

The Unfinished Epic

In Five Acts

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Ralph D. Winter, July, 2007

Preface

I was a missionary to a people who thought a rainbow was an animal to be feared. I was able to spray water in the air on a dark night and shine a flashlight producing a rainbow. I told them that every time in the misty highlands of Guatemala they saw a rainbow they could know that the sun like a giant flashlight was right behind them. They might also have never conceived of the Earth being a planet hanging in space. I somehow never asked them. *It did not really matter.* My main purpose was to introduce them to the person of Christ and to the tasks of an obedient believer.

Today we face a very large number of scientists who believe that the universe is billions of years old. Is that true? Does it matter? *In this case, yes—because if the Bible is said to contradict what they feel they know for sure, it can destroy their confidence in the Bible.* Thus, we do well to ask, “Is it really true that the Bible teaches that the universe is only 6,000 years old?” The idea that the Bible does teach that was actually stated in *Time Magazine*.

However, it so happens that the two most influential Bible expositors of the 20th Century both taught that the Bible teaches no such thing.

Nevertheless, not all Evangelicals today can easily imagine how a widely accepted interpretation of Genesis 1:1 by a Dallas Theological Seminary professor (Dr. Merrill Unger) could possibly lead to a momentous reinterpretation of our conventional concepts of Christian mission. In any case, this paper actually has three different purposes.

1. This paper attempts to defend the trustworthiness of the Bible in the eyes of the average well-educated secular person by showing how the Bible does not necessarily conflict with the idea that the universe started with a bang and is immensely old, and that the Earth itself is very old and displays a steady progression of increasingly complex life forms. Even if that all were true, what would it do to the Bible? While this paper tries to describe accurately what most paleontologists believe for the sake of discussion, its conclusions do not depend on the validity of the views of contemporary paleontologists. And, for the record, it does not give an inch to either the

idea of Darwinian random evolution or to an untrustworthy Bible.

2. Secondly, it is a serious attempt to take the Bible literally and yet be able to believe in both “the young Earth” and “the old Earth” points of view. I feel sad when I hear that a famous Bible College *graduate* faculty believes in “the old Earth” while the *undergraduate* faculty believes in “the young Earth”—thinking they are contradictory. If they aren’t, let’s take this seriously.

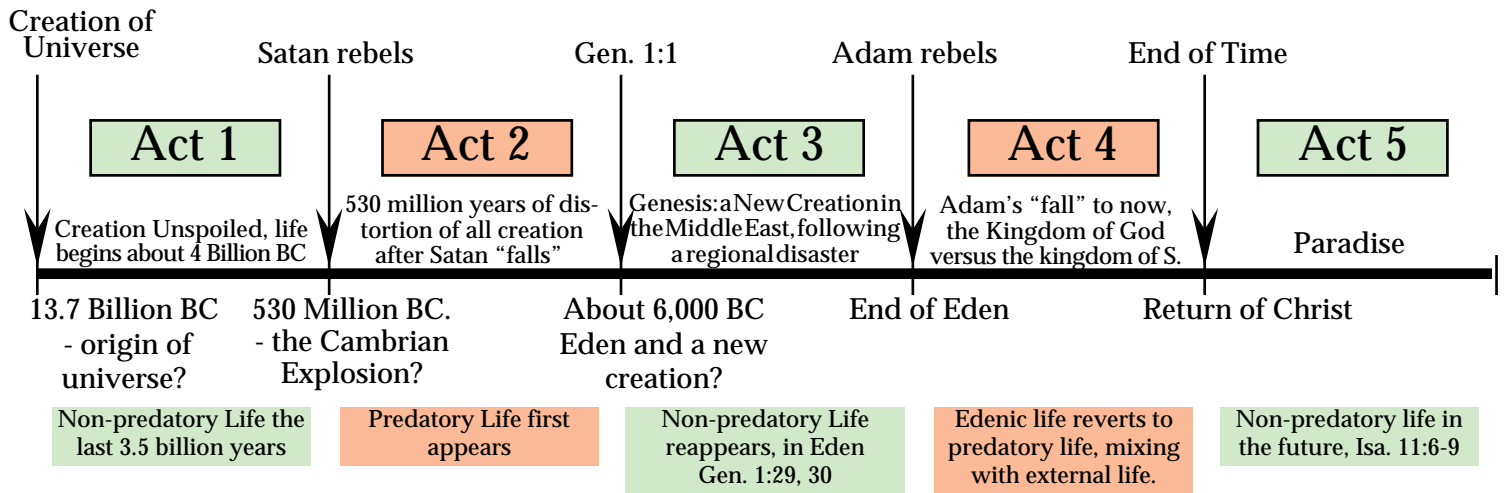
3. Much more important, in a way, is the proposal that our current concepts of Christian mission work are good but incomplete, and, in fact, are much too narrow if we are really setting out to glorify God who is constantly blamed for evil. The novel element here is the idea that the full implications of the New Testament’s concept of Satan have been largely lost in Western Christianity to the extent that we have been influenced by Augustine’s neo-platonic view of a God who, often with mysterious reasons, initiates both good and evil—with Satan only a “bystander.”

