

CREATION



in Six Days

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CREATION IN SIX DAYS

INTRODUCTION

This subject is one that is very near to my own heart, since I have had to face the problems that there are. For many years I was wandering in the wilderness, as it were, having been taught that the Bible was untrue both at school and university. Yet, at the same time, knowing in my heart of hearts that it was true, I had this conflict within myself. It centred especially around the doctrine of creation because I had been taught that man was not created by God as recorded in the Scriptures, but had evolved from apes and other lower forms of life, and yet I could see that this was in conflict with the Scriptures. Therefore, there was this dilemma in my mind. The way in which I came to see the fallacies of what I had been taught at university would take too long to tell you, but what I hope to do in this lecture is to tell you what I believe the Scriptures teach, and having told you this I want you to see the conflict as it is. I want to show the conflict between what we are told by those of the world and what God's Word tells us. Then, having seen this conflict, I want us to see whether we are willing to receive the Word of God. After showing that there is a conflict, then perhaps we may be in a position to go into the actual theory of evolution at our own leisure in more detail.

You may wonder at the subject of this address and think it rather strange for a meeting on behalf of the Trinitarian Bible Society, yet this is not so strange really, for the Society believes in and distributes an infallible Bible. It is basically on this point of infallibility that the Society exists separately, for example, from the British and Foreign Bible Society. The creation of the world in six days is part of the doctrine of this Bible, as I hope to show, and many evangelicals profess to believe that the Bible is God's infallible Word, yet when we point out this doctrine of creation

they deny, in practice, that it is. They are afraid, in many ways, to resist the spirit of the world, so they try to hold the teaching of evolutionary science and at the same time try to believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God. There may be many such evangelicals among you this evening. If so, I hope that what I say will be of help to you to strengthen you in your resolve to adhere to the Bible in its entirety.

Let me say at the outset that this is not primarily an anti-evolutionary address. That is, I am not going to hold up the theory of evolution to ridicule, though what I say will be anti-evolutionary of necessity. I intend rather to declare what is the teaching of Scripture and as I do this it will be clear that the Bible contradicts the theory of evolution. This is my aim.

I want us all to be brought to the position where we can see the issues plainly, and where we can examine ourselves to see if we are willing to follow God's Word wherever it leads. If we are willing, then is the time to examine the theory of evolution if we are Christians **because** it contradicts the Bible and **not** because the theory of evolution is unscientific. The theory of evolution is unscientific, but if we reject it for that reason then we are still pinning our faith on science and not on the Word of God. So, then, at the outset, let me say that I am addressing you as a company of believers. That is, as those who believe in the inspired Word of God, and that the Bible is infallible. As I speak to you I am assuming that you have the same attitude to the Scriptures as I have.

The first thing that I wish to do is to prove to you that the first few chapters of Genesis are to be taken literally. And then, having done so, I want to draw five principles from the first two or three chapters of Genesis. The five principles are, first of all, concerning the doctrine of creation and secondly, concerning the plan of God in creation. Thirdly, I want us to consider some of the events in the creation week. Fourthly, I want us to consider the fact that the finished creation was very good

and fifthly, I want us to see that Adam, as he came from the hands of God, was no savage. From these five points I wish to show that there are a number of very important principles which we can gain from the early chapters of Genesis and I hope that it will be abundantly clear that the Bible and evolutionary theory are in total conflict.

A LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS

First of all, then, let us see that the early chapters of Genesis, especially chapters 1 – 3, are to be taken literally. I am going to adopt three lines of proof here and the first one is concerned with the language of Genesis 1 – 3. When we read this passage we should see that the language is that of a narrative – we are not reading Hebrew poetry, neither are we reading the vision of a prophet. What we read here is sober history. If we were to read these chapters without bringing to them any preconceived notions of our own and without thinking, ‘Well, I believe this and therefore I must turn the Scriptures to fit in with what I believe’ – if we set that on one side and come to the Scriptures with an open mind, then we could only come to one conclusion. If we were honest, we would have to admit that the writer, Moses, is describing just what happened. Listen to the following, taken from the first chapter of Genesis, as examples of what I mean. First of all – *“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day”* (Genesis 1:3-5). Then, at the end of the chapter, Moses says *“And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day”* (Genesis 1:31). In these passages one gains the impression that we are privileged as we read them, to be spectators of the creative power of God. The very simplicity of the passages that I’ve mentioned emphasizes that this is just what happened, and this is just how it happened, given in just as much detail as is good for us. The first line of proof, then, that the first chapters of

Genesis are to be taken literally, is from the language of the passages. It is the same language as the language which is used when we read about Abraham, when we read about Isaac and Jacob. We are reading about things that actually happened.

The second line of proof that I want to take is that the fourth commandment about the seventh day demands that we take Genesis 1 literally. God commanded Israel to labour six days and rest the seventh. The reason given was that God made the world in six days and rested the seventh. The very reason that men should work six days and rest one is that God worked six and rested one at the creation. If we make the day in Genesis 1 to be something indefinite, for example, then the fourth commandment loses its authority and becomes something which is meaningless and rather grotesque. Imagine it, if the day of Genesis is an indefinite period of time, the commandment would be to work six indefinite periods of time because God made the world in six indefinite periods of time, and rested for a seventh indefinite period of time. If we look at it in this way, then we see that the fourth commandment, for it to have any authority at all, demands that we must take the days of Genesis 1 literally. Since the days must be literal, it follows that everything that goes along with them must be literal also.

Our third line of proof is that the Lord and the apostles take the early chapters of Genesis literally whenever they refer to them in the New Testament. There are many examples, but I have taken just three – one from the gospels, one from the epistles of Paul and one from the epistles of Peter. If you turn with me to these examples, I think you will see what I mean clearly enough.

The first one is Mark 10:6-8. The Lord here uses the very words of Genesis 1:24 to prove His point against the Pharisees. Listen to what He says in verses 6,7 and 8: *“But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother,*

and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh". It is evident from this that our Lord is using Genesis in a way which is authoritative. He is quoting the passages from Genesis perfectly factually and the Lord is not making any mental reservation to fit in with the prejudices of His hearers. The Lord is taking Genesis as it is, literally, and the very quotation of the words is the end of all controversy.

A second example is in 2 Corinthians 4:6 which says "*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*". In this passage, Paul is teaching that the spiritual enlightenment of the child of God is as much a creative act of God as the original creation of the light at the beginning of the world. Notice that Paul does not say 'The enlightenment of the Christian is **like** God causing light to shine into darkness' but rather "*God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath...*", etc. The apostle Paul here refers us to Genesis 1:3 to remind us Who it is that is working in us – the Creator of all things. So God, when He opens the eyes of His children, is exerting the same creative power as He exerted at the beginning, when He caused the light to shine out of darkness. The apostle Paul here is pointing back to Genesis 1:3.

The third example from the New Testament is from 2 Peter 3:3-6. "*Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished*". Peter here says that the world destroyed by the flood was the very world created by God. In describing the earth as standing out of the water and in the water he obviously has in mind the words "*Let the*

waters that are under the heaven be gathered together unto one place and let the dry land appear; and it was so" (Genesis 1:9). It is also clear that Peter is understanding Genesis 1 as literally true – otherwise he would not be able to comment as he does.

There are many other passages in the New Testament which show the same view of Genesis 1. Always, the chapters are referred to in such a way as to show that the New Testament writers regarded them as being literally true.

I hope that these three lines of thought that I have indicated will show what our attitude to Genesis 1 should be. It was necessary, I think, for me to lay this foundation, because all I have to say following this depends on our being able to understand Genesis in a literal way. You see, if Genesis is just a poem or a vision or a parable, then I am completely unable to draw any conclusion from the details of what is said. I am unable to attach any significance to the fact that words are used in a particular way. If, however, Genesis 1 is to be understood literally, then the principles I wish to draw from it are valid. So I want us to look at the five important principles I outlined earlier in order to enable us to have a truly Biblical doctrine of creation. I hope to concentrate on some of the important aspects of the chapter and do not intend to go through Genesis 1 and 2 verse by verse.

THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

The first thing I want us to consider is the doctrine of creation which underlies these chapters. In Genesis 1 we find that God spoke several times and that each time the result was the same. Whatever God commanded sprang into being immediately. Throughout the whole of the chapter we read, “*God said*” and then, “*And it was so*”. This happens time and time again. We have a good exposition of Genesis 1 in Psalm 33:6&9 where the Psalmist says “*By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth*”. “*For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast*”. Now the words, “*For He spake and it was done*” are very important in helping us to understand Genesis 1 for they mean that, in the very act of speaking, whatever God commanded sprang into being. God did not ‘start a process’, but rather whatever was commanded by God came to be at the instant of the command.

