

IS THE BIG
BANG BIBLICAL?

AND 99 OTHER QUESTIONS

WITH

JOHN MORRIS

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INTRODUCTION

Many questions have been raised regarding creation and the Christian world view. How do I know there is a God? Where do the dinosaurs fit in with Scripture? What about carbon-14 dating? Is there evidence for creation? Questions may be tough but biblically there's always an answer if you're willing to study and believe.

The Institute for Creation Research (ICR) exists to uncover answers to such questions. It consists of a group of scientists, thoroughly trained in their various fields, all absolutely committed to the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and the Bible as God's inerrant Word to us. Of particular interest to us are the passages dealing with creation, the Flood, the age of the earth, etc. While the Bible is not a textbook covering every subject in minute detail, the framework it provides becomes the context in which every question is answered. Our specialty is science and scientific research. Personally, my main interest and background is geology, but I love learning in many fields, especially God's Word.

ICR publishes a monthly newsletter called *Acts & Facts* that has grown to be a small magazine. In it we reveal research results, report on major events, and provide answers to questions that people ask, including some which are rather technical. For the last several years, I have written a monthly column in the "Back-to-Genesis" section of *Acts & Facts*, which strives to reach non-technical readers with biblical and scientific information relevant to their lives and ministry.

In each issue I select a question that has been raised. Maybe it responds to a newspaper article claiming an evolutionary discovery. Maybe the question came from a high-school student confused by a textbook section. Or maybe it's a question which was leveled at me in a formal creation/evolution debate and I needed an answer. Eventually one hundred (plus four) of these articles were

compiled and updated into this book of answers. I pray it will be a faith-strengthener to the Christian, a doubt-remover to the challenged and a truth-confronter to the skeptic. I further pray it will aid us all in developing a fully “back to Genesis” way of thinking.

To receive a free subscription to *Acts & Facts*, please contact ICR at either P.O. Box 6607, El Cajon, CA 92021 or www.icr.org

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CREATION MINISTRY?

Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name (Amos 5:8).

ICR is well known as a creation-science research group, with an additional emphasis in biblical apologetics. But first and foremost, ICR is a Christian ministry. So what are our goals?

ICR's threefold ministry of research, education, and publication is summed up in the mission statement of the ICR Graduate School ". . . to discover and transmit the truth about the universe by scientific research and study, and to correlate and apply such scientific data within the supplemental integrating framework of biblical creationism."

These goals reflect two scriptural missions. One is the *Great Commission*, given to all Christians: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them . . . Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19–20).

This commission incorporates evangelism and discipleship — the process of bringing lost individuals to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and helping them grow in their faith to a place of maturity and effective ministry. At ICR, God has equipped us in the area of science, and that is the tool we use to carry out the Great Commission.

In many ways, evolution has become a major barrier to evangelism. If evolution is true, then the Bible is not true. We are the product of randomly operating natural processes, and God is not necessary. Before the seed can be sown, the rubble of evolu-

tion must be cleared away and the ground prepared. For many confused products of our educational system, legitimate questions must be answered before a person can come to faith. Some have called creation ministry “the cutting edge of evangelism,” and ICR outreaches (books, seminars, teaching) carry creation information to those in need.

But then a Christian must grow to maturity. Without doubt, evolution teaching proves a hindrance. Evolution teaches that the Bible has errors and cannot be trusted. Christians need to have their questions answered and doubts removed. Churches, seminaries, and denominations need to be called back to a belief in all of Scripture and to come under the authority of the Book they have been taught to doubt. This is the real message of creation.

An even larger commission was once given to all of mankind — the *dominion mandate*. “God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over (the animals) . . . and over all the earth . . . and subdue it” (Gen. 1:26–28). Bible believers have long understood this as a mandate to study the creation (science), and then to use it wisely for man’s good and God’s glory (technology). Mankind was given stewardship over creation, to care for it in wisdom as the Creator’s representative on earth.

ICR desires to follow this mission as well. Its basic research strives to answer questions, but also to more fully understand God’s creative handiwork.

With the rise of evolution and naturalism, “science” has become the enemy of Christianity, but true science “declares the glory of God” (Ps. 19:1). ICR desires to return science to its proper, God-glorifying, position.

COULD EVOLUTION AND CREATION BE TELLING THE SAME STORY IN DIFFERENT WAYS?

For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it (Exod. 20:11).

Often those who call themselves “theistic evolutionists,” who claim that evolution was the method God used to create, offer the platitude that the order of creation given in Genesis is the same as the order of evolution as determined by the fossils. Thus, they say if we ignore the issue of time, we can believe in both evolution and Genesis. Sounds good, but this works only if you don’t look too closely. While there is general agreement (such as fish preceding land mammals), there is much disagreement in the details.

