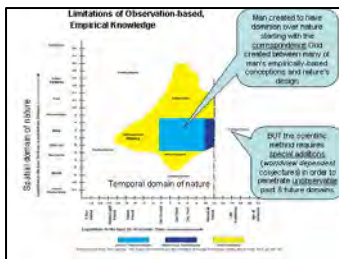
Lesson 29

Natural history is man's attempt at telling the story of natural development over time. It is one of the tasks dominion man seeks to do. As a dominion work it depends upon the limitations of man's reason and experience--subjects discussed in Chapter Three. I pointed out there that reason is a limited tool. It can supply logical rigor to our thinking, but such rigor can show us reality only if our categories and logical rules fit reality. I also pointed out in Chapter Three that our experience as finite creatures is very limited. We cannot extend our experience backwards in time beyond human observations except by speculation and conjecture.

All attempts, therefore, at writing natural histories must cope with man's limited reason and experience in space and time. Either God's revelation of the origin and destiny of nature is accepted as reasonable and as empirically-observed data, or it is not. Presuppositionally, a decision has to be made: which will be the final reference point--the Word of God or the thoughts of man?

In the realm of the physical sciences the battle between biblical faith and paganism is wrapped up in the short biblical chronology versus the vast ages of the universe allegedly "measured" by terrestrial and astronomical clocks. This appendix discusses the deep methodological differences between the biblical approach to dating the universe and the pagan approach. With these profound methodological differences in mind, I then survey some techniques of age-measurement using materials directly available on earth.

Next, I consider some of the oft-cited astronomical indicators of a vast age of the universe. Finally, this appendix concludes with recent progress in general theory-construction by Bible-believing mathematicians and scientists. These proposals are the result of several decades' work and offer exciting insights into the very heart of the physical sciences.



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### METHODOLOGIES AND PRESUPPOSITIONS

The method you use to measure past historical time shows the way you think about physical constants and their basis of stability. Insistence upon a vast age for the world has always been a hallmark of paganism as I pointed out in Chapters 1-2. "They lived many days, adding years (to days). . ." says Enuma Elish. Commentators on the history of science have often remarked

that ancient Hinduism foreshadowed modern scientific cosmology in its concept of an essentially eternal universe.

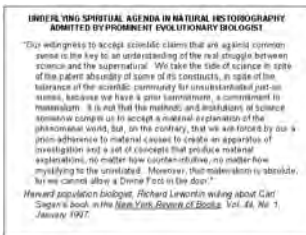
This pagan insistence upon vast ages is not surprising to any Bible-believing student of paganism. Vast ages push back any creative work of God far beyond the human horizon and sense of ethical responsibility to Him. A long chronology offers spiritual "relief" to the rebellious heart. If any conceivable creation is too distant in the past to contemplate, then any judgment would probably also be too distant in the future to worry about. Thus both ancient and modern paganisms agree in conjecturing that the universe (the creature) has divine attributes (of the Creator).

On the presupposition of paganism modern science has developed a doctrine of "natural law". Hiding behind this legal metaphor, modern paganism seeks to establish an autonomous base for knowledge independent of God and His Word. An illusion is thus created that seems to provide the necessary constants for mathematical calculations. Such constants or "laws" are then universalized throughout space and time far beyond mankind's local experience and data-sets (cf. II Pet. 3:4). All measurement of past historical time builds upon such constants that are hypothesized for the speed of light ("c") and radioactive decay.

On the presupposition of the Creator-creature distinction given in the Bible, however, man's knowledge is anchored in God's (Q)uality of immutability as we learned in Chapters 2-3. In Chapter 6 we learned how God extended the stability of His immutability through the specific promises of His Word to all of nature in the new world covenant. Since Noah's day, the universe has existed in a geophysical/biochemical steady-state bounded by God's verbal promises. Natural constants, therefore, which are the centerpiece of all time measurement derive from the Word of God.

Methodologies of time measurement are bound up with the presuppositions chosen. Let's do a thought experiment about the creation of Adam given in Genesis 2:7. Imagine three observers to this event: A, B, and C. Observer A has a videocam with a clock recorder in the viewer. He records the entire event of Genesis 2:7 on video with the time recorded. Let's say it happened between 10:00am and 10:05am on the sixth day.

At 10:10am observer B (who knows nothing about the recent miraculous creation event) enters the garden and sees Adam. Observer B has data from his experience about how men normally grow up from natural birth, but he has no access to the videocam record. Thus observer B projects backward in time on the basis of his experience of human growth rate in order to figure out how old Adam is. Observer B is very confident that human growth-rate is a stable constant and estimates Adam's age at, say, 25 years.



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At the same time observer B enters the garden, observer C enters the garden by another route and also sees Adam. Observer C, unlike observer B however, has access to the videocam record of observer A. Observer C, therefore, has a choice in methodology of deriving Adam's age. He can either accept the eye-witness record of observer A's videocam or the human growth-rate calculation of observer B. If he accepts the videocam record, he finds that Adam is only 5 minutes old and that the human growth-rate constant has been unexpectedly changed. On the other hand, if he can't accept unexpected changes in the human growth-rate constant, he will reject the videocam record and figure Adam's age at 25 years.

Faced with two discordant ages, observer C now has to decide which methodology to follow in measuring the past historical duration of Adam's life. How can he decide? He has to weigh the reliability of alleged observational data (videocam record) against the strength of a hypothetical constant (human growth-rate). But this choice involves what he believes about the world and its overall structure--in short, his presupposition or worldview. His choice is not a scientific one; it is a philosophic one! Methodologies, therefore, are interwoven with presuppositions; they are not "theory-neutral" and objective as most people think.

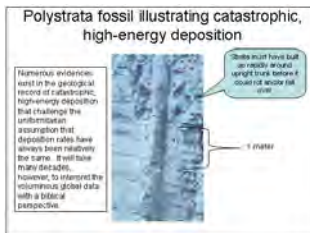
## TERRESTRIAL "CLOCKS" AND THE BIBLE

Let's apply the two methodologies to physical evidences available on planet earth. What is the age of the earth according to the two methods? The evidences are directly available to mankind so I refer to them as "local" to distinguish them from extra-terrestrial evidences discussed in the next section.

### **The Biblical Age of the Earth**

From the biblical view, the earth was created five days before Adam and three days before the rest of the universe (cf. Gen. 1:14-19). Adam fathered the human race that geneologically produced Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus. Records of the Adam-Jesus genealogy exist through Scripture and are summarized in Luke 3:23-38. Obviously, these records limit the age between Adam and Jesus to thousands of years, not millions or billions of years.[1] The Bible also observes that whatever processes God used to create the earth and its life, those processes stopped on the seventh day and do not continue today (Gen. 2:1-3).

All calculations, therefore, involving so-called constants such as radioactive decay constants must model the observational data of Genesis 1. Moreover, they must model the further observational data of Genesis 6-9 that report a cosmic discontinuity affecting the entire universe. The present-day



see p.143 for full size slide

steady-state condition of the earth cannot be extrapolated backward naively beyond the flood of Noah's day.

