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Henry M. Morris IV
Lift Up Your Eyes

It’s hard to think about sowing and reaping in the middle of winter, but right now is the perfect time to stop and take stock. When you curl up by the fireplace and while the snow blankets the fields, it’s time to plan for next fall’s harvest and prepare for springtime storms and brutal summer heat. Though it’s cold and sometimes dark, this season between harvesting and planting offers rest from hard labor, an opportunity to evaluate life, and a time to renew our focus before we begin the next season of the work God has given us to do.

Many of us take time in January to reflect over the past year—to consider our goals and direction, what changes to make, ways to simplify our households and streamline activities, how to strengthen our commitments, and how to sharpen our focus. In this month’s feature article, Dr. Henry Morris III talks about “the mindset of the Christian laborer” and how we are challenged to “do business” until the Lord returns (“Sowing and Reaping,” page 5). We’re reminded of the urgency of our work: “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest?’ Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” (John 4:35).

Now is the time to “lift up your eyes and look.” Jesus challenged His followers to see the needs of those around them now, not four months from now. He urged them to see the needs of a fallen culture and to share the truths of God’s Word with the people in their “white fields.” Our Lord wants us to feel the same urgency for those around us today. Do they know Christ? Have we become complacent about the souls of the people in our lives?

He wants us not only to see the harvest, but ultimately to go through life with our eyes on Him. Jesus’ lesson to His disciples began with the words “lift up your eyes.” It’s like a mother saying to her toddler “Now, look at me…” before she gives instructions. Or a teacher who says “All eyes up here, please” before she assigns homework. Likewise, with us, God knows He has to get our full attention before He gives the instruction to “look.” The cares of the world can keep our eyes distracted by issues that don’t matter.

He is our example, the One 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). He pushed through the challenges and trials, staying focused on the reward—and so should we. We depend on Him for our daily needs, our moment-by-moment direction, and help with our work. We trust Him with the results of our service and rely on Him with every step (Psalm 123:2).

Any day is a good time to renew the commitment to continue “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2). As we evaluate where we are and where we’re going, let’s lift up our eyes anew to see a harvest ripe for reaping, labor faithfully in the work we’ve been given, and fix our gaze on Him.

Jayme Durant
Executive Editor
Two repeated illustrations throughout the New Testament speak to the mindset of the Christian laborer. The military picture is found frequently in the epistles and uses some of the warlike examples from the Old Testament. The Lord Jesus, however, more often uses stories or applications from the agricultural lifestyle. He gave the above classic illustration to His apostles after He spoke with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:7-37).

Even the more businesslike parables of the talents and the minas use the generic servants of a nobleman or prince who instructs them to “do business” until he returns (Luke 19:13). What is not said, but would be well known by the population of Jesus’ day, is that the wealth of the nobleman came from land ownership and farming or ranching that land. Yes, there were manufacturing

“Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.”

(John 4:35-36)
businessmen during that era (like Paul, who made tents), but the bulk of the wealth came through working the land.

Thus the emphasis on agricultural illustrations.

Common Reward

One of the points made by our Lord Jesus was that we will share in the “profits” of the Kingdom. In the illustration given to the apostles at the Samaritan well, the Lord noted that there were different skills and different equipment necessary to bring the farming enterprise to fruition. Sowing took place a long time before reaping, yet both were necessary to pay the wages of both sets of laborers. Paul recognized the importance of the middle process when he noted that the laborer who waters is one with the person who plants (1 Corinthians 3:8-9). All of the different processes are necessary to produce the fruit that provides the profit that pays the wages of everyone.

Obviously, the Lord was using an earthly illustration to make clear an eternal and spiritual point. The sowing of the “seed” of the Word of God (Luke 8:11) through the Kingdom of God is a vast process (Acts 1:8) and cannot be accomplished by one person, one church, or one support group (1 Corinthians 12:21-22). Many different churches and organizations will be involved in making disciples “to the end of the earth,” and the labor involved to do that must be underwritten by those in the Kingdom (Malachi 3:10; 2 Corinthians 9:6; Hebrews 6:10).

Investment Obligations

I grew up in a family that tithed their income. My father, ICR’s founder, practiced double tithing—giving a tenth of his gross income to his church and a tenth to Christian organizations that met the biblical criterion of “seeking the Kingdom first” (Matthew 6:33). As you might suspect, the Institute for Creation Research was a beneficiary of a significant portion of that second tithe. And when he provided for his family through his will, one of the “children” was ICR. The blessings followed as God opened the “windows of heaven” (Malachi 3:10), and his family and ministry “reaped bountifully” (2 Corinthians 9:6) well beyond mere financial return into the true riches of eternal impact on the souls of men.

Although some have argued that the New Testament does not obligate a Christian to tithe, it does seem strange that the Lord Jesus would commend the self-righteous Pharisees for their tithing practices—even though they had left undone the more important matters of “justice, mercy, and faith” (Matthew 23:23). And the apostle Paul encouraged a proportionate giving by members of the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 16:2), with the only proportion ever taught in the Scriptures being the tithe. Many have concluded that the tithe is only the starting place for our Kingdom investment.

However one believes about giving a tenth of their income to the Lord’s work, there should not be any argument about the responsibility to give. Whatever you give should begin with your church. Yes, it is incumbent on fathers to provide for their families, but part of faithful godliness is ensuring that a regular portion of the prospering that God permits is invested in the matters of the King—His church.

Kingdom Agriculture

Using the plentiful illustrations of the agricultural lifestyle, the reaping at the harvest comes after long hours of sowing and watering (amid months of careful attention to the health of the crop). James encouraged his readers to follow the example of “how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain” (James 5:7). The Kingdom “farmer” must always have the eternal perspective in view.

The famous parable of the sower recorded in each of the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) gives us a very clear picture of how God sees our work as Kingdom farmers sowing the “seed” of God’s Word (Luke 8:11). The sowing process spreads the biblical message wherever
possible, but some seed falls on the wayside where “the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts” (Luke 8:12). Other efforts fall among rocky soil, generating a quick response from those who hear, but “these have no root” and after a season of joy become withered spiritually “and in time of temptation fall away” (Luke 8:13).