For instance, in evolution, fruit trees are among the most recent things to have evolved — long after the land was populated and other plants as well as animals. But in Genesis 1, fruit trees and other seed-bearing plants were created at the beginning of day 3. Animal life in the oceans wasn’t created until day 5, with land dwellers created on day 6. A favorite evolutionary claim these days is that land-dwelling dinosaurs evolved into birds. What does the Bible say? Birds were created on day 5 and land animals on day 6.

Another favorite “just so” story is that land-dwelling creatures (some say perhaps it was cow-like, others say it was more wolf-like, or perhaps a hippopotamus) wandered into the ocean and, over many generations, evolved into the whales. In other words, land animals preceded whales. But again, in Genesis, whales preceded land animals. Many, many other examples could be given. The point is, the two stories are irreconcilably different. They cannot be made to say the same thing.

Listed below are some of the most obvious contradictions in order between the two systems. The list could be considerably extended. There is no excuse for theistic evolutionists and other old-earth advocates to claim that the evolutionary system is compatible with Scripture. Either Scripture contains allegory only, or evolution is wrong.

Contradictions Between Evolution and the Bible

Evolutionary Order	Biblical Order
1. Life in ocean before land plants	1. Land plants before life in ocean
2. Simple plants before fruit trees	2. Fruit trees, the first plants
3. Land animals before flowering plants	3. Flowering plants before land animals
4. Small animals, first land life	4. Cattle before creeping things
5. Dinosaurs evolved into birds	5. Birds before land animals
6. Land reptiles evolved into pterosaurs	6. Flying animals before land animals
7. Land reptiles evolved into plesiosaurs	7. Marine animals before land animals
8. Land mammals evolved into bats	8. Flying animals before land animals
9. Land mammals evolved into whales	9. Whales before land animals
10. Death of the unfit produced man	10. Man, the cause of death

WHAT COULD THE GOD OF SCRIPTURE CALL “VERY GOOD”?

*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly
but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope
(Rom. 8:20).*

The Bible tells us that as creation was completed, “God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31). What was that world really like? Was it different from our world? Could God call this world “very good”?

The world that we experience contains much beauty and balance — much that is good. Radiant flowers, laughing babies, lofty mountains, and shimmering crystals. But it also contains pain, suffering, disease, and death. In the biological realm, everything dies. Plants wither and fade. Animals feed on one another and eventually die. Men exercise brutality over others, and all pass on. In the physical realm, everything goes toward disintegration. Cars wear out, rocks crumble, the moon’s orbit decays, and the stars burn out. It seems the creation has been “made subject to vanity” and is under “the bondage of corruption.” Ultimately, “we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain” (Rom. 8:20–22). Things have changed. They are no longer “very good.”

Remember that the God of the Bible is a God of grace and mercy. Would such a God use the principle of “survival of the fittest” (which really means the extinction of the unfit) to produce His image in man? Would the God of Scripture, an all-powerful and all-wise God, delay His plan for billions of years waiting on evolutionary mutants to develop a being with whom He could communicate and on whom He could shower His love and grace? No. He has the wisdom to know what He wants, and the power to accomplish it in a timely manner without violating His character along the way.

The Christian will recognize the current state of things to have been affected by the Curse on all creation in Genesis 3:14–19, with the “wages of sin” pronounced on all of Adam’s dominion because of his rebellion. In the beginning, there was no carnivorous activity (Gen. 1:30), no extinction, no decay, no cancer. But now, everywhere we look, we see sin’s effect.

Darwin saw it clearly too, but he denied the biblical doctrine of the Curse and that the resultant less than “very good” state of things was due to man’s rebellion against his Creator. In a letter of May 22, 1860, he stated, “There seems to me to be too much misery in the world. I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created the ichneu-moni-dae [a parasite] with the express intention of their feeding within the living bodies of caterpillars, or that a cat should play with mice. Not believing this, I see no necessity in the belief that the eye was expressly designed.”

God’s full intention for His creation, as expressed in the deathless, painless, “very good” creation, has been delayed by the rebellion of His creation against His authority. But it will one day be fully realized, as Edenic conditions return. In that day, the wolf and the lamb will once again live together in harmony, the lion will eat straw, and the child will play with the snake without fear (Isa. 11:6–7).

By what means will the Creator accomplish this? He certainly won’t use “survival of the fittest.” Instead, He sent His only begotten Son, the “fittest” of all to die for the unfit (1 Pet. 3:18) — to pay their wages of sin and restore broken fellowship.

