

Survey of Creation Theory

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Introduction.....	2
Creationism	2
Day-Age Creation Theory.....	5
Literal Six-Day Creationism	6
The Gap Theory.....	7
Darwinism.....	9
Conclusion	11
Bibliography.....	13

Introduction

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1)¹ I thought it appropriate for my thesis statement to be a scripture that also reflects my personal belief that all things begin with God – period. Some people oppose this view completely while others, including laity, scholars, and theologians maintain variations of it that span the interpretive ranges from conservative to liberal. This brief paper is an attempt to provide an introductory survey of the most prevalent views of creation, and while this work is largely informative, I will also offer some degree of argumentation in support of my person views.

The Bible is the source of truth for everything, including creation. I offer this statement of belief for my readers because I want them to have a clear understanding of my theological position as a point of reference when interpreting my arguments for and against the views being surveyed. I think it only fair to quantify the principle behind my belief so that when my readers formulate their opinions of this writing they can do so intelligibly. Now, let us begin this survey of the theories of creation; and it is my prayer that because of this work, my readers will not only be more informed about some of the various views of creation, but that they will also be blessed by the reading.

Creationism

Bible-believing Christians maintain through scripturally empirical evidence that all existence was foundationally created out of nothing by God. From the viewpoint of a systematic theology hermeneutic, it is clear in scripture that God, specifically, *elôhîym* in Hebrew

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the King James Version (KJV).

translation, created everything by His Word *ex nihilo* which means “out of nothing”.² Even the secular meaning of *Creationism* is defined as, “a doctrine or theory holding that matter, the various forms of life, and the world were created by God out of nothing and usually in the way described in Genesis”.³ There is no ambiguity as to what creationists fundamentally believe; God created the heavens, the earth, and everything therein out of nothing by the power of His Word, and this is the understanding I have and maintain as a Bible-believing Christian. To emphasize, the prophet Isaiah in Chapter 40 records a host of divine accomplishments attributed to God, and then says regarding God, “To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things...” (Isaiah 40:25-26) The prophet teaches through divine inspiration that there is none who can compare to God who is the creator of all things. In Chapter 42 of Isaiah, God directly speaks for himself and says, “Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein...” (Isaiah 42:5) There can be no doubt nor equivocation that God is He who has created everything by the power of His own might, and of His own sovereignty.

The Bible is replete with evidence in support of creationism. In fact, our literary introduction to God’s Word lays the foundation of all existence by informing humanity that God created the heaven and the earth in the beginning of all we know and understand (Genesis 1:1). Whatever His reason, God is the One⁴ who decided to speak everything into existence of His

² Dr. John McArthur and Richard Mayhue. *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth*. (Crossway, 2017), See “Divine Creation”.

³ Merriam-Webster. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. n.d. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>. See definition for “Creationism”.

⁴ Emphasis given to the capitalized form of “One” to acknowledge the unity of the Godhead as implied in the use of *Elohim* which is plural in Genesis 1.

own will (Psalms 33:6). One of the arguments presented by those who oppose creationism is that we cannot see God, so we cannot know if He exists and that He is the creator, but the Bible specifically and readily addresses this rationale. In the Old Testament, we are informed that, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psalms 19:1) This passage teaches us that creation itself gives ample testimony to support the fact that God is indeed the creator. The New Testament speaks in agreement with the Old Testament regarding the veracity of God as Creator, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:20). Here we learn that there is no excuse for denying God as Creator, because those things which may seem unknowable about Him are clearly made known by virtue of the presence of creation itself.

Despite a plethora of biblical evidence and the literal testimony of creation which gives birth to science, creationism remains a fierce competitor in the battle between science and religion. In their book, *The Creation Controversy & The Science Classroom*, James Skehan and Craig Nelson support the idea that science and religion stand in strict opposition of one another, they say, “Science and religion are very different from each other. Although most people seem to understand this fact, many have difficulty explaining how they differ.”⁵ The statement is offered with a bias, and I disagree that the difference between the two cannot be readily explained. I personally maintain that science and religion are siblings conceived by the same Father. My explanation of this statement is that science is the natural by-product of creation, and religion is the acknowledgment of and worship of the Creator in gratitude and appreciation for what He has done. In my opinion, there can be no separation between the two. The problem with positioning

⁵ James Skehan and Craig Nelson. *The Creation Controversy & The Science Classroom*. (NTSA Press, 2000), See Religious Science? Scientific Religion?.

science in opposition to religion is the denial of the fact that science was itself created by God. For example, there would be no law of gravity without the presence of matter which consists of mass, and which was created by God. Similarly, there would be no measurements of the various natural elements if they did not exist by virtue of divine and intelligent creation. Rather than science and religion being at odds with one another, they are akin to one another, having been sourced from the same point of origin – God.

Creationism has controversy embedded within the sphere of its own influence even though the existence of God is its core premise. Regardless of agreement on God being the key element in creationism, its proponents are at odds with one another about how God performed the acts of creation. Consequently, several creationist theories have surfaced which present unique distinctions in terms of how God created the heavens, the earth, and everything therein.

