

THE DAYS DO MATTER

by Henry M. Morris*

In his latest book,¹ Dr. Hugh Ross mounts the most vigorous attack yet against literal Biblical creationism and its defenders. The book is replete with references to creationist writings—not only mine, but those of John Morris, Ken Ham, Walter Brown, and many others. There are also many references to those of secular astronomers in connection with his spirited promotion of the Big Bang theory.

Although Hugh Ross has a Ph.D. in astronomy from Toronto plus post-doctoral work at Cal-Tech, he has spent most of his career as a minister of evangelism and (since 1986) leading his "Reasons to Believe" organization. The purpose of the latter is that of winning people to Christ through scientific apologetics. Dr. Ross repeatedly (but unjustifiably) maintains that what he calls "young-earth creationism" is a hindrance in doing this. The purpose of his new book, therefore, is to promote the "day-age theory" of Genesis interpretation and also to defend the standard evolutionary belief in long geological ages with their billions of fossils of dead animals entombed in the sediments of those alleged ages.

Dr. Ross does claim to believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God and in salvation through Jesus Christ. Al-

though he does not use the term himself, his position is apparently what most of its advocates call "progressive creation"—the idea that God's creative activity did not take place in six literal days, but rather at different times during the supposed 4.6 billion years of earth history demanded by evolutionary geologists. It differs slightly from "theistic evolution" in that the latter assumes God's over-all guidance of the process of evolution but without any occasional interjections of special creation.

There is no *scientific* way, however, of distinguishing between progressive creation and theistic evolution. Both systems rely on the geologic ages as real history and interpret the "days" of creation in Genesis to correlate in some vague way with those ages. Both systems incorporate billions of years of suffering and dying among the animals before man appeared. But this implies a God who is either sadistic or incompetent—certainly not the God of the Bible who cares when even a sparrow dies. Animal suffering in the present order, of course, is part of God's "Curse" on man's dominion because of human sin.

Hugh Ross devotes many pages to arguing for a non-literal meaning of the "days" of creation and then also trying

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to justify the suffering of those billions of animals before Adam's sin brought death into the world. There are many compelling evidences against such notions, but space does not allow their repetition here. Exodus 20:8–16, for example, inscribed by God Himself with the Ten Commandments, clearly stresses that the whole universe was made in six literal days. There are now *thousands* of fully credentialed scientists who have become “young-earth creationists,” partly because of the preponderance of Biblical evidence but also because they are satisfied that the *real* scientific evidence agrees with it. The only real reason for following the Ross approach is to avoid disagreement with evolutionary geology and astronomy.

Many of these scientists (including myself) were once evolutionists. They have found (as I did) that there is not a hint anywhere in the Bible of the long ages of geology. The latter are based on their premise of uniformitarianism—which the Bible declares to be wrong (II Peter 3:3–6), and on their rejection of the global cataclysmic flood so plainly described in Genesis 6–9.

Dr. Ross only mentions the Biblical Flood in passing, but it can account for the geological deposits better than uniformitarian geology does and the modern revival of literal creationism is believed by many to be attributable largely to the recent revival of Biblical geology. In other writings, Ross has indicated that he believes the Flood was only a local flood, despite the clear teachings of God's Word otherwise.

A good portion of the Ross book is devoted to defending the Big Bang, which Hugh Ross thinks may correspond with the primeval creation of Genesis 1. This is the most impressive part of the book, but he ignores the fact that there are many outstanding astronomers

who reject the Big Bang theory altogether, and only a handful who think it might have something to do with Genesis 1:1.

In one strange tangent, he accuses us literal creationists of being “hyper-evolutionists” because we believe the Biblical teaching that all present land animals are descendants of those preserved on Noah's ark (Genesis 7:21–22; 8:19). The different varieties that developed from the original “kinds” after the Flood did not “evolve,” of course, by mutation or any other evolutionary process. They simply diversified by recombination of the genetic information already present in their parents in response to environmental factors in the barren world after the Flood, with all such diversification occurring within the originally created “kinds.” This was not evolution but simple variation.

In his personal references to me, Dr. Ross made a number of errors. For example, after referring to the rapid growth of the Creation Research Society following publication of *The Genesis Flood*, he said that the Society soon “began to splinter because of differences in personalities and objectives” (p. 33). This is not true: ICR was formed in order to have a full-time creationist educational ministry, but our membership in and support of the Society continues to this day.

Another example was in his discussion of the 1982 meeting of the International Council of Biblical Inerrancy dealing primarily with Biblical hermeneutics. He said that Walter Bradley, Gleason Archer and I each presented “full-length” papers on how to interpret the Genesis record of creation. This also is wrong. Dr. Bradley presented the only full-length paper. The presentations by Dr. Archer and myself were merely discussions of Bradley's paper. The “stacking” of the ICBI program was evident in that both

Dr. Bradley and Dr. Archer were known to be opposed to the literal-day record of Genesis. The statement finally adopted by the Council was so innocuous on the subject of origins that it would not even exclude evolution as an acceptable interpretation. *That* was the reason I could not sign their statement on Biblical hermeneutics, a decision which Ross deplors.

