

Fact Sheet for “In the Beginning” Genesis 1:1-2:4

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02/14/2016 (Valentine’s Day)

Particularly notice the words, “And God said” as you read the following passages from Genesis.

Genesis 1:1-2

Day 1 – Genesis 1:3-5

Day 2 – Genesis 1:6-8

Day 3 – Genesis 1:9-13

Day 4 – Genesis 1:14-19

Day 5 – Genesis 1:20-23

Day 6 – Genesis 1:24-25; 26-31

Day 7 – Genesis 2:1-3

Genesis 2:4

This week the Smithsonian is setting up an exhibit on human origins at our public library. Evolution will figure prominently in that exhibit. Here’s the question. Can evolution and the biblical account of creation be blended into a model of our beginnings that is consistent with both science and the Bible? The answer to that question is a resounding “No!”

I attended the University of Delaware, which is much like the University of Oregon. I took classes in biology, chemistry, geology, physics, anthropology, ancient history, etc. I have also been attending church since nursery, and have been a Christian since I was 10 years old. As I was thinking about the biblical account of creation, and what I was learning in science, I adopted a viewpoint that seemed to make perfect sense... God used evolution to create life (“days” = “eons” in Genesis 1). This viewpoint is called “theistic evolution”. After Delaware I came to seminary in Oregon. One of the first classes I took at seminary was a class in hermeneutics... a class in the rules of biblical interpretation. Just like there are rules of the road there are rules for good biblical interpretation. And these rules cover a lot more than just context. In that seminary class I quickly realized that a biblical view of creation and theistic evolution are two *totally incongruent* explanations of how we got here.

Let’s go to some facts.

1. Genesis 1 is God’s record of creation. Evolution is a godless explanation of how we got here. It is an explanation based on natural processes that needs no god.
2. Evolution is *not proven fact*. It is scientific *theory* that is strongly presented as fact.
3. The biblical record is consistent with recorded ancient history, but not with evolutionary anthropology.
4. When you try to explain Genesis 1 from the viewpoint of theistic evolution you are effecting a huge change in your hermeneutic. In other words you are changing the rules of how you interpret the bible. No longer do you look for the meaning that is resident in the words of the biblical text of Genesis 1. Now the Bible is a book of words from God. Look at God’s emphasis on the words of scripture in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Matthew

5:18. If you look to secular scientific theory as the standard you will use to interpret Genesis 1, and not the words of the text themselves, then you have placed scientific theory over the Bible. Be careful in your thinking. The Bible, as truth, cannot by definition contradict scientific or historical fact. It can and does however contradict some scientific theory when that theory is wrong.

5. Adopting the viewpoint of theistic evolution in your interpretation of Genesis 1 has far-reaching implications for your interpretation for the rest of scripture. Here are some of them:

a. The Bible records that death entered the human experience due to the fall (Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12). But theistic evolution holds that we evolved from apes, and therefore death existed prior to the fall. If science has become our standard to interpret Genesis then Genesis 3:19 and Romans 5:12 cannot be statements of truth. We would need to find another explanation for them. The explanation that many are suggesting flows along these lines. Ancient people were familiar with the untrue myths of their culture. God simply used those untrue myths to communicate His truth. In Genesis 3:19 God used the untrue myth of Adam and Eve's fall to convey the reality of death in the human experience. Paul also referred to this untrue myth in Romans 5:12 to communicate the truth of life in Christ. Think about this. This explanation is that God used the falsehood of Genesis 3:19 and Romans 5:12 to communicate the truth of saving faith in Christ. With this approach to biblical interpretation you only have to determine what is false and what is true for whatever passage you read.

b. If we evolved from apes then Adam was likely not a real person, but just a figurative composite of early man. But this would make the creation of Eve in Genesis 2 a complete fabrication.

c. If you adopt evolutionary theory to explain the origins of man then why not scientific theory to explain the origins of the universe. Genesis 1 presents light as being created on the first day while the sun and moon are created on the fourth. As this is not consistent with scientific theory then it has been put forward that the days of Genesis 1 are not sequential.

d. If the days of Genesis 1 are to be understood as eons, then this makes one of the Ten Commandments awkward (Exodus 20:8-11).

In other words, if you try to blend Genesis 1 & 2 with evolution you end up shredding the Bible. Your corrupted hermeneutic will call into question all of the Bible.

The biblical view of creation and theistic evolution are two *totally incongruent* explanations of how we got here.

I could have quoted passage, after passage, after passage, after passage in support of what I have said this morning. Others can confidently quote the science supporting creationism and against evolution [Institute for Creation Research (www.icr.org), Answers in Genesis (answersingenesis.org), Creation Evidence Museum (www.creationevidence.org)].

Trust your Bible. It has the words of life from God.