There seems to be some success when the seed is sown among thorns, but as the seeds begin to sprout and start to mature, they are “choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity” (Luke 8:14). But ultimately, there are some who genuinely respond to the seed that falls on “good ground...[and] having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15). And as Matthew’s gospel records, they “yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty” (Matthew 13:8).

ICR’s Sowing and Your Watering during 2016

Coming full circle to the principle that Jesus established with His apostles after His witness to the Samaritan woman, ICR has been “sowing” among several fields, and you have been “watering” our efforts with your prayers and financial support. Here’s a quick overview of our “reaping” together.

**Research Projects**

This is the heart of ICR’s sowing. Our science team is involved in three major research areas: astronomy and physics, biology and genomics, and geology. Each of these disciplines is focused on unanswered questions that will add more substance to the evidence for the accuracy and authenticity of the Scriptures. As progress is made, our scientists prepare articles, technical papers, and presentation materials that can be disseminated through our international outreach efforts.

**Public Communications**

Most of you are familiar with the monthly *Acts & Facts* and quarterly *Days of Praise*. These publications are read by nearly 500,000 people. In addition to these publications, our Communications staff produced five new books, several *That’s a Fact* videos, 65 new radio programs, weekly creation science updates and 15 new DVDs, along with the third of our professional teaching video sets, *Uncovering the Truth about Dinosaurs*. ICR’s website readership and social media outreach are growing each day.

**Seminar Outreach**

ICR was in 100 different venues during 2016, speaking to well over 100,000 people and either selling or giving away nearly 35,000 books and DVDs. Some events were single presentations, usually in church pulpits, academic chapels, or classrooms across the nation. Many were two- or three-day seminars in larger churches or regional auditoriums where we had the privilege of providing more intense training and exposure to the fruit of our current research.

**Ready for 2017**

As readers of *Acts & Facts* know, ICR is preparing to start construction on the ICR Discovery Center for Science and Earth History. The property is secured, the plans have been designed, and the permits obtained. Much of the funding has either been raised or already spent on the property, plans, and artifacts that will be part of the new center. The Lord has encouraged a faithful donor to provide a $4 million matching gift that, when fulfilled, will enable us to begin construction.

Almost everything is in place. All of our “farmers” are working diligently to sow as much of the seed as we are able. You who water and co-labor with us are faithful to support and undergird us with your gifts and your prayers. The work is not yet done—indeed, it must continue until the Lord returns. We are all under “contract” to “do business till I come” (Luke 19:13).

Dr. Morris is Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for Creation Research.
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Secular scientists claim the Hawaiian Islands are millions of years old based primarily on radioisotope dating. Yet, the landforms and measured erosion rates tell a far different story—a story that better matches the Bible.

The Hawaiian Islands are a chain of islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean on the Pacific plate (Figure 1). The conventional explanation is they formed as a result of volcanic activity as the plate passed over a “hot spot” in the mantle at a rate of inches per year (Figure 2). As the islands moved off the hot spot and their volcanoes became inactive, they left a trail of progressively older volcanic islands in the northwesterly direction of plate motion (Figure 1).

In contrast, creation geologists attribute the formation of the islands to recent activity during the Flood. Geophysicist John Baumgardner demonstrated that the plates would have moved much more quickly in the Flood—at rates of several yards per second—creating millions of years. Yet, we still see lava tubes, steep valleys, and dramatic waterfalls on all the islands.

We also observe extensive layers of lava on every island. Stacked lava layers are evidence of rapid volcanic deposition, placing layer upon layer, with no evidence of time or erosion between any flow.

But the strongest evidence for a youthful Hawaii comes from the measured erosion rates along the coastlines of the islands. Scientists studying photographs and maps since 1900 found that most beaches on Kaua‘i, O‘ahu, and Maui experience erosion averaging 0.4 feet/year, or about five inches per year. United States Geological Survey Director Marcia McNutt explains:

The inevitable fate of the Hawaiian Islands millions of years into the future is seen to the northwest in the spires of French Frigate Shoals and the remnants of other once mighty islands, ancestors of today’s Hawaii, but now sunken beneath the sea through the forces of waves, rivers, and the slow subsidence of the seafloor.

This erosion process would completely destroy the islands in only a few hundred thousand years. Doing the math, we get 76 miles of erosion in only one million years (at 0.4 ft/yr), which would completely eliminate the islands—except possibly the Big Island where volcanism is still occurring since it currently sits on the hot spot. If the islands are really millions of years old, they should have eroded beneath the sea long ago.

Secular science cannot claim there was not an ocean around the islands to prevent erosion in the past. Nor can they claim renewed uplift and mountain building as a rescuing device to preserve the islands. As each of the islands move off the hot spot (Figure 2), they cool, sink, and rapidly erode away in just thousands of years. Once off the hot spot, there is simply no new lava source to keep them “afloat.”

However, if they are only around 4,500 years old, then the islands have experienced about a third of a mile of erosion. And that is precisely what we observe. The Hawaiian Islands really are young.

The rocks and landforms of Hawaii also tell a different story from the secular version. Lava tubes and waterfalls, common on all the islands, are evidence of youth. Lava tubes form as natural conduits to transport molten lava, but today they are merely hollow, cave-like “pipes.” These tubes cannot exist for millions of years without collapsing. Steep valleys, steps, and waterfalls should have long eroded away, forming a gentle, subdued landscape over the course of millions of years. Yet, we still see lava tubes, steep valleys, and dramatic waterfalls on all the islands.

