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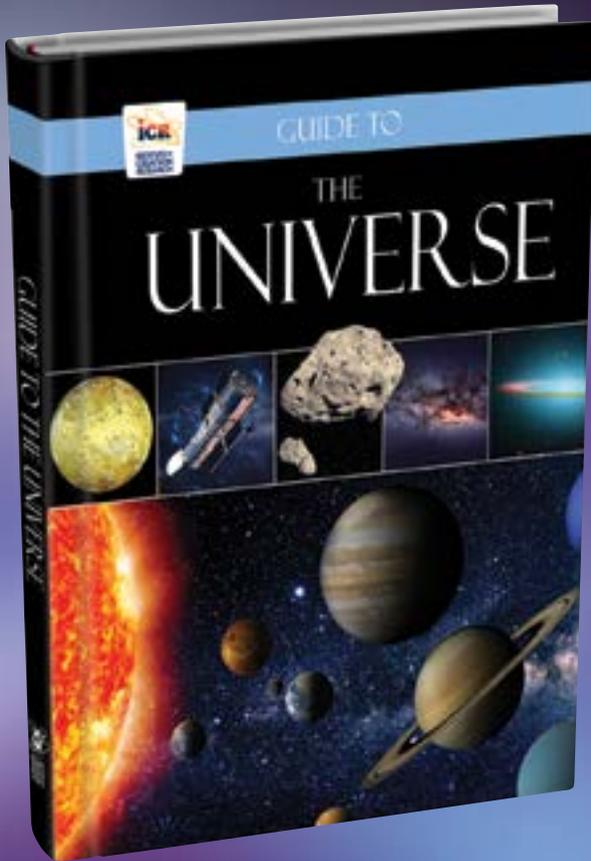
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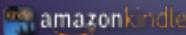


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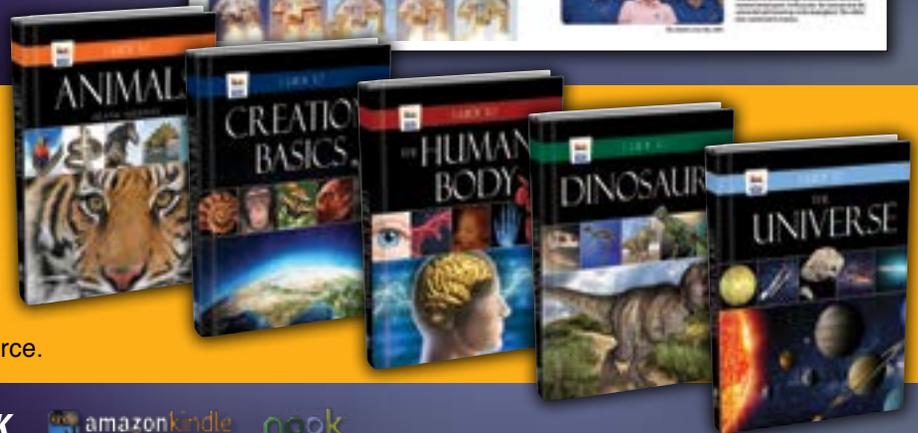
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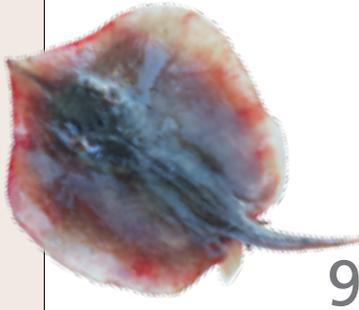
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Counting Our Blessings

Thanksgiving begins with a heart of gratitude. A grateful heart toward God recognizes that our Creator is our benefactor and we are merely the recipients of His goodness and generosity. We exist because He wants us here, and everything we have comes from Him.

In “Eternal Thanksgiving” (pages 5-7), Dr. Henry Morris III says, “Before the first atom of the world was ever created, we were predetermined to be made just like the Lord Jesus.” That alone is “worth rejoicing over”! Dr. Morris also mentions that on Thanksgiving Day, “Many still gather around their tables to re-bond as a family and remember the blessings of the past year. Some of us read the Scriptures together and give our Lord Jesus the thanks He deserves for bringing us through another year....We should never stop those efforts to rekindle our love for God and the expectant delight of His blessings” (page 6).



Perhaps you're going through difficult times and finding it tough to be thankful during this season. But even in hard times, we can count our blessings.

We can be thankful for life. Every breath we take is a gift from God (Job 12:10). Everything we are and everything we are able to do come from God. Every moment of our life was ordained by our Creator—He determines why we are alive and how long we will live. We are made in His image, a reflection of our majestic Lord.

We can also thank our heavenly Father for our bodies. He designed every incredible, tiny detail to work in an engineered orches-

tration of perfect timing, fit, and function. He gave us brains to accomplish feats like no other creatures on Earth. And while many of us deal with limitations or illnesses, we can thank Him because waning health and disabilities are no surprise to Him. Whatever limitations our bodies encounter, we can be certain our Creator has a plan to work them for our good and His glory (Romans 8:28-29).

Family is a gift from God. Look around your table. Our children and spouses are gifts from the Lord (Psalm 127:3; Proverbs 18:22). God didn't want us to be alone, so He created the family unit when He began with Adam and Eve.

Do you have food on the table and clothes in your closet? It all came from God. He created cranberries and cotton on Day 3 and turkey and Cornish hens on Day 5. We didn't make any of it, but we get to enjoy the work of God's hands when we sit down for our Thanksgiving feast.

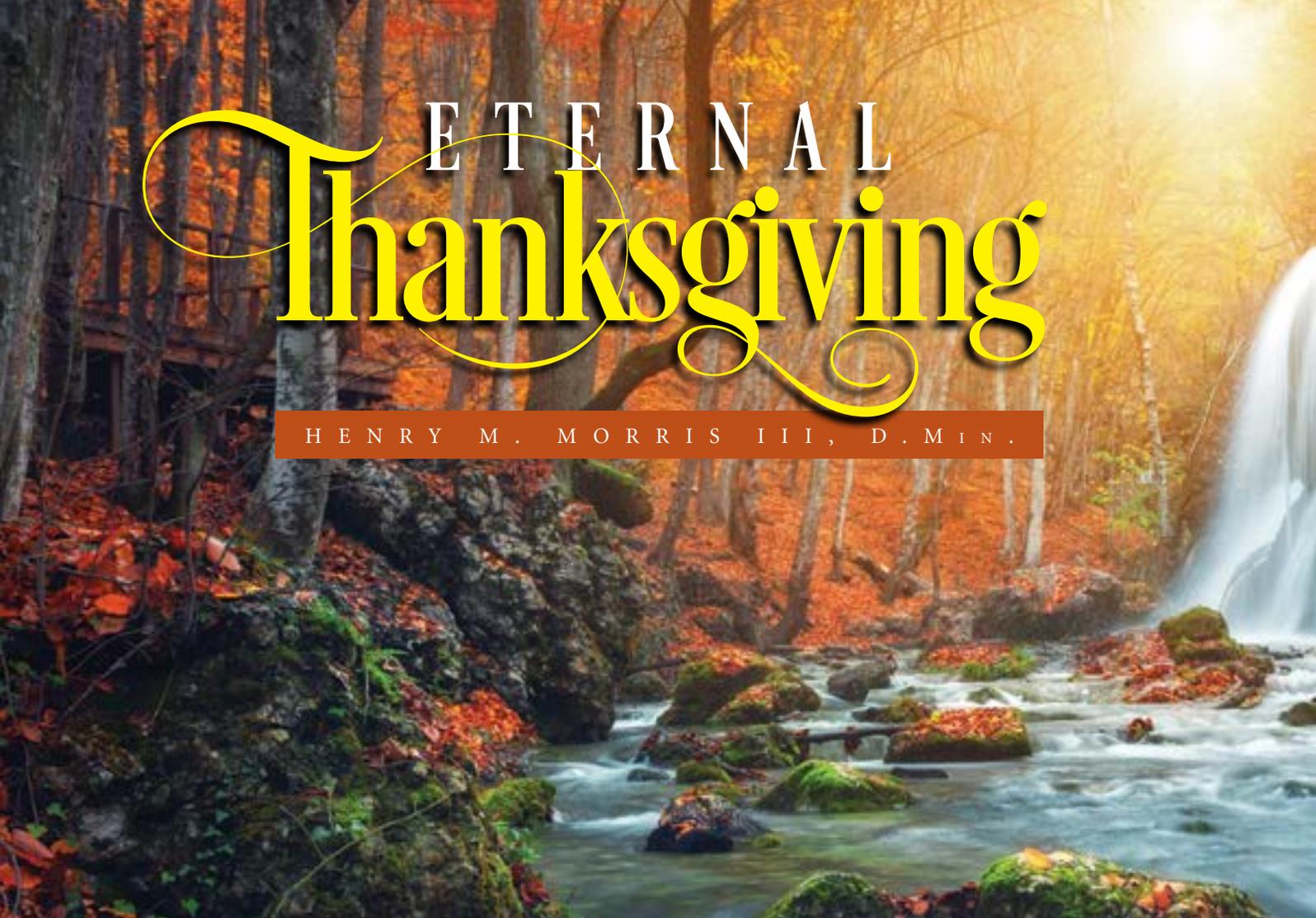
All of the other things we own or experience—our educations, jobs, transportation, entertainment activities, friendships, and homes and the possessions that fill them—comes from God. He even gives us the ability to make a living (Deuteronomy 8:18), so there's no room for pride in our careers, bank accounts, abilities, or brains.

