

TIME AND ANCIENT RECORDS

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It is shown that not only Scripture, but also the works of the pagan writers of antiquity, points to a young world, which originated no more than a few thousand years B.C. Many quotations are adduced to show this point. Also, the ancients believed, not in random evolution by chance, but for the most part in fixity of the kinds, and in practically all cases that the world about us is to be seen as a result of intelligent design.

I remember a conversation I had with Sir Mortimer Wheeler, a distinguished archaeologist, on a Mediterranean cruise in 1965. I asked him, "What about 4004 B.C. as a date for the beginning of civilization?" We were leaning on the handrail and looking out to sea. His eye gleamed as he drew himself up to his full six-foot-three, pulled out his pipe, and snorted: "That idea we have long since chewed up . . . pulverised . . . scattered to the winds!"

Later I visited the tomb of Archbishop Ussher in Westminster Abbey. (You will, of course, recall that it was Ussher who popularised 4004 as the date for Creation.) He has a beautiful epitaph. It reads (in Latin):

"Among scholars he was the most saintly,

Among saints the most scholarly."

But the question today is: was he *right*?

(Charles Darwin, too, was buried in Westminster Abbey. What does that prove?)

We shall consider the question under two headings: I. Ancient records outside the Bible; and II. Ancient records in the Bible.

I. Ancient Records Outside the Bible

Robert Young's Concordance lists thirty-seven computations of the date of Creation. Of these, thirty are based on the Bible; seven are derived from other sources—Arab, Indian, Babylonian, Chinese, Egyptian, Persian, and Abyssinian. It is interesting to note that not one of these puts the date earlier than 7000 B.C. If man has been on this planet for two million years, as evolutionists allege, it seems very strange indeed that ancient civilizations, which included expert astronomers and engineers, should have left *no record whatever* of their own history before this arbitrary date. All the myths and legends, however bizarre, speak of instant creation a few thousand years ago. In a moment we shall look at a number of ancient writers who confirm us in this opinion; but first, it is interesting to see how evolutionists try to resolve the anomaly. For example Ridpath in his *Great Races of Mankind* (New York, 1877), writes: "No child notes its coming into the world by making a record of the event for posterity . . . we must not therefore expect to find any evidence in history at first hand, relative to the date of man's appearance." (page 132) Note the false analogy: newborn infants do not keep diaries, therefore *homo sapiens* could not have written his own history! But newborn infants do not do lots of things that Adam is said to have done, like eating fruit, naming animals, and undergoing major surgery in order to get a mate . . . If, on the other hand, he was

created fully grown, and given the stars to measure time, the difficulty disappears. Adam may well have had a perfect visual memory; in which case the recording of years would have been no problem.

Now let us see what the ancient world *outside* the Bible can teach us about the Origin of Man.

A. The "Rig-Veda" is one of the holy books of India, written in Sanskrit about 1000 B.C. In Book X, 90, we find this:

From that great general sacrifice . . . were horses born, from it all cattle with two rows of teeth;

From it were generated kine, from it the sheep and goats were born. When they divided Purusha (= embodied spirit, or Man personified) how many portions did they make?

What do they call his mouth, his arms? What do they call his thighs and feet?

The *Brahmin** was his mouth, of both his arms was the *Rajanya*** made, His thighs became the *Vaisya*†, from his feet the *Sundra*‡ was produced.

Note: Although the Hindu scriptures do not regard all men as equal, they do sharply distinguish all humans from animals.

B. The Greek historian *Herodotus* (444 BC) has rightly been called the "Father of History." His quarter of a million words cover a vast canvas stretching from central Russia to South Africa and from the Caspian to the Atlantic. His own travels took him to Greece, Thrace (Bulgaria, Rumania), Scythia, Asia (Turkey), Italy, Libya, Egypt and Babylon; and he investigated the origins and culture of about one hundred tribes from the Atlas Mountains to India. Now, what has Herodotus to tell us about the *time* of the arrival of these tribes in their present locations? The general impression left upon the reader is that Europe was occupied by the Europeans *not very many centuries before the time of writing*. The Thracians had come from "Asia", the Greeks from Egypt, and the Thebans (Cadmus) from Tyre. Tyre is the oldest city mentioned: the local priests claimed for it an age of 2300 years, i.e. running back to 2750 B.C. Herodotus asserts that the Athenians originally did not speak Greek but "changed their language when they were absorbed into the Greek family of nations." Such an inquiry and such a conclusion would be possible only *in the early days* of a nation, when the subject of origins was still a matter of public interest. He is sceptical about the (comparatively) vast antiquity claimed by the Egyptians for their civiliza-

*Priests, the top caste.