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**References**


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

Uniformitarian scientists, who ignore the Bible’s eyewitness accounts of recent creation and the Genesis Flood, claim that dozens of ice ages have occurred over the last few million years. The Milankovitch, or astronomical, theory is their main explanation for these purported ice ages. In this view, ice ages are triggered by subtle changes in the seasonal and latitudinal distribution of sunlight. These changes in turn are caused by slow changes in Earth’s orbital and rotational motions. The Milankovitch theory is today widely accepted largely because of an important paper titled “Variations in the Earth’s Orbit: Pacemaker of the Ice Ages” that was published 40 years ago last month.¹

The Pacemaker paper presented an argument based on two Indian Ocean deep-sea cores that the climate was undergoing cycles of roughly
100, 42, and 23 thousand years in length. Because these are very close to the cycle lengths that Earth's orbital and rotational motions would exhibit in an ancient solar system, the Pacemaker paper was seen as providing strong evidence for the astronomical theory.

The Pacemaker authors used a technique called spectral analysis to confirm the astronomical theory. Geophysicist Gordon J. MacDonald and physicist Richard A. Muller wrote:

In fact, the evidence for the role of astronomy [in climate variation] comes almost exclusively from spectral analysis. The seminal paper was published in 1976, titled, “Variations of [sic] the earth's orbit: pacemaker of the ice ages” (Hays et al., 1976).

For this reason, the Pacemaker paper played an extremely important role in uniformitarian thinking. However, the Pacemaker paper has been invalid—even by uniformitarian reckoning—for nearly 25 years. I encourage readers who may have missed the first two articles in this series, which explain why the paper is invalid, to read them online at ICR.org.

**Milankovitch Theory and Dating Methods**

Does other strong evidence for the theory exist? I suspect not, for reasons discussed below. But if evidence for the Milankovitch theory is weak, then the implications for uniformitarian dating methods are potentially devastating—and that's no hype.

Uniformitarians generally assume the astronomical theory to be correct and use it to assign ages to seafloor sediment cores through a technique called orbital tuning. They then use the ages assigned to the seafloor sediments to date the deep ice cores of Greenland and Antarctica, as well as other sediment cores. For instance, uniformitarian scientists used multiple ice and deep-sea cores to assign ages to one particular deep-sea core near New Zealand (the A in Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Uniformitarians use ages assigned to sediment cores and ice cores to assign ages to other sediment and ice cores. These ages often come from the Milankovitch theory.](image)

But the dates for those other cores were ultimately tied back to the Milankovitch theory.

Incredibly, uniformitarians even use the astronomical theory to calibrate the argon-argon radioisotope dating method!

If the astronomical theory is wrong, then orbital tuning is nothing but circular reasoning, and all these age assignments are suspect—even for uniformitarians who believe in millions of years.

**Milankovitch Theory and Climate Change**

The astronomical theory is also contributing to climate change alarmism. Uniformitarian scientists believe the Milankovitch theory to be correct, but they also recognize that the subtle changes in sunlight caused by Earth's orbital motions are too small, in and of themselves, to be the sole cause of an ice age. For this reason, many uniformitarian climate scientists have postulated “feedback mechanisms” to amplify these small variations in sunlight. For this reason, they have concluded that our climate is unstable. Creation researcher
and atmospheric scientist Larry Vardiman noted:

A major result of this need for feedback mechanisms has been the development of a perspective that the earth’s climate system is extremely sensitive to minor disturbances. A relatively minor perturbation could initiate a non-linear response which might lead to another “Ice Age” or “Greenhouse.” Because of the fear that a small perturbation might lead to serious consequences, radical environmental policies on the release of smoke, chemicals, and other pollutants and the cutting of trees have been imposed by international agencies and some countries. If the basis for the Astronomical Theory is wrong, many of the more radical environmental efforts may be unjustified.8

The Milankovitch theory is also contributing to concern over future rising of sea levels. Respected uniformitarian oceanographer Wolfgang Berger asked the question:

Just when can we expect to see a rapid rise of sea level, ten times higher than the present values of a few millimeters per year? We do not know. All we can say, from experience with the many millennia of the ice-age records in the deep sea, is that once melting starts, it stimulates further melting for centuries. Deglaciation keeps going once begun in earnest: a great example of the dilemma of the sorcerer’s apprentice.9

What Berger is calling “experience” is really just a Milankovitch interpretation of the seafloor sediment data. But if the Milankovitch theory is wrong, then this argument for rapid sea level rise is invalid. This is a good example of how wrong ideas about our origins can have serious negative consequences in the present.

The Age Revision That Caused All the Trouble

The original Pacemaker paper used age estimates from a 1973 paper by Nicholas Shackleton and Neil Opdyke.10 This 1973 paper assumed that the Brunhes-Matuyama (B-M) magnetic reversal, the most recent reversal of Earth’s magnetic field, occurred 700,000 years (700 ka) ago. The date for the reversal was obtained from the potassium-argon (K-Ar) radioisotope dating method. However, in 1979, uniformitarians revised the age of the B-M reversal boundary upward to 730 ka, based on new data and revised values of the K-Ar dating constants.11

In 1990, Nicholas Shackleton and others, after orbitally tuning chemical wiggles within a Galápagos deep-sea core, recommended that the age of the B-M reversal be increased to 780,000 years.12 Another scientist, F. J. Hilgen, after attempting to orbitally tune features within a number of Mediterranean cores, made a similar recommendation.13 Therefore, the radioisotope dates were overruled and the age of the B-M reversal became 780 ka. Although this revised date was soon “confirmed” by radioisotope dating, there appears to have been little, if any, real justification for this higher age estimate at the time.14

The Dates Don’t All Agree

Uniformitarians were more than happy to use an age of 700 ka for the B-M reversal boundary, along with chemical wiggles from two Indian Ocean cores, to convince the world that the Milankovitch theory was correct. But they were unable to orbitally tune wiggles within other sediment cores unless they changed the age of the B-M reversal to 780 ka.

This is ridiculous. The B-M reversal boundary can only have one true age—not two! If uniformitarian scientists really believe that the correct age for the reversal is 780 ka, then logically they should have gone back and redone the Pacemaker analysis, as I did, taking this new age estimate into account.

Other Evidence for the Theory?