Every circumstance of life is an opportunity to offer thanks to our Creator. As Henry Morris IV reminds us, God wants us to give thanks in everything (page 21). Even in the difficult times, we can “rejoice always” (1 Thessalonians 5:16) because we can rest in His presence and be confident of His purposes.

And above all we can thank God for His indescribable gift of grace—our atonement through Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 9:15). We can't fully grasp the depths of His love for us and the magnitude of the gift of salvation through His Son, but we can understand enough to pour out our thanks to Him!

Counting our blessings and offering thanks begin with gratitude—we exist because of our gracious Lord. Everything we have and are came from our Creator. We created nothing, and yet we are the recipients of God's goodness simply because our Creator chose to pour out His blessings on us. As we gather around our tables, let's give thanks to the One who made and redeemed us.

Jayme Durant
EXECUTIVE EDITOR



ETERNAL Thanksgiving

HENRY M. MORRIS III, D.M.N.

One of the more delightful passages of the book of Revelation describes the uncountable throng surrounding the Throne, joining the 144,000 freshly sealed saints from the tribes of Israel and the 24 elders, the specially commissioned angels, and the four living creatures, singing, shouting, and praising the Lamb, saying: “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 7:12).

They had just witnessed the coronation of the Lamb. Our great Creator and Redeemer had opened the seven-sealed book, given white robes to the martyrs beneath the altar, issued the final trumpets to the seven angels, and set the stage for the Tribulation saints to “serve Him day and night in His temple” (Revelation 7:15).

It’s as though these billions of people and angels could contain themselves no

longer! The restraint of sin and shame is removed, the pain of age and death are no longer in memory. Everyone present bursts into the unrestrained praise that was pent up for thousands of years while “the whole creation” was groaning and laboring “with birth pangs” until the longed-for day became reality (Romans 8:22).

Eternal World Begins

“The holy city, New Jerusalem,” visible in the distance, is “coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Revelation 21:2). We who are the twice-born are either present already with the Lord Jesus or soon to be caught up to be with Him forever (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). The Last Days are being consummated, and immediately on the horizon is the long-promised destruction when the “heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat;

both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10).

Then! With the indescribable glory that caused all the angels to sing during the creation week (Job 38:7), a new heavens and a new earth are fashioned before our eyes, anchored by the physical presence of the “Lord God Almighty and the Lamb” as the temple in this new city, and there will be no need for “the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.” The pomp and awesome majesty of the kings of Earth stream constantly into the city to pay homage to the “King of Kings and Lord of Lords” (Revelation 21:22-24; 19:16).

I wonder if this new heavens and new Earth will ever be *quiet!*

Eternal Body Gifted

The Bible gives us a small glimpse into the resurrected and immortal body of the

Lord Jesus. He could appear and disappear (Luke 24:30-31), He could eat regular food (John 21:9-12), He could walk through walls (John 20:26), and He went straight up into the Throne room (Acts 1:9). All of that is marvelous, to be sure, but we are given the promise that “we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2).

That phrase in and of itself is worth rejoicing over. But there is much more. We are predestined “to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29). Think of that! Before the first atom of the world was ever created, we were predetermined to be made just like the Lord Jesus—the second Person of the triune Godhead. We will not “be” Him, but we will share His image and His likeness as we were first created, and will be “raised in incorruption...raised in glory...raised in power...raised a spiritual body” (1 Corinthians 15:42-44). We *shall* (no maybes, no exceptions, no exclusions) bear the image of the heavenly.

There is no doubt. When eternity starts and time ceases (Revelation 10:6), we will be immortal and incorruptible and changed! No longer weak and dying, no longer merely coping and barely surviving, we shall be “joint heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17).

Eternal Kingdom Service Begins

In America, we have for many years celebrated Thanksgiving Day. Yet, it has become so mixed with “turkey day” and various football games, or masked by Halloween or Christmas, that we have lost sight of the purpose and reason for the celebration. But the legend of the Pilgrims giving thanks for their survival after the harsh winter and the generous help of the Native Americans has not been lost on everyone. Many still gather around their tables to re-bond as a family and remember the blessings of the past year. Some of us read the Scriptures together and give our Lord Jesus the thanks He deserves for bringing us through another year.

We should never stop those efforts to rekindle our love for God and the expectant delight of His blessings—sometimes

unlooked for.

As an example, an unlooked-for gift came to ICR just prior to my writing this article. Many of you know that ICR is trying to raise a large amount of funds to build the ICR Discovery Center of Science and Earth History. God continues to supply, and we had long ago learned to wait until He supplies before we begin any major project. Well, the deadline for a matching gift was approaching with little sign that we were going to reach sufficient funds to trigger that match—until the day dawned that a decision had to be made. Without our prior knowledge, a huge gift showed up in the mail from a donor and a foundation we had never heard of. I can’t tell you who or how much, but it was a total surprise and sufficient to make all of us admit to our previously waning faith—and to rekindle our confidence that God did hear our prayers and was going to build the Center as planned.

While we are serving our Lord here on Earth, we are under a number of restraints, not the least of which is a constant dilemma of a lack of resources and just as often a lack of insight or clarity of vision. While some people seem to have little difficulty with “big” things, it is often clear that “not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called” (1 Corinthians 1:26). Most of us are involved in smaller churches or unknown schools or unimportant ministries (in the world’s eyes) and struggle to find the freedom to support the various efforts we firmly believe are needed in one facet of the Kingdom or another.

Yet, when we look at the heroes of faith listed in Hebrews 11, most of them are unnamed and their hopes were unfulfilled.

They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise. (Hebrews 11:37-39)

Even the great man Abraham “went out, not knowing where he was going... for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Hebrews 11:8, 10). Every example in the Old and New Testaments tells the story that we are “training” down here for eternal responsibilities. Two of Jesus’ parables (the talents and the pounds) confirm for us that our use of money (as a display of our understanding how to use the opportunities and attributes granted to us by our Lord) will be rewarded in eternity with authority over cities during the eternal new heavens and new Earth.



Eternal Authority Granted in Direct Proportion to Value

In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), the Lord Jesus presents Himself as a nobleman who travels to a far country and delegates a portion of his wealth to his servants. The amount given varied “to each according to his own ability”; to one the lord gave five talents, to another two, and to another one. Immediately, the lord left on his journey, and the servants got busy and “traded” or “gained” or “dug in the ground” as suited their abilities and faith.

“After a long time,” the lord returned and “settled accounts” with each servant. The servant who had been given five talents of his lord’s wealth had gained another five and received the lord’s blessing and was

made “ruler over many things.” The servant who received two talents had gained another two talents. The lord’s judgment was, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (v. 23).

But the servant who only received one talent (remember, the lord’s disbursement was based on his knowledge of the servant’s ability), that servant began to make all kinds of excuses why he had done nothing with the provision granted. Please note what the lord said to this awful servant.

“You wicked and lazy servant, you



“Look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18).

knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 25:26-30)

Four principles are clearly established here. One, the money belonged to the lord, not to the servants. People—and especially redeemed people—are the *doulos* (house/bondservants) of the Lord Jesus, not the co-owners. Two, the *reward* is in direct pro-

portion to the *value* of investment (double). Three, the most valuable servant is given the most reward. Four, the “wicked and lazy” servant is sent to hell for eternity. There is no second chance for a “do-over.”