A larger interpretation of mission goes like this: we have been recruiting people all over the world into God’s eternal family, which is an activity as basic and as significant as you can get. But while our new “recruits” are now all dressed up in their new-life-in-Christ uniforms they do not realize these are *military uniforms*. Evangelicals may seem more often hoping to flee evil rather than fight it. Personal righteousness, both “attributed” and actual, would seem to be very thin if it does not turn around and fight evil.

Worse still—far worse—is the fact that if we just let the world fight disease, corruption and violence, God is generally blamed for “allowing” such evils. We are forced to puzzle over evil if we think God is “behind” all evil—instead of “in front”—working good out of evil. Such a theology requires books that help us to understand *When God Doesn’t Make Sense*.¹ However, suffering and violence *in a war* against an intelligent enemy *does make sense* and doesn’t need to be explained, and for the very same reason neither is an explanation necessary for the verse, “All that will live godly ... will suffer persecution.” *We are in a war!*

This chart portrays, for the sake of discussion, the perspective of conventional paleontology, true or not, namely that prehistoric fossils belong to vast earlier ages. According to Professor Unger, the latter would seem not to conflict with the Bible. Note that the timeline is clearly not to scale.

An Overall View



Summary

Opening the AD 1611 King James Bible we read "In the beginning God created" During the following 400 years this interpretation was cemented in the minds of millions of people. It conveys the idea that the Bible begins by describing the beginning of the entire universe, not merely the new beginning of the human story.

However, not even in 1611 was the universe well understood. It was likely far less clear to the "holy men of God"² writing in the days of Genesis.

In fact, the "known world" of Moses would not have even included the idea of a planet, of a sphere hanging in space. Similarly, "The ends of the Earth" in Isa. 49:6 never referred to our planet but to the ends of the Earthen plain ending abruptly where the "fertile crescent" of the Middle East is bounded by the mountains rising in Turkey and Iran.

In other words, the common interpretation of Genesis today -- that the universe began 6,000 years ago -- may simply be the result of reading later understanding into an earlier text. Such errors are called *anachronisms*. The error is understandable. However, the very serious result is to force the Bible (unfairly?) to say that the world is only 6,000 years old, *and thereby to create the greatest single stumbling block to modern man's trust in the Bible.*

Curiously, as long ago as 1958 the chair of the Old Testament Department at Dallas Theological Seminary, Dr. Merrill Unger, taught that "the geologic ages" preceded Genesis 1:1 and that the events of Genesis 1 portray not THE beginning but "a *relative* beginning (*Unger's Bible Handbook*)."³ His was not a new idea even then, but today it has become uncommon.

Our problem is that most of the world today assumes that both our

planet and the universe are much older than 6,000 years. The grim result, then, is that to everyone who believes that, the Bible appears dead wrong, when in fact the Bible may be giving us a very accurate description of things using terms that were understood in that day.

Thus, Unger's insight is what undergirds the tentative perspective of this paper, namely, that "the geologic ages" took place long before Genesis 1:1 I would add that perhaps Satan is the one who began distorting all of nature from the Cambrian Period on, continuing that type of genetic distortion after Adam's fall. Although he was decisively routed at the turning point of the Cross, he stalks the land to this day, *his works casting blame on "the God of Creation."*

This then sets the stage for a radically expanded concept of Christian mission.

Since some parts of the discussion in this paper are not common understanding, any feedback large or small will be greatly appreciated.

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Note this paper was presented under a different title at the 2006 Annual meeting of the Evangelical Missiological Society in Orlando, in connection with the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association. It is a condensation of three lectures given as the Annual Mission Lectureship in 2005 at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. I will be happy to send those three lectures on request. They together run 22 pages. Just send me an email with the proper return address and I will reply with a PDF attachment. RDW

This presentation is both hypothetical and conjectural. It lays, out accurately I believe, the predominant secular interpretation of the history of the universe and more specifically the history of the Earth and life on Earth. In so doing, whenever the phrase “many scientists believe” is employed, I am not affirming my beliefs but describing theirs. It does not give any credence to random, unguided Darwinian evolution at all. But it does note that there is no necessary conflict with Genesis caused by the secular concept and time spans, if, that is, Genesis 1:1 does not describe the origin of the universe but rather a new creation of the era of “image of God” humans, as Professor Unger suggests.

The story is cast in narrative form for efficiency and digestible order. Credit is due to John Eldredge for the concept of “acts” in a story. He has four acts in his superb little book, *The Epic*.⁴ I have split his third act into Act III, the Edenic period and Act IV, the period after the Fall of Adam. Thus, I have five “acts.”

These pages are a condensation, in part, of the three Annual Mission Lectures I was invited to give in 2005 at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Act I: The Creation of The Universe

Thirteen and a half, or so, billion years ago, many scientists believe, a “Big Bang” occurred, *producing* the entire universe. (They don’t like the word *creating*.)

•For various reasons mentioned below, such a creation event does not seem to be what Genesis 1:1 is describing.

Four and a half billion years ago, many scientists believe, planet Earth was formed.

About four billion years ago, many scientists believe, very small forms of life appeared on Earth. For the next 3.5 billion years life forms were still very small.

•This astounding slowness of the formation of progressively more complex forms of life may in this case imply that God has for millions of years been doing that work through intelligent, but finite, intermediate beings who have been at work in an incredibly complex, *and thus lengthy*, learning curve. Perhaps some of them have been small enough to work directly with DNA.