Milankovitch proponents might argue there is still strong evidence for the theory apart from the Pacemaker results. After all, many, many scientific papers dealing with the astronomical theory have been published. This is true, but most of these papers simply assume the theory is true and then attempt to draw conclusions from that assumption. There are at least four reasons to suspect that additional hard evidence for the theory is weak at best.

First, confirming the astronomical theory, even if it were correct, is not easy. One needs long, undisturbed sediment cores with the right properties for such an analysis, and such cores are not necessarily numerous. The Pacemaker authors claimed that, at the time, only two such deep-sea cores, out of several hundred, had the right properties for such an analysis.1
Second, Wolfgang Berger made an eye-opening observation regarding what he considers to be the “strongest argument yet” for the Milankovitch theory:

In the end, the correct timescale [for the marine sediment cores] was a matter of co-ordinating isotope stratigraphy with the results from palaeomagnetism, applying the date found in basalt layers for the MatuyamaBrunhes boundary to cores with known magnetic stratigraphy (as in Shackleton & Opdyke 1973). The agreement of dating by that method and by Milankovitch tuning (urged by Shackleton et al. 1990) is the strongest argument yet for the correctness of Milankovitch theory.15

As already noted, the Pacemaker authors used the results from the 1973 Shackleton and Opdyke paper to help construct the timescales for the two sediment cores in their analysis. But Shackleton and Opdyke assumed an age of 700 ka for the B-M reversal boundary. The 1990 paper by Shackleton et al. is the paper that recommended revising the age of the B-M reversal to 780 ka. Those two papers require two completely different ages for the B-M reversal boundary.16 If the “strongest argument yet” for the Milankovitch theory requires the most recent reversal of the Earth's magnetic field to have two different ages, then it is safe to say that the theory is in serious trouble.

This is itself a third reason to suspect that evidence for the theory is weak. If one needs to arbitrarily use different ages for the same magnetic reversal to reconcile all the data with the theory (in other words, “fudging”), why should anyone take the theory seriously?

Fourth, the original Pacemaker results imply a “linear” climate response, at least for the 41,000 and 23,000-year astronomical cycles.1 This means that the output frequencies of the climate response are equal to the input frequencies of the astronomical cycles. However, one could also assume that the climate responds in a “nonlinear” way so that the frequencies of the climate cycles are different from those of the orbital cycles. In fact, some uniformitarian scientists have argued for nonlinear versions of the astronomical theory.18,19 Obviously, they are having difficulty getting all the data to fit a single version of the theory and the details of the theory have not yet been nailed down. But how is one supposed to test a theory whose details are still “fuzzy”?

Conclusion

The “Pacemaker of the Ice Ages” paper has long been an iconic argument for the Milankovitch theory. Furthermore, because the astronomical theory assumes millions of years of Earth history, this well-known paper has also long been seen as supporting an old earth. However, it has been invalid for a quarter century, and other possible evidence for the astronomical theory seems weak at best. Therefore, Christians who believe the Bible’s depiction of a recent creation and a young earth should be encouraged by these results, as they are very damaging to uniformitarian dating methods. Likewise, the results give us yet another reason to question the current alarmism over the issue of climate change.

References

16. Published uncertainties in radioisotope ages for the B-M reversal boundary are roughly 10 ka—much too small to account for the apparent 80,000-year age difference.
17. Note that the frequency of a cycle is just the reciprocal of the length, or period: frequency = 1 / period.

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.
If fossils really are millions of years old, then the Bible has problems. It would place death before sin—undermining the work of Christ on the cross. It would also fictionalize the Bible’s timeline—undermining confidence in scriptural authority and accuracy. However, if fossils were deposited only thousands of years ago, then the biblical record stands firm. Fortunately, secular researchers have discovered timers that show fossils formed only thousands of years ago, as expected from God’s Word.

1. Numerous fossils preserve original animal pigments. No decay experiment as much as hints that these admittedly hardy biochemicals could last even one million years. Some fossil pigments are still so vibrant that paleontologists used them to reconstruct colorful bird-feather patterns and dinosaur skin shades. Another team drew a picture of a Jurassic squid using its own preserved ink.

2. A tough biomolecule called chitin (KITE-in) makes up scorpion shells, insect shells, fungi, and cuttlefish. If chitin could last virtually indefinitely, then ocean floors would be filled with discarded krill shells. Ant and other arthropod carcasses would litter land surfaces around the world. A German-led research team recently identified chitin in a Cambrian sponge, and a separate team found fossilized, flexible chitin protein from tube worms found in a deep-rock core sample.

3. Some rare fossils even preserve hemoglobin remnants, for example in a mosasaur from Kansas and bright red tissue deep inside a T. rex leg bone from Montana. Hemoglobin contains iron, which slows microbe growth, helping explain why microbes have not yet eaten the protein. But even without microbes around, hemoglobin chemically decays in fewer than one million years.
4. Somewhat like hemoglobin, ovalbumin protein can trap heavy metals. Possibly this helps it survive for thousands of years, but like all highly organized structures, ovalbumin should decay into tiny, disorganized chemicals (like carbon dioxide) in far fewer than a million years. What’s it doing in dinosaur eggs?  

5. The journal Nature published the first images of dinosaur bone collagen fibrils a half-century ago in 1966. Since then, many other techniques confirmed collagen in unmineralized fossil bones and skin. Lab bench decay experiments repeatedly confirm that bone collagen, one of the most durable materials in the body, does not last even one million years at normal outdoor temperatures.

6. Microbes like bacteria do not make or contain pigments, chitin, hemoglobin, ovalbumin, or collagen, so to claim that bacteria somehow brought them into fossils ignores reality. And just in case those biochemicals aren’t enough to mystify secular thinking, some fossils contain whole tissues. Researchers used weak acid to remove bone mineral and expose a hand-size sheet of flexible osteoid tissue inside a Triceratops horn, and another team found intact blood vessels in hadrosaur and other bones.