Also, we are told that God used no means in creation. Created things are here in obedience to God’s command. Think of it! Can you order something to appear out of nothing in obedience to your will? This is what God did – He said, for example, “*Let there be light: and there was light*” (Genesis 1:3). He said it, and in the act of saying it, it came into being. The lesson that we must learn from this is that **creation is instantaneous**. The idea of ‘process’ is entirely foreign to what the Bible teaches us concerning creation and it is a flat contradiction of words to say that evolution is the process that God used to create the world. It is equally false for us to say that God made the world in six days, if by it we mean that God **needed** the six days in which to create the world. That is the same idea of process again. What we **should** mean is that during the very first week of time God uttered His commands and what He commanded obediently came into being instantaneously. So, during the creation week, rather than having the idea of God taking six days to make the world, we should instead understand that during the first six

days of time it pleased God to bring the world into being and to furnish it by a series of instantaneous creative acts, all by His word.

I think we can learn a useful lesson from this by going back to our fathers. If we do, we must acknowledge that they were much better theologians than we are! For example, if we look at the Shorter Catechism (which was meant for children) we find that God's work of creation and providence are separated. Question 9 is: "What is the work of creation?" the answer being, "The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing by the word of His power in the space of six days and all very good". Then in Question 11 we are asked, "What are God's works of Providence?" The answer to which is: "God's works of Providence are His most holy, wise and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions". The providence of God is the process by which He governs the world. The work of creation is the instantaneous activity of God. You see, our fathers clearly understood the difference between creation and providence. They understood the difference between 'act' and 'process'. The reason why we tend to listen to theories which try to draw together evolution and the Scriptures is because we do not understand the differences between 'act' and 'process'. We tend to confuse the activity of God and the processes and so we are prone to listen to theories which deny the factual truth of this first chapter of the Scriptures.

It is because creation is instantaneous and by the word of God that the writer to the Hebrews says it is, "through **faith** that we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Hebrews 11:3). Nothing could be more contrary to the reason of natural man, who is in rebellion against God, than to believe that the worlds were not made out of some raw material, but rather by the word of God. So then, creation is instantaneous. Not only the original matter, but also the sea and the land, the sun and the moon, the plants and the animals and man also.

THE PLAN OF CREATION

The second point I wish to make is that the sequence of the creative acts of God was exactly as God willed. There was not a trace of ‘trial and error’ in God’s creative week. Every time we read, “*And God said*”, we also read, “*And it was so*”. We also read that six times God ‘saw that it was good’; but this does not mean that the Lord was uncertain of the outcome of His work and was relieved when He saw that it turned out to be all right. Rather we have here an emphasis on the fact that God was exercising His sovereign will. This point is particularly important when we consider verse 2: “*Now the earth was without form and void*”. The footnote in the Schofield Reference Bible at this point has caused much needless trouble by stating (without any proof, be it noted) that the word ‘was’ should be rendered ‘became’. So we are told that the earth became without form and void. This is nonsense! Verse 2 says that the earth **was** without form and void. Yet we must ask ourselves ‘How can an earth described like this be viewed with satisfaction by God?’ If the creation was proceeding exactly according to God’s plan, how can a world that is without form and void be pleasing to God?

Well, the answer is not at all difficult if we remember that it pleased God to carry out His work of creation in stages. God did not need to act in this way but it pleased Him to do so. The initial creative act was for God to bring the raw material into being and then in the further acts during the creation week He formed and embellished this raw material. The world was without form because God had not yet formed it. The earth was void because it was not yet a fit dwelling place for man for whom the world was made. So the words “*without form and void*” are not a criticism. They do not mean that judgment had come upon the world. They simply mean that the world was not yet finished. It was in a disorder. It was in the same sort of shape as the clay a potter uses before he starts to make things. The clay is without form and void - it hasn’t been fashioned. Each creative act, subsequent to the first, is to show us

that God is giving the earth form and making it fulfil the end of its creation. The words “*without form and void* ” mean that the earth was incomplete, and would continue to be so until it was ready for man himself. In revealing these creative acts to us I believe that God is teaching us how carefully He prepared a Paradise for His creature man; and therefore by contrast He is showing man’s base ingratitude in rebelling against God at the Fall.

THE EVENTS OF CREATION

The third lesson I wish us to learn, is that there is no continuity between creation and providence. We will do so, I trust, by considering some of the events of creation week. We are so prone to judge Genesis 1 by things as we know them today that I think it would be good for us to note the following facts:

1. On the first day of creation we find that light exists apart from the sun.
2. On the third day, God created the vegetation before the sun was created.
3. The sun, moon and stars were created on the fourth day; yet prior to this, there had been three 24-hour days without the sun’s existence.