**Kings, the second caste.

†Merchants, the third caste.

‡Labourers, the lowest caste.

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tion: he puts the demi-god Dionysus at 2050 B.C., whereas they allege 13,000 years beyond that.

Herodotus traces the causes of the Greco-Persian War back to the abduction of Io, princess of Argos (in Greece), by the Phoenicians who "originally came from the coasts of the Indian Ocean." This led to two reprisals: the abduction of a princess of Tyre, by Cretans, and of Medea, daughter of the king of Colchis (on the Black Sea), by Greeks. This, says Herodotus, encouraged Paris of Troy fifty years later to steal Helen from Menelaus . . . hence the Trojan War (1100 B.C.). Thus the abduction of Io, Herodotus's starting point, can scarcely have taken place earlier than 1500 B.C. Generally speaking it would be safe to say that his chronology fits comfortably into the Biblical picture of a dispersion from Babel in the third millennium B.C. Dating of the Great Pyramid has dropped in the last sixty years from 4800 to 2600 B.C. This may indicate that Herodotus was right to suspect that the Egyptians exaggerated.

The only support for Darwinism that can be found in the *Histories* is a report of "dog-headed men, and headless men with eyes in their breasts" (Herodotus does not vouch for this but merely repeats what the Libyans say); and another of a mare giving birth to a hare. Strange mutations indeed! He describes outlandish customs and legends of scores of tribes. There are the Cannibals (two varieties: those who eat their dead, and those who kill to eat), the headhunters and the scalp-hunters, the bug-biters and the skull-drinkers, the Amazons (who may not marry a man until they have killed a man), the Nameless tribe (who call each other 'you'), the Bald tribe, the troglodytes (world record-holders for running), sun-worshippers and sun-cursers, monkey-eaters and snake-eaters. Herodotus calls some of these 'uncivilized' but never drops a whisper of a hint that they are anything but truly human—even when they speak a language "like nothing on earth, it might be bats screeching."

"I acknowledge no master but Zeus (= top God) from whom I sprang", is the message sent to Darius by the king of Scythia. (The Scythians maintain that the country was uninhabited until their ancestor, a son of Zeus, arrived around 1500 B.C.). Darwin writes somewhere that he is humble enough to acknowledge his simian ancestry. All one can say is that, so far as we know, this humility was not shared by anyone known to Herodotus. Whenever pedigrees are mentioned, they are traced back to gods or demi-gods, *never* to the lower animals. The great chorus of antiquity, from East to West, from North and South, unite with the stars in declaring—"The Hand that made us is Divine."

Cicero

Towards the end of his life the Roman orator Cicero (106-43 B.C.) wrote a treatise on *The Nature of the Gods* ranging over all Greek and Roman philosophy. He refers to the Golden Age of vegetarianism when men "never did any harm to oxen," and insists that a) the stars and much of earth's produce have been created for man's sake alone, and b) many animals have been created for the service of man. When arguing against

the idea that the gods have human form, he quotes an older Latin poet as saying:

How like ourselves, in form and shape,
Is that ill-favoured beast, the ape!

But, says Cicero, outward physical similarity does *not* indicate a similar way of life (apes' habits are not ours); and conversely spiritual likeness does not betoken physical similarity. Thus "the gods must have wisdom and reason as we do, but that does not prove they look like us." Cicero has here intuitively hit on an important discovery of modern genetics: *similarity of physical structure does not necessarily indicate descent from a common ancestor*. It is "irrelevant." In the whole book there is not a syllable to suggest the idea of gradualism or transformation of one kind of creature into another. Epicurus (born 342 B.C.) is quoted as saying that ". . . the world was made by a natural process, without any need of a creator: and this process in fact comes about so *easily* that nature has created, is creating, and will create, worlds without end." In other words, no long aeons of *time* are required: "nature" can produce a rabbit out of a hat at any moment, and keep on doing it! So even the atheist lends no support to Charles Lyell's geological theories.