Now the fact that Ross is wrong about these facts with which I was personally familiar might raise questions about his reliability in other sections of the book. However, the book is copiously documented and impressively argued.

Ross tries to criticize a few of the scientific evidences for recent creation (pp. 185–206). However, questioning a few of them in no way obviates the fact that there are still scores of others, all of them indicating an age far too small to be accommodated in the standard geological system. Furthermore, there are many more processes that yield young ages than the handful that yield old ages.

Ross twice quotes (pp. 36, 211), in apparent disagreement, my contention that, if we really want to *know* the age of the earth or the universe, God must tell us. This God has done in His written Word, but Ross refuses to believe what the Bible says.

Dr. Ross is evidently a sincere Christian who earnestly desires to win skeptics to Christ. (So do “young-earth creationists,” of course, and we have indeed seen many come to real faith in Christ and His Word.) But he thinks this purpose can best be served by adopting the whole uniformitarian worldview of origins, and then superimposing the gospel on that.

We disagree: we have found that more scientists and other intelligent men and women can be won by taking God at His Word, accepting the Biblical worldview and trusting Christ on His own terms,


without compromise. This may be a harder road, because it demands more study and rethinking, as well as ridicule from naturalists (and compromising Christians), but it is a higher road, and actually more productive. The vigor of the creationist revival of the past several decades bears witness.

Dr. Ross maintains in his book that his goal is to reconcile the two worldviews and bring peace, but this to him seems to mean that we who believe in a literal Genesis should abandon this belief and accept his belief that there were long ages of suffering and death long before sin entered the world. To us, however, such a compromise dishonors the clear teaching of Scripture and even undermines the gospel. Furthermore, the day-age and progressive creation concepts are not accepted by the scientific establishment any more than is young-earth creationism.

When John Morris and I met with the “Reasons to Believe” board several years ago, Hugh urged us to accept and treat their position as a valid Biblical position in order to bring about the peace they talked about. We in turn suggested that they reciprocate by accepting and treating literal six-day Biblical creationism as a valid scientific position.

But this Hugh Ross still refuses to do. I’m afraid his new book will widen the chasm, not help to bridge it.

Endnotes

1. Hugh Ross, *A Matter of Days* (Colorado Springs, Navpress, 2004), 300 pp.
2. See, for example, chapter III in *Scripture and Creation*, volume 1 in *The Modern Creation Trilogy*, by Henry M. Morris and John D. Morris (Green Forest, Arkansas: Master Books, 1996). 

HOW SOON AFTER THE FLOOD DID THE EARTH RETURN TO EQUILIBRIUM?

by John D. Morris, Ph.D.

In the original creation the earth was deemed “very good” (Genesis 1:31). Soon Adam and Eve rejected God’s authority and incurred the great curse of Genesis 3:14–19, which affected *all* of creation (Romans 8:20–22). This led to the great Flood of Noah’s day which fully altered all aspects of Earth’s once “very good” status.

While the Bible doesn’t give us all the details, we get the impression that before the curse there were no storms, no earthquakes, no landslides, etc. Even after the curse, but before the Flood, these would have been minimal. However, during the Flood the earth “broke” and geologic processes happened rapidly. Indeed, the entire surface of the earth was restructured by the waters of that great Flood.

Today we live once again in a world of relative equilibrium. We now experience earthquakes, hurricanes, tidal waves, and volcanoes, but to a much lesser degree than occurred during the Flood. Those early centuries after the Flood thankfully saw the devastation taper off but I suspect it took several hundred years for the earth to regain the relative equilibrium that we enjoy.

Today our weather patterns are influenced by the jet streams, huge currents of air at high altitudes. These probably took quite some time to be re-established. Weather patterns are likewise controlled by ocean temperatures, the warmer the oceans the more evaporation, and the more precipitation. Creationists suspect that the “Ice Age” was a direct result of the great Flood due primarily to the heating of the oceans by the fountains of the great deep,

which erupted during the Flood. Modern speculation that global warming will cause an Ice Age (although largely misguided) mirrors this creationist theory. Such dynamic weather patterns would have continued until the oceans gave up their excess heat.

We also see in the centuries following the Flood that volcanism occurred on a scale dwarfing anything that we see today. Consider that as the Flood ended, the continents were rising and spreading, and the ocean basins sinking, giving rise to immense fractures in the earth’s crust. Volcanic aerosols in the atmosphere would have contributed to the Ice Age, shielding the earth from much of the solar radiation that we now receive, thereby cooling the continents and allowing snow to build up into great ice sheets.

As the continents rose and split, mountain chains buckled up, further influencing our weather patterns. No doubt the weather was quite violent and unpredictable for several hundred years until things stabilized, and earthquakes were a common occurrence. There may have been a reason that the early peoples lived in tents and not buildings.

Creationists have come to call this post-Flood period one of “residual catastrophism” which would have continued through the time of the Tower of Babel and into Abraham’s day. Today we live in a relatively stable world, but still a world reeling from the effects of the great Flood. Thankfully one day there will be a new heaven and a new earth where catastrophes will not even be remembered. ☺



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