

Preface

Genesis One

Prior to 1642, it was settled that Genesis One's mention of *yom* did not mean a 24 hour *day* but meant *time*, *epoch*, etc., like we speak of the "Day of the Dinosaur." This meaning of *yom* is its other *literal* meaning.¹

Lightfoot in 1642 changed all that. He, along with Ussher soon thereafter, dated the seven *yoms* of Genesis as seven 24 hour days. They did not exegete the text. They did not discuss all the commentaries prior to 1642 that were *universal* that *yom* did not mean a 24 hour day. Jewish and Christian concurred on this point. Hardly was there any unanimity about many topics, but on Genesis One prior to 1642, it was clearly agreed that *yom* did not mean *day* in the 24 hour sense. Lightfoot and Ussher with very different objectives thoughtlessly measured *yom* as 24 hours.

Then for so many, this became sealed as 'Biblical' by having these two men's chronology inserted directly into the Bible's headings. This gave the impression that these dates were sanctioned by God almost as if *inspired*. We read:

[Ussher's chronology] was incorporated into an authorized version of the Bible printed in 1701, and thus came to be regarded with almost as much ***unquestioning reverence as the Bible*** itself. Having established the first day of creation as Sunday 23 October 4004 BC, by the arguments set forth in the passage below, Ussher calculated the dates of other biblical events, concluding, for example, that Adam and Eve were driven from Paradise on Monday

1. See "Long Days of Genesis?" on page 1 *et seq.*

10 November 4004 BC, and that the ark touched down on Mt Ararat on 5 May 2348 BC ‘on a Wednesday.’²

The spiritual damage by Lightfoot’s and Ussher’s error has by now become enormous.

The Potential Danger To Evangelism by Young Earthers

Young earthers have a simple syllogism that grounds their purpose:

- The Bible says the earth and universe is about 7,000 years old.
- Science proves the earth and universe is about 7,000 years old.
- Therefore, the Bible is credible as the Word of God.

The only flaw in this approach is what happens if science proves the earth is about 4.5 billion years old and the universe is about 15 billion years old? Then the conclusion must follow from this same syllogism that the “Bible is *not* credible as the Word of God.”

Thus, the very way the debate is framed, the young earther has set up the faith for attack *if the young earther’s science is wrong*. Not only would the Bible be subject to attack. *The Bible would be proven false*.

Hence, whenever the young earther promotes his view that the Bible inescapably proves the earth and universe is 7,000 old, the non-Christian realizes that the Bible must be false if science proves the earth and universe is any significant date greater than 7,000 years old.

Young earth science, if justifiably realized to be false by a non-believer, then *cements unbelief* in the non-believer. Young earth science, because grounded in an admission that

2. G. Y. Craig & E. J. Jones, *A Geological Miscellany* (Princeton University Press, 1982).

the Bible is false if old earth science were true, promotes the lost condition of every lost soul who accepts their view of the Bible, but cannot fathom a young earth. The non-believer will think he can justifiably reject the Bible because of the young earther's claim that the Bible is irreconcilable with old earth science.

Will young earth science ever rescue the Bible from the old earth science facts?

As a Christian deeply committed to the inspiration of the book of Genesis, I can affirm unequivocally *no*. Young earth science, *as presented and practiced today*, has no hope to salvage the authenticity of the Bible if it continues to insist upon the young earth view. There is no conceivable way to reconcile Genesis with science unless Christians find a way textually to reconcile Genesis to old earth science. It is an indisputable fact that the universe is many millions times older than 7,000 years, and the earth's age is over three billion years.

Young earth science, as I will explain in this book, is entirely bogus. We will examine its leading claims. Yet, we will find no credible young earth claim exists. All its main assertions are based on the worst imaginable science and analysis. It is not even a close question. Many times the ethics of the speaker are clearly in doubt. As a result, young earth science is a bad witness for Christ. It is not grounded in reality, science and, tragically, quite often it violates the ethics that fair investigation and discussion requires.

As a result, young earth science can only confirm those who are already committed to their preconceptions about a short-day view of Genesis. ***It can never open the door to any intelligent or informed person accepting Genesis as the word of God as long as the young earth voice stubbornly insists that Genesis One can only have one meaning: a 24 hour day.***

Even if the door would open to Christ by means of young earth science, the 'convert' would eventually learn the Christian who evangelized him did so by, in effect, *spreading*

lies about reality. The young earthers are setting people up to have their faith destroyed. For if sincere mature Christians can make falsehoods appear truth, how can ‘converts’ trust these same speakers’s reasoning that Jesus is the Messiah?