It took a century with thousands of intelligent engineers at work to “evolve” the Model T Ford into a Lincoln Continental. That kind of “evolution” certainly did not happen without intelligent guidance at every point.

Prokaryotes were followed by Eukaryotes about two billion years ago, many scientists believe.⁵ It would appear that none of the angels were in rebellion at this time.

Then, about 530 million years ago, the Ediacaron period displayed small animals with “radial symmetry” similar to starfish, as well as “bi-polar symmetry”—with a front and a back and four legs.

•Significantly this Ediacaron type of animal life revealed no predatory life nor even defenses against predation!⁶ Still only good angels apparently.

Act II: The Fall of Satan

Next, relatively suddenly, the “Cambrian Explosion” took place, perhaps the most puzzling event in Earth history. A wide variety of different types of animals now appeared abruptly, and, for the next 500 million years, *all of them can be characterized as horrifyingly cruel predators or prey or both.*

Note that this lengthy record of violent animal life does not seem to fit well into the first chapter of Genesis, even if the “days” spoken of there might be considered very long, since the animals described in Genesis 1 are explicitly declared (v. 29) to be *non-carnivorous*.

•Here is a thought: this new and radically different 500-million-year period might have begun when an intermediate being, an archangel, in turning against his Creator, in the “Fall of Satan,” carried perhaps millions of equally rebellious angels with him, becoming what C. S. Lewis called “a hideous strength” or what Paul called the “god of this world.”

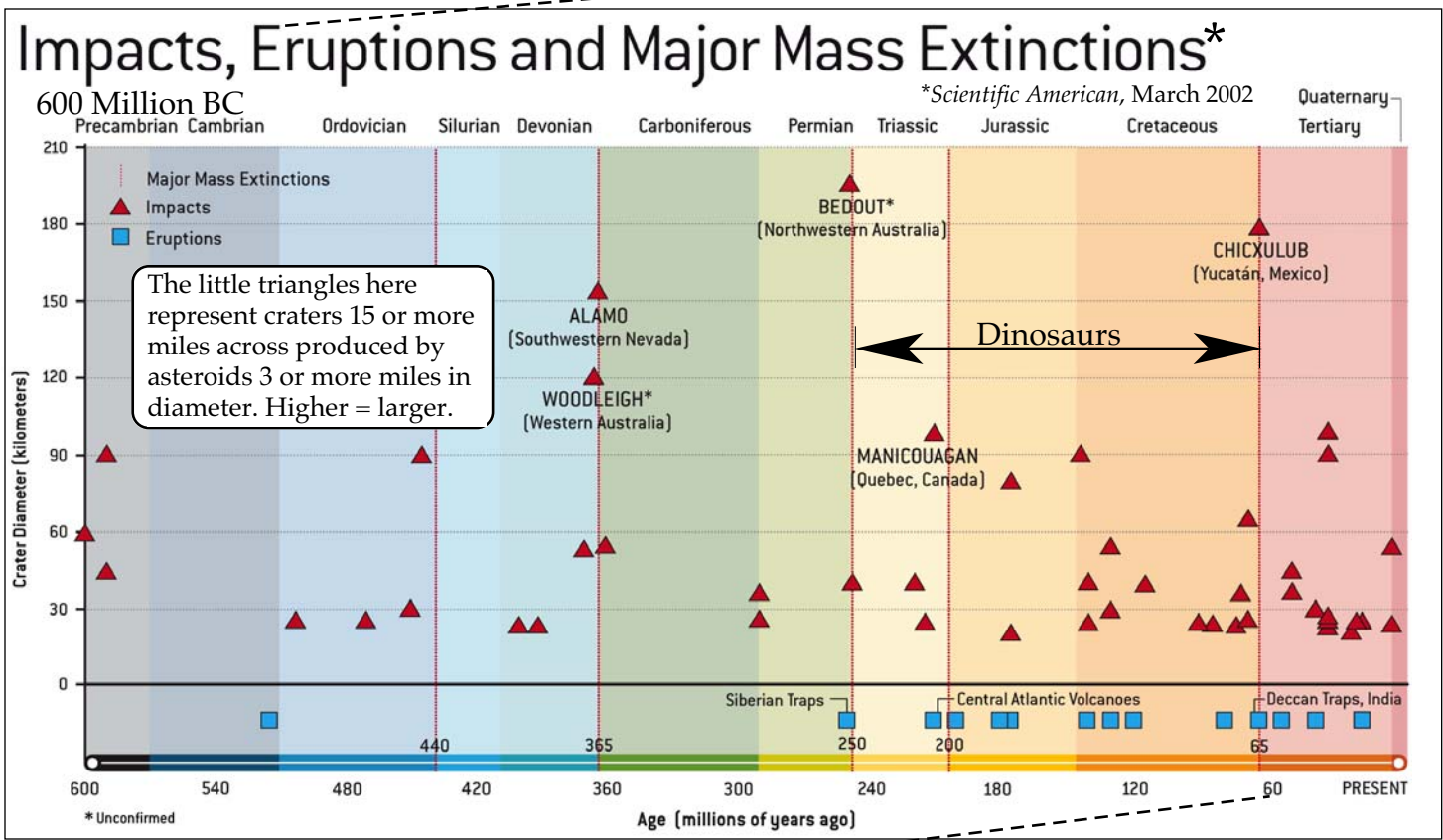
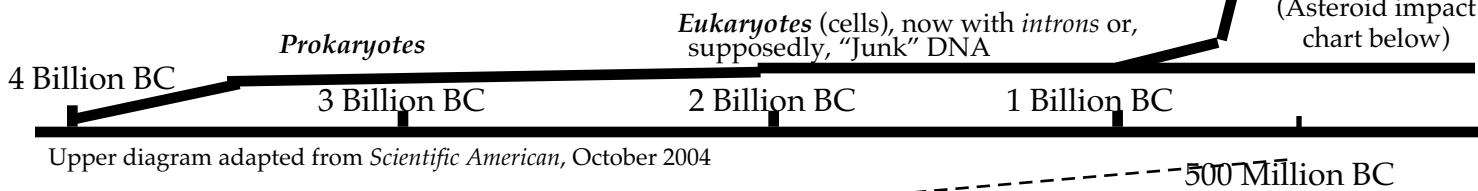
•If the long story of the earlier, progressive, *creation* of non-predatory life had reflected God’s infinite wisdom and goodness, now the pervasive *distortion* of that life, if not that of a Satanic foe, would seem clearly to *reflect negatively on God’s character*. This negative reputation may be seen today in the very common attribution of tragedies not to Satan, but to “God’s mysterious will.” This absence of Satan in people’s minds is what allows a book by the title of *When God Doesn’t Make Sense*,⁷ or a Harvard professor logically to remark that, “If the God of the Intelligent Design proponents exists, He must be a divine ‘sadist’ who creates parasites that blind millions of people.”⁸ How can we reply to such thinking if we do not recognize (point out and fight)