## The Pagan Age of the Earth

In the pagan view, present-day observations fix the value of all timing constants. Any supposed "discontinuities" such as a creation and a flood are ignored. These constants are then compared; their differences reconciled; and a picture of past history is built up. A value of several billion years is generally accepted as the age of the earth. It must be kept in mind, however, that the underlying method here always depends upon carefully selected constants being extrapolated backward millions of times beyond direct human records.

What is not usually mentioned is that even with this method there are widely varying ages that result. Here are a few examples: (1) human population growth rates yield an age for the human race of less than 9000 years; (2) Carbon 14 has not yet reached equilibrium which requires that the build-up to present levels could not have taken more than 10,000 years; (3) Helium is continuing to build up in the atmosphere and gives an average atmospheric age of less than 100,000 years; and (4) the earth rotation rate is slowing down which implies that it could not be more than 325,000 years old, or it would have been spinning so fast that the continents would have lined up along the equator.[2] Clearly, these examples show that the pagan methodology gives ages from a few thousand to a few billion years! A method that is this uncertain should not be considered a serious threat to biblical faith.

## ASTRONOMICAL "CLOCKS" AND THE BIBLE

Lesson 30

I have shown how the two dating methods approach terrestrial evidences that are "local" to mankind. Now I turn to extra-terrestrial evidences that are "remote" from mankind. Some of these so-called astronomical clocks are used to determine the age of the universe which such confidence that news media regularly report their ages as hard facts instead of modeled estimates.

## The Biblical Age of the Universe

From the biblical view, the universe was indistinguishable from the earth in the original watery chaos of Genesis 1:1. Out from the earth, God created the expanse we call outer space on the fourth day. Just as He populated the earth with plants and animals, He "populated" the heavens with the stars and planets two days before creating Adam (cf. Gen. 1:14-19). The universe, therefore, has the same young age as the earth.

## The Pagan Age of the Universe

For the pagan method to work in estimating the age of the universe, it has to cope with an additional problem that it avoids when estimating the earth's age. The method can only utilize remote evidences, many of which are located in far-off outer space and not subject to direct measurement techniques. For an astronomical clock to work, constants have to be extrapolated in space as well as time.

Layer upon layer of speculative thought is required to date the universe. Great reliance is placed upon the relativistic theories of Einstein in order to model light travel and spatial geometry in spite of the fact that alternate theories (which are far less imaginative) exist that explain key experimental data. The so-called "red shift" in incoming light toward the earth is explained exclusively in terms of Doppler effects which implies an expanding universe. Distances to nearby stars are calculated using trigonometry similar to ordinary surveying, but distances to far away stars are inferred using multiple assumptions. Such computations extrapolate constants billions of times beyond the nearby "surveyed" stars.

Once an expanding universe model (with its multiple layers of conjecture) exists and the rate of expansion is thought to be known, then the age from a starting "big bang" can be computed. What is often overlooked, however, is that the starting big bang is neither a creation-from-nothing nor an extrapolated physical process. It is not an *ex-nihilo* creation because before the big bang there was something, if only a tightly condensed object. Nor is it an extrapolated process because its explanation requires a different set of "natural laws"; the big bang amounts to a sort of pagan "miracle". Thus the big bang theory involves an internal contradiction with the central pagan principle that "all things continue as they were from creation".

The modern pagan method claims an age for the universe that varies from about 10 billion to about 20 billion years (with the stars apparently older than the universe!). This age is the age from the big bang state to the present day. It does not include the duration of any universe that pre-existed the big bang. Nevertheless, such figures are confidentially trumpeted in the mass media as assured scientific "facts". The term "fact" is deceptively used as though highly speculative model results are just as certain as directly observed phenomenon.

Just as with the terrestrial clocks, however, the astronomical clocks do not all give consistent answers. Here are some examples: (1) comets have very short lifetimes before they break up, and there is no clear source of resupply so that the age of the solar system seems no longer than 6000 years; (2) spiral galaxies are observed with straight "bars" but angular momentum calculations show that such bars can't exist more than 12.5 million years; and



(3) since very massive stars burn up their energy much faster than less massive stars, they must be young in order to have such mass--probably less than 100,000 years.

What about any historical observations that might touch on this matter of astronomical clocks? There are some historical observations that challenge the modern theory of evolution of stars. Stars are supposed to take hundreds of thousands of years to evolve from protostar to main sequence star to red giant to white dwarf. Obviously, there are no direct observations of such a slow process. There is, however, a set of historical observations of the star Sirius. These observations show that Sirius went "backwards" from a red giant to a main sequence star and did so in only 1000 years![3]

You should realize by now that dating methods for the earth or the universe are largely determined by one's chosen presuppositions about the nature of reality. Such dating is not rigorous, experimental science; it is conjecture and speculation of scientists who hold to a fundamentally pagan view of reality.

## **RECENT COSMOLOGICAL THEORIES OF BIBLE-BELIEVING SCIENTISTS**

Developing any cosmological theory involves tremendous labor in theoretical physics, astronomy, and mathematics. For Bible-believing scientists no grant money or federal subsidies are permitted. Thus there have been few scientifically qualified believers who have had the resources to research cosmological explanations from a non-pagan viewpoint.

The few believers that have done serious work in this area begin their cosmological theory-making in way that radically differs from the prevailing approach. They obviously are proponents of the counterattack strategy discussed in Chapter 1. The pagan scientific community creates "exclusionary ground rules" that disqualify all biblical observations of terrestrial and extra-terrestrial events as genuine empirical data. These Bible-believing scientists, however, not only begin by accepting such biblical observations as admissible empirical data, they also interpret the data within a distinctively biblical philosophy of logic, categories, and knowledge (see previous chapters).

Let's look at two examples of recent cosmological theory-making from a biblical viewpoint. In each case I will briefly survey the model propounded and then comment on what it shows about the popular pagan models presented in the press as "fact".

## Humphreys' Cosmological "Water Model"

A Christian physicist, Dr. Russell Humphreys, has recently promoted a cosmology that builds upon Einstein's General Theory of Relativity just as the pagan big bang cosmology does. What Humphreys does that radically differs, however, is to change the starting point or "initial conditions" for the relativistic calculations.

The big bang cosmology assumes as an initial condition that the universe has no edges or boundaries. It is like the two dimensional surface of an expanding balloon: there are no "edges" to it. This condition, say big bang proponents, fits the observation that we see from earth approximately the same density of stars in all directions. If there were an "edge" to the universe, we ought to see less stars in one direction than the others.

There is a hidden assumption in this interpretation: it dismisses the possibility that the earth could be at the center of the universe! If it is, then the universe could well have an outer boundary and the star density would be the same in all directions from the earth. In fact, Humphreys points out that the entire big bang initial condition is loaded with pagan theology that refuses to accept the idea of the earth being at the center of the universe:

*"[The idea of the earth being at the center of the universe]. . .strongly smacks of purpose and is thus unpalatable to most theorists today, who prefer to believe in a universe run by randomness. So it is simply assumed there is no center, and no boundary. . . .*

*It may not be unfair to suggest another possible reason for the near-universal acceptance of this assumption. To allow the possibility of anything "outside" the universe (perhaps God) makes it harder to hold to the position that the universe is 'all there is' (the popular position of philosophical materialism)."[4]*

In other words, in the big bang initial condition the universe is given the divine attribute of endlessness (a weak form of omnipresence). Paganism, whether ancient or modern, is always idolatrous.

Replacing this initial condition with the narrative of Genesis 1, Humphreys starts with a bounded universe compressed in a sphere of water two light-years in diameter which contains all the mass believed to be in the universe today. During creation week God expands the universe outward (Gen. 1:6-8), makes all the elements from hydrogen and oxygen atoms, and by the fourth day He forms the stars (Gen. 1:14-19).

The stunning finding of Humphreys is this: such an expansion of the universe, according to the General Theory of Relativity, would cause all the matter expanded away from the earth to age by billions of years while time on earth advanced only six 24-hour days! What we observe, then, in extra-

terrestrial space is not evidence of an expanding universe, but an expanded one (cf. Gen. 2:1-3).

To cause such a radical shift in the age of the universe by changing the initial conditions of the calculations simply reveals how dependent the pagan big bang model is on its philosophical starting point. You should observe that this dramatic turn of events shows you the truth of the diagram in Chapter 3 on the limits of man's experience and how a story of history prior to all human observation rests completely upon conjecture. When it comes to history reconstruction prior to human observations, there are no "facts" in the commonly accepted meaning of the term--only speculation and conjecture--whether the popular media recognize it or not.

The Humphreys Water Model is not the only explanation of the apparent great age of the universe. Another model has also been proposed that not only changes the initial condition of the universe but also changes the calculation process of the General Theory of Relativity.

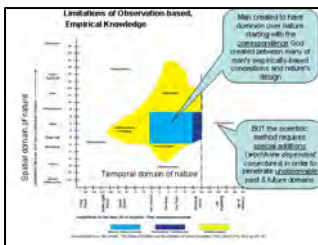
### Herrmann's Metamorphic-Anamorphic (MA) Model

For over a decade a Christian mathematician, Dr. Robert Herrmann, has developed a very extensive critique of mathematical modeling used in all scientific theory, especially at the sub-particle level of nuclear physics and at the very large scale of cosmological theory-making.[5]

Dr. Herrmann has deeply engaged two fundamental dilemmas of 20th century math and science. First, mathematicians have become aware of the "incompleteness" of their key tool: formal logic. The term "incompleteness" refers to the discovery that human ingenuity and intuition which are used to create proofs cannot themselves be formalized by a fixed set of rules. No computer can be made that will reproduce the ingenuity and intuition involved in human thought.

That means one of two things. It could mean that human thought and its formal logic activity is only a superficial electro-chemical phenomenon of accidentally-formed neuron networks in an evolved animal brain. If so, then away goes the vision that reality should be logical, and also disappearing with it is the basis for scientific knowledge.

Dr. Herrmann argues for a second option. Human logic is incomplete, but logic itself is not. There exists a "metalanguage" behind the natural world of human observation and logical proof-making, what Herrmann calls the "D-world" with "ultrallogic" and "ultralinguistic" processes beyond human comprehension. The parallel to Hebrews 1:3 and 11:3 is obvious. While others have suggested similar ideas, Herrmann's contribution is the rigorous



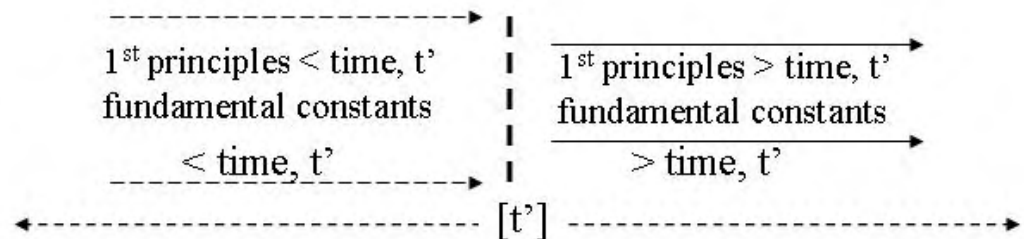
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mathematical development he has produced to support it. No one who utilizes the mathematical modeling techniques of modern science, he shows, can deny this D-world without destroying his own modeling efforts.

The second fundamental dilemma of modern 20th-century thought is a similar "incompleteness" problem found in physics. To obtain any grand unification of science, any "theory of everything", there must be a reconciliation between the idea that the universe is a continuum in space and time (*i.e.*, describable in terms of real numbers) and the idea that it has discontinuous, discrete features such as photon emissions that occur suddenly with no "in-between" values (*i.e.*, describable in terms of rational numbers but not in terms of real numbers). Ample evidence for both views now exists.

Herrmann meets this second dilemma with his results from dealing with the first one. He applies his "D-world" concept to the modeling the history of any natural process imaginable--radioactive decay, evolution of the stars--whether that process is continuous or discontinuous. After much rigorous analysis and proof, he derives what he calls his "metamorphic-anamorphic" or MA model. The MA model is one of the most powerful concepts ever introduced into the creationist controversy.

**The MA model looks like this:**



In the MA model the universe is not uniform within the normal sense of human language and logic, but it is "ultrauniform" in the sense that there exists a complete set of rules to predict the natural history of any process for all space and all cosmic time. In Herrmann's model there can be periodic discontinuities in any natural process just as there are with normal photon emissions in the atom. While such events appear to us in this world as "sudden", they do not so appear in the D-world that surrounds us.

Herrmann's extensive logical development produces many insights along the way. Here are a few of them: (1) there is no way to scientifically verify the uniformity of nature outside of our "local" knowledge in space and time; (2) most major theories such as Einstein's General Theory of Relativity are flawed in how they handle fundamental properties of space and time;

(3) sub-atomic particles such as neutrinos and antineutrinos need not exist; they are only required by an incorrect understanding of mathematical modeling; (4) due to MA effects, there exist a potentially infinite set of cosmological models all of which can produce the same empirically sensed data so no such model can ever be verified on a scientific basis; such models are chosen philosophically only; (5) a cosmology based upon a literal understanding of the Genesis narrative in light of the MA model explains sudden appearances, prematurely aging of the universe, red-shift effects, and all other possible evidences.

As with the Humphreys Water Model, so with Herrmann's MA Model: they underscore the speculative structure of history construction for physical and chemical systems. In fact, they show that at the end of the 20th century man seems to have reached the limits of the scientific method. What was once a method based upon careful laboratory experimentation has become a method compromised by spiritually-motivated conjecture. Like the ancient pagan astrologers of Babylon who were at once brilliant mathematicians and celestial observers but also wildly speculative priests, modern cosmologists combine stunning brilliance with unbelievable pagan speculation. Also like the ancient Babylon priesthood, they are richly subsidized with public taxes!

### END NOTES FOR APPENDIX C

1. Henry Morris noted years ago that to expand these genealogies by inserting gaps to get enough time between Abraham (ca. 2000 BC) and the allegedly "first" true man would require gaps of 50,000 years each--an absurd denial of the entire concept of a genealogy. See his Biblical Cosmology and Modern Science (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1970), pp. 66-68.
2. See materials available from the Institute for Creation Research. A convenient summary with a PhD's evaluation of each method is Theodore W. Rybka, Geophysical and Astronomical Clocks, privately published manual available from the author at 2050 Longley Lane, Reno, NV, 89502 for about \$15 plus postage.
3. See Rybka's discussion with references, pp. 123-4.
4. D. Russell Humphreys, Starlight and Time (Colorado Springs, CO: Master Books), p 19. Excellent paperback introduction to his Water Model.
5. See Creation Research Society Quarterly issues between 1984 and 1994 available at P.O. Box 969, Ashland, OH 44605 or publications from R. A. Herrmann Press, P.O. Box 3268, Annapolis, MD 21403.

## APPENDIX D: GEOLOGICAL NATURAL HISTORY: BIBLICAL CATASTROPHISM VS. UNIFORMITARIANISM

Lesson 31



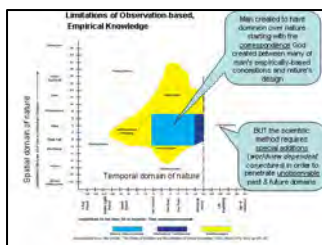
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Natural history is man's attempt at telling the story of natural development over time. It is one of the tasks dominion man seeks to do. As a dominion work it depends upon the limitations of man's reason and experience--subjects discussed in Chapter Three. I pointed out there that reason is a limited tool. It can supply logical rigor to our thinking, but such rigor can show us reality only if our categories and logical rules fit reality. I also pointed out in Chapter Three that our experience as finite creatures is very limited. We cannot extend our experience backwards in time beyond human observations except by speculation and conjecture.

All attempts, therefore, at writing natural histories must cope with man's limited reason and experience in space and time. Either God's revelation of the origin and destiny of nature is accepted as reasonable and as empirically-observed data, or it is not. Presuppositionally, a decision has to be made: which will be the final reference point--the Word of God or the thoughts of man?

In the geological realm the battle between biblical faith and paganism is wrapped up in the opposing interpretative principles of biblical catastrophism and pagan uniformitarianism. First, I will show the difference in these principles, then I will summarize the history of their use in geology. Finally, I will show what is happening in this field today among creationist students.

### PRESUPPOSITIONS BEHIND CATASTROPHISM AND UNIFORMITARIANISM.



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Interpreting the causes of and the time required for deposition of rock is just another area of natural history writing. On the biblical basis, three major events play a critical role: creation, fall, and flood. All rock formations have been caused by one or more of these three major acts of God. Creation established the antediluvian earth and a structure of rock and soil that later was reworked into the form we observe today. The fall introduced death and so all fossils must postdate this event. Natural evil and catastrophes begin after this time. The flood and its after-effects become the major geological catastrophe of all history. This "high energy" epoch is thought to explain each rock formation and each fossil assemblage.

On the pagan basis, however, a completely different interpretative principle operates. In this view death and evil are "normal" so that fossils all

go back to whenever they first appeared in the evolutionary process. The universe is "safe" from any catastrophic intervention of the biblical God so there has certainly not been any such high energy event like the flood that could have caused most of the global geologic formations. All rock formations and fossil assemblages, therefore, came about from a variety of "low energy" processes similar to those we observe today: river flooding, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, etc. This principle used to interpret the rock strata is known as the principle of "uniformitarianism".

Uniformitarianism is another version of the pagan idea of the Continuity of Being seen in the biological and physical realms (Appendices B and C). Everything supposedly comes about as the sum of a long series of very small incremental changes. This idea excludes in principle the possibility of great discontinuities and sudden changes.

## THE HISTORY OF GEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

As geological studies began after the Protestant Reformation, several Bible-believing naturalists tried to develop a flood-model to explain the newly-discovered data. To their credit, it was these Bible-believers who first argued against the medieval interpretation that fossils were strange objects produced "in situ". They insisted that fossils were the organic remains of a catastrophe.

By the late 1600s, however, certain weaknesses in their approach led them to begin reinterpreting Genesis to allow more time for the natural history of the earth. Unintentionally, they insisted upon explaining geological data by means of processes that were still going on in their day. In short, they allowed the foreign principle of uniformitarianism to take hold of their work. Anti-biblical critics attacked them by saying that such natural processes could never have brought this planet about in six literal days.

The 19th century saw the total victory of the uniformitarians before Darwin ever published any of his works. The accommodationist strategy toward the Genesis narrative by Christians was already well underway. No one ever challenged the validity of the uniformitarian principle that everyone was using and accepting. Only a few Seventh Day Adventist naturalists kept the old flood geology model alive.

In 1961, however, the battle was resumed by the publication, The Genesis Flood, by Whitcomb and Morris. These authors, on the basis of a very careful exegesis of Genesis 1-11, insisted that the Bible could not accommodate uniformitarianism. The narrative simply recorded too much evidence of God's catastrophic dealing with the earth for it to be ignored.

Following in their footsteps have come a group of younger Bible-believing scientists who are now seeking to create a new flood model of geology more consistent than that of the early Protestant naturalists.[1]

## FLOOD GEOLOGY TODAY

Uniformitarian-based geology that completely dominates the intellectual world today prides itself on its ability to explain the many different geological formations around the world with one picture. Geologists speak of a "geological column" that contains the historical record of macro-evolution from its lower layers of simpler fossil forms to its upper layers with more complex fossil forms. They assure us that the many layers of sedimentary rock took untold millions of years to lay down. Vast times were required for the necessary volume of debris to accumulate in order to supply thick sedimentary rock layers (many thousands of feet thick). Erosion of large chunks of such sedimentary rock--so-called "missing" layers--demands hundreds of thousands of years.

The challenge for Bible-believing scientists is to explain such features in terms of the creation, fall, and flood events. How can they account for fossil separation in the geologic column, the thickness of sedimentary rock formations, and the erosion of entire "missing" layers? And why are there no human fossils found in the deeper layers of the geological column? I will summarize some of their present day efforts.

### What is the Geologic Column?

The backbone of historical geology is the picture we all get in school of the "geologic column", that vertical sequence of fossilized life forms ranging from the "earliest" microbes in Precambrian rock to the "latest" forms similar to present ones in Cenozoic rock. Using the principle of superposition, that the upper rock was deposited after the lower rock and is therefore older, geologists confidently assure us that this column depicts the natural history of the earth.

By using so-called "index fossils" which appear limited to certain strata and epochs only, geologists can correlate a rock layer in one place with a rock layer bearing the same index fossils in another place. From such correlations the geological column is built up from segments existing here and there.

Bible-believing young-earth creationists begin by carefully scrutinizing this column just as their biologist colleagues scrutinize the so-called "fact" of evolution. What exactly is the logical process involved in building this column? Logically, a certain circular reasoning seems to be involved. If I discover a rock layer "A" on top of another rock layer "C", by superposition



"A" ought to follow "C". However if the index fossils in "A" and "C" belong to two "ages" separated by a third set of index fossils missing from this formation, I have to suppose that there is a missing layer "B". Even if I cannot find physical evidence that there was such a layer, I am bound by this pagan system to claim "B" existed at one time. In one sense the column is logically dependent upon an evolutionary sequence of index fossils, but evolution is dependent upon the column!

How much of the column actually exists across the earth's land masses? In a remarkable study John Woodmorappe divided the earth's land surface into 967 equal areas. He then surveyed geological literature for reports on the fragments of the column found in each area. He found, much to his surprise, that of the 10 periods in the geologic column less than 13% of the earth's land surface has as many as five periods represented and less than one percent has all 10 periods in place. These figures count the periods whether or not they are even in the proper sequence. He concludes:

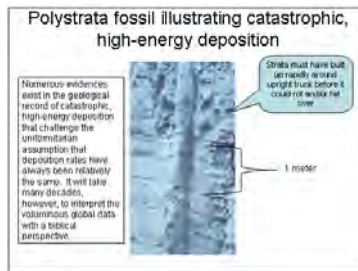
*"Since only a small percentage of the earth's surface obeys even a significant portion of the geologic column, it becomes an overall exercise of gargantuan special pleading and imagination for the evolutionary-uniformitarian paradigm to maintain that there ever were geologic periods." [2]*

*Areas of "missing" layers are usually explained as due to non-deposition or erosion, but Woodmorappe notes that this excuse "is self-serving because there is no deterministic reason why the earth's land surface should (or should not) become everywhere depositional sometime within any span of several tens of millions of years comprising each geological period. (This claim) does not face the question whether or not these geologic periods ever existed in the first place." [3]*

Flood geologists, therefore, must explain the general fossil patterns shown in the different rock layers, but they do not need to explain the hypothetical geological column.

### **Evidences of Out-of-order Layers and Catastrophic Sedimentation**

Positive evidences that support flood geology and cause problems for classical uniformitarian geology include out-of-order layers and catastrophic sedimentation. Many places on earth feature supposedly "older" layers with early index fossils on top of "younger" layers with later index fossils. If it weren't for the fossils, by superposition these layers would be dated in order from below to above. Often no physical evidence exists of any overthrusting or lateral thrusting, but because evolutionary theory requires the proper sequence of index fossils geologists feel bound to let the physical evidence yield to the biological evidence. Flood geologists, however, accept the physical evidence of straightforward superposition and date the layers from below to above.



see p.143 for full size slide

Other evidence includes "polystrata" fossils. Petrified tree trunks (at varying angles to the vertical) are sometimes seen piercing several layers of rock. Quite obviously such layers all must have been laid down quite rapidly before the tree rotted away! Fossil clusters or "graveyards" jammed together also testify to rapid processes at work. These evidences show high energy catastrophism at work to preserve fossils rapidly.

### **John Woodmorappe's Tectonically-Associated Biological Provinces (TAB) Model**

To explain various fossil patterns on the basis of one flood event, Woodmorappe has devised what he calls a tectonically-associated biological provinces (TAB) model. In this model, antediluvian regions or provinces are visualized with the general characteristics of, say, a Paleozoic epoch or a Mesozoic era. Then as the flood began with the "fountains of the deep" breaking up (Gen. 7:11), giant sinkholes or down-warpings developed in the earth's crust. Water poured into such areas entombing their life forms with sedimentary debris.

As the food continued, more and more such regions were affected which resemble the higher portions of the classical geological column. Locally, many exceptions to this sequence occurred, but globally there was a statistical prevalence for the sequence. Through this mechanism Woodmorappe is able to explain the fossil differentiation in strata, the distribution of phyla in the fossil record, and even the relative absence of human remains in the Paleozoic and Mesozoic periods.[4]

In the closing stages of the flood and subsequent terrestrial adjustments after the flood, flood strata were reworked, folded, eroded, and covered over with volcanic outflows. Thus Woodmorappe's TAB model goes into details never before addressed in flood modeling. Such work shows indeed that rational explanations that utilize the eye-witness record of Scripture are not only possible but offer more plausibility than the Bible-denying pagan approaches.

### **END NOTES FOR APPENDIX D**

1. See discussion in Chapter 1.
2. John Woodmorappe, "The Essential Nonexistence of the Evolutionary-Uniformitarian Geologic Column: A Quantitative Assessment," Creation Research Society Quarterly, Vol. 18 (June, 1981), p. 69.
3. Ibid

John Woodmorappe, "A Diluvialogical Treatise on the Stratigraphic Separation of Fossils," Creation Research Society Quarterly, Vol. 20 (December, 1983), pp. 167-171.

## APPENDIX E: Diagrams Used in Class

The following slides were used on an overhead projector during class.

### Shall I Bow To My Creator?

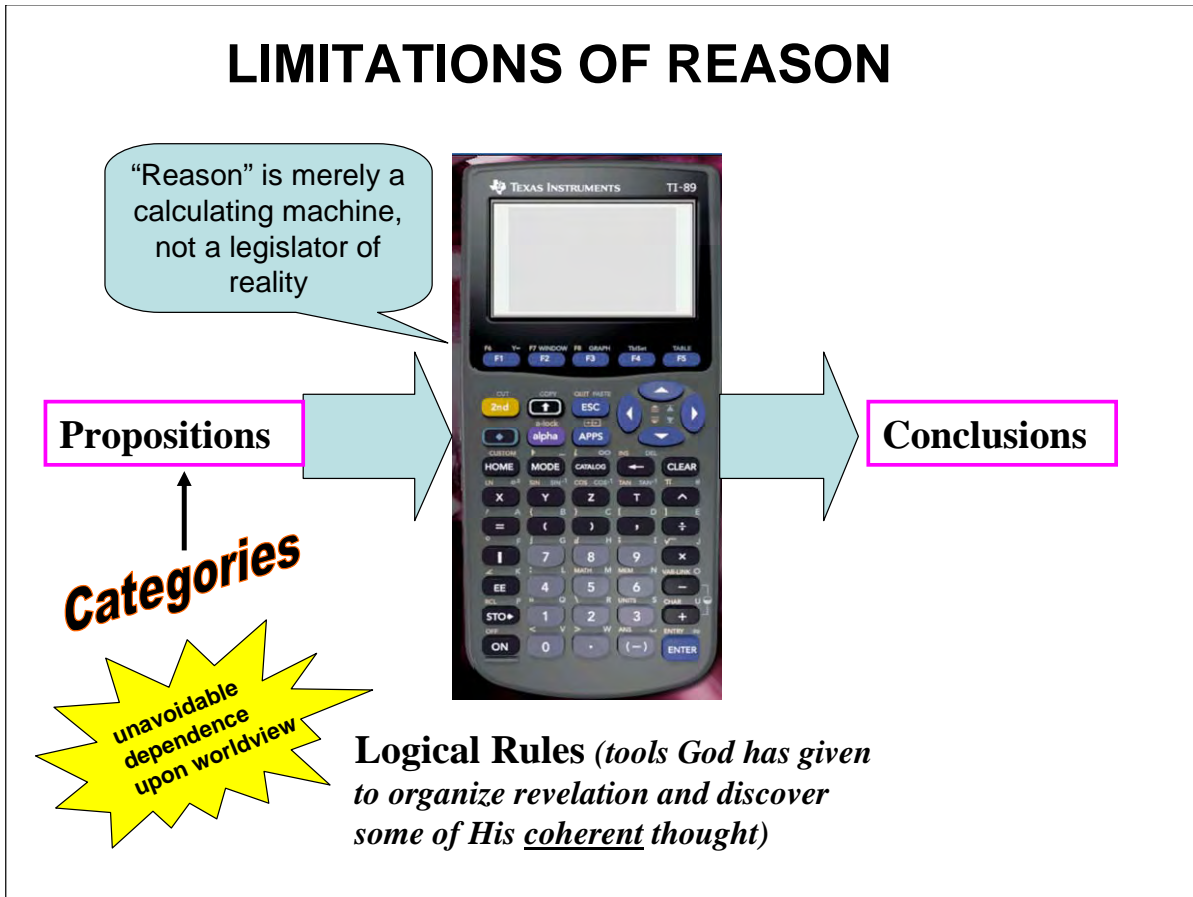
- **YES!**
  - ancient monotheism
  - ancient Israel
  - Bible
  - Fundamentalism
- **CREATOR/creature**
  - God || man | nature
  - everlasting distinctions
- **PERSONAL SOVEREIGN**
  - ultimate responsibility
- **NO!**
  - ancient myths
  - eastern religions
  - western philosophy
  - modern theology
- **Continuity of Being**
  - nature > gods > man
  - transmutation / evolution
- **IMPERSONAL FATE / CHANCE**
  - ultimate victimization

Slide referenced in Lesson 3 on page 11  
and Lesson 21 on page 77  
and Lesson 26 on page 101  
and Lesson 28 on page 108  
and Lesson 31 on page 124

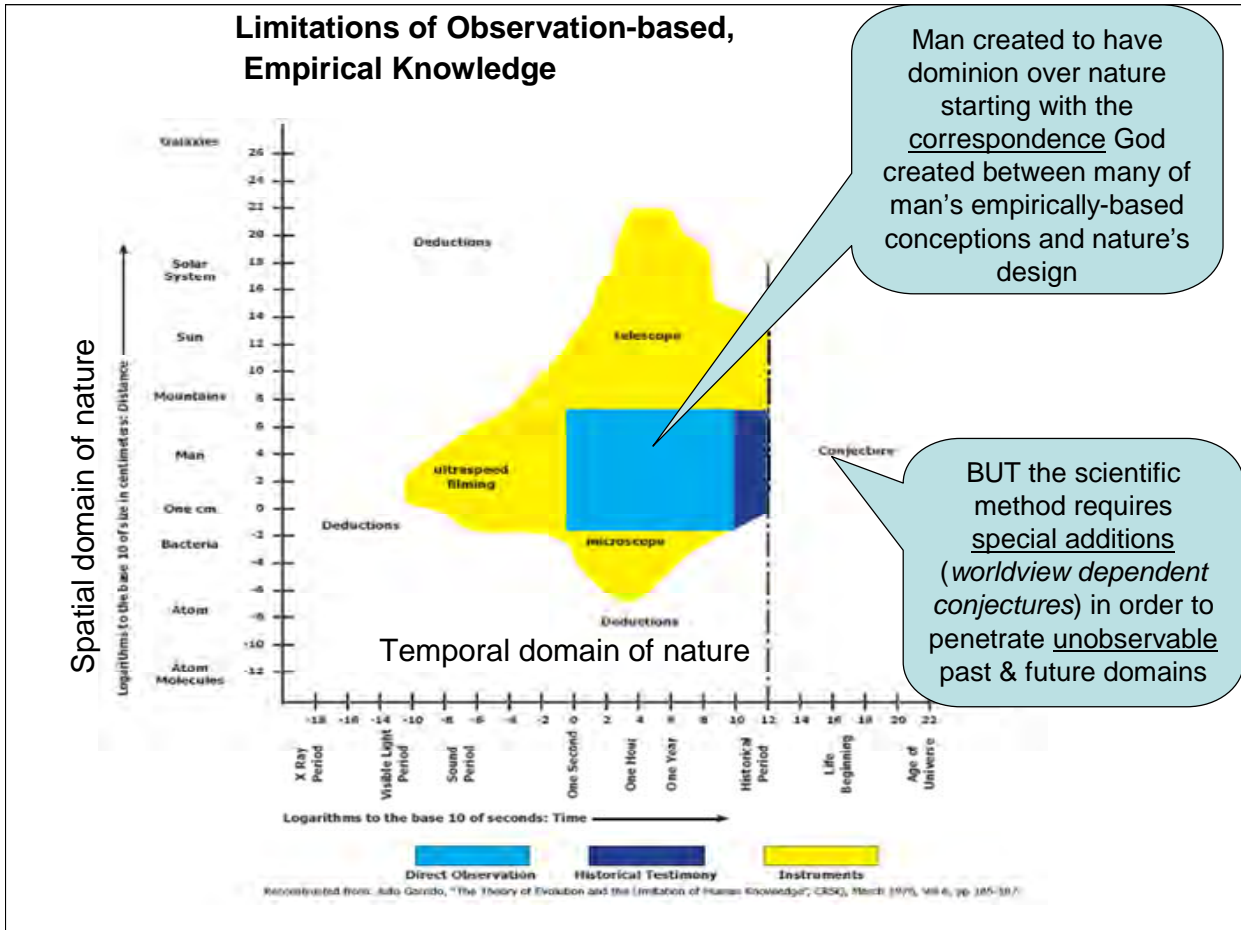
## 6-Day Pattern

1 <sup>st</sup> 3 days	2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 days
Domains of Light & Darkness (Day & Night)	Sun “rules” the Day; Moon and stars “rule” the Night
Domain of sea and atmosphere	Fish fill the sea and birds fly in the atmosphere
Domain of land	Animals fill the land and man rules fish, birds, and animals

Slide Referenced in Lesson 5 on p.13

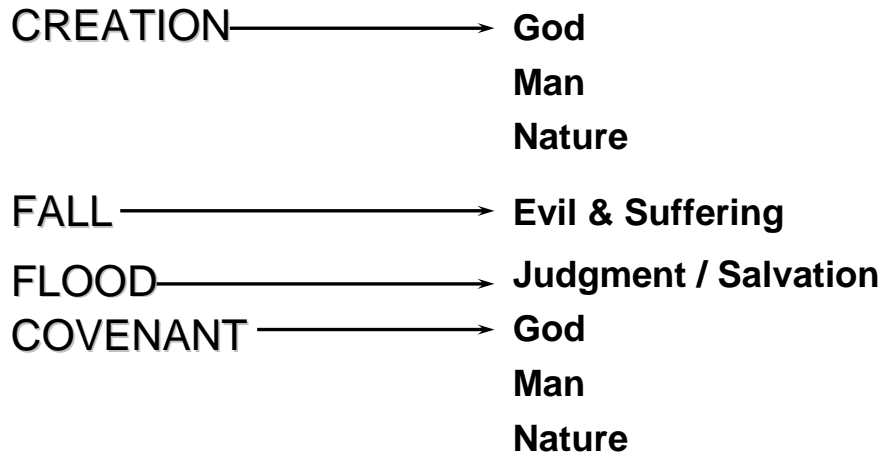


Slide Referenced in Lesson 13 on page 47  
and Lesson 24 on page 90  
and Lesson 28 on page 108

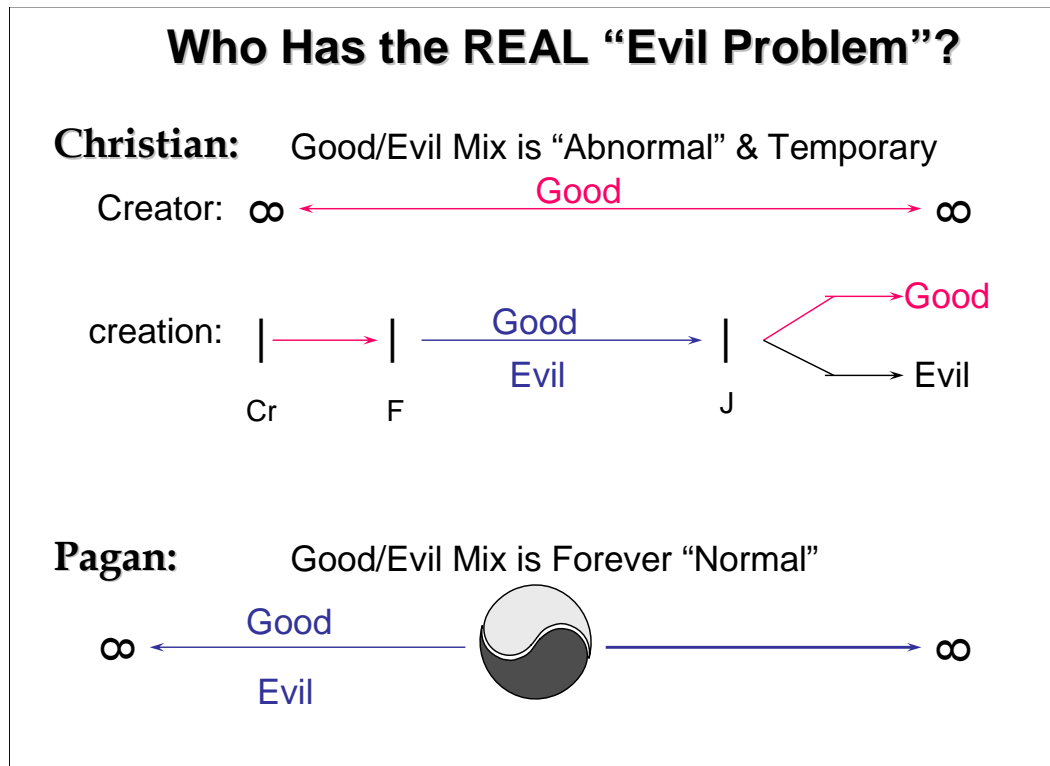


Slide referenced in Lesson 13 on page 48  
 and Lesson 23 on page 88  
 and Lesson 24 on page 90  
 and Lesson 28 on page 108  
 and Lesson 29 on page 114  
 and Lesson 30 on page 121  
 and Lesson 31 on page 124

## THE BURIED FOUNDATION



Slide referenced in Lesson 14 on page 51  
and Lesson 19 on page 71  
and Lesson 26 on page 101

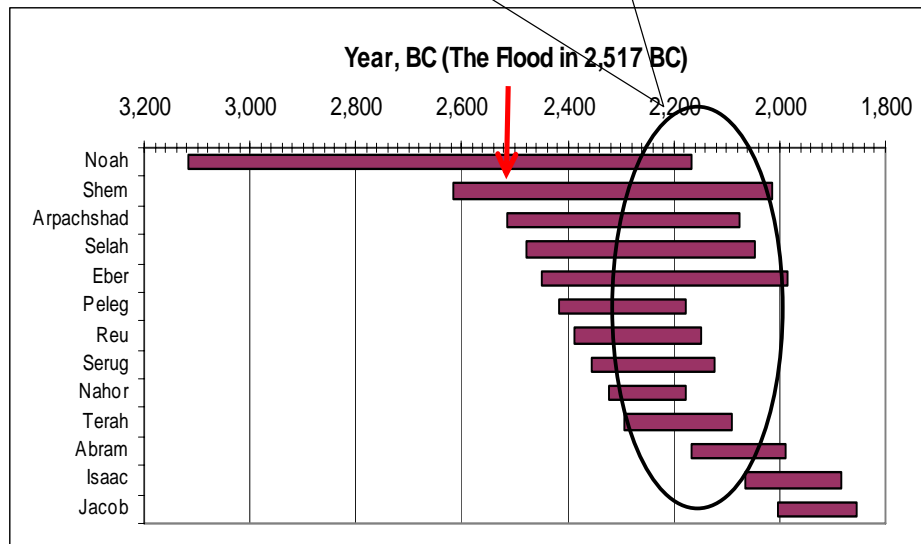


Slide Referenced in Lesson 15 on page 56  
and Lesson 17 on page 63



# The Strange Time After the Flood

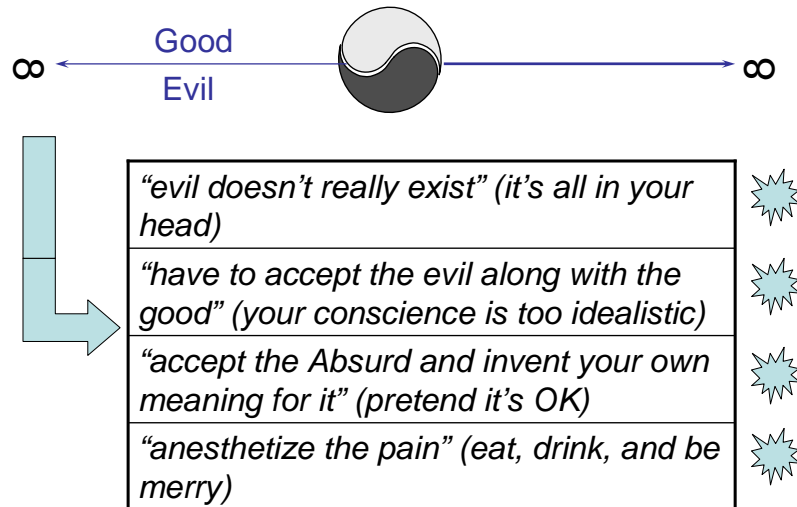
Ancestors outlived their descendants and many generations died out at once that must have caused racial amnesia regarding past history apart from the Word of God



Slide referenced in Lesson 16 page 63  
 and Lesson 24 on page 91  
 and Lesson 25 on page 95

## Pagan “Coping-with-Evil” Strategies

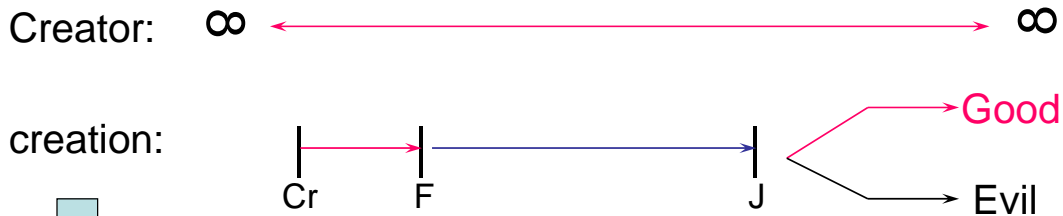
Good/Evil Mix is **Forever “Normal”**



Slide referenced in Lesson 17 on page 64

## Biblical “Coping-with Evil” Strategies

Good/Evil Mix is “**Abnormal**” & **Temporary**



*“Evil operates only within the creature; not within the proven just and good Creator” (you must affirm the Creator-creature distinction)*