Although not strictly relevant to the question of time, a few more paragraphs from Cicero will show that arguments against evolution and for creation have been familiar to clear thinkers for at least two thousand years. William V. Mayer, writing in the *NABT Compendium on the Evolution-Creation Controversy* (page 96) tries to drag in the Greek philosopher Thales (640-546 B.C.) as a Darwinian before Darwin. But he does *not* tell us, as Cicero does, that Thales said: "from water the mind of God created all things!" Mayer calls Empedocles (495-435 B.C.) "the founder of the idea of evolution." Perhaps he was, but let us read Cicero's comment on his school of philosophy;

"Is it not a wonder that anyone can bring himself to believe that a number of solid and separate particles by their chance collisions and moved only by the force of their own weight could bring into being so marvellous and beautiful a world? If anybody thinks that this is possible, I do not see why he should not think that if an infinite number of examples of the twenty-one letters of the alphabet, made of gold or what you will, were shaken together and poured out on the ground it would be possible for them to fall so as to spell out, say, the whole text of the Annals of Ennius. In fact I doubt whether chance would permit them to spell out a single verse!

So how can these people bring themselves to assert that the universe has been created by the blind and accidental collisions of inanimate particles devoid of colour or any other quality? And even to assert that an infinite number of such worlds are coming into being and passing away all the time. If these chance collisions of atoms can make a world, why cannot they build a porch, or a temple, or a house or a city? A much easier and less laborious task."¹

Aristotle, too has often been (naively) invoked as a

champion of evolution, but his real sentiments have been preserved for us (from a lost book) by Cicero:

“Let us imagine a race of men who have always lived beneath the earth in fair and noble dwellings, beautified with paintings and statues and furnished with everything requisite to wealth and the blessings that wealth can bring. Let us imagine that these men have never come up to the surface of the earth but have heard by rumour and hearsay of the existence of the divine kingdom of the gods. Then let us imagine that at some point of time the jaws of the earth were opened and they were able to escape and come forth from those hidden abodes of theirs into the places where we live. When all at once they saw the land and sea and sky, beheld the majesty of the clouds and felt the power of the wind, and looked at the sun in its splendour, and came to understand its power, how it brought daylight to the world and shed its light across the sky: then, when night cast its shadow over the earth, they saw the whole heaven bright and glorious with stars, the varying brightness of the waxing and the waning moon, the rising and the setting of these heavenly bodies, and their sure and changeless course through all eternity. When they saw all these things, would they not be immediately convinced of the existence of the gods and that all these wonders were their handiwork?”²

Finally, I cannot resist including a paragraph which reminds some of us of our own humble origins 2000 years ago:

“If anyone tried to improve anything in the natural world, he would either make it worse or else attempt the impossible. All the parts of the world are so made that they could not be better adapted to their use or more beautiful to see.

Let us consider now whether all this is accidental, or whether the whole world is so constituted that it could not hold together without the guiding spirit of divine providence . . . When you look at a picture or a statue, you recognize that it is a work of art. When you follow from afar the course of a ship, upon the sea, you do not question that its movement is guided by a skilled intelligence. When you see a sundial or a water-clock, you see that it tells the time by design and not by chance. How then can you imagine that the universe as a whole is devoid of purpose and intelligence, when it embraces everything, including these artifacts themselves and their artificers? Our friend Posidonius, as you know, has recently made a globe which in its revolution shows the movements of the sun and stars and planets, by day and night, just as they appear in the sky. Now if someone were to take this globe and show it to *the people of Britain* or Scythia, would a single one of those *barbarians* fail to see that it was the product of a conscious intelligence?

Our opponents however profess to be in doubt whether the universe, the source and origin of all things, came into being by accident or by necessity or is the product of a divine intelligence. They im-

agine that Archimedes showed greater powers by imitating the motions of the heavenly bodies in a model than nature does in bringing them about. Yet the real motions are many times more subtle than his imitation of them.”³

“So let us put aside all casuistry of argument and simply let our eyes confess the splendour of the world, this world which we affirm to be the creation of the providence of God.”⁴

To sum up: Cicero was one of the most learned and prolific writers of the ancient world. His letters, speeches and treatises would fill two Bibles. But an evolutionist might search day and night for years without finding one crumb of comfort or support for Darwin in all those hundreds of thousands of words. As a trained lawyer Cicero preferred to believe the *evidence* of his senses, the *record* of history, and the *facts* of nature rather than the speculative hypotheses of head-in-air philosophers.

Ovid

One of the closest parallels to Genesis 1-11 is found in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid (43 B.C.-17 A.D.), a famous Roman poet. The parallel is in fact so close that some scholars believe he may have had the Old Testament at his elbow while he wrote. But even if he did, it is certain he would not have written for a Roman readership ideas that were *peculiar* to the Jews. It seems more probable that, if Ovid had read Moses, he simply allowed the Hