

Reasons to Believe in a Young Earth

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Should we interpret Genesis 1-11 literally? (a literal six-day creation)

Should Christians believe in a young earth and a global flood?

Francis Collins

Former head of NIH & the Human Genome Project

He leads the Biologos movement--He believes in theistic evolution & denies a historical Adam & Eve; He believes Genesis 1-11 is mythology

Hugh Ross

President of Reasons to Believe; Rejects human evolution

But, he promotes the Big Bang & believes in an old earth (13 billion years old)

He incorrectly thinks he is literally interpreting Genesis 1-11

William Lane Craig's Quest for the Historical Adam

He argues for a historical Adam and Eve, but interprets Genesis 1-11 as mytho-historical

Adam and Eve evolved from non-human parents

Craig denies Adam was created from the ground & Eve from his side

No literal serpent or forbidden fruit

Believes in an old earth & theistic evolution

He denies a literal 6 day creation (though he admits a literal interpretation of Genesis 1-11 teaches 6 day creation & a global flood)

Tree of life & tree of forbidden fruit are metaphors

Cherubim, 4 rivers in Eden, & long life spans are symbolic

Global flood & Tower of Babel are mythological

Craig admits Jesus and Paul believed in a historical Adam & Eve

But, he believes Young Earth Creationism is "wildly implausible"

Craig believes we should not take Genesis 1-11 literally

He accepts contemporary evolutionary "science"

Craig rejects interpreting Genesis 1-11 in a literal way

Still, Adam and Eve were the 1st historical humans

But, much of (not all of) Genesis 1-11 is mythological

Hence, Craig classifies Genesis 1-11 as "mytho-historical"

He believes Adam & Eve evolved from pre-humans

He seems to favor the Documentary Hypothesis

Craig respects secular scientific speculation more than a literal interpretation of Genesis 1-

11; Adam & Eve were the first humans—they evolved from sub-humans 750,000 years

ago; Craig classifies Adam & Eve as Heidelbergensis

They were the ancestors of Neanderthals & other humans

Adam & Eve were the first to bear the image of God

There was physical death before the fall, but not spiritual death, for humans

Age of the Earth Discussion

Should we take Genesis 1-11 literally? Should we be young earth creationists?

Point #1—A Debate Between Brothers

There are Christians who love the Lord who are in both the young earth & old earth camps.

But, the Bible is the final authority—it is the Word of God

We must not white-wash over biblical passages

Point #2—God called His creation “very good” (Genesis 1:31)

If old earth creationism is true, then there already existed billions of fossils of dead animals; Old earth creationism is wasteful

Old earth creationism does great damage to the traditional response to the problem of evil & suffering (blamed on man’s abuse of free will)

Point #3--The Fall led to a cursed creation with animal & human suffering & death

Genesis 3; Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 15

Point #4—the order of God’s creation work (Genesis One)

Old Earthers reverse the order on each point:

Earth before sun & stars; Light before the sun; Land vegetation before the sun

Birds before reptiles; No meat-eaters before the Fall; No thorns before the Fall

Point #5—Consistent Old Earthers deny the Global Flood

Genesis 6-9 describes a global flood

A continual downfall of 40 days

“Mabbul” used only of Noah’s flood

The enormous size of the ark

The waters covered all the mountains

Every human & every land animal died

The Ark rested on a mountain top

Noah’s family could not leave the ark for over a year

God promised to never again flood the entire earth

Point #6—the historical view of the church

Until 1800 ad, the church believed in a young earth with under 6,000 years of history

Early church, reformers

Only when scientific consensus began to promote an old earth did many Christian thinkers begin to reinterpret Genesis 1-11

Point #7—God’s Word is the final authority, not scientific consensus

Scientific knowledge is tentative; God’s Word is inerrant. Why did it take the church 1800 years to find out what Genesis 1 “really” meant?

If God wanted to tell us about a literal six-day creation & a global flood, could He have been any clearer?

Eisegesis vs. Exegesis

Eisegesis = bringing into the text something the Word of God does not really say

Exegesis = bringing out the text exactly what the Bible says (good hermeneutic)

Conclusion

There is no reason to interpret Genesis 1 to 11 metaphorically

The first 5 books of the Bible are historical books, not mythology

Therefore, the church should not change the way it interprets Genesis 1-11

We should not give in to the false wisdom of man (Colossians 2:8)