When we as lawyers want to win a case, we dispense with all of our weakest arguments. The one argument we never should make is the one in which the jury might learn *we deceptively used the evidence*. This will always backfire. How much more so we should respect truth and our listener by not needlessly exposing our faith to falsification!

When we continue to use disproven or falsified factual claims, it is evident we hope to capture someone by guile. That is, by deceit. Yet, Jesus “left us an example, that we should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was *guile* found in His mouth.” (1 Peter 2:21-22.)

Friendly Criticisms

Daniel E. Wonderly, a teacher with graduate degrees in science and theology, wrote a work entitled *Neglect of Geological Data: Sedimentary Strata Compared with Young-Earth Creationist Writings* (Hartfield, Pa.: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 2006).³ He speaks as a Christian. Wonderly makes many telling observations on the deficiency of the science of young earthers.

He says when faced with contrary data to their hypotheses, young earthers are “invariably thrown into a confused set of speculations in attempting to explain them, advocating hypotheses for which they have no relevant observed data.” (*Id.*, at 54.) Wonderly cautions: “We should remember that God has never asked us [to defend] his truth with irrational explanations, or by postulating processes which contra-

3. <http://www.asa3.org/ASA/resources/Wonderly2006.pdf> (accessed 12/14/07).

dict or violate the natural laws He has created.” (*Id.*) Where did this wrong methodology of young earthers begin? With the leaders of the movement! Wonderly explains:

Why do the young-earth leaders not recognize the significance of these structures and characteristics? These leaders are maintaining a method of thought and practice which is **foreign** to what most evangelical scientists know as **responsible scientific research**. (*Id.*, at 61.)

Similarly, Christopher M. Sharp, a Christian scientist,⁴ in 2005 wrote Dr. James Kennedy a kind but blunt letter. He notes that young earth zeal has become like a mental disease rather than an intellectual endeavor, as it violates so many canons of *reasoning* and *proof*:

Young earth [doctrine], namely a belief that the universe is less than about 10,000 years old, together with other dogma, in particular a global Noah’s flood about 1600 years after the creation, is in my mind **a disease** that has infected a large fraction of the evangelical community in the USA since World War II, and does not necessarily have much to do with the bogy word “evolution.”⁵

Sharp goes on to note that many reputable Christian scholars of another generation accepted an old earth:

In fact many evangelical scholars in the late 19th century and early 20th century, such as Charles Hodge and Benjamin B. Warfield, accepted that the earth was probably very old, even if they had problems with evolution. The

4. Christopher M. Sharp, Department of Astronomy, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, E-mail: csharp@as.arizona.edu / cmsharp01@aol.com website <http://csharp.com>

5. <http://www.csharp.com/kennedy.html>

whole issue of a young earth creationism was revived by Henry Morris and John Whitcomb Jr. with their book “The Genesis Flood” in 1961, which was based on the writings of the Seventh Day Adventist George McCready Price before World War II....

This Christian scientist, Sharp, then actually accuses the leaders of the young earth movement of being deliberate liars:

[T]he leaders in the [young earth] community,... I have every reason to believe ***are knowingly bearing false witness in some cases***, as I can tell by what they say,

Sharp says that the rest of us are simply being duped. These young earth ‘scientists’ are taking advantage of our lack of knowledge of science. Sharp tells Dr. Kennedy:

I have every reason to believe that you are just misguided, and have bought into this whole business of young earth [doctrine] simply because you have not thought through the whole issue properly, and ***acquainted yourself with the science***. It appears that you have been persuaded by some of the leaders in the [young earth] community, and are propagating these errors to other Christians.

Sharps goes on and says that the claim that old earth science is the product of an alleged conspiracy is flawed, and ends up with Christians denying objective truth:

The impression you give in your two broadcasts⁶ is that there is a world wide conspiracy in astronomy and geology to cover up the evidence that the earth is no more than about

6. May 25, 2004 was one.

10,000 years old, and that somehow geologists with their dating methods are ***evil and deliberately manipulate dates*** because they do not want to be accountable to God. You stated several times that over 99% of all geochronology gives relatively young ages for the earth. Indeed many rocks can be young, but many can be old; however, the age of the earth, the moon, the other planets, the sun, and the Solar System as a whole, have been dated to be 4.5 billion years old. These are based on many independent assumptions, and if different and independent assumptions generally agree, there is every reason to accept this figure. There is no argument that the Solar System is about 4.5 billion years old, rather than about 10,000 years old, nor that the universe as a whole is about 14 billion years old. The ***empirical evidence is just too strong***, and anybody who denies this is in effect ***denying that there is such a thing as objective truth.***⁷

Sharp brings a challenge to consider. If one holds to a young earth, you are rejecting objective truth. Sharp's harsh criticism is one that regrettably is far closer to the truth than one would ever imagine. We need not prove young earth leaders are deceptive or lying, but the fact a Christian scientist brings such a charge should cause us concern whether non-Christians could form that conclusion.

7. On July 11, 2005, Sharp received an e-mail from a member of Coral Ridge Ministries that confessed Sharp was one hundred percent correct. Sharp said he would not reveal the person's name to protect their privacy. The letter reads in part: "It is my opinion that you are correct on each and every point raised. As you know, not every believer concurs with the 6,000 to 10,000 year old 'young earth' theory. We here at CRM have interesting internal discussions on these topics; unfortunately free speech is a questionable one."

Sharp provides this very apt conclusion that the young earth science, if not dropped by Christians, is going to cause the demise of the Christian gospel into a narrow gutter:

By making the age of the earth an issue, all you are doing is **ghettoizing Christianity**, and making it **ineffective**. Moreover, because of a number of serious and well known scientific errors in these and other broadcasts (the shrinking sun is another example), **skeptics** who hear your broadcasts can **use your erroneous arguments against Christians**.

It is not like this never has happened before. We must learn from the past. Sharp points out that the church once denied Galileo had seen moons around Jupiter:

[T]he Roman Catholic Church denied that Galileo had seen moons in orbit around Jupiter. In the end, with the weight of evidence so strong, [the church] quietly back-peddled, but probably not before damage was done to the image of Christianity

Another Christian, Matthew S. Tiscareno, wisely commented that we must treat the unassailable facts of nature as another revelation *from* God for God cannot deceive us:

Regardless of what we may think the Bible says, the facts of nature are also ordained by God, and it is not right deny them or to misrepresent them in order to support any particular belief system.⁸

8. Matthew S. Tiscareno, *Is There Really Scientific Evidence for a Young Earth?* at <http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/Lab/6562/young-earth/yeclaims.html> (accessed 12/14/07).

Alan Harvey, a Christian scientist who debunked the alleged Law of Thermodynamics argument of young earthers, wisely said:

I have a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering (UC-Berkeley, 1988), specializing in "Molecular Thermodynamics," which combines classical and statistical thermodynamics to describe the thermophysical properties of fluids... I am an evangelical Christian. I believe the Bible to be entirely trustworthy in conveying God's messages.... ***We should be diligent in our efforts to avoid bearing false witness***, whether the victim is our next-door neighbor or Ludwig Boltzmann.⁹

Young Earthers Cause Discrediting of Creationism

One of the greatest tragedies of all is that despite science now showing verifiable facts that prove the necessity of a superior intelligence as creator, those proofs are lumped together with young earth 'science.' Because young earth science is so discredited, 'creationists' can be rejected as out of hand. Listen to this quote, and see how the bogus young earth claims about moon dust now taint valid proofs of God as creator:

For an excellent study of this moon dust argument, read Clarence Menninga (Van Till et al, 1988, pp.67-82). If you do, you will find that there are still more blunders associated with this infamous ***creationist argument!***¹⁰

9. <http://members.aol.com/steamdoc/writings/thermo.html> (accessed 10/2/2008).

10. Dave E. Matson, *How Good Are Those Young-Earth Arguments? A Close Look at Dr. Hovind's List of Young-Earth Arguments and Other Claims*, at www.talkorigins.org/faqs/hovind/howgood-yea.html (accessed 12/17/07).

This critic disputes creationism too. So he enjoys *equating* young earth science claims with creationism. But they are distinct. Yet, the taint of young earth science on creationism is a significant one. It stigmatizes purely creationist arguments — the very kind of claim which true seekers of God might take seriously the theological claims from the Bible. The stigma of young earth science blocks that important message from being taken for real. Everyone assumes the same unscientific (even apparently dishonest) presentation is involved in offering creationism as there is in presenting young earth science. However, they are not the same. But now the creationist is saddled with overcoming an unnecessary hurdle to his or her outstanding proofs. As a result, young earth science takes the luster away from God's outstanding witness of His role in history, and allows it to be besmirched by poor, even despicable scientific reasonings used in the presentation of a supposedly young earth.