These are remarkable, because now, under God’s providence, we have the following three facts which are utterly incomprehensible without a proper doctrine of creation:

1. All our light comes from the sun and stars.
2. Vegetation cannot exist without heat and light from the sun.

3. Our experience of day and night, of months, etc, comes from the rotation of the earth and the moon around the sun. What I am driving at here is that our knowledge of day comes from the motion of the sun and the moon, yet the sun and the moon were not made until the fourth day and there had been three days before that.

The reason that I emphasise these contrasts is to show that it is **impossible** to try to guess how things were created by studying the creation as it is now. In other words, we cannot study the world as we find it, and from this work out how the world was created. I think these contrasts that I have drawn show the utter impossibility of this. All such a study can yield is a knowledge of the present order of things. The vast difference between the actual creation and the present course of that creation shows very clearly that we can only know how it came to be by a direct revelation from God. This we have in these early chapters of Genesis.

Calvin says that another reason for the contrasts is to teach us not to attach too much importance to the means God uses to preserve His creation, but rather to teach us to lift up our eyes to Him, the Creator of all things. For example, we are too prone to insist that plants cannot exist without the sun, yet the very way in which God created the plants teaches us that plants exist by the sovereign will of God and for no other reason. God created the plants and then He created the means whereby those plants are preserved. We tend to look at the means as that which matters but the creation account tells us to turn our eyes to the sovereign will of God.

THE GOODNESS OF CREATION

In my fourth point I want us to observe that the finished creation was “*very good*”. At the end of the account of God’s creation Moses invites us to examine it in wonder. Moses says, “**Behold**, *it was very good*” (Genesis 1:31). These words are tremendous! It is so easy to read these verses over and over again and miss the point. We notice this word ‘Behold’ in the Gospels also, whenever something remarkable occurs. Moses here says, ‘Behold!’ ‘Stop, think and look at the creation as it came from the hands of God’. ‘See, it is all very good’. God looked with obvious pleasure on all that He had made.

The creation was indeed worth beholding. Man was holy and upright, he was subject to God and all the earth was subject to man. Death, pain and disease were unknown both to man and to beast. Death and general disorder are our lifelong experience now. We are used to suffering in our lives, but not so then. There was then an earth which yielded up its fruits to its inhabitants without a struggle. Yet now man especially, of all God’s creation, must wrestle with the earth for his food and clothing. Also man did not eat meat, and the animals did not prey on one another, for God said that the vegetation and its fruit were for their food. God allowed us to eat meat later on but not at the beginning. Verses 29 and 30 of Chapter 1 make this clear.

I mention this aspect of the creation as it was finished by God because often men ask how a good God could make a world like ours. Well the answer is, of course, that He did not. Sin entered the world when Adam sinned, and death came by sin, and death passed upon all men. Also, God cursed the earth because of man’s sin and so the earth suffers from the result of man’s disobedience. So much so, that the apostle Paul says “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Romans 8:22). What we see around us is not what came from the hand of God: what we do see is an originally good creation with a curse upon

it because of man's sin. These facts have some important consequences for us. Firstly, death is not inherent in creation. It is a result of sin. Secondly, all death and disease is subsequent to the fall of man. Any evidence that we see of death and any evidence that we see of disease, must have come about after man's fall. So what does this mean? Well, take an example. Fossils are the remains of dead animals which we can dig out of the rocks. Also in many fossils there is evidence of disease. Now what was our doctrine? Death is subsequent to the fall of man? Well, the fossils must have been formed **after** the fall of man! Yet are we not told that fossils are evidence of life on the earth millions of years before man came into being? I think it must be clear that any attempt to find a place for fossils before the creation of man, comes into head-on collision with the teaching of God's word.

ADAM IN CREATION

The last point I wish to make is that Adam was no savage. I want here to make a few observations about man himself, and see how man was when he came from the hand of his Creator. It is clear that man is the highlight of God's creation, and all that God did previously was with a view to providing a fit dwelling place for him. Let us see then what man was like before he fell. Let us see what we would have been like if we had not sinned in Adam.