Eternal Authority Based on Return on Investment

In the parable of the pounds (Luke 19:12-27), the Lord again presents Himself as a nobleman going into a far country to receive a kingdom. As he was leaving, he called all of his servants and gave them each a pound (a day’s wages) and immediately left them with the instructions to “do business till I come.”

We are told that the citizens of the native country the lord left hated him and did everything they could do to disrupt his affairs and marginalize the servants who were *still* in charge of those affairs. After the lord returned, having received his kingdom, he commanded each of his servants to be called to him so that “he might know how much every man had gained by trading.”

Then came the first, saying, “Master, your mina [pound] has earned ten minas.” And he said to him, “Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.” And the second came, saying, “Master, your mina has earned five minas.” Likewise he said to him, “You also be over five cities.” Then another came, saying, “Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.” And he said to him, “Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?” And he said to those who stood by, “Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas....For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken

away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.” (Luke 19:16-27)

Once again, four clear principles are established. One, the servants do not own the money—it belongs to the lord. Two, since each servant was given the same amount to start with, the only way to accurately judge how effective each servant could be with cities was to see how much they had done with “very little.” The *reward* was based on the *return* on investment. Three, the most valuable servant is given more than he actually earned; he had proven himself to be both trustworthy and effective. Four, the enemies of the nobleman who hated his rule and kingdom were dragged in front of the whole crowd and publicly executed.

Eternal Thoughts

There are many warnings in Scripture that tell us our affection needs to be placed on “things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:2). Unfortunately, our lifetimes are filled with “stuff” that tends to keep our focus on the troubles rather than the blessings. Oh yes, we can and do rejoice when the special things happen (like ICR’s “surprise” gift for the Discovery Center). But more often than not, the humdrum work of the day and the “grind, grind, grind” of our sin-cursed culture keep our sight flipping back and forth between the joyous (but all too rare) events of God’s particular answers to our prayers and the draw of the flesh toward the gory “accidents” of sinful catastrophes on the six-o’clock news.

Rather than dwell on the obvious, permit me to remind all of us that we should not “look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18). ✉

Dr. Morris is Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for Creation Research.



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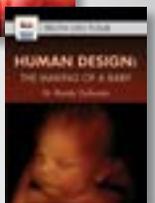
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Fresh Water and Salt Water Don't Mix

On a recent visit to the Royal Tyrell Museum in Alberta, Canada, I headed straight to the famous Dinosaur Hall that houses over 40 mounted specimens, including the *Tyrannosaurus rex* known as “Black Beauty.” However, a seemingly insignificant pair of fossil fish caught my eye—fossils that illustrate the fallacy inherent in uniformitarian thought and interpretation.

The first display was a beautifully preserved fossil herring with signage stating, “Modern herring live in salt water, but close Eocene relatives were abundant in the fresh water lakes of western North America.” A second display featured a spectacularly preserved fossil ray and claimed, “Rays are rarely preserved as fossils, in part because their skeletons are made of cartilage rather than bone. Most rays prefer salt water, making this fresh water form an even more remarkable fossil.”



Fossil ray

Why are these fossil fish, which look nearly identical to modern herring and rays that live exclusively in the marine realm today, claimed to be ancient fresh water fish in this museum? Uniformitarian scientists make this claim because these fish were found in the Green River Formation of Wyoming, and this rock unit also contains a lot of fish, like gar, paddlefish and sand fish, that are found only in fresh water, therefore they have to conclude that the entire rock unit represented an ancient fresh water lake deposit.

In a recent *Acts & Facts* article, I discussed several similar examples of marine and terrestrial environments mixing within the same rock layer.¹ Five species of sharks have been found in the same strata as *T. rex* fossils. And the deep-ocean-dwelling coelacanth fish has been found in rock layers with the dinosaur *Spinosaurus*.¹

Contrary to the claims of uniformitarian scientists, there is no evidence that these fish lived in fresh water and somehow evolved to live in salt water—the claims are entirely speculative. These fossils are nearly identical to modern fish found only in the ocean. The spectacular preservation of these specimens serves as a stunning testament to rapid burial and the globe-sweeping catastrophic nature of the floodwaters. Huge tsunami-like waves must have transported these marine fish onto the continents, mixing them in the same sedimentary deposits as the dinosaurs and other land animals.

There are many other examples of land animals transported by floodwaters into the sea, many miles from shore. The deepest dinosaur bone ever discovered was found in an oil-well core taken from the North Sea, between Greenland and Norway.² Coal fragments from land plants have

been found in marine sediments thousands of feet below the surface in an oil well off the coast of Labrador, Canada.³ Finally, terrestrial plant debris and lignite have been found hundreds of miles east of the Falkland Islands in nearly 10,000 feet of water⁴ and also in deep water off the coast of California.⁵

Uniformitarian scientists often ignore or downplay these discoveries because they are not readily explainable in their worldview. By refusing to accept the Word of God, these scientists have no recourse but to explain away the evidence as insignificant anomalies or use a rescuing device such as claiming these marine fish lived in fresh water. They forget that only the great Flood can explain the turbulence necessary to transport marine animals hundreds of miles onto the continents and sweep terrestrial organisms into the deep ocean. ☞

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Dr. Clarey is Research Associate at the Institute for Creation Research and earned his Ph.D. in geology from Western Michigan University.





Milankovitch Meltdown

Toppling an Iconic Old-Earth Argument, Part 1

Introduction

Next month marks the 40th anniversary of the publication of “Variations in the Earth’s Orbit: Pacemaker of the Ice Ages.”¹ Regular *Acts & Facts* readers know that I’ve been analyzing this paper for quite some time.² The Pacemaker paper is generally thought to have confirmed the secular explanation for the many recent Pleistocene ice ages that supposedly occurred during Earth’s prehistoric past. This paper’s importance is routinely acknowledged in textbooks, and it is no exaggeration to say that the paper is an icon of uniformitarian and old-Earth thinking.

After much hard work, I am ready to share my conclusions with you. The results of this iconic Pacemaker paper are—even by uniformitarian reckoning—largely invalid. Moreover, they have been invalid for nearly a quarter century!

Incredibly, most secular scientists seem to be completely unaware of this fact. In this and next month’s Impact articles, I will explain how uniformitarian scientists inadvertently undermined the conclusions of this paper.

Alternate Ice Age Explanations

Uniformitarian scientists, who reject the Bible's testimony of recent creation and the global Flood, claim there have been about 50 ice ages in the last 2.6 million years.³ However, creation scientists argue that Earth has experienced just a single Ice Age—a consequence of the never-to-be-repeated Genesis Flood (Genesis 6–8). Former meteorologist for the National Weather Service and creation scientist Michael Oard has proposed a detailed and convincing Ice Age explanation that solves a number of well-known mysteries, such as how millions of woolly mammoths were able to thrive in Siberia during the Ice Age and why afterward they suddenly became extinct.^{4,5}

There is strong geological evidence for a single Ice Age but not for the dozens of ice ages claimed by uniformitarians. The main reason secular scientists believe in multiple ice ages is that they interpret chemical wiggles within cores extracted from deep-seafloor sediments to represent many ice age cycles.³

The Milankovitch Ice Age Theory

Uniformitarians claim ice ages are triggered by changes in the way sunlight falling on the earth is distributed with latitude and season. Supposedly, the high-latitude northern ice sheets grow at times when there is less summer sunlight falling on them. This results in glacial intervals, or (in popular speech) ice ages. Likewise, when there is more summer sunlight falling on these northern high-latitude ice sheets, the sheets shrink, and a warmer period called an *interglacial* results. This is called the Milankovitch, or astronomical, ice age theory.