Young Earth Claims Shatter The Faith of Christians When Its Falsity Is Exposed

The pernicious effect of young earther's continuing to haul out refuted claims is described in an *Answers in Genesis* article, entitled *What About Carl Baugh?*, by a Christian — Dr. Don Batten. He was concerned about the practice of those who continue to publish or sell books with erroneous factual claims about a young earth. Baugh to support scientific claims that Christians hold near and dear. He wisely said:

It is sad that Carl Baugh will 'muddy the water' for many Christians and non-Christians. Some Christians will try to use Baugh's 'evidences' in witnessing and get 'shot down' by someone who is scientifically literate. The ones witnessed to will thereafter be wary of all creation evidences and even more inclined to dismiss Christians as nut cases not worth listening to.

Also, the Christian is likely to be less apt to witness, even perhaps tempted to doubt their own faith (wondering *what other misinformation they have gullibly believed from Christian teachers*). CSF ministers to strengthen the faith of Christians and equip them for the work of evangelism and, sadly, the long term effect of Carl Baugh's efforts will be detrimental to both.¹¹

This threat to the faith is visible in the experience of Todd Greene, a Christian. He became disillusioned by young earth science but fortunately has chosen to abandon believing young earth claims rather than distrust our Lord. Yet, his words blow demonstrate what must be the same thought processes of other Christians who certainly have made similar realizations of the invalidity of young earth science but who did not have the strength in their faith to withstand the disillusionment it caused them.

Todd Greene thus explained:

I am no newcomer to young earth creationism. I grew up with it. I believed it. Then I discov-

11.<http://paleo.cc/paluxy/whatbau.htm> (accessed 10/2/08). Glen Kuban, a Christian who hosts this page, explains the history of how AIG was pressured to remove this article from the AIG website and undo its courageous effort to correct the record: "This web page was originally authored by Dr. Don Batten of Answers in Genesis (AIG), a sister group of the Creation Science Foundation. The purpose was to answer often-asked questions regarding the teachings of Carl Baugh, a strict creationist who is perhaps best known for his Paluxy 'man track' claims. AIG and CSF had installed this page as part of their own web site, but was asked to remove it by Eden Films, another creationist group with whom they share web space. AIG and CSF feel it is important to continue making this site available to the public. Therefore, they have graciously allowed me to include this page as part of my Paluxy web site, and to update portions of the text to reflect information made available since the original AIG page was created. I do not share the young-earth position of AIG and CSF, but applaud their courage and forthrightness in dealing frankly and publicly with the serious problems in Carl Baugh's work and claims.

ered it was wrong. I've had many, many years of experience with YEC. I'm used to the habitual carelessness with details, the attitude of remaining obstinate in error, and the endless repetition of anecdotal stories that characterizes so much of the YEC community. These are straightforward facts that non-YECs who have experience with YECs attest to, and there are even some YECs who have honestly acknowledged that these are problems characteristic of the "YEC culture."¹²

This Book's Claims

This is not a book trying to prove an old earth. It is a book trying to examine young earth science. This may indirectly provide proof of an old earth. But that is not the point of this book.

Nor is this a book about claims for creation. If it were, I would defend proof of a created universe and life. Instead, in this book we will focus on *young earth* science. From time to time, I will mention proofs of creation which the young earther overlooks or obscures due to a misdirected zeal to prove a young earth.

12.<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/7755/Paluxygullibility.html> (accessed 10/2/08). Notice how Todd includes in his a criticism the entire young earth creationism movement. He did separate creationism claims from young earth science. Even though there are numerous valid design arguments (unlike the zero number for young earth science), the proponents of young earth science were such poor practitioners of scientific-investigation and proof that often their creationist arguments suffered from the same flaws that their young earth claims suffered from. Hence, Greene's criticism applies to the creationist side of young earth proponents in many, many cases. This has brought indisputable harm to the intelligent design movement which truly debates the issues on a level and honest playing field.

We will see young earthers arguments for a young earth:

- are entirely and utterly bogus;
- tragically overlook clear proofs against evolution and in favor of creation whenever those proofs mention timelines over 7,000 years; and
- often unwittingly prove an old not a young earth — citing proofs that demonstrate the earth is well over 2 million years old (*e.g.*, Kelvin's proof for the age of the earth).