Day-Age Creation Theory

Day-Age creationism is the offspring of its parent ideology – Old Earth Creationism which teaches that scientists are correct in their assessment that the earth is old, but wrong about the evolution of species. The core belief supporting the Day-Age theory of creation is that God did in fact accomplish creation in 6 days, but that those “days” are not literal 24-hour periods of time and could represent millions or even billions of years in terms of chronology. Proponents of this theory felt a need to compensate for the existence of scientific evidence that the earth is old, while maintaining their belief in God and the Bible. Jason Rosenhouse, author of *Among the Creationists: Dispatches from the Anti-Evolutionist Front Line*, writes, “While the possibility that the Genesis days are not twenty-four hours long has a history going back to St. Augustine, and has always had defenders among Christians, the day-age view specifically was a response to

geological advances in the early nineteenth century.”⁶ It seems clear that there are people who believe in God and consider themselves Christians, while simultaneously supporting a belief that defies the doctrine of theology proper because of certain scientific findings.

A detailed word study suggests that the Day-Age theory is flawed. The Hebrew word for “day” is *yôm*, which carries a host of related literal connotations as indicated here: “יֹם *yôm*; from an unused root meaning to be hot; a day (as the warm hours), whether literal (from sunrise to sunset, or from one sunset to the next), or figurative (a space of time defined by an associated term).”⁷ In addition to the Hebrew definition, E. W. Bullinger asserts in his annotated *Companion Bible*, “The word *day*, when used without any limiting words, may refer to a long or prolonged period... But when the word *day* is used with a numeral (cardinal or ordinal) ... it is defined, limited, and restricted to an ordinary day of twenty-four hours.”⁸ Diligent research and the proper theological exegesis and hermeneutic will lead the avid theology student in a direction away from the Day-Age theory, and toward an idea more in line with sound creation doctrine such as Literal Six-Day Creationism.

Literal Six-Day Creationism

The Bible teaches that God (’elôhîym)⁹ completed all of creation in six literal twenty-four-hour days. As previously mentioned in this paper, the key to understanding the duration of the creation process lies in the word “day” which in the Hebrew language is the word *yom*. The

⁶ Jason Rosenhouse. *Among the Creationists: Dispatches from the Anti-Evolutionist Front Line*. (Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 165

⁷ Strong’s Number: h3117

⁸ E. W. Bullinger *The Companion Bible - The Authorized Version of 1611 (KJV) with Structures, Notes, and Appendixes*. (Kregel Publications, 1922), See Appendix 11.

⁹ The Hebrew translation of God used in Genesis 1.

grammatical principle applied to *yom* states that when the word is used in conjunction with a numerical reference, its meaning must be interpreted as a literal twenty-four-hour day. If one is to remain true to proper exegesis, then scripture will be allowed to interpret itself in this case and a creation period of six literal days is the only conclusion to which one can arrive. In his article, *The Necessity for Believing in Six Literal Days*, Ken Ham, a theology contributor to Creation.com writes, "The major reason why people doubt that the days of creation are 24-hour literal days usually has nothing to do with what the Bible says, but comes from outside influences."¹⁰ The outside influences the author references are the archeological and geological findings of scientists who conclude that the earth is billions of years old, theories that undermine the biblical teaching of a relatively young earth.

Literal Six-Day Creationism in fact and in principle, supports and preserves the creative work of an omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent God who is unrestricted in His power to perform His own will. The veracity of this statement is what requires humanity to stand in awe of the Creator of the universe and render unto Him the glory that is due Him as God. The fact that God created all that exists from nothing, including humanity, demands that the whole of creation bow down in worship before Him.

The Gap Theory

The creationist Gap Theory may be a controversial topic among Christians, but its idea warrants serious consideration because it suggests a plausible explanation for the earth being very old, and simultaneously supports a literal six-day creation. There are many sources which explain the Gap Theory idea in deep detail, but because I want to ensure that this paper is

¹⁰ Ken Ham, "The necessity for believing in six literal days." (Creation.com. December 1995).

reflective of what I personally deem credible regarding the subject, I will present my own interpretation of the theory.

The Gap Theory posits that there is an unknown, yet significant amount of time between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. Verse 1 makes what I consider to be the infallible declaration that God created the heavens and the earth. To further accentuate and confirm this divine statement, the Bible itself stands in agreement as quoted here, “For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else. (Isaiah 45:18). The word “inhabited” in Hebrew is *yāšab*, and it means to dwell, to inhabit, and to abide. Each of these primary connotations indicate that God initially formed and created the earth in a state that allowed habitation. Further exegesis of the text reveals that God did not create the earth in “vain” (Hebrew: תֹהוּ *tôhû*), meaning that God did not create the earth without form, nor did He create it empty and void, but He created the earth in a condition opposite that which it would somehow become in Genesis 1:2 – without form and void. The principles of Systematic Theology require that the whole of scripture be considered and examined to determine the mind of God in His Word more perfectly, and I have not yet found anything in the Bible to contradict what I have gathered on this point.