There will come the day in which “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” (Rev. 21:4).

This is the nature of the truly “very good” creation. Very different from our present world, it will last forever.

IS THE GOD OF THEISTIC EVOLUTION THE SAME AS THE GOD OF THE BIBLE?

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written (John 21:25).

Most Christians are uncomfortable with purely naturalistic evolution. The solution for many Christians has been to adopt theistic evolution, which is based on the idea that the God of the Bible employed an evolutionary process to create.

Any listing of the attributes of God would include omnipotent, omniscient, loving, gracious, possessing forethought, and the desiring of a relationship with man, the “image of God.” Would this kind of God have used long ages of evolutionary development to create His image? Would such a process reflect His nature?

Theistic evolution looks back to about four billion years ago when God brought just the right chemicals into the right order to form a single cell. This multiplied and mutated for over three billion years until He either allowed or caused them to evolve into two-celled organisms, then about 500 million years ago these tiny organisms morphed into marine invertebrates, such as clams, snails, trilobites, and flatworms. Over hundreds of millions of years, many types went extinct and were never seen by man. But the flatworm eventually begat fish, then amphibians, then reptiles and birds, then mammals. They would live and die, mutate and go extinct. Some would eat the others. All were subject to disease and starvation. Some, like the dinosaurs, also passed into oblivion before man arrived. The fossil record provides ample evidence of their existence, suffering, and extinction long ago.

Just a few million years ago there were rather upright-walking apes, then *Homo erectus*, and then Neanderthals, “animals” who

made tools, employed agriculture, utilized both religious implements and weapons, and suffered from disease and malnutrition. They enjoyed music and flowers and art, but had no eternal spirit.

Then, just a few thousand years ago, God made true man. He either created man from scratch or took a sub-human animal and gave it an eternal spirit. As He finished His work, He called it all “very good.” God’s creation could finally recognize His grace, respond in love, and give God the glory due His name.

But was it all “very good”? Beneath Adam’s feet would lay the fossils of billions of animals, many giving evidence of traumatic death. And who were the long-extinct dinosaurs? Had God been experimenting, trying to find something He could call His image? Did He not know what He wanted? Was He not powerful enough to create it without so many mis-steps? If the creation and redemption of man was His purpose, why did He wait so long?

And why did He use the process of the extinction of the unfit (i.e., “survival of the fittest”) to create? His very nature ultimately impelled Him, the fit, to die for the unfit. In redemption, He would strongly denounce personal works as a method of salvation. Would He have used survival of the fittest as His method of creation and accept “glory” from His creation on this basis?

No, the righteous God revealed in Scripture would create just as described in Genesis 1. Creation would be orderly and wise, with man and his walk with God the result. It would be deathless and sinless, compatible with the all powerful, Holy, life-giving Creator’s label as “very good.”

Then, when sin and its penalty, death, had ruined that creation, rejecting the Creator’s authority over their lives and eschewing close relationship with Him, the Creator, himself, came back to His creation, took upon himself the form of man, lived a perfect life for whom no sin penalty was required, and died a sufficient sacrifice to pay sin’s penalty for all. Now *that* scenario is compatible with the nature of God, as revealed in His word.

DOES GENESIS ADDRESS THE “TIME” OF CREATION OR JUST THE “FACT” OF CREATION?

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens (Gen. 2:4).

It has become popular among evangelical leaders to hold that while God is truly the Creator, creation occurred over millions and billions of years. These “semi-creationists” are fond of claiming that the Genesis account only reveals the “fact” of creation, and that God orchestrated it all, but that it does not specify when He created, nor how long He took. Is their position valid? Let’s go “back to Genesis” and check it out.

Hypothetically, consider a person fluent in biblical languages who knows nothing of either Scripture or the various claims regarding the age of things, but who can read, carefully analyze, and understand a written document. Given the Bible for the first time, such a reader would certainly understand Genesis 1–11 to teach that creation occurred only thousands of years ago, not millions or billions, and he would cite several reasons.

He would note that the word “day” (Hebrew, *yom*) in Genesis 1 is best understood as a literal day (either a 24-hour day or the daylight portion of a day). While this common word can mean an indefinite time period, it almost always means a literal day and is so defined the first time it is used in Genesis 1:4–5. Furthermore, it always means a literal day when modified by a number (i.e., 2nd day) or evening and/or morning, as it is in Genesis 1. To cap it off, it always means a literal day when used in the plural form (i.e., six *days* of creation, Exod. 20:11).