Cambrian Explosion

New Period of
Predatory Life

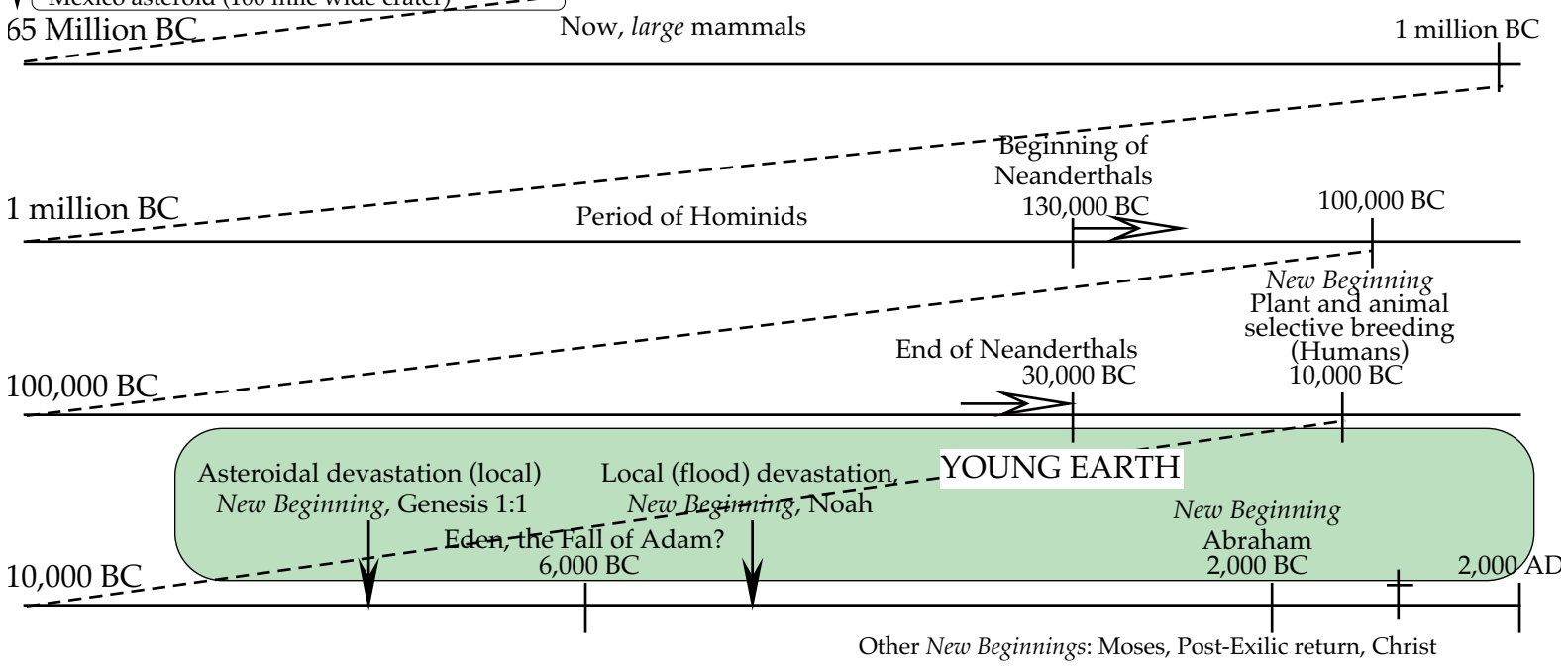
Fall of Satan?

The Enigma of Life



The little triangles here represent craters 15 or more miles across produced by asteroids 3 or more miles in diameter. Higher = larger.

New Beginning: Dinosaurs killed off by Yucatan, Mexico asteroid (100 mile wide crater)



“the works of the devil (1 John 3:8)”?