These rare fossils yield only small amounts of partly degraded proteins or tissues. Protein decay studies model the best possible preservation scenarios, yet they established protein shelf life at fewer than about one million years or somewhat longer if held in a deep freeze. If these fossils formed 70 to 500 million years ago according to secular age assignments, then why do they contain still-ticking timers that expire before one million years? Removing fossils’ secular age assignments explains these discoveries and fits the Bible’s record of a recent creation.

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1. "But here is the problem. If death existed before Adam, then death is not the penalty for sin. How, then, did Christ’s death pay the penalty for our sin? If death is not tied to Adam’s sin, then life is not tied to Christ’s death and resurrection, and the Christian faith is all in vain.” Morris, J. D. Death before Sin? Days of Praise. Posted on ICR.org December 22, 2012, accessed November 1, 2016.


Mr. Thomas is Science Writer at the Institute for Creation Research.
Plants’ amazing sensor systems enable them to adapt in response to multiple environmental cues. Since plants can’t get up and move around, they have to grow, develop, and thrive where they are.

One of the key factors in a plant’s life cycle is processing sunlight in the form of duration (day length), light quality (wavelength), and light intensity. All of these interconnected light-related factors are monitored within the plant’s leaf cells by a family of sensor proteins called phytochromes. When the red to far-red region of the visible light spectrum changes during the day, or because of shade from neighboring plants, the conformation (3-D shape) of the phytochrome proteins becomes altered and they act like genetic switches. They turn on and off a whole host of genes that modify plant metabolism, physiology, growth, and development. Phytochromes also help set the plant’s circadian rhythm (day/night clock) in addition to telling the plant what time of year it is, when it should flower and make seeds, or go dormant for the winter.

Scientists have studied the roles of plant phytochrome sensors in relation to light regulation since the 1960s, but they’ve been baffled about how plants sense and regulate responses to temperature. In addition to light, temperature is a primary environmental variable that must be properly monitored and responded to for healthy plant growth, development, and physiology. The main problem in the scientific discovery process in isolating a temperature detector was that scientists never envisioned that a sensor such as a phytochrome could do anything but detect and respond to light—an already incredibly complex feat.

Now, through a series of serendipitous discoveries while studying plants with phytochrome mutants under different temperature regimes, researchers have unexpectedly uncovered an amazing example of complex engineered systems far beyond human reasoning and ingenuity. Not only are phytochromes able to detect different wavelengths of red to far-red light and then directly alter gene expression and a myriad of plant processes, they can sense and respond to temperature as well! This temperature-sensing capacity and seamless integration with the light sensory function is so finely tuned that it enables the plant to make a wide variety of adjustments in growth and development both during the night and during photosynthesis in daylight.

Evolutionary scientists did not predict such elaborate sensory integration in a single protein system. Such an amazing piece of engineering is way beyond human capability and speaks clearly that life was engineered by an omnipotent Creator.

References

Dr. Tomkins is Director of Life Sciences at the Institute for Creation Research and earned his Ph.D. in genetics from Clemson University.

Evolutionary scientists did not predict such elaborate sensory integration in a single protein system.
“So easy, a caveman could do it” is the witty slogan of a company hoping to lure customers to switch car insurance. The humorous catch to the commercial was the brutish-looking, yet endearing, Neanderthals among us who found the slogan stereotyping them as dimwits to be “not cool” or “hurtful.” The fact that viewers could readily spot the standard view of Neanderthals shows how pervasive it is and how it dominates the popular perception.

Evolutionary beliefs—not known facts about Neanderthals—forced this misleading subhumanized caricature of them. Evolutionary beliefs conjured up the ape-like, hairy, club-wielding, mentally underdeveloped savage because it fit their expectations of a missing link between an ape-like ancestor and humans, as seen in Figure 1. Rather than liberating scientific research, for decades this major evolutionary blunder has sidetracked an accurate understanding of Neanderthals.

Imagining More Than Flesh on Neanderthal Bones

Charles Darwin hurt the scientific method when he injected the look-imagine-see methodology into the process of explaining the diversity of life on Earth. This method of interpreting findings has led to one evolutionary blunder after another in which evolutionists develop a clear mental picture of just exactly what they are looking for...even though it actually does not exist.

The mental projections of ape-like features onto Neanderthal bones is akin to the envisioned ape-like features of the human skull cap of Piltdown man.

Neanderthals were named after the limestone cave of the Neander Valley near Dusseldorf, Germany, where their first bones were discovered in 1856. Evolutionary ideas biased the interpretation of these bones just as these same ideas have prejudiced the understanding of different people groups found worldwide. Over 100 years later, the bestselling Life Nature Library series explained to lay audiences Neanderthals’ place in human evolution:

Darwin heard about these remarkable bones, yet never investigated them, but Huxley undertook a thorough study of the unprecedented skull. In the condition in which it was discovered, the cranium could hold 63 cubic inches of water; complete, it would have contained 75 cubic inches, or as much as the skulls of living primitive tribesmen.

In the evolutionary spectrum of ape to modern human as reflected in brain size, “primitive tribesmen” were expected to fall somewhere in between.

Readers of this series in eight languages and in 90 countries were treated to more imagination than just the brain size of...
“primitive” tribesmen. Sir Julian Huxley was also able to clearly visualize ape-like features in the skull of this supposed transition from ape to human:

“Under whatever aspect we view this cranium,” wrote Huxley in 1863, in his book Zoological Evidence as to Man’s Place in Nature, “whether we regard its vertical depression, the enormous thickness of the supraciliary ridges, its sloping occiput, or its long and straight squamosal suture, we meet with apelike characteristics, stamping it as the most pithecoid [ape-like] of human crania yet discovered.” Neanderthal man, Huxley concluded, was more nearly allied to the higher apes than the latter are to the lower apes, but for all of that he was a man.3

The view in scientific literature that Neanderthals fit into the evolutionary scheme as a type of transitional creature was reflected in the popular literature. Movies that today would seem like a spoof or a comedy, like the one advertised in Figure 2, shaped the public perception of Neanderthals and other “cavemen.”