Archeological and geological scientific records demonstrate the earth is much older than thousands of years, and I believe the Gap Theory of creation allows for that eventuality without compromising the truth of a literal six-day creation. William Buckland, in his book, *Geology and Mineralogy Considered with Reference to Natural Theology: Volume I*, alludes to the fact that theologians have debated the idea of the Gap Theory from two perspectives. First, that Genesis 1:1 is immediately followed by six literal days of creation, and second, that the verse is more of

an abstract statement without any limitations on time expended to conduct the creative effort.¹¹

Buckland goes on to state that he espouses the latter idea because in his estimation, a biblical interpretation of long “days” are more plausible than literal twenty-four-hour days, a conclusion with which I cannot agree and remain faithful to sound biblical exegesis.

It is theologically permissible to gravitate towards the Gap Theory if the literal six-day creation truth is not compromised. I do not mind a good debate about the potentiality of an unspecified period prior to the literal six-day creation narrative, but in my opinion, to debate in favor of a day-age perspective is theologically unfruitful. I will not shy away from a day-age debate, but my opponent will be advised in advance that my perspective will be that they are arguing for an ungodly principle as egregious as Darwinism and the theory of evolution.

Darwinism

There is a blatant disdain for creationism, the idea that the universe, the world, and all they contain are products of the sovereign will of the Almighty and All-Wise God. In this section of my paper, I will discuss the core principles of Darwinism which are promoted by scientists as empirical evidence; that creation was an explosive, happenstance, and scientific event known as the “Big Bang”, which in turn became the source of the theory of evolution. The propagation of the “theory” of evolution is so prevalent that it is taught to our children in schools as a matter fact instead of the theory it is. According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, the complete definition of Darwinism is,

“A theory of the origin and perpetuation of new species of animals and plants that offspring of a given organism vary, that natural selection favors the survival of some of these variations over others, that new species have arisen and may continue to arise by

¹¹ William Buckland. *Geology and Mineralogy Considered with Reference to Natural Theology: Volume 1*. (Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1837), p. 26

these processes, and that widely divergent groups of plants and animals have arisen from the same ancestors.”¹²

The theory of evolution is the offspring of Darwinism and is diametrically opposed to the idea that God is Creator, and rather suggests that species, including humans were initiated by chance and evolve over time. This idea denies the existence of God as Creator and that He should be acknowledged and worshipped as such which is core to the principles of Creationism.

Creationism is the primary target of evolution’s satanic spiritual attack against the seed promise God made to humanity in the book of Genesis, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:15) This promise condemns Satan to inevitable and eternal defeat by the coming seed of the woman, and consequently, those who place their faith in God through this seed are predestined to inherit the eternal benefits of the promise. However, if a person does not believe that God exists, there is no way for them to receive the benefits of the seed promise, and therefore Satan uses the theory of evolution to lead humanity away from God because it presupposes that God does not exist. In fact, scientists who support Darwinism and evolution are of the strict opinion that creationists are the aggressors of an intellectual war against science, and its process of deducing facts, known as the Scientific Method. It is most intriguing that evolutionists believe that religion has a mandate to unseat Darwinism, when in fact, it is quite the opposite that is true. Robert T. Pennock writes about intelligent design creationists (IDC) in his book, *Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics: Philosophical, Theological, and Scientific Perspectives*, “In addition to their philosophical attacks on scientific method, IDCs follow the pattern of classic creationists in launching a barrage of negative arguments against

¹² Merriam-Webster. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. n.d. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>, See definition for “Darwinism”.

evolution...”¹³ Pennock’s statement and other of his writings decries the fact that creationist stand in opposition to its beliefs, and actually takes offense at the notion that there is an eternal God who is Himself Creator of all that exists.

The most egregious position Darwinism takes as part of its primary tenet of evolution, is the idea that modern man is an evolved descendent of primate species. To be more succinct, Darwinists maintain that man evolved from apes, a notion that is not only abominable, but inherently heretical. Specifically, evolution of species is defined as, “The scientific theory explaining the appearance of new species and varieties through the action of various biological mechanisms (such as natural selection, genetic mutation or drift, and hybridization)”¹⁴ To clarify, this definition is the scientific explanation of how mankind came into existence. From a puddle of primordial soup to the complex biological systems we are today, for Darwinists, it was the evolutionary process over billions of years that facilitated the intricate complexities of the human anatomy and ontology. Such a position is wholly inspired by satanic influence and has been one of the most effective weapons used in the spiritual war for the minds and souls of men.

Conclusion

It was God who created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1), and it was He who created man from the dust of the ground and breathed His spirit of life into him and he became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). This statement is foundational biblical truth, and it foremost acknowledges the existence and efficacy of the one true God, Yahweh. While every individual has the God-given right to believe whatever they want, we have all been given the opportunity to

¹³ Robert T. Pennock. *Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics: Philosophical, Theological, and Scientific Perspectives*. (MIT Press, 2001), p. 239.

¹⁴ Merriam-Webster. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. n.d. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>, See definition for “Evolution”.

enter covenant relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Unfortunately, Satan uses some versions of Creationism, Darwinism, and other heretical doctrines to prevent many people around the world from accepting the gift of salvation offered to us all by an all-wise, and all-loving God.

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