These changes in sunlight distribution are thought to be caused by slow changes in Earth's orbital and rotational motions over many tens of thousands of years (Figure 1). Because uniformitarian scientists believe the solar system is billions of years old, they feel free to extrapolate these motions backward into the supposed prehistoric past. According to these extrapolated calculations, Earth's orbital motions should exhibit dominant cycles of roughly 100,000, 41,000, and 23,000 years. Because they can calculate the past times when this

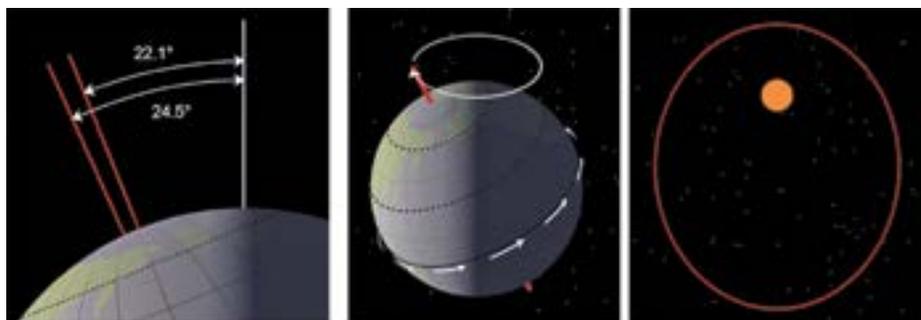


Figure 1. According to the Milankovitch theory, ice ages are triggered by slow, gradual changes in Earth's orbital and rotational motions.

Image Credit: NOAA.

high-latitude summer sunlight would presumably have been weaker, they believe they can also calculate the approximate times these supposed ice ages occurred.

Although there are many theoretical problems with the Milankovitch theory, it is generally thought to have been vindicated by the Pacemaker paper.⁶ The authors analyzed chemical wiggles in two sediment cores from the Indian Ocean designated as RC11-120 and E49-18. Because the Pacemaker analysis showed evidence of climate cycles having lengths of 42,000, 23,000, and about 100,000 years, it was seen as confirming the Milankovitch ice age theory. A third core from the western Pacific Ocean, designated as V28-238, also played a critical role in the analysis (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The Pacemaker paper used data from the two southern Indian Ocean deep-sea cores RC11-120 and E49-18. The V28-238 core was used to help construct the timescales for the two Indian Ocean cores.

Pacemaker Problems

There are significant problems with the Pacemaker paper. First, the authors excluded nearly one-third of all the data from the longer E49-18 core, an omission that other secular scientists have since claimed may have been needless.^{1,7} Second, before the authors could perform their calculations, they had to construct timescales for the cores. The most recent magnetic reversal, in which Earth's magnetic poles flipped, is named the Brunhes-Matuyama (B-M) magnetic reversal, and it played an important role in the Pacemaker paper.

Creation scientists argue that these magnetic reversals occurred quickly and were initiated by the Genesis Flood, but uniformitarian scientists claim they occurred slowly over long ages.⁸ In the early 1970s, uniformitarian scientists assigned an age of 700,000 years (700 ka) to the B-M reversal boundary, and this age was used to construct the timescales

for the two Indian Ocean cores, especially the longer E49-18 core.^{1,9}

In order to understand why the Pacemaker paper is no longer valid, it is necessary to cover some additional background material.

Seafloor Sediments and Oxygen Isotope Ratios

There are several different varieties, or isotopes, of the oxygen atom. One of these varieties, oxygen-18 (¹⁸O), is slightly heavier than the oxygen-16 (¹⁶O) variety. Scientists measure the ratio of oxygen-18 atoms to oxygen-16 atoms in a sample and calculate a quantity called the *oxygen isotope ratio*, denoted by the symbol δ¹⁸O.

Tiny marine creatures called *foraminifera* build their shells out of calcium carbonate (CaCO₃), a molecule that contains oxygen. These creatures use both ¹⁸O and ¹⁶O to construct their shells. When these foraminifera die, their shells become part of the accumulated debris on the ocean floor.

Researchers can calculate δ¹⁸O values from foraminifera remains buried at different depths within the seafloor sediments. When these values are plotted as a function of depth on a graph, numerous

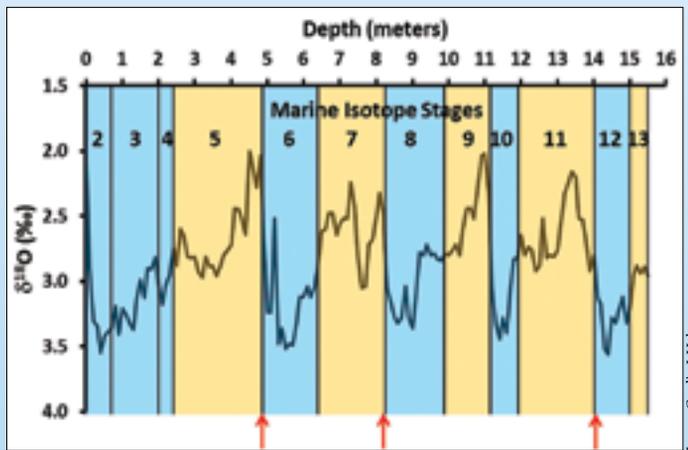


Image Credit: J. Hebert.

Figure 3. δ¹⁸O values from the E49-18 core. The blue boxes indicate marine isotope stages (MIS) that correspond to cold ice ages, while the yellow boxes indicate warmer interglacials. Red arrows indicate the three MIS boundaries that were assigned ages (directly or indirectly) based on the age of the B-M magnetic reversal boundary.

wiggles can be seen. The oxygen isotope ratios from the E49-18 core are shown in Figure 3.

Uniformitarian scientists believe these δ¹⁸O values are global climate indicators. Within seafloor sediments, higher oxygen isotope values are thought to indicate times when the ice sheets were larger (i.e., colder ice ages), and lower oxygen isotope values are thought to indicate times when the ice sheets were smaller (warmer interglacials).

Marine Isotope Stages

Because uniformitarian scientists believe that the δ¹⁸O signal is a *global* climate indicator, they think the same pattern of δ¹⁸O wiggles that appears in one sediment core should also appear in another sediment core, even when the cores are separated by thousands of miles. They recognize this will not always be the case, as seafloor sediments may be disturbed and local “noise” can distort the climate signal. However, they believe that, in principle, prominent δ¹⁸O features, such as pronounced peaks or troughs, in one sediment core should have the same age as the corresponding δ¹⁸O features in a second sediment core. This means they can, in theory, transfer the ages assigned to δ¹⁸O wiggles in one core to the corresponding δ¹⁸O wiggles in a second core.

Uniformitarians have devised a numbering system involving *marine isotope stages* (MIS) to help keep track of prominent features within the δ¹⁸O signal. The 12 different marine isotope stages identified in the E49-18 core are the blue and yellow rectangles in Figure 3. Generally, the boundaries of the marine isotope stages, indicated by the vertical lines, are thought to represent times at which Earth was transitioning from an ice age to an interglacial, or vice versa.

Assigning Ages to the Cores

Before they could perform their analysis, the Pacemaker authors had to assign ages to the sediments within the two Indian Ocean cores. This wasn’t easy, as radioisotope dating methods can’t generally be used on seafloor sediments. Therefore, they needed a way to



indirectly date those sediments, and this is where the B-M magnetic reversal boundary played a critical role.

Magnetic reversals are recorded in volcanic rocks, and uniformitarians use radioisotopic dating methods to assign ages to those rocks. By the mid-1970s, uniformitarian scientists had already used radioisotope dating to assign an age of 700,000 years (700 ka) to volcanic rocks showing the B-M magnetic reversal. Moreover, because seafloor sediments contain magnetic minerals, a reversal of Earth's magnetic field may also be "recorded" within long sediment cores. The B-M magnetic reversal boundary was identified at a depth of 1,200 cm (about 40 feet) within the V28-238 sediment core.

Uniformitarian scientists believed the sediments within the V28-238 core were deposited at a nearly constant rate for hundreds of thousands of years. They assumed the very top of the sediment core had an age of zero, since the uppermost sediments were deposited very recently—presumably yesterday. Likewise, since they believed the reversal occurred 700,000 years ago, the age of the sediments at a depth of 1,200 cm within the V28-238 core should have been 700,000 years.

Then researchers used depth down the core to assign ages to oxygen isotope features at various locations within the V28-238 core. For instance, the sediments halfway between the core top and 1,200 cm would presumably have an age that was itself halfway between 0 years and 700,000 years—that is, 350,000 years (Figure 4). They used this method to assign ages to 21 marine isotope stage boundaries within the V28-238 core and then used, either directly or indirectly, three of those ages in the Pacemaker analysis.

A New Age for the B-M Reversal

However, in the early 1990s, uniformitarian scientists revised the age of the B-M reversal to 780,000 years.¹⁰ This means that, by their own reckoning, the ages they originally assigned to the marine isotope stage boundaries are no longer valid. Incredibly, it seems that uniformitarian scientists never bothered to check whether this revision would adversely affect the Pacemaker results. When one re-per-

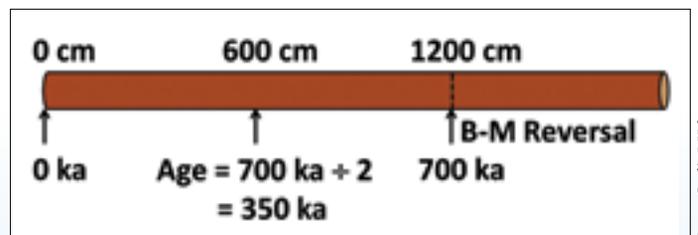


Image Credit: J. Hebert

Figure 4. Illustration of how the Pacemaker authors used an assumed age of 700,000 years (700 ka) for the B-M magnetic reversal boundary to assign ages to isotopic features at different depths within the V28-238 core. These ages were then transferred to the RC11-120 and E49-18 cores.

forms the Pacemaker analysis using the revised age for the B-M reversal boundary, one obtains a bombshell result: the analysis no longer provides convincing support for the Milankovitch theory!

We will continue this discussion next month, but for readers who don't want to wait that long, my results have been published online in three technical papers.^{11,12,13} ✉

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Dr. Hebert is Research Associate at the Institute for Creation Research and earned his Ph.D. in physics from the University of Texas at Dallas.



The Lion's Mane

A male lion in his prime with a grand and bushy mane rarely fails to impress. Ancient peoples carved lions onto stone walls, and prophets spoke of lions in the Scriptures. But of all the cats found around the world, why do only lions grow manes? Lion researcher Bruce Patterson from the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago has made answering these kinds of questions his life's work. His research helped answer why some male African lions have puny manes while others possess majestic ones. Those answers reveal intriguing details about creation and its great Creator.

Hybrids between lions and other cat species show that lion-specific genes express manes. Evolutionary biologists often assume that an animal expresses a given trait to increase its species' survival rate. But they have a hard time figuring out what adaptive advantage a mane provides. Some male lions grow virtually no manes and they thrive just fine, but female lions can occasionally grow a mane, further complicating the origins question. What causes the lion's mane?

It Has to Get Really Chilly

Patterson identified three contributing factors of lion mane development.¹ First, since males develop manes and females typically don't, male hormones play a key role. But male lions with virtually no manes have similar hormone levels, so other factors must contribute. Patterson's work demonstrated the role of temperature in lion mane development. It turns out that lions reared in places with cold winter nights often grow glorious manes, and lions that grow up in warmer, more southerly African climates likely end up with virtually no mane growth.

Patterson wanted to rule out other wild conditions like nutrition

or social ostracism, so he focused on lions in zoos—environments where researchers can control many of these factors. Crossbreeding zoo lions revealed “that up to half the variation in mane length and density (but not color) is attributable to mean January temperature—the colder the temperature, the longer and fuller the mane.”¹

Could external temperature alone somehow tinker with a young lion's mane growth patterns *inside* its body? Temperature cannot do this directly any more than drumming fingertips on a table top can somehow insert words into a computer. You need a keyboard for that, and the keyboard needs to be connected to the



computer, and the computer needs to have software telling what each keystroke means and what to do with it. Likewise for the lion.

How do we know that only certain conditions stimulate traits like mane growth? Well, drumming fingertips on a lion's neck will probably not produce or lengthen a mane, and might instead lead to personal injury. Therefore, lions must have internal programming that specifies a particular low temperature as a mane-hair stimulus. Do lions contain temperature sensors integrated with biological hair growth machinery?

Living Thermometers

Anatomists know about biological thermometers. Mammals use specialized nerve endings that detect and send temperature data to the brain. Brains have instructions for processing the data and sending signals as suitable responses. For example, when the human body's core temperature drops below a certain threshold, it normally responds by sending a message telling muscles to uncontrollably shiver, raise goose bumps, or constrict blood vessels in arms and legs to concentrate warm blood toward the torso.

Putting these pieces together, future research should reveal that young lions detect their body temperature during cold winter nights, and some centralized processing unit outputs suitable responses. It would then send its signal, possibly using hormones, to neck area hair follicles. Each follicle has hair-producing cells arranged like tiny test tubes. They have cellular timers to control hair production. A follicle grows a hair until its timer expires, then it rests. Longer times make longer hairs. Follicle cells in the young lion's body decode signals that specify how to dial up or down their hair growth timer.

If a computer with perfectly integrated hardware and software demonstrates complicated design, then the lion's mane length-adjustment system does too.

No Rain, No Mane

So far, we see that maleness and low temperatures contribute to lion mane hair length. But Patterson and others' research revealed a

third factor—"where there is no rain, there is no mane."¹ He showed that lions of the Greater Tsavo Ecosystem in southern Kenya grow manes in climates with regular rainfall but not in hot and dry places. He wrote, "Correlations of manes with nightly temperatures and rainfall explain why lions in the hotter Kalahari and Sahara deserts can have sizeable manes—there, water is available during summer's heat while winter nights are cold."¹

This means that mane control systems must have software that specifies hydration as an input relevant to mane length, plus biological equipment that detects internal hydration. Biochemists are just now uncovering how these features function. In fruit flies, certain nerve cells express specific proteins—roundworms and rats have similar proteins—that sense hydration levels of internal body fluids just outside the cell.² The neurons transmit those data to the brain to determine whether the organism should eat food or drink water.

These results imply an even more complicated internal network than a simple single input-output for mane development. Instead, features inside the lion collect and interpret various inputs to produce outputs that range from no manes to big bushy manes. If a male lion is living near deserts, can readily access water during hot summers, and lives through cold winters, then it grows a long mane. If a male lion is living near deserts, cannot readily access water, but endures cold winters, it also grows a mane, but not as robust as the former. Other combinations lead to short or very short manes.

What's the Mane Point about God?

What do these lion mane development details reveal about creation and the Creator? Since the same outside conditions of temperature and hydration do not produce manes in other creatures, we know that precise physical and informational structures inside lions detect the factors, sort the data, and react according to script. Engineers build detectors. Intelligent people build machines that sort through specific inputs. Craftsmen build machines that react to specified inputs, like computers that place English characters on a screen in accordance with specified keystrokes. In like manner, an Engineer, intelligent Person, and careful Craftsman fashioned lions to make a range of manes.

Lion manes add to the many evidences in creation that make God's divine nature so "clearly seen," according to Romans 1:20. He is supernatural, not natural. Because *natural* factors like temperature and humidity never integrate hardware and software for a specific purpose like adjusting hair length, a *supernatural* source must have integrated it. Lion mane development clearly reveals our great Creator's divine nature. ✍

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Mr. Thomas is Science Writer at the Institute for Creation Research.



Haeckel's Embryos Born of Evolutionary Imagination

RANDY J. GULIUZZA, P.E., M.D.

"Generations of biology students may have been misled by a famous set of drawings of embryos published 123 years ago by the German biologist Ernst Haeckel."¹ *Science* magazine is referring to Haeckel's sketches of diverse animal embryos first published in 1874 (Figure 1). They report that Haeckel fraudulently minimized major differences between animals at the earliest developmental stages. This fraud is peculiar because it is being "rediscovered" by new research. Remarkably, *Science* notes that some embryologists of Haeckel's day had doubts about the drawing's accuracy, and his peers actually got him to admit he used "artistic license." Yet these drawings (or similar reproductions) have been incorporated into nearly every major biology textbook ever since.² So unlike Pildown Man, *Archaeoraptor*, and other evolutionary frauds that only temporarily duped everyone, Haeckel's blunder misleads to this day.

Thus, *present* biology students are still deceived by a complicated tangle of misleading ideas that clever evolutionists regularly attach to Haeckel's fraudulent drawings.

Misleading Drawings and Concepts Promote Evolution

I didn't escape being misled. In 1975 my sophomore biology textbook referred to a drawing very similar to Haeckel's. Like most students absorbing this information for their first—and possibly only—time, I was somewhat shocked by the incredible fish-like similarity of all early embryos...especially humans. The visual evidence looked undeniable.

These drawings persuasively promoted three powerful evolu-

tionary concepts. First, life evolved from "primitive" animals to complex humans. This "fact" is seen in the supposedly

nonhuman structures that humans possess during development. My textbook commented, "For example, the early human embryo has a well-developed tail and also a series of gill pouches in the pharyngeal region."³

Second, as my textbook went on to say, "Human and fish embryos resemble each other because human beings and fish share a common remote ancestry."³ It presented the remarkable similarity of the embryos in the illustration as strong evidence for a universal common ancestor.