Next, he would note the narrative character of those early chapters. They are telling a story, and there is no indication that it is figurative. He would find the poetic portions are no less “historic” than the prose portions. It all appears to be chronological, with each event followed by another.

For instance, every verse in Genesis 1 starts with the conjunction “and.” The entire chapter is one run-on sentence, with no hint of major time gaps. The remaining chapters use a similar format, implying an orderly sequence of events.

As a matter-of-fact, of the 299 verses in Genesis 1–11, 32 percent contain “time” words, such as “days, weeks, or years.” Also, 49 percent of the verses contain some sort of “sequence” words such as “and” or a resulting action verb. Of the remaining 19 percent which don’t contain such words, most amplify the thought in the previous verse which does mention time or sequence. There can be no doubting the Bible’s intention to communicate the “when” and duration of creation.

Genealogical records dominate two complete chapters, 5 and 11. There is no hint that these lists are mythological. It’s as if the author wanted us to know this information and knew that there was no other way for us to obtain it, so He told us in no uncertain terms.

Our hypothetical reader would no doubt conclude that Genesis, coupled with the rest of Scripture, clearly teaches that God created, cursed, and flooded all things only thousands of years ago.

To modern old-earth “semi-creationists,” whether theistic evolutionists, progressive creationists, or day-age advocates, he would say: “You may choose not to believe what is written here, but if so, you should cease deceiving yourselves and others by using the term ‘Bible believer’ to describe your position.”

WHY DID GOD CREATE US?

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created (Rev. 4:11).

Some things cannot be fully comprehended. Infinite things, eternal things, matters of God's sovereignty — these transcend our finite and temporal minds. For example, why did He create us? Certainly He doesn't need us, for He existed in perfect love and unity before He even created time. Furthermore, He even knew beforehand that His image, recreated in man, would reject Him and His kingship over their lives, resulting in unthinkable pain and suffering and death of all things placed in man's dominion. He foresaw ruinous mutations, debilitating injuries, devastating cancer, etc., as consequences. We can only approach an answer to this unanswerable question by following the hints given in Scripture.

In a more ultimate sense, God knew that man's sin would force His only begotten Son to die an unthinkable horrid death in sacrificial payment for man's sin, and that ungrateful man would even carry out the execution, for Scripture identifies His Son as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). In order to accomplish this fully sufficient sacrifice, the Son willingly set aside aspects of His deity, and "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7), limiting himself to bodily form. Why would He do this? If we had not been created, it would not have been necessary. Why did He create us?

While we can never fully answer the question, it helps to recognize that the answer will come only as we recognize the character and attributes of God. First and foremost, God is a God of holiness, an attribute which demands that sin's penalty be paid. He is also a God of love, and love must be demonstrated by showering it upon the object of that love. His grace comes

only to those who deserve punishment, and such a demonstration of His love and grace and mercy stands without parallel among humans.

In His love, He desired reciprocal love, so He created man in His own image. Man was given the ability either to respond to God's love or reject it. In the beginning man enjoyed full fellowship with God, but soon rejected Him, bringing the ruination of all creation. This wasn't God's intention, so He implemented His plan for creation to fulfill its intended purpose.

Perhaps the grandest statement of His purpose can be found in Revelation 4:11, where we see heavenly beings gather in His praise, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." And there we have it! God created us for His pleasure, for His ultimate good and perfect will, because it is best in His estimation.

Unfortunately, the present world, with sin and its penalty permeating all things and processes, temporarily experiences postponement of His ultimate plan, but it will not be forever thwarted. There will be the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13) once again. This is His plan, purpose, and pleasure.

Thus, it makes sense that He would have created things as stated in Scripture, in an orderly, rapid fashion. He would not have used billions of years to create in His image, and He certainly would not have used death, pain, extinction, and survival of the fittest. These are the results of sin and bring Him no pleasure at all.

IS BELIEF IN THE YOUNG EARTH NECESSARY TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth
(Gen. 1:1).

At our seminars and in our books, we at the Institute for Creation Research take a strong stand on the young earth. We certainly don't do this to win a popularity contest, for this position is ridiculed by the secularists and many Christians alike. Nevertheless, we teach this without compromise and without apology.

The main reason for believing in the young earth is that the earth *is* young! The Bible tells us so, and the weight of the scientific evidence points to a young earth. While the Bible may not specify a precise date for creation, it does indicate that the earth is only a few thousand years old. Similarly, while the geologic and physical evidence cannot give a precise age, all the evidence is compatible with the young-earth doctrine, with far greater evidence supporting a young earth than an old earth. And besides that, there is much evidence incompatible with the old-earth idea.