Evolutionary Depictions of Neanderthals Were Stunningly Wrong

In the last decade an astounding flood of documentation has poured in showing how Neanderthals are far more human than evolutionary stories have depicted. Views about diminished mental capacity were especially overturned. Infant brain development for Neanderthals was believed to follow “an ancestral mode of brain development, similar to that of our closest living relatives, the chimpanzees. Modern humans, by contrast, were suggested to follow a uniquely derived mode of brain development just after birth,” but “the new data indicate that Neanderthals followed largely similar modes of endocranial development to modern humans. These findings challenge the notion that human brain and cognitive development after birth is uniquely derived.”

The full sequencing of Neanderthal DNA showed it was at least 99.7% like that of living humans.8 Neanderthals and other humans mated and exchanged DNA that “in some places, such as the DNA related to the skin, the genetic instructions are as much as 70 percent Neanderthal and in other places there’s virtually nothing from the species that’s often portrayed as brutish cavemen.” Therefore, the “next time you call someone a Neanderthal, better look in a mirror.”10

Usually creatures, especially humans, mate only with others that they recognize as the same species. The fact of Neanderthals mating with people like us reveals, as a science reporter states, that “for a long time, the field of human evolution has imagined a fictional world where distinct human groups separated from one another and then remained distinct for long periods of time,” Siepel [a Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory geneticist said] . . . “And we’re just finding out on multiple time scales that’s just not true.”11

The evidence of Neanderthals as evolutionary transitions is being shown to be merely a mental construct that took on a life of its own following its wholesale adoption. Possibly, the most remarkable findings are Neanderthal artifacts that reveal behaviors like those of all people throughout history. A simple search for published reports returns headlines like “Surprise: Neanderthals Were Fine Housekeepers,” “Ancient Engraving Strengthens Case for Sophisticated Neandertals,” “Ice age fashion showdown: Neanderthal capes versus human hoodies,” “The Real Question: Who Didn’t Have Sex with Neanderthals?,” “Neandertals may have used chemistry to start fires,” “Handaxe design reveals distinct Neanderthal cultures,” “Neandertals made their own jewelry, new method confirms,” “Maybe Neanderthals Weren’t Such… Neanderthals,” “Neanderthals Built Mysterious Stone Circles,” and “Modern humans no brainier than Neanderthals, study finds.”

The magnitude of the evolutionary blunder that Neanderthals were transitions between ape and human is accentuated in today’s reconstructions of Neanderthals—which look like us. The National Geographic Society commissioned a reconstruction of a Neanderthal woman based on the most current information from genetics, fossil evidence, and archaeology, as shown in Figure 3. The magazine reported, “For the first time, anthropologists can go beyond fossils and peer into the actual genes of an extinct species of human,” said National Geographic’s senior science editor, Jamie Shreeve, who oversaw the project. It also reports “that at least some Neanderthals would have had red hair, pale skin, and possibly freckles.”12

Figure 2. The 1953 movie The Neanderthal Man reflected the evolutionary notion that Neanderthals were transitional creatures between apes and humans.

Figure 3. The National Geographic Society commissioned a reconstruction of a Neanderthal woman named “Wilma” based on the latest information from genetics, fossil evidence, and archaeology. Artistic license constrained by evolutionary imagination still attempts to depict Wilma as a somewhat disheveled subhuman despite her underlying human features.
Given the currency of this blunder over Neanderthals, how likely is it that evolutionists would risk another mistaken depiction of a “caveman” sporting imagined features? It is clear that evidence for evolution obtained from fragmentary fossil remains must still be derived from Darwin’s look-imagine-see methodology. Another blunder concocted from fertile imaginations seems likely.

Another Imaginary “Authentic Look” at Early Human Life

Duke professor Adrian Bejan’s astute observation that “in biology, evolution is largely a mental construct built on imagination, because the time scale of animal evolution is immense relative to the time available” clarifies why holes in evolutionary theory get filled with “evidence” that is later shown to be pure fantasy. Neanderthals appear to be one variety of humans bearing traits that people today still express. But evolutionary theory for human origins still requires primitive transitional forms between apes and humans.

In 2009 the Public Broadcasting Service grabbed the human evolution baton and used its popular show NOVA to produce a three-part special on human origins, Becoming Human. NOVA retained the talented Graham Townsley as producer and Harvard paleoanthropologist Dan Lieberman as the technical consultant for human origins. They selected Homo heidelbergensis and Homo erectus to be depicted as subhuman links to an ape-like ancestor. Though fossil remains for both creatures are scarce, the program asserts that H. heidelbergensis is the direct ancestor of Neanderthals.

Just as French paleontologist Marcelin Boule invoked wholesale imagination in 1909 to depict Neanderthals as cavemen, NOVA and Townsley did the same with H. heidelbergensis. Filling the subhuman void left by Neanderthals, Figure 4 depicts NOVA’s actor made to look like a primitive caveman complete with a “pronathic lower jaw” and “protruding” lips. As costumed, he could star in either Becoming Human or the 1953 movie The Neanderthal Man. Fossils do not generally inform us of details about skin, hair, clothing, or behavior, thus Leiberman, like Boule, invokes pure imagination to advise on these features. NOVA’s documentary of the series’ production makes plain the imaginative element. “The skeleton of Homo erectus is different from a modern human,” it said, “so Townsley’s actors had to learn how to walk and run like an ancient hominin.” And Townsley describes how “Dan Lieberman, who is a well-known Harvard paleoanthropologist, is telling us all how he thinks we should go about imagining this hunting scene with Homo erectus.”

Becoming Human also conveyed scenes of an “evolving human society.” Filling in where H. erectus bones leave off, Dan Lieberman drew again on his imagination in the scene shown in Figure 5 to instruct actors in blue suits on how to squat like apes and pick nits from each other’s hair. The blue suits allowed for computer graphics artists to cover their bodies with hair and other primitive features. Townsley desired his lay audience to have a high level of confidence in Becoming Human’s imaginary scenarios, and he “says that working with computer graphics like this was new ground for him, but he hopes they will give viewers an authentic look at what early humans were like,” and also that “the recreations” in his documentary will have “a new type of authenticity to them.”