Third, a synopsis of the evolutionary history of life on Earth emerges as scientists map out all stages of embryonic development for every species. Remarkably, the stages of embryonic development for organisms, called *ontogeny*, supposedly reenacted or "recapitulated" their evolutionary history through time, which was called their *phylogeny*. Haeckel's embryos were clearly time-lapse pictures of evolution itself.

Those concepts remain cemented in contemporary evolutionary thinking. During medical school in 1992, my graduate-level human-development textbook contained the same drawings and concepts.⁴

Those concepts remain cemented in contemporary evolutionary thinking. During medical school in 1992, my graduate-level human-development textbook contained the same drawings and concepts.⁴

In 2001, Harvard's Ernst Mayr included Haeckel's exact embryos in his definitive work on evolution. Referencing them, he reaffirmed that only evolution explains why "the embryos of birds and mammals develop gill slits, like fish embryos."⁵ Mayr detailed how he believed embryology demonstrated both universal common ancestry and recapitulation:



Figure 1. Illustration of embryos in Ernst Haeckel's *Anthropogenie*, 1874. The sketches give a false impression that embryos of diverse vertebrates are nearly identical in a "primitive" fish-like form during early development. Many biology textbooks reproduce similar sketches. Research shows broad differences in embryonic shape and developmental pathways.





An early human embryo, for instance, is very similar not only to embryos of other mammals (dog, cow, mouse), but in its early stages even to those of reptiles, amphibians, and fishes...[the] study of the embryonic stages very often shows how a common ancestral stage gradually diverges in different branches of the ancestral tree...[that] in certain features, as in the gill pouches, the mammalian embryo does indeed recapitulate the ancestral condition...[which] this is the same reason why all terrestrial vertebrates (tetrapods) develop gill arches at a certain stage in their ontogeny.⁵

As a student, I implicitly accepted concepts built from Haeckel's drawings as truthful. Belief in evolution seemed reasonable. Unfortunately, I was deceived by the picture's and concept's extreme misrepresentation of reality.

Haeckel's Drawings Are a Spectacular Fraud

Though *Science's* article labeled Haeckel a fraud, it's possible that *Science* could also report misleading beliefs. To be fair, Haeckel was using 19th-century equipment, and he did not hide every embryonic difference. Considering these mitigating factors, Robert Richards of the University of Chicago argues that *intentional* fraud by Haeckel has not been proven. He suggests that Haeckel critic Michael Richardson presents his embryonic research findings in ways that "exaggerates their differences from Haeckel's images." Richards also argues that Haeckel shouldn't be the sole scapegoat for perpetuating this misinformation. He points out how evolutionary embryologists since Haeckel have also advanced his views, so "actually, these recent embryologists ought to have been judged more culpable, given the increase of knowledge, standards, and instrumentation during the last 125 years."⁶

However, Michael Richardson makes the case that the magnitude of the true embryonic dissimilarities concealed by Haeckel indicates intentional fraud to promote evolution. He claims, "Unfortunately, Haeckel was overzealous. When we compared his drawings with real embryos, we found that he showed many details incorrectly. For example, we found variations in embryonic size, external form, and segment number which he did not show."⁷ As he sums up, "It looks like it's turning out to be one of the most famous fakes in biology."⁸

Harvard's Stephen Jay Gould, a zealous evolutionist himself, frames the legacy of Haeckel's behavior:

I do dislike the common phrase "artistic license," especially for its parochially smug connotation (when used by scientists) that creative humanists care little for empirical accuracy. (After all, the best artistic "distortions" record great skill and conscious intent.) But I don't know how else to describe the work of Haeckel. To cut to the quick of this drama: Haeckel had exag-

gerated the similarities by idealizations and omissions. He also, in some cases—in a procedure that can only be called fraudulent—simply copied the same figure over and over again.... Haeckel's drawings, despite their noted inaccuracies, entered into the most impenetrable and permanent of all quasi-scientific literatures: standard student textbooks of biology.... Once ensconced in textbooks, misinformation becomes cocooned and effectively permanent, because, as stated above, textbooks copy from previous texts.⁹

Exposing Haeckel-like textbook drawings as fraudulent is important, but the story of deception is far from over. The concepts attached to them are even more misleading.

Imaginary Gill Slits, Tails, and Biogenic Laws

Looking at the embryos in Figure 2, much of evolutionary embryology stands on the belief that folds in the neck region are truly gill slits and, for the human, that the long stretch of vertebral tissue is honestly a tail. Darwin appealed to that belief when he asserted that embryos "recapitulate" the *adult* stages of their ancestors in evolutionary history. He says, "It is highly probable that with many animals the embryonic or larval stages show us, more or less completely, the condition of the progenitor of the whole group in its adult state."¹⁰ How can Darwin or other evolutionists see things like evolutionary progenitors or gill slits? Only by imagination.

Darwin's invocation of imagination into evolutionary scenarios legitimized plugging colossal data gaps with evolution's look-imagine-"see" methodology. Darwin visualized a bear evolving into a whale, a light-sensitive spot evolving into an eye, and embryos as reenacting their adult evolutionary progenitors.

The history of evolutionism shows how advocates can simply look at bones from Piltdown England and see ape features in a human skull, or look at bones embedded in the soft tissue of a whale's underbelly and see "whale hips," or see "primitive" features in a living fish, or how Richard Dawkins can look at a human retina and plainly

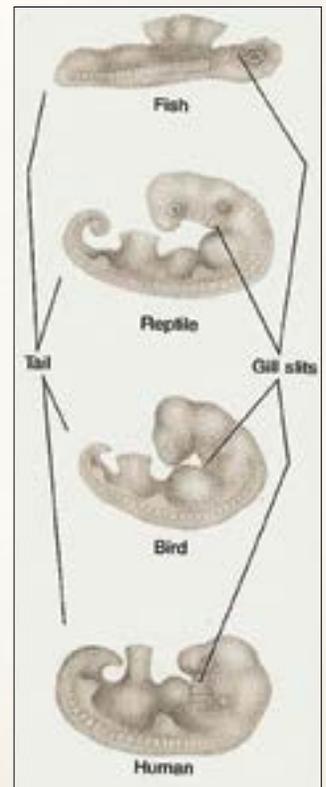


Figure 2. Biology textbook embryo illustration example. The "gill slits" on the reptile, bird, and human as well as the "tail" on human are fictitious. The folds of skin in the neck area never develop into gills and no evolutionary relationship can be inferred from them.

Image credit: Biggs, A., et al. 1998. *Biology: The Dynamics of Life*. New York: Glencoe, 433.

see that it's "wired backwards."¹¹ All of these instances have turned out to be blunders because evolutionists simply project evolutionary ideas onto any given finding, and, via their fertile imaginations, clearly see just what they were looking for.

Shouldn't students be skeptical when they're told that evolutionists can simply look at folds in embryos and see gill slits? The truth is that these are only folds of tissue in the pharynx region of vertebrates during the pharyngula stage of development. For mammals, birds, and reptiles, they *never* develop into a structure that is in any way like fish gills. In humans, for instance, this fold tissue develops into cartilage or bone for the jaw, inner ear, hyoid, and voice box. Muscles for the face, temple, and neck form out of them, as well as the thyroid, parathyroid, and thymus glands. No evidence exists that they ever resembled an adult fish or that throughout human history they lost the ability to form fish-like structures and now form new ones.

Regarding Haeckel's biogenic law of recapitulation, Richardson's work in the 1990s demonstrated that concept was utterly incorrect.¹² His results confirmed what Keith Thompson, president of the Academy of Natural Sciences, declared in 1988: "Surely the biogenic law is as dead as a doornail."¹³

The human "tail" is another misnomer born of evolutionism's look-imagine-"see" methodology. What we actually see through time are early precursors to the spine forming the axial skeleton (skull to coccyx). In a slightly lagging sequence, the rest of the embryo grows from head-to-rump on this foundational framework. So, when evolutionists see a lower portion of the axial skeleton where the embryo is yet to grow, they "see" a transient "tail." In their imaginations, human embryos are recapitulating their reptilian past. But there never is a tail. The embryo grows down to its coccyx, which begins anchoring developing muscles of the pelvic floor.

How much of the evolutionary story makes sense if human embryos never have gill slits or a tail?