Also, during the next 500 million years, many scientists believe, numerous asteroidal collisions blotted out life in various parts of the globe, as if in judgment—my thinking—of the prevailing violence and destructive nature of gruesomely distorted life forms.

•Forty-five of the resulting craters that have been found are 15 miles across or larger. The largest, in the Antarctic, is 300 miles in diameter. It is believed to have occurred 275 million years ago, and is estimated to have extinguished 97 percent of all life on Earth. Another large crater, at the north end of Mexico’s Yucatan peninsula, is believed to have occurred 65 million years ago, and is 100 miles across. It is the one understood to have ended the one-hundred-million-year period of the characteristically violent dinosaurs. Many of these forty-five larger asteroids are understood to have been solid rock, miles in diameter, moving at the speed of a rifle bullet at the moment of impact.⁹

Following the extinction of the dinosaurs, many scientists believe, mammals came into their own, growing in size to tons of weight, existing virtually unchallenged until intelligent humans appeared and began to drive them into extinction.

Finally, evidence of distinctive and unprecedented intelligence appeared, reasonably (in my opinion) the first true humans (but still Satanically distorted, carnivorous, violent, cannibals, not the Genesis 1 type). The evidence in this case is not *fossil bones* but indications of highly intelligent *genetic breeding of both plants and animals*, that is, 1) the selective breeding of virtually inedible plants, deriving corn, wheat, rice, and potatoes, etc., and 2) the selective breeding of animal life, for example, dangerous wolves into friendly dogs. Both types of genetic engineering, many paleohistorians and paleontologists believe, took place 11,000 years ago¹⁰ (about five thousand years before the Genesis new beginning).

However, despite this early evidence of sudden, unprecedented intelligence, all fossils of human life that far back clearly reflect cannibalism and violence, in other words, durable evidence of intentional, *evil distortion*.¹¹

The cover story of *Newsweek*, March 19, 2007 reported some paleoneurologists believe that truly human beings require three genes

first appearing as recently as 50,000, 37,000 and 5,800 years ago.

Act III: Genesis: A New Beginning and the Fall of Man

About 6,000 years ago, at the very beginning of the Jewish/Christian Bible, we find what may be a series of events which could possibly be the aftermath of a fairly small asteroidal collision in the Middle East.

The idea of an asteroid wiping out all life in a local region of the Earth is conjectural but not unrealistic. However, the idea of Genesis describing a new beginning *following* a major catastrophe has been fairly widely thought of by people such as, arguably, the two most influential Bible scholars of the 20th Century: C. I. Scofield, editor of the most widely used reference Bible of all time, the *Scofield Reference Bible*, and Merrill Unger, as mentioned earlier, a Dallas Theological Seminary professor and editor of the 500,000-in-print *Unger’s Bible Handbook*, published by Moody Press.

John Eldredge (*Wild at Heart*, and *The Epic*) speaks of events “prior to Genesis” on page 19. On page 18 he says, speaking of Genesis 1:1,

An important passage it is, to be sure. But to grasp this Epic, you cannot start there. That is way into the story. That is Act Three. It is a beginning, but it is the beginning of the *human* story, the story of life here on Earth. As Hebrew scholar Robert Alter says, a better rendering of the Hebrew goes “When God began to create heaven and Earth.” When God began to create the life we know. And before this? There are events that have preceded this chapter, events we must know.

If you want to look back into the once upon a time before all time, well, then you have to start with another passage, from the Gospel of John (1:1). (Underlining mine.)

Genesis 1:2 is the rest of the sentence, describing what God had to contend with in this particular new beginning. The English translation “formless and void” is today widely understood not to be a good translation of the Hebrew idiom, *tohu wabohu*, which more often in the Bible means “destroyed and desolate.”¹²

The result might then actually be “When God began to put things back together, to reclaim the heavens and the Earth, the (regional) situation appears to have been

destroyed and desolate.”

The subsequent verses describe the initial total darkness surrounding the entire planet, but, then, with light peeking through as the dust settled.

•Note well that it is typical of even the smaller of these major asteroidal impacts to kick enough dust into the atmosphere to block out all light for a time around the entire planet. Gradually, however, as the dust settles, dim light becomes noticeable once a day. Eventually the direct rays of the Sun penetrate the remaining dust and the Sun becomes visible. Later, the Moon. Later, the stars.¹³

These verses thus seem to be a “restoration sequence” rather than a “creation sequence.” If they are viewed as a *creation* series of events many scholars have wondered how the dim light each morning would have been created before the Sun appeared. The word *creation* is not even used. The text simply says “Let there be light.”

•Obviously those humans wiped out in this regional impact would not have been able to report this sequence. On the other hand, surviving humans scattered elsewhere around the globe would certainly have been actual eye witnesses of the darkness and the gradual reappearance of light, the Sun, etc.. Egyptian scholars then could have retained a record of such observations so as to be the source of information Moses employed in Genesis.

