SPECIAL CREATION IN SIX DAYS

The Doctrinal Statement of Crossway Chapel reads, in part, as follows:

We teach that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He created all things (Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 3:9) in six twenty-four hour days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).

We believe the Bible explicitly teaches that everything, both visible and invisible, was directly created by God ex nihilo, or out of nothing (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3). This is what we mean by “Special Creation.”

We believe the Bible teaches that God created the universe and everything in it in six twenty-four-hour days (Genesis 1:1-31).

We believe the most natural reading of the scriptural evidence (e.g. references to creation week or the “beginning” in later passages, or the genealogies of Genesis 5, 10, 11; Luke 3; and elsewhere) presents the earth as relatively young—less than 20,000 years old.

We believe there are current scientific data and theories which support this understanding of special creation and also point toward a young earth.

In the following pages we will present our reasons for believing what we have stated briefly above. Specifically we will address (1) God’s work in creating and sustaining all things, and His plan to redeem all things in Christ, (2) some biblical data supporting creation in six days, and (3) how special creation correlates with scientific observation. Most of our attention will be given to this third section. Since God is both the Author of the Bible and the Creator and Sustainer of an ordered and, therefore, scientifically observable universe, we believe that the biblical testimony and scientific observation cannot ultimately contradict each other.

God’s Work in and Plan for Creation

There are many Bible passages which clearly state that God has created out of nothing everything that exists and that He is providentially sustaining His creation (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11, Psalm 8; 102:25-27; 136:5-9; Colossians 1:15-17). And the witness of creation that God is its Creator is so clear and strong that God holds all humanity accountable for an awareness of His existence and power based solely upon this testimony (Psalm 19:1-6; 33:6-9; Romans 1:18-20).
But God’s creation is also inextricably related to His redemptive plan. In fact, creation and redemption are tied together throughout Scripture, both being wrought in and through and for Christ (Colossians 1:15-20). Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 and 42-49 present extended parallels between the historical person, actions, and legacy of Adam, who introduced sin and death into the world, and the historical Person, actions, and legacy of Jesus Christ, Who accomplished everything needed for our salvation and resurrection. In addition, Romans 8:18-23 and 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 report that all of God’s “very good” creation, which was corrupted by Adam’s sin, will ultimately be redeemed by the Person and work of Jesus Christ. This joining of creation and redemption are further seen in Ephesians 1:4 and 9-12 where Paul states that believers were chosen before the foundation of the world to fulfill God’s will and purpose by obtaining the inheritance for which they were predestined; that is, in the fullness of time God would unite all things in Christ to the praise of His glory. Just as we believe that God will complete this redemption with the creation of the new heavens and new earth as described in Revelation 21-22, so also we believe that God created the original heavens and earth as described in Genesis 1-2.

**Biblical Data Supporting Six-Day Creation**

Genesis 1:4-5 reads, “God separated the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.” Thus, “day” (Hebrew *yom*) here in Genesis 1 is defined by the periods of daylight and dark which comprise one twenty-four hour day. Although “day” can be used to speak of a longer period of time (cf. Genesis 2:3; possibly Hosea 6:2), its meaning in any given passage is determined by the context. The context of Genesis 1 is quite clear: the boundaries of each of the first six “days” are established by “evening” and “morning” (vv. 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31), even before sun and moon were created on day four “to rule over the day and over the night” (v. 18). Additional weight may be added to this understanding of “day” by the use of ordered numbers (e.g., “first day” ... “sixth day”). With the creation of the sun and moon on the fourth day, we see the intended structure of the later half of the creation week as a sequential progression of normal solar days, and we believe it is unlikely that there would be a fundamentally different structure to the earlier half of the week when there is no indication of such a divide in the descriptive language.

The validity of a six-solar-day creation week is strengthened by the imagery of the Fourth Commandment (Exodus 20:8-11), which presents the “work week” of God in creation as the basis of the work week He intends for his image-bearing creatures: “Six days you shall labor and do all your work. ... For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them.”

**How Special Creation Correlates with Scientific Observation**

The central empirical challenge for materialistic biological evolution (i.e., the study of the origin of life and evolution into higher biological kinds apart from any form of intelligent design) continues to be the origin of genetic information. Laboratory investigations at Cambridge University have shown that Darwinian mechanisms cannot produce either new biological forms or new information (Dembski and Witt 2010, 41, 73-89). Scientific calculations show that the probability of the chance origin of even the
simplest conceivable form of life is infinitesimally small, in the range of one in $10^{77}$. And recent calculations by astrophysicists to determine the likelihood of bacteria evolving unaided into intelligent beings yielded one in $10^{24,000,000}$ (Rana and Ross 2005, 153). Additionally, developing research into so-called “orphan genes” significantly amplifies this empirical challenge.

The processes upon which materialistic evolution depends to promote change have actually been shown to resist change. Mutations to DNA provide the “building blocks” of evolution, yet DNA replication has repair mechanisms to correct any mutations that may occur quite efficiently. And only mutations in germ cells have been shown possibly to confer any selective advantage since mutations in somatic cells are not hereditary. Most mutations have either negative or neutral impact, leaving only a tiny percentage of mutations which could even possibly affect the phenotype for a beneficial selective advantage to the offspring. Research continually shows that DNA replication, transcription, and translation work to maintain stasis, and there has been a dearth of recorded and verified, beneficial mutations—certainly not near enough to result in the amount of changes required by the neo-Darwinian model.

Moreover, the proposed “vertically upward” evolution from one kind of organism to another kind with a higher complexity has never been observed in all of human history. Each created kind either reproduces after its own kind, generation after generation as stated in Genesis 1, or that animal kind deteriorates and becomes extinct. Analysis of fossils in the geologic records has not shown viable creatures with transitional structures (e.g., scales becoming feathers, legs becoming wings, gills becoming lungs, etc.) required by evolutionary theory. Rather, past life forms are abruptly found as fully formed kinds (note the Avalon and Cambrian explosions). And although living creatures do experience mutation and selection, they have varied only horizontally with the same level of complexity (micro-evolution); they do not evolve into higher kinds (macro-evolution) so far as the observable evidence indicates.

Over against materialistic evolutionary theory, some scientists have formulated “Intelligent Design” (ID) as a scientific discipline which more closely describes the phenomena observable in nature. ID scientists have documented the principle of “irreducible complexity” to describe the fact that both biological systems and biochemical pathways must be fully formed in order to be sufficiently functional to support life. In addition, design can be clearly demonstrated by the specified complexity of enzymes to produce life; that is, an exact sequence of amino acids is required to establish the exact secondary, tertiary, and quaternary structure for an enzyme to yield and sustain life. Such narrow limits for variability in biological systems can only be achieved by ID.

Further evidence for special creation is found in the study of Fine-Tuning, which refers to specific fundamental physical constants (FPC) within the universe that are precisely configured for a life-permitting universe. Oxford professor Nick Bostrom writes, “The case for fine-tuning is quite strong. Given what we know, it seems reasonable to doubt that there is a plausible physical theory on which our universe is not fine-tuned.” Bostrom goes on to point out that many naturalistic theories once thought to provide an answer require fine-tuning themselves in order to work (Bostrom 2002, 14).
As examples of Fine Tuning, Paul Davies indicates that changes of only one in $10^{100}$ to the strength of either gravity or the weak nuclear force at the initial expansion of the universe would have had disastrous consequences for our universe (Davies, 1992, 108). And physicist Roger Penrose has calculated the odds of the special low entropy condition of the universe (entropy being the change of energy from usable to unusable) to be one in 10 to the 10 to the 123 ($10^{10^{123}}$). Considering that there are only $10^{80}$ subatomic particles in the universe, these odds effectively eliminate chance as an explanation (Craig 1994, 148). William Lane Craig has argued that: (1) The fine-tuning of the universe is due to either physical necessity, chance, or design; (2) it is not due to physical necessity or chance; (3) therefore, it is due to design (Craig 2013). Davies summarizes, “Through my scientific work I have come to believe more and more strongly that the physical universe is put together with an ingenuity so astonishing that I cannot accept it merely as a brute fact. There must, it seems to me, be a deeper level of explanation” (Davies 1992, 16).

Finally, the basic laws describing change in nature are the laws concerning the conservation of the mass/energy quantity (First Law of Thermodynamics) and the decay of the quality of energy (Second Law of Thermodynamics). These two physical laws correspond, respectively, to the theological principles of the completed creation and of God’s curse on that creation (Genesis 3:17-20), but they contradict the evolutionary concepts of a continuing progressive innovation and increasing complexity in nature. While it is true that some systems increase in complexity (e.g., seeds becoming trees, eggs becoming birds, etc.), such processes are temporary before they themselves succumb to entropy and invariably they require the focused use of an appropriate amount of usable energy to implement highly complex, pre-designed plans and mechanisms. Such systems cannot originate by physical laws, time, and chance as materialistic evolutionary theory requires.

As can be inferred from the previous comment, the age of the earth is an important corollary topic in any discussion of special creation in six days. A variety of methods have been developed to measure timescales. However, these methods involve various assumptions which other scientific discoveries can call into question, and which can produce “apparent ages” that have no necessary relation to the “true ages” (Morris 2000, 137-49). Such assumptions are related to initial conditions and the stability of the mineral deposits in rock matrices, and also to the causes for non-equilibrium in radioactive decay chains.

We would also note that there are various natural phenomena and processes which suggest a younger earth: for instance, the influx of chemicals into oceans, the rate of soil deposition in river deltas, carbon-14 levels in diamonds, polonium-210 halos, continental and Niagara Falls erosion, solar fuel consumption, growth of radiocarbon in the atmosphere, deposition of meteor dust, persistence of oil, gas, and water pressure, survival of comets and planetary rings, and helium and lead diffusion from zircon (Patterson 2005, 303-17).

But what should be thought of the proposed “geological ages” which cover billions of years of earth history, those ages which materialistic evolutionists identify primarily by the billions of fossilized remains of animals and plants preserved in the earth’s sedimentary rocks? Apart from the theologically troubling implications of death before the fall, we would argue that the fossil record is actually best explained by intensive,
short-period processes of destruction and burial. The preservation of fossils suggests rapid burial and lithification; otherwise the dying animals and plants would have long since decayed into dust prior to fossilization. Many modern non-Christian geologists now agree that various geological formations across the earth’s surface and crust are consistent with catastrophism. And since most of these geologic formations originated as water-borne sediments, the rock and fossil records actually testify eloquently of the worldwide flood of Genesis 6-8.

Conclusion and References for Further Reflection

When the breadth of both biblical and scientific data are analyzed, we maintain that special creation in six days is not only the most natural interpretation of God’s special revelation according to the testimony of Genesis 1-2, but also of His general revelation according to the testimony of the heavens and the earth.

One of the most intractable aspects of the discussion of origins and the reading of Genesis 1-2, however, is the sheer complexity of the issues. The discussion ranges from matters of exegesis and Hebrew poetry, ancient near eastern historiography and mythology, hermeneutics and epistemology, biology, geology and geophysics, physics, statistics, and beyond. We are hardly experts in all these areas (or even a few of them), nor could we be. Herein, therefore, we have relied on some of the following resources which may be helpful for further study and reflection.