What a Tangled Web We Weave

Embarrassed that his exposure of Haeckel's fraud had become a "Creationist cause celebre," Richardson later insisted that "data from embryology are fully consistent with Darwinian evolution."¹⁴ Like Haeckel, Richardson began misleading people by declaring that an organism's "shared developmental program" that showed "that development in different animals is controlled by common genetic mechanisms" fit evolutionary theory. The fact is evolutionists *never* expected common genetic mechanisms: they were "shocked" and "stunned" upon discovery, and only pivoted to embrace relabeled "conserved" mechanisms *after* detection. It was creationists who had first discussed common designs for common features.¹⁵

Students should be aware of evolutionary authority—such as when Jerry Coyne altered his approach to salvage recapitulation. He claims, "Embryonic stages don't look like the adult forms of their ancestors, as Haeckel claimed, but like the *embryonic* forms of ances-

tors."¹⁶ How? Evolution doesn't erase developmental plans; it somehow keeps adding new information. According to Coyne, "It's usually easier to simply tack less dramatic changes onto what is already a robust and basic developmental plan... This 'adding new stuff onto old' principle also explains why the sequence of developmental changes mirrors the sequence of organisms."¹⁶

But Coyne misleads. The "adding new stuff onto old" principle is born of evolution's look-imagine-"see" mechanism. Coyne's scheme has many inconsistencies. He admits the sequence "is neither strict nor inevitable: not every feature of an ancestor's embryo appears in its descendants, nor do all stages of development unfold in strict evolutionary order." He adds that plants "have dispensed with nearly all traces of their ancestry during development."¹⁶ Yet two decades prior, Keith Thomson foresaw Coyne's "add on" principle as absurd since the development of a species "would be almost infinitely long, as the sequence of characteristics of every ancestor, every evolutionary divergence, was rerun... through the adding on of new stages—terminal additions—to the developmental history of the immediate ancestor."¹⁷

Lessons Learned

Watching a single cell assimilate resources and self-develop into an extraordinary creature should evoke a sense of awe for our Creator in any mind not blinded by naturalistic thinking. Ironically, unbridled imagination actually blinds some minds. As biochemist Michael Behe noted regarding Haeckel's embryos, "The story of the embryos is an object lesson in seeing what you want to see."¹⁸ But lest we overlook a beam in our own eye by focusing on others, we should examine whether we promote misleading evolutionary concepts or jargon that might have crept into our thinking unaware, thereby unintentionally helping the wrong side. ☞

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Dr. Guliuzza is ICR's National Representative.



Q: DID GOD USE THE BIG BANG?

A: Many Christians accept the Big Bang story as though science proved it years ago. According to this story, our universe began with all its energy and matter densely packed into a tiny space. Nobody quite knows why—but one day it exploded. Somehow, particles changed direction and self-organized into planets, pulsars, and people. But two key factors demote the Big Bang from science to fairy tale.

First, solid science refutes Big Bang models. That's why the models keep changing and why hundreds of secular physicists signed a public "cosmology statement" explaining that they reject it because it uses too many "fudge factors" to work around its many problems.¹ For example, in order for a Big Bang to conform to the laws of physics, it would have generated equal amounts of matter and antimatter, but the antimatter is almost all missing from the visible universe.²

The incredible sameness (1/100,000) of the inferred temperature of distant space also confounds the Big Bang. Some regions of the early universe were supposedly much hotter than others. The hot spots would emit light that carries heat to the cold spots. How long would it take the hot spots and cold spots to reach the same inferred temperature we see today? Far too long for the Big Bang. Hot and cold spots that lie on opposite sides of the visible universe are simply too far apart to have reached their observed sameness even after 13.8 billion years.³

Nor would a Big Bang make stars or galaxies. Repulsive forces like gas pressure—stars are spheres of compressed gas—and magnetism normally overpower gravity's small attraction between particles. Hence, materials should have thinned, not clumped, as they expanded along with space. Many other fundamental scientific problems plague the Big Bang.⁴ Why insist on such a problem-packed tale?

The second key factor that demotes the Big Bang calls attention to clashing differences between it and what God's Word describes

about the beginning. The Big Bang begins in a fiery and chaotic explosion of space, time, energy, and matter that came from nobody-knows-where, but the Bible begins with water that the eternally existing God commanded into being. Genesis 1:16 says God crafted stars on Day 4 of the creation week, and Psalm 33:6-9 says that this miracle happened in instant obedience to God's command. The Big Bang story occurred over billions of years, but the Bible's beginnings tell of only six days. The Big Bang teaches that the sun and stars formed before Earth, but the Bible affirms just the reverse.

Secular Big Bang cosmologies have no place for a Creator or His miracles, but Genesis lists specific creation week miracles. If God used the Big Bang, then not only did He completely fail to say so in His Great Book, but He actually described a very non-Big Bang sequence. The God of the Bible knows that our everlasting salvation depends on clearly written truth for sinners to understand. He who is not willing that any should perish⁵ would act consistently with what He wrote in Genesis. Otherwise, He would undermine His own trustworthy character and thus his vital message. Science and the Bible both refute the Big Bang, a story that never happened. ✍

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Mr. Thomas is Science Writer at the Institute for Creation Research.

BALANCING CHURCH AND STATE, PART 3: Luther's Stand Revisited



Image credit: Luther at the Diet of Worms, by Anton von Werner, 1877.

Like Dr. Martin Luther's stand of old, a Missouri Synod Lutheran church took a stand, asserting their religious liberty and conscience rights when they invoked the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment—not unlike the apostle Paul's appeal to Caesar.¹ Why? Because meaningful religious freedom for churches and parachurch ministries requires *gatekeeping autonomy*—the power to select religious mission leaders and messengers.

This confrontation also illustrates how the First Amendment is relevant to biblical apologetics, because defending the faith requires vigilant gatekeeping that only a self-governing church body can accomplish. Such autonomy is freedom in action.

As in biblical times, gatekeeping in religious ministry is a serious priority.² During the 1600s, Puritans sought religious liberty in America, “to elect their own ministers and establish their own modes of worship,” free from governmental jurisdiction or restraint.³ And centuries before that, the English confronted similar conflicts.⁴

To promote religious liberty, the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment traces a triangle of intertwined checks and balances: the regulatory rights of Congress, the institutional rights of churches, and the religious liberty rights of individuals.^{1,3}

In 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court applied this intertwined balance to a Christian church-sponsored school in a “first impression” ruling that examined how Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) actions conflicted with a Christian ministry's internal gatekeeping powers—specifically the hiring and firing practices of Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School.^{3,5}

The First Amendment is relevant to biblical apologetics, because defending the faith requires vigilant gatekeeping.

The job termination involved a school-teacher whose narcolepsy impairment was arguably protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), one of Congress' anti-discrimination/anti-retaliation statutes.⁵ But does the ADA (or similar employment laws) trump the First Amendment? By no means. The church school's right to select and manage its own educational ministry personnel prevailed.^{3,5}

So, the EEOC was judicially rebuffed for trying to use Congress-issued powers of “government interference” against “an internal church decision that affects the faith and mission of the church itself”—overreaching the independence of a Lutheran church (and its school) to promote its faith

message.⁶ Thankfully, this rare 9-0 decision recognizes that church/religious organizations have substantial protective exemptions under the First Amendment.

In defending and promoting God's truth, the apostle Paul appealed to Caesar.¹ Likewise, American Christians—especially churches and parachurch ministries—can appeal to the First Amendment. Christians should practice good stewardship of their religious freedoms to resist unjust overreaching by Constitution-dishonoring bureaucrats—because safeguarding religious freedom is part of defending the faith. ✞

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3. *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church & School v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*, 132 S.Ct. 694 (2012) (per curiam opinion by Chief Justice Roberts), applying the First Amendment's Religion Clauses to recognize Christian schoolteachers as covered by the “minister” exemption, as an affirmative defense to EEOC's accusation of illegal discrimination in employment), *reversing* 597 F.3d 769 (6th Cir. 2010), quoting, 132 S.Ct. at 702, Michael W. McConnell, “The Origins and Historical Understanding of Free Exercise of Religion,” 103 *Harvard Law Review*. 1409, 1422 (1990).
4. “Controversy between church and state over religious offices is hardly new. In 1215, the issue was addressed in the very first clause of Magna Carta. There, King John agreed that ‘the English church shall be free, and shall have its rights undiminished and its liberties unimpaird.’” Quoting 132 S.Ct. at 702, quoting Magna Carta.
5. Emphasizing the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's religious mission and message, the U.S. Supreme Court applied the First Amendment to the church school's right to select and manage its own religious-message-promoting personnel. “Requiring a church to accept or retain an unwanted minister, or punishing a church for failing to do so, intrudes upon more than a mere employment decision. Such action interferes with the internal governance of the church, depriving the church of control over the selection of those who will personify its beliefs. By imposing an unwanted minister, the state infringes the Free Exercise Clause, which protects a religious group's right to shape its own faith and mission through its appointments.” Quoting *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran v. EEOC*, 132 S.Ct. at 705-706.
6. “By requiring the Church to accept a minister [whom] it did not want, such an order would have plainly violated the Church's freedom under the Religion Clauses to select its own ministers.” Quoting *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran v. EEOC*, 132 S.Ct. at 709. This dovetails with an earlier labor law ruling in *Holy Trinity Church v. United States*, 143 U.S. 457, 12 S.Ct. 511 (1892), by Justice David Josiah Brewer, a Smyrna native.