•Many Bible expositors are either unaware of, or do not go along with, the fairly recent search for impact craters on the Earth’s surface. This search began in earnest only in 1970 after the first Moon landing unexpectedly revealed that the hundreds of pockmarks on the Moon were not, as had been assumed, volcanic craters but were *impact* craters.¹⁴

•Beginning in 1812, hundreds of thousands of fossil bones of violent animals have been dug up which belong to thousands of now-extinct forms of life. Since these animals cannot be the ones described in Genesis 1, where both animals and humans are clearly described as non-carnivorous,¹⁵ they must have either come *before* Genesis or we must assume they were distorted into their violent and carnivorous nature *after* the Fall of man. The latter possibility would force enormous complexity into the last 6,000 years, including thousands of extinctions—bones have been discovered for a thousand times as many animal species as survive today.¹⁶

It would seem to be easier to believe, following Unger, that all of that violent life *preceded* Genesis, and that, then, Genesis is describing a new creation of non-distorted life in the “known world” of the writers. In

fact, it may be unfair to the Bible to make it speak of a *planet* since at that time people did not know of such a thing. Indeed, most of the Old Testament is written by (KJV) “holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”¹⁷ A key word here is “men.” Unlike the *Qur’an* and the *Book of Mormon* (which are said to have been *dictated* by God) the Bible normally contains what these holy writers, guided by God, understood and their hearers understood. Reading later knowledge into earlier documents is a common mistake called *anachronism*.

•Similarly, the later judgment of the flood would reasonably be in “the known world.” The table of nations in Genesis 11, the children of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, are nations which Bible maps locate in the Middle East. There are no Incas or Eskimos in the picture. This would certainly be fair to the Bible. Some of the faculty at Wheaton College have believed and taught a regional flood for fifty years.

•Thus, Genesis may be an account of regional events, and, if so, the Edenic events would thus not be the first or only “new beginning.” The flood is another “new beginning.” The selection of Abraham is another “new beginning.” Isaac instead of Ishmael is another “new beginning.” The selection of Jacob/Israel instead of Esau is another “new beginning.” The Exodus is another “new beginning.” The return from Babylon is another “new beginning.” The coming of Christ and the breakthrough to the Gentiles in the NT is another “new beginning.” So the Reformation, etc.

In any case, the vast majority of all scientists today, if we continue to tell them that the Bible teaches that all forms of life are no more than 6,000 years old, will continue to feel forced to believe that the Bible cannot be trusted.

Is this what happened with Luther and Calvin? They interpreted Psalm 19 to mean that the Sun revolved around the Earth, in contrast to Copernicus’ view that the Earth revolved around the Sun. Unfortunately, subsequent *critics did not say Luther and Calvin misinterpreted the Bible. They said the Bible must be wrong.* However, science in that case did not contradict the Bible. Science contradicted a misinterpretation of the Bible!

•Thus, it is not to criticize the Bible, but to defend it, if we recognize that the phrase “to the ends of the Earth” in Isa. 49:6 only refers to the flat plain of Earth leading up to the mountains of Eastern Iran and Turkey. Only fairly recently in European languages has the word *Earth* (soil) meant *the Earth* (a planet), and it still is not usually used that

way.

Genesis 1 may then present the same non-carnivorous type of life, animal and human, which we see again at the end of time in Isaiah 6 and 11 (the lion lying down with a lamb). Once Adam and Eve are seduced by Satan and turned out of Eden, the “sons of God” (the new type of humans created in Eden in the image of God?) marry the “daughters of men” (previously distorted and depraved humans beginning 11,000 years ago?). In that case we can understand why the life spans of the Edenic humans gradually shorten.

Further, it would seem reasonable that the Edenic type of non-carnivorous human and animal life, by interbreeding with the distorted, carnivorous life outside of Eden, would gradually revert to the life-destroying carnivorous behavior of the pre-Edenic, pre-Genesis 1:1, distorted life. Eventually the non-carnivorous Edenic version of human and animal life would have have virtually disappeared into the genetically distorted earlier gene pools. This may be one way of understanding original sin as something we cannot wish away easily, it being inherited genetically—something illuminating Romans 3:23, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” This also would enable us to understand why being “born again” does not change all our inborn wayward traits even though it allies us with our Father in Heaven against hardwired genetic evil within which we still must fight—the sort of conflict we read about in Romans 7.

Act IV: Wartime

Far more important is the fact that this scenario describes a great length of time Satan has been at work distorting God’s creation, producing the incredible vastness of his corrupting work *of which we are mostly unaware*. As one theologian put it, “The greatest achievement of Satan is to cover his tracks.”¹⁸ The crucial facts would thus be that 1) we underestimate what Satan has done and is doing, and 2) we do not consider it our mission to fight it, and for that reason 3) *we very often attribute the works of Satan to God*. Remember the Harvard professor mentioned

earlier who quite logically remarked that “If the God of the Intelligent Design proponents exists He must be a divine ‘sadist’ who creates parasites that blind millions of people.” I cannot forget that damaging statement, even though it is alarmingly misinformed. Unfortunately, in secular circles, the Intelligent Design people can’t admit that some of what they see in nature is *evil* design, *not to be blamed on a supreme being*.

Few people refer to Satan these days, perhaps due to the mountain of strange guesses about his role. C. S. Lewis, in *Mere Christianity* did not have any trouble with the concept.

One of the things that surprised me when I first read the *New Testament* seriously was that it talked about a Dark Power in the universe—a mighty evil spirit who was held to be the Power behind death and disease, and sin. The difference is that Christianity thinks this Dark Power was created by God, and and was good when he was created, and went wrong. Christianity agrees with Dualism [to this extent] that this universe is at war ... Enemy-occupied territory—that is what the world is.¹⁹

If Satan exists and opposes God in every way possible we might then expect two things to happen, 1) physical *distortions* and 2) intellectual *delusions*.