Time and truth go hand in hand. Decades from now, Becoming Human may have as much credibility as The Neanderthal Man (movie) or be lumped in with other major evolutionary blunders. Its misleading information about Neanderthals was not something that just happened or can be blamed on pop culture. It started with evolutionary scientists and the scenarios they envision using Darwin’s look-imagine-see methodology to fill in the missing data for their theory.

References

15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.

Dr. Galuzzi is ICR’s National Representative.
Most American Christian students attend public schools that promote human evolution. But evolution undermines the Bible’s main message of redemption by asserting that men descended from amoral apes. Both cannot be true. Something has to budge. Clues from science and the Bible—not found in most textbooks—give great answers.

If we really evolved from apes, then Moses,1 David,2 Jesus,3 Luke,4 and Paul5 may have lied when they noted mankind’s origin by supernatural creation. God’s Word gives sinners hope of redemption, but if we don’t inherit Adam’s sin nature as his descendants, then what would we need to be redeemed from?6 The Bible flatly rejects human evolution.

What about scientific evidence? Textbooks teach that Neanderthals were less than human. Although Neanderthals looked a little different from most folks on Earth today, they were fully human just like us. They made fires, instruments,7 jewelry,8 performed elaborate cave burials,9 and intermarried with modern-looking people.10 Similarly, most Homo erectus fossils classify as fully human.

Textbook Lucy illustrations show her as a human ancestor. But Lucy was merely an extinct ape. This creature had no more to do with human ancestry than modern chimpanzees. Its chimp-size body, outturned knees, curved finger and toe bones, knuckle-walking wrists, cone-shaped rib cage, and upturned skull orientation all shout “ape”!

Also, Australopithecines remains like Lucy would have to predate human remains for them to have fathered mankind. But sedimentary layers equivalent to those encasing Lucy fossils have human footprints,11 human bones,12 and human tool marks.13 Since humans already existed when Lucy died, she had no place in human ancestry.

Evolutionist Dr. Charles Oxnard rejected Lucy as a human ancestor in 1983:

The australopithecines...are now irrevocably removed from a place in the evolution of human bipedalism [walking on two legs], possibly from a place in a group any closer to humans than to African apes and certainly from any place in the direct human lineage. All of this should make us wonder about the usual presentation of human evolution in introductory textbooks, in encyclopedias and in popular publications.14

Lucy discoveries since 1983 verify its utterly nonhuman status.

What about DNA? Human and chimp DNA sequences share about 85% similarity, not the incorrect ~98% figure that classroom texts often cite to support human evolution.15 This means that 450,000,000 letters distinguish human from chimp DNA. Even after six million years, no known natural process could even begin to write such an immense library of information.16

Science does validate much textbook information. But students, beware: secular textbooks mingle good science with bad. And the Bible-hashing bits often come slickly dressed as conclusive science when they are actually speculations.

Fossils reveal Neanderthals as created people and Lucy as an extinct ape. Genetics reveal mankind’s unique DNA, matching the Bible’s description that we were made in the image of God just thousands of years ago. Nobody needs to feel like speculations about human evolution should trump the Word of our all-knowing Creator, especially when we can follow good science right back to Genesis. 

References
1. Deuteronomy 4:32.
6. 1 Corinthians 15:45.

Mr. Thomas is Science Writer at the Institute for Creation Research.
Dung Beetles: Promoters of Prairie Preservation

The apostle Paul evaluated social and materialistic success as disposable dung compared to the ultimate value of belonging to and living for Christ. Yet, even dung has value, especially to dung beetles—humble insects that, ironically, ancient Egyptians worshiped as “scarabs.”

Imagine the life of a dedicated dung beetle, collecting, moving, and hoarding dung—even raising its children on it. Talk about a lowly existence! Yet, from the dung beetle’s perspective, it’s completely normal; dung is what its life is all about.

Consider the valuable ecological service the dung beetle provides as it mundanely moves manure morsels. It uses herbivore-dropped manure to benefit itself and its family, as well as the habitat in which it crawls around. What is so valuable about herbivore feces that dung beetles actually fight over dung balls, energetically “stealing the ball” from one another as if dung ball-grabbing were an Olympic soccer game?

Although often ignored or reviled, insects are cornerstones of the prairie ecosystem: they spread seeds and pollen, break down plants, fertilize the soil, and provide food for birds and small mammals. Not quite an inch long, the dung beetle…uses its scooplike head to roll a ball of dung sometimes as large as an apple. Once satisfied with its compacted artwork, the beetle buries it, feeds on it, and then lays its eggs in it [after crafting an air hole for each deposited egg]. When the larvae hatch, they finish off what remains of the ball. In this way dung beetles assure themselves of a reliable diet and, inadvertently, distribute seeds that may be rolled up within the dung.

Dung beetles serve themselves and their progeny by accumulating and storing the dung of grazing animals (e.g., pronghorns or cattle). While doing so, they serve the ecological needs of their neighborhood by transporting nutritious nitrates to other locations, as well as loose seeds that get mixed in. Thus, life-growing seeds and helpful fertilizer are simultaneously distributed to new sites for seed germination. Think of dung beetles as slow-motion couriers and farmers who provide a seed-sowing service!

Are these dung beetles being altruistic environmentalists, caring about their native ecosystem? No, dung beetles don’t study biome ecology; they don’t select seed-sowing sites to promote the nutrient dynamics of American prairies.

Rather, the mutualistic symbiosis we see exhibited in prairie habitats—where cattle provide resources to dung beetles, which help plant the next generation of grasses, which in turn feed the cattle—is a composite and interactive display of God’s preplanning genius and bioengineering. It is God who is multitasking on the great grassy plains, working above and below the surface to provide habitat for plants and animals while simultaneously providing for human needs.