Dr. Johnson is Associate Professor of Apologetics and Chief Academic Officer at the Institute for Creation Research.

Thanksgiving HERITAGE

Perhaps no other custom so clearly reveals our nation's original character as Thanksgiving Day. Other nations have similar observances, but the United States of America was the first to nationally recognize its dependence on God with a special day set aside to thank Him for His many blessings.

While the exact date of the first American thanksgiving celebration is debatable, there's no doubt this custom sprang from the shared Judeo-Christian heritage of those early Pilgrims. From early Spanish expeditions



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in the late 1500s to the Popham Colony in Maine in 1607, each group publically declared their thanks to the God of the Bible. Twelve years later, settlers in Virginia declared a day of thanksgiving for their survival on the shores of this then-uncharted land. And in 1623, Governor William Bradford of Plymouth Colony established the most famous of these observances when a bountiful harvest prompted him to proclaim a special day to “render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings.”¹

During our Revolutionary War, the U.S. Continental Congress set aside a day for thanksgiving and praise for the decisive victory at Saratoga in 1777, marking the first time that all American colonies took part in such an event on the same day. The following year at Valley Forge, George Washington declared a special day of thanksgiving upon

receiving news that France would provide aid to our cause. And later, as the young nation's first president, he accepted a congressional petition by declaring Thursday, November 26, 1789, as the first Thanksgiving Day of the United States of America.

Many state and national days of thanksgivings have been proclaimed since that first Thanksgiving declaration. But it was the tireless crusade of Sarah Josepha Hale that led to the establishment of this observance as a national American holiday. Her moving letters so touched the heart of Abraham Lincoln that in 1863—in the midst of the horrors of the Civil War—he urged his countrymen to be mindful of their many blessings that are “the gracious gifts of the Most High God” who ought to be thanked “with one heart and one voice, by the whole American People.”²

Of course, giving thanks to God isn't an exclusively American convention—it was first commanded of Christian believers thousands of years ago. Paul wrote, “In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Notice that the charge was not to give thanks *for* everything—rather, we are to give thanks *in* everything. Good or bad, right or wrong, be thankful *in* everything! Our American forebears knew this well.

So in this season of Thanksgiving, ICR joins all Christians in taking part in

this beautiful tradition rooted in the biblical heritage of our country. ICR is thankful to God for His many blessings upon our ministry and for His faithful supply through believers like you who support the work of our staff to advance the truth of creation. Above all, we are thankful for Christ “who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2). Now that's something to be thankful for! ✉

This was adapted from the November 2012 *Acts & Facts* article, “The Roots of Thanksgiving.”

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1. Governor William Bradford's Thanksgiving Proclamation, Plymouth Plantation, 1623.
2. Proclamation of Thanksgiving, Abraham Lincoln, 1863.

Mr. Morris is Director of Donor Relations at the Institute for Creation Research.



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Discovery Center



We just want to say a huge thank you for taking on this profoundly important task of establishing a real scientific center which points to our loving Creator who intelligently designed all things! We are a homeschool family who loves reading the scientific and biblical resources you at ICR have made available! Our prayer is that these resources will be made available for our posterity so that everyone will know about the truth of God's creation. Though it was not very much, we donated today by faith that God would bless this project and bring it to completion for the entire world to see!

— S. G.

Evolutionary Blunders

One of the finest examples of the unfettered imagination of evolutionists is Lucy. From a single fossil bone they have determined the sex, size, diet, clothing, social habits, and habitat of Lucy. But recently they also discovered (drumroll please) how Lucy died! "She fell from a tree!" I am waiting to hear if she fell because she was not evolved enough to handle her new tree habitat, or so evolved she could no longer handle it.



— A. B.

New ICR reviews at Great Nonprofits (GNP)

ICR came to the Dallas Convention Center in 1996. I had received a brochure at church asking questions like: What really happened to the dinosaurs? What about carbon dating? Was there really an Ice Age? Where did Cain get his wife? Was there a worldwide flood? Are there dinosaurs in the Bible? As the scientists were giving answers, I was writing as fast as I could. When the questions were answered scientifically and in full support of the Scriptures, my heart was so full of joy and excitement that I have never doubted any part of the Bible since. I can now say that I have led others to the Lord based solely on the solid foundation of the book of Genesis and the authority of all Scripture.

— H. D.

Seven years ago, I was at a home Bible study on creation; the host handed out copies of ICR's information on creation studies. This was a mind opener, I could not get enough and knew this was the door I wanted to go through and explore. Thank you for all your contributions to my spiritual growth, *Days of Praise, Acts & Facts*, and your huge archives on Bible and science studies.

— B.

Comments about ICR event at Denton Bible Church

That message was so amazing, we went back home, got our kids, and stayed again through the second service!

— S. W. W.



It was FANTASTIC!!! Thanks for all the work it took to bring us this amazing truth.

— K. H. M.

f ICR Facebook comments about DBC Lisle LIVE video | August 30, 2016

ICR does a great job, God bless them. Please support them if you are able.

— T. W.

This is great. Hello from Perth, Western Australia.

— T. R.

Awesome! Love Dr. Lisle! Hello from Kingston, Ontario, Canada!

— N. R.

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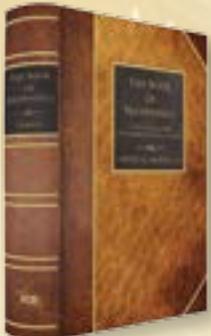
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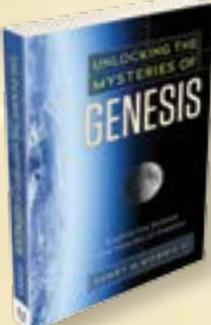
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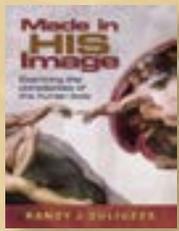
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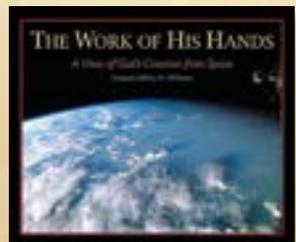
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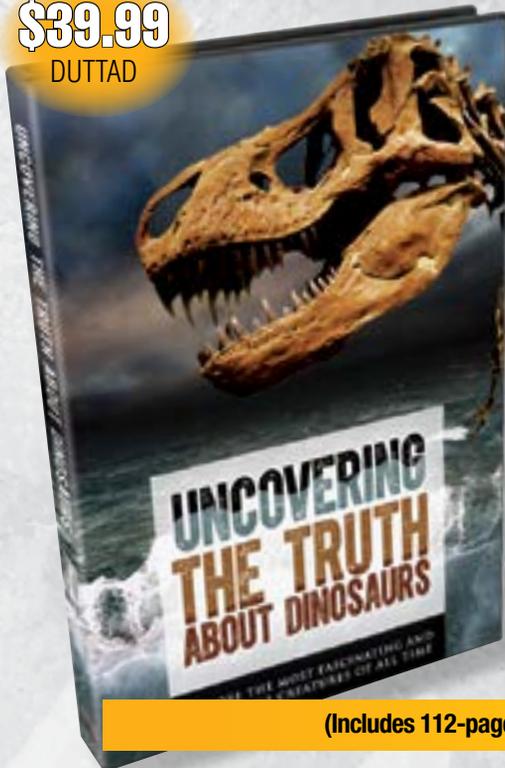
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