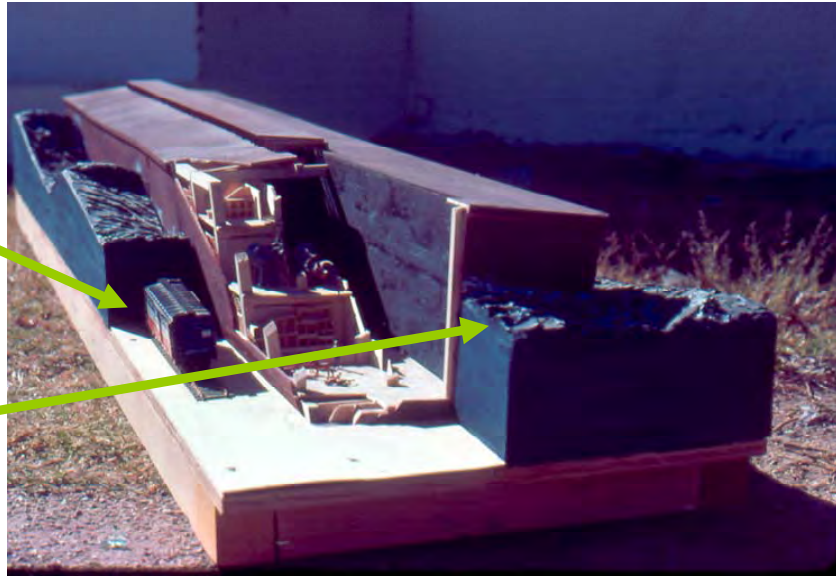
*“All evil is limited and purposeful” (you must affirm that it has a purpose in your life)*

*“Multiple precedents of purposeful evil are revealed” (sufficient rationale exists for inner peace and thanksgiving)*

Slide referenced in Lesson 17 on page 65

## Size of the Ark

Model cutaway of Noah's Ark with model railroad box car (scale = 1/8" to the foot). Water shown for idea of Ark's 15 cubit draught



No ship was ever built larger than the Ark until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century!

Slide referenced in Lesson 19 on page 73

## Stability of the Ark

Stability diagram of Ark showing that even tilting at a  $31^\circ$  angle the buoyancy force, B, restores the Ark to level. Pagan flood stories tell of unstable canoes and a boat in the shape of a cube. A cube of course at a  $31^\circ$  tilt angle would topple over because its center of gravity, G, would become to the right of the restoring buoyancy force, B.

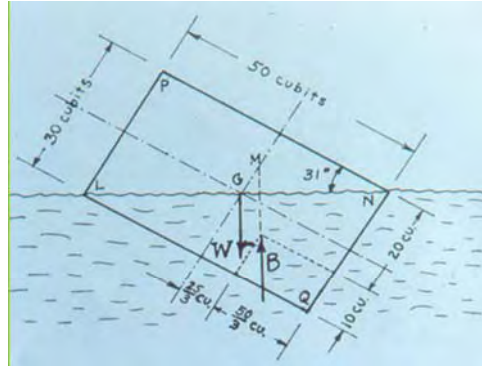


Diagram from Henry Morris' article on the Ark in the September 1971 issue of the [Creation Research Society Quarterly](#).

Slide referenced in Lesson 19 on page 74

## Divine Institutions in Early History

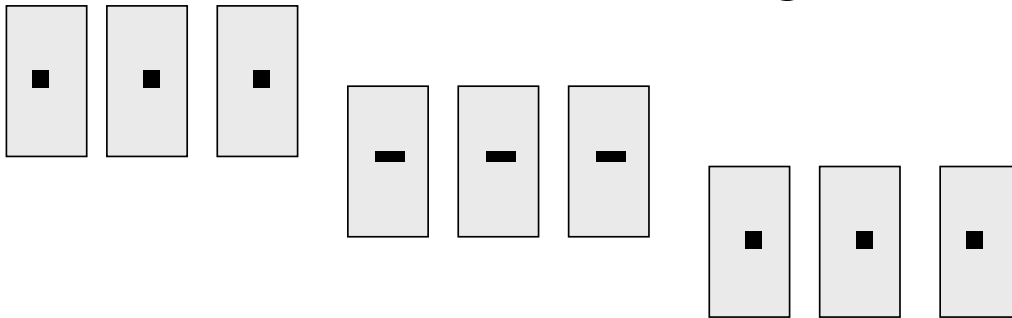
Institution	Creation	Fall	Post-flood
Responsible dominion	channel of spiritual growth & reign under God	spiritual growth under conflict	spiritual growth under conflict; 90% reduction in lifespan
Marriage	channel of spiritual growth & propagation of race	husband & wife each suffer uniquely & conflict together	husband & wife each suffer uniquely & conflict together
Family	channel of spiritual & cultural growth	dysfunctional	dysfunctional
Civil authority to take life	_____	_____	given to fallen man



only post-fall institution: preservative, but not redemptive

Slide referenced in Lesson 24 on page 93  
and Lesson 25 on page 97  
and Lesson 26 on page 101

## WHERE DOES INFORMATION RESIDE ?



in highly-ordered symbols or in the minds that interpret these symbols?

Information transfer requires a common meaning assigned to such symbols by the sending mind and the receiving mind!

Slide referenced in Lesson 28 on page 111

**UNDERLYING SPIRITUAL AGENDA IN NATURAL HISTORIOGRAPHY  
ADMITTED BY PROMINENT EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGIST**

“Our willingness to accept scientific claims that are against common sense is the key to an understanding of the real struggle between science and the supernatural. We take the side of science in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.”

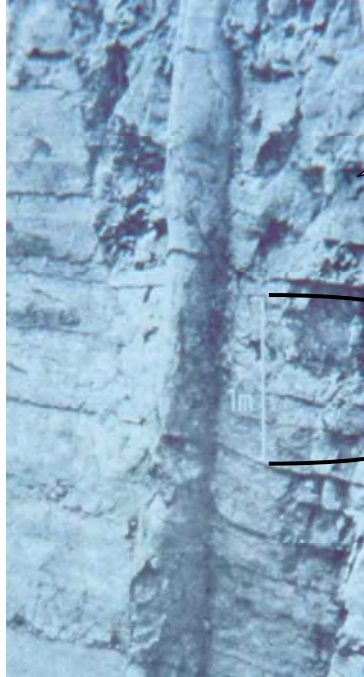
*Harvard population biologist, Richard Lewontin writing about Carl Sagan's book in the New York Review of Books, Vol. 44, No. 1, January 1997.*

Slide referenced in Lesson 29 on page 114



## Polystrata fossil illustrating catastrophic, high-energy deposition

Numerous evidences exist in the geological record of catastrophic, high-energy deposition that challenge the uniformitarian assumption that deposition rates have always been relatively the same. It will take many decades, however, to interpret the voluminous global data with a biblical perspective.



Strata must have built up rapidly around upright trunk before it could rot and/or fall over

1 meter

Slide referenced in Lesson 29 on page 114  
and Lesson 31 on page 128