Diabolical Distortions

Obviously, if the time of the Cambrian Explosion were to mark the point when Satan turned against God, it would mean that Satan began distorting the larger forms of life genetically a very long period of time before the events in Genesis even began. It also seems logical that Satan would have been not only rewiring animal life to be predatory, but twisting bacteria into dangerous germs, creating destructive viruses, and inventing extremely clever and deadly parasites like malaria. Are we supposed to fight germs? Is that part of the verse “The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8)?

Is this what Jesus meant when He taught us to pray “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in Earth as it is in heaven”?

Augustine and Calvin were unaware of germs, yet not even do our theologians or TV preachers today speak of deadly germs being *the work of Satan, to be destroyed as an intentional mission of Christ and of those who follow Him—not wanting to blame disease on God*. But

if you identify and recognize the enormous global impact of disease-induced suffering as a sphere of diabolical distortion, then both the great violence introduced by the fall of Satan and the fall of Adam become a major reality. (One parasite alone, Malaria, subtracts from Africa annually 45 million man-years of effort.²⁰ In this perspective, Satan becomes the enemy and the Christian life and mission must be seen as part of an all-out war, a war to be fought not “*in addition to winning souls to Christ*” but as *a means of glorifying God and thus empowering our evangelism. Disassociating God from the works of the devil becomes then both the means and the end of winning souls to Christ.*

Diabolical Delusions

A second dimension of Satanic evil for us to become aware of, *and to be fought as a Christian mission*, is what could be called *diabolic delusions*. Millions of people suffer horribly and die prematurely not only because of disease, but because of misunderstandings about the origins of disease. The whole history of medicine has been, in one sense, the mysteriously delayed understanding of the real causes of disease. Just three of actually hundreds of examples of this mysterious delay are the fact that the common cold, tuberculosis, and duodenal ulcers were thought for many centuries not to be the direct result of destructive germs but rather to be the result of, respectively, 1) getting cold, 2) sleeping in damp, cold places and 3) being subject to stress.

There are many other types of diabolical delusions. Here are merely four:

- Down through history in India thousands and thousands of widows have been burned on their husbands’ funeral pyres because of the *delusion* that they would thereby be reincarnated at a higher level.
- Thousands of young women have contracted AIDS in South Africa due to the widespread *delusion* that a man with AIDS can be cured by having intercourse with a virgin.
- We are *deluded* if we think that the world’s largest business—the American medical/pharmaceutical industry—is tracking down the primary *sources* of disease. Why are

we deluded? Because all of that industry’s money comes from people who are already sick and are paying to be *healed*. However, treating the sick and eradicating pathogenic sources of illnesses are usually very different activities. For the latter the available money is almost non-existent by comparison

- In Africa, due to mistaken *delusions*, 140 million women have undergone “female genital mutilation,” which often leads to ruptured bladders (at the time of childbirth) and a resulting life of being social outcasts.

These are some of the destructive *delusions* which need to be fought in the Name of Christ.

Evangelical Fatalism?

However, Evangelicals, instead of fighting to destroy the “works of the devil” have gotten accustomed to a plainly fatalistic understanding of them as “the mysterious will of God.” This is the relentless message of the book already mentioned, *When God Doesn’t Make Sense* (by no less than James Dobson). In other words, if there is no Satan, much of life really “does not make sense,” and our concept of the Christian life and mission becomes diabolically reduced.

What To Do?

Many may think, “What can I as an individual do? What should I do differently? Isn’t it still important to win people to the Lordship of Christ even if I can’t explain to them how their lives can make a difference in the identification and destruction of the works of Satan?”

Yes, winning people to Christ is still bedrock. But two other things are also true.

1. More and more people can’t even be won to Christ because they are deeply confused by the “good news” of a loving God who would seem to have created a world of suffering, or to have at least been unwilling or unable, in general, to rescue us from Earthly horrors of evil and pain until the next world.

2. People who are won to Christ rarely understand that they have been recruited to become soldiers in an all-out war.

Of course we know that individuals on

their own can't "win a war." To win a war you need a whole lot of teamwork. The United States during the Second World War would be an example.

Swarms of "servicemen" (including women) swirled about on planes, trains, and buses, heading off to ports of departure for the various "theaters of war" around the world. Eleven million were sprayed out across the globe in the Army, Air Corps, and the Navy. But 200 million "civilians" staying behind *were equally occupied by the war*.

As millions of men disappeared from their jobs women back home took their places. A largely women's workforce ("Rosie the riveter") built entire ships one every 14 days, medium bombers one every four hours. Nylon was needed for parachute cords—no more stockings. No more coffee: incoming ships had no room for such trivialities because more crucial goods took their place. Any idle moments or carelessly disposed materials were instantly challenged by "Don't you know there is a war on?" You could get a huge fine for unnecessary driving—driving *unrelated to the war*, like, yes, a family outing on Sunday! Gasoline had other more crucial uses.

Today, when Evangelical believers get together, in general they don't compare notes on how to win the war against the "works of the devil." They compare prices on home furnishings, vacations, adult toys. Truly, *they don't know there is a war on!* We act like we don't live in a wartime economy but in a time of peace.

Organize, Organize, Organize.