First of all, man was made in the image of God. This means that man was like God. He was upright and pure in all his thoughts and deeds. We know that man was upright because we are told in these chapters that it was the practice, before the fall, for Adam and Eve to commune with God in the garden. This communion was direct and is not something enjoyed by man as a sinner. We can only have communion with God now through a Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, on the very day of his creation Adam had the gift of prophecy in the sense that he was able to declare the will of God. If we turn to Genesis 2:23,24 we read that Adam said, “*This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh ...*” Here Adam is prophesying. He is declaring the will of God. He had no father and mother, he did not yet have any children. Nevertheless he was declaring what was the will of God for His creatures. Adam, therefore, as he came from the hands of God, was a prophet and therefore, must have been the recipient of revelation from God.

Thirdly, also on the very day of his creation, Adam had the ability to speak logically and coherently. This shows us that speech is inherent in man and is one of the things which so obviously distinguishes us from the animals. It would seem that the ability to speak is one manifestation of the image of God.

Closely connected with the faculty of speech is the intellectual ability that Adam obviously had. In Chapter 2 verses 19 and 20 we see that Adam gave names to the animals brought before him. This does not mean that Adam’s haphazard grunts were accepted by God as the names of the animals – nothing of the sort. In Hebrew, the giving of a name involves an actual description of the thing being named. Adam therefore, at the very beginning, was able to assess an animal’s characteristics and give it a name which described them. No mean feat! Adam, then, had the gift of speech and intellectual ability on the day that he came from God.

Finally, man was made to work for God. In chapter 2 verse 15 we read, “*The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it*” Man was made, at the very beginning, to work for God, and not for a life of idleness. From this we learn that it is man’s calling to work. It is one of the reasons for which we were made. Man was not,

however, to work for his own comfort, enjoyment or profit, but beyond all these, he was to work for the glory of God.

These observations show clearly that Adam was no savage. He was upright and noble, unlike ourselves. He was not a grunting, shuffling, half-man and half-ape as you would be led to believe by a visit to any natural history museum that you would care to mention. He was not a shiftless vagabond living in a cave, hunting for food and working as little as possible. The Bible forbids us to believe these things. Yet there are remains that have been found of fossils of man which may well be those of men who were grunting, shuffling savages; men who did dwell in caves and men who were idle. The remains may well be those of early men; but these fossils were not primitive men. The primitive man was Adam and he was a noble creature. Any remains that we find are those of men showing the degenerating effects of sin after the fall but are not the remains of primitive men in the evolutionary sense of the word. The Bible teaches us that man was made upright, but he fell. Man has not become upright, having gradually taken his hands from the ground so that now he is able to stand upon his two feet. Rather our upright stature reminds us that we once had the pure image of God. Our very physical make-up is a reflection of the spiritual image of God that we had.

I think it is clear from what I have said that the teaching of Genesis is very much in conflict with evolutionary theory at every point. Not merely over the six days of creation, but in everything else as well. My main purpose has been to make this clear by highlighting these five aspects of Genesis 1 and 2 and I am going to leave it at this point with a challenge: **Do you believe God's word in its entirety and do you set your face against intellectual worldliness?**

Trying, as a Christian, to play with the theory of evolution is a form of worldliness. It is a manifestation of the lust of the mind, and is worldliness in the sphere of our thinking. Are you willing to set your

face against this, or are you going to try to serve God and the devil by believing what God says about salvation, but rejecting what He says about His creative activity? We cannot have it both ways. If God reveals how He has saved us from our sins He has also revealed how He created us. Well, that is the challenge!

It took me a long time to come to the position where I believed the Word of God in its entirety. I am afraid that I had no one to help me. All those I went to for help seemed to believe in evolution and the Bible. The trouble was that, in practice, it worked out that they didn't believe in the Bible. Yet God in His mercy brought me to the position that I had to believe His word and face up to the ridicule I was afraid of. When He brought me to this place, however, He also graciously opened my eyes to the fallacies of evolutionary theory and helped me by leading me to some good books. I had never been laughed at before but I've been laughed at many times since. I used to try to witness to people and tell them about the claims of God. Inevitably the question was asked, 'Well, what do you think about the early chapters of Genesis?' and I hesitated. I started to come out with the usual arguments about the days not being literal and all the rest of it. The result was I ended up with the people patting me on the back and saying what a judicious fellow I was, that I was able to distinguish between truth and error in the Bible. Yet I was a fundamentalist. At least I wanted to be; yet I couldn't be. Well, God led me out of all this.

I hope this humble effort will help to save some of you from the uncertainties and troubles that I've been through myself and set you thinking along the lines which will bring you into a complete subjection to the whole Bible.

J. W. Milner, BSc, PhD

*From a lecture given at a Trinitarian Bible Society meeting at Leicester in 1969.
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