Furthermore, many biblical doctrines are based on the recency of creation and the corollary doctrine, the global flood. One cannot hold the old-earth position and believe that the flood was global, for if the flood was global, then the entire earth's surface was altered. The flood would leave in its wake the rock and fossil record which now is misinterpreted by geologists as evidence for an old earth. All Christians who knowledgeably advocate an old earth believe that the flood was only local. (A few still hold the bizarre notion that the flood was tranquil and did little geologic work. Imagine — a tranquil, worldwide flood!)

The doctrinal absurdities which result from a local flood and old earth are well documented in creationist literature. The most serious fallacy involves the death of the vast majority of earth's inhabitants before man appeared, and before he sinned and incurred the wages of sin. Astronomer Hugh Ross even proposes human-like animals who buried their dead, practiced religious ceremonies, painted pictures on cave walls, etc., but did not yet possess an eternal spirit. Death before sin implies that death is natural, not the penalty for sin. But if so, what good did the death of Jesus Christ accomplish? And what was the world like before the Fall? Old-earth advocates believe it was no different from our world — with death, disease, bloodshed, carnivorous activity, fossils.

Because of ICR's stand on this all-important issue, some have suggested that ICR teaches that belief in the young earth is necessary for salvation. This is not the case! Salvation does not imply perfect understanding of doctrine, for then no one could be saved. God grants salvation when one repents of his sin and asks for forgiveness based on Christ's death for his sin. A sinner doesn't have to know anything about the age of the earth.

Nor does one have to believe in the young earth to be a Christian leader. Many Christian leaders believe and do a lot of things they shouldn't. But belief in the old earth, with the implied concepts of death before sin, the world before Adam not really "very good," an inconsequential Fall and Curse, a local flood, etc., destroys the foundation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some Christians do believe in both Christianity and the old earth, but this is inconsistent with their professed belief in the Bible.

DOES SCRIPTURE ALLOW A GAP?

It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed (Exod. 31:17).

The so-called gap theory proposed early in the 1800s, but which became popular around the turn of the century, has very few scholarly advocates these days. However, many Christians do still hold to it, mostly by tradition, having never examined it closely. There have always been many scientific and theological problems with the idea of a long gap of time between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, but perhaps the “death” of the gap theory came with the 1978 publication of Dr. Weston W. Fields’s fine book, *Unformed and Unfilled*. In it, Fields specified the many biblical problems inherent in the concept and, with only a few exceptions, Bible scholars have now abandoned it. Some of his main arguments are briefly summarized below.

Gap advocates hold that only the surface of the earth was “created” during the six-day series of events detailed in Genesis 1:2 through 2:25. This creation followed a global holocaust brought on by the fall of Satan, which destroyed a supposed pre-Adamic world. But the all-summary statements of Genesis 2:1–3 and Exodus 20:11, and elsewhere, argue otherwise; “the heavens and the earth . . . all the host of them . . . all that is in them . . . all His work which God created and made,” seem better to refer to *all* of creation, not just the earth’s surface.

Some have claimed that in Exodus 20:11 the verb “to make” is used instead of “to create,” and, that, therefore, the summation is referring only to the earth’s surface, leaving the rock strata and the earth’s interior untouched. But in reality, while there is an

important distinction between the words in Genesis 1, both are used in Genesis 2:2–3 and Nehemiah 9:6 to refer to all of creation; and are even used in synonymous parallelism in Genesis 2:4, Exodus 34:10, Isaiah 41:20, and Isaiah 43:7.

Another often-repeated claim is that Genesis 1:2 should read, “the earth *became* without form and void,” as opposed to the traditional understanding that when God first created the earth in verse 3, it “*was* without form (i.e., not yet in completed form) and void (i.e., not yet inhabited).” The verb’s normal meaning, however, is simply “was,” and while it may be translated “become,” the context does not warrant it, and all accepted versions of the Bible use “was.”

Each verse in Genesis 1, except verse 1, begins with the conjunction “and,” thereby connecting each verse sequentially to those before and after. There is no hint of the passing of millions or billions of years of time between verses 1 and 2.

Gap advocates frequently turn to other portions of Scripture for support, particularly those which use the words “without form” and “void” (Jer. 4:23, Isa. 24:1, and 45:18 are most important). In each case, the prophet refers to a wasted state due to the judgment of sin, thereby implying that Genesis 1:2 likewise implies a condition brought about by judgment. But in each case, the context regards the land of Israel, not the original earth. There is no justification for postulating long ages present in a supposed gap in Genesis.

The gap theory, as with all efforts to harmonize Genesis with the geologic ages, faces insurmountable problems on several fronts. How much better to take God at His Word and simply believe what He says.