Obviously, individuals usually need to organize with others to be effective. Do we need dozens of new specialized mission agencies? Yes. Note that *there is not one Christian institution in the world dedicated to eradication of disease pathogens*. Our entire, mammoth medical/pharmaceutical industry, perhaps the largest industry in the world, is focused 99% on needs of people who are already sick, rather than on methods of eradicating the disease origins. This huge industry is mainly market driven and supported. It can do no other. What must be added are "mission"

organizations that are donor supported. That is, if we are going to exterminate pathogens not just prevent or cure disease.

Our pastors tend to define "Christian service" as activity in and for and through the local church, not the labors of the 40-hour week. If, as Rick Warren says, he wants to transform his "audience into an army," and other pastors joining him by the thousands would follow him, a veritable revolution might occur—*if they joined forces*. But his *Purpose Driven Life* contains not a single line about the 40-hour week, much less does it recognize that the 40-hour week is exactly where, in a major way, we can best actually fight evil, corruption and disease—efforts crucial to restoring glory to God and credibility to our evangelism. (In a conversation about this, he told me he is going to write another book.) This sphere is nowadays being called "Public Theology."

However, although we hear of pastors around the world *losing their lives* because of their faith, it is not often we hear of laymen in the USA even *losing their jobs* because of, say, being honest or opposing deception.

Basically, the incredible violence we must fight against *in the Name of Christ* constitutes an all-out war. Neither laity nor clergy are well aware of that war. Thus, all true believers, not just "fulltime workers," must be willing to organize against evil, to be creative, and to measure every vocation not by its pay scale, but by its contribution to that war.

It seems very clear that we must recruit people for this war as well as for heaven. If we can't do both *we will ultimately fail at both*. This is why the Christian mission is far more complex and demanding than we thought.

I would hope existing mission agencies could lead the way in the discovery and the defeat of both 1) Satanic *indirectly-inspired human* evil such as war, and the corruption that guts almost every secular type of humanitarian aid, and 2) *direct Satanic* evil such as genetic distortions of man and animal, the creation of disease germs and diabolical delusions. This means seeing mission in very much larger terms. It also gives a much larger role to laymen than check-book missions or "after hours Christianity" center-

End Notes

1. James Dobson, *When God Doesn't Make Sense* (Illinois: Tyndale House, Inc., 1997).
2. 2 Peter 1:21, KJV.
3. Merrill F. Unger, "Rethinking the Genesis Account of Creation." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 115 (Jan-Mar 1958): 27-35. Also, *Unger's Bible Handbook* Chicago: Moody Press, 1967.
4. John Eldredge, *The Epic* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2004).
5. Luann Becker, "Repeated Blows," (*Scientific American*, March 2002: pp. 76-83).
- 6 Richard Fortey, *Life: A Natural History of the 1st 4 billion Years of Life on Earth*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998, p. 82, 92-93).
7. James Dobson, *When God Doesn't Make Sense* (Illinois: Tyndale House, Inc., 1997).
8. Steven Pinker, quoted in David Van Biema. "Can You Believe in God and Evolution?" (*Time*, August 7, 2005).
9. Luann Becker, "Repeated Blows," (*Scientific American*, March 2002: pp. 76-83)
10. Melinda A. Zeder and Brian Hesse. "The Initial Domestication of Goats (*Capra hircus*) in the Zagros Mountains 10,000 Years Ago" *Science* (24 March 2000).
11. "Once Were Cannibals," by White, Tim D.. *Scientific American*, August 2001, Vol. 285 Issue 2, p58, 8p; "Clear evidence of cannibalism in the human fossil record has been [considered] rare, but it is now becoming apparent that the practice is deeply rooted in our history." [*Abstract from author*]
12. Old Testament scholars translate *tohu wabohu* with such terms as "desolation and disorder" (John Gibson, 1981 *Daily Study Bible Series: Genesis, Vol. 1*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster, John Knox Press), "welter and waste" (Robert Alter, *The Five Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., p. ix), "chaos and desolation" (Bernhard Anderson, *From Creation to New Creation: OT Perspectives*. Minneapolis: Fortress, p. 11).
13. Luann Becker, "Repeated Blows," (*Scientific American*, March 2002: pp. 76-83).
14. See #13. Also, Walter Alvarez, *T. Rex & the Crater of Doom*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1997).
15. Genesis 1:29-30.
16. This estimate has been mentioned often in many places. It is not a personal conjecture.
17. 2 Peter 1:21, KJV.
18. Pastor Gordon Kirk, Lake Avenue Church, Pasadena, CA.
19. John Eldredge, *The Epic* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2004), p. 40.
20. *The Times* (London), March 20, 2007

The chart on page seven portrays the same conventional wisdom as the one on the second page. That this is conjecture is no doubt. But this is the widely held view not my conjecture. You will note that the diagram at the top of the chart shows only the 4 billion year era of *life* on Earth, not even the age of our 4.5 billion-year-old planet much less the age of the 13.7 billion-year-old universe - which is portrayed in the chart on the second page. The

middle section, the colored diagram, covers only the last 600 million years. The four lines in the bottom portion refer, respectively, to the last 65 million years, 1 million years, 100,000 years and finally 12,000 years. The last period includes what may be covered by the Genesis narrative. The basic idea is that, as Dr. Unger suggests, the geologic ages came *before* the events of Genesis 1.