This seemingly lowly insect is but one valuable gem of God’s handiwork in the plains of the Great West. We can see that even the dung beetle glorifies God, providentially promoting prairie preservation in plain view—if we look carefully at what’s happening in the grass beneath our feet.

References
1. Philippians 3:8 (KJV).

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

The Institute for Creation Research has grown tremendously since its inception over 46 years ago. As the first full-time organization dedicated to creation science research, the financial support of our ministry was quite lean during the early years. But month after month, God faithfully supplied each need as fellow believers responded to occasional appeals and updates in Acts & Facts. Today, everyone at ICR shares my sense of profound gratitude for our financial partners who labor with us in this international ministry. Lord willing, we are prayerfully confident that present levels of support will continue.

That said, key research initiatives and major projects rarely move forward without large gifts to underwrite them. Significant gifts make more expansive ministry possible, and ICR’s own history bears witness to this. Major gifts have been vital to research projects such as ICR’s landmark RATE initiative a decade ago. They also made two major location moves possible, the first into our very own facility in 1980 after sharing space with Christian Heritage College (now San Diego Christian College) for 10 years, and the second in 2007 to our current three-building campus in Dallas. In California, large gifts funded new office construction and heavily underwrote our first museum. In Dallas, they enabled ICR to hire key personnel, make much-needed renovations to our facilities, and purchase adjacent property for future growth. These significant gifts helped make ICR a better, stronger, and more effective ministry for God.

Yet, the big-gift mentality of some organizations can lead to very real dangers, so please do not misunderstand my point here. Smaller gifts are absolutely essential to ICR’s ministry, and the Lord has used these gifts to graciously meet every need. Furthermore, ICR remains debt-free as a testament to our faithful supporters and our desire to be the best stewards of the funds God has granted to us. But it would be disingenuous to ignore the impact that significant gifts have made in the past—and could make in the future. Frankly, large gifts are often the missing ingredient needed to unleash the full potential of ICR capabilities.

To place this in perspective, consider the following. Over the last decade, ICR received approximately 533,000 gifts from an average of 22,000 donors each year. Of these, only 149 gifts—less than 0.03%—were valued at $25,000 or more, and roughly a third of these large gifts came from estates of long-time supporters after their home-going. Because of ICR’s low-key fundraising approach, most of these substantial gifts were unsolicited and came as a complete surprise to our ministry, often arriving at critical times just when we needed it most. God has been good to us, but we must do better if we are to fully utilize the unique talents and capabilities He has marshaled at ICR.

As the recent political season so amply demonstrated, the battle has escalated to new heights. Our Adversary is “roaring” like never before, and an entire generation is growing up in a world beset by amoral cultural “norms” that dispute, devalue, and disparage the very essence of scriptural doctrine. ICR has the scientific muscle, intellectual prowess, and biblical commitment to effectively combat these threats, but not without considerable help from God’s people to fully develop current initiatives.

ICR’s newest initiative, the ICR Discovery Center for Science and Earth History, is poised to advance the cause of our Creator through the public display of scientific evidence that confirms the Bible is right and its message is true. We can reach the coming generations with evidence that blows evolutionary arguments away, but only if God’s people help us move the ministry forward in 2017. If there was ever a time to help ICR with a gift of significance, now is that time. Pray for us, and please help if you are able. 

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

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ICR is a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit ministry, and all gifts are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.
Please pass along my thanks for an especially terrific November issue of Acts & Facts. I read Acts & Facts each month from cover to cover. Every issue has articles that are important. They might address history, creation/evolution, some aspect of society, or provide better/clearer biblical understanding. But this November 2016 issue was the first issue (or perhaps the first in a long time) in which every article was so memorable—every single article. The issue was simply outstanding.

Thank you and the entire ICR staff for holding fast to God’s Word, for maintaining a Christian worldview.
— M. M.

The most devastating problem with evolution as an axiom is that it is shown completely false in genetics. Dr. John Sanford, in his book Genetic Entropy, absolutely destroys all hope that evolution could ever climb upward from a worm to a man. It turns out, mutations and natural selection can’t even stop the genomes we have from degrading. After I read this book, all of my doubt evaporated. I now boldly proclaim the truth of creation instead of speaking timidly. Thanks to ICR, and to Dr. Sanford, and to the many brilliant brave men and women who have contributed to the destruction of the idol of evolution.
— L. F.

Even with their mountainous amount of self esteem (and their desire for more of it), they [evolutionists] still would rather choose to be a descendant of a sea worm than accepting the teaching of being created in God’s image.... That’s how much they hate God and want to suppress the truth about Him (Rom. 1:18-20). They so prove the Bible to be true about their condition.
— J. K.

Have a comment? Email us at editor@icr.org or write to Editor, P. O. Box 59029, Dallas, Texas 75229.
Note: Unfortunately, ICR is not able to respond to all correspondence.
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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2017
9:00 a.m.  Children’s Dinosaur Fossil Walk
11:00 a.m. Youth Dinosaur Fossil Walk
1:00 p.m.  Dinosaur Fossil Walk
4:00 p.m.  Dinosaur Fossil Walk
5:00 p.m.  Registration & Check-in
6:00 p.m.  Battle for the Beginning (Dr. John MacArthur)
7:00 p.m.  Unlocking the Mysteries of Genesis
           (Dr. Henry Morris III)
8:15 p.m.  The Work of His Hands (Col. Jeffrey Williams)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2017
9:00 a.m.  Creation Basics: A Recent Global Flood
           (Dr. Tim Clarey)
10:00 a.m. Astronomy Reveals Creation (Dr. Jason Lisle)
11:15 a.m. What You Haven’t Been Told about Radioisotope
           Dating (Dr. Jake Hebert)
1:00 p.m.  Uncovering the Truth about Dinosaurs
           (Dr. Tim Clarey)
2:15 p.m.  The Ultimate Proof of Creation (Dr. Jason Lisle)
3:00 p.m.  Q & A

Dinosaur fossils will be on exhibit. Join one of our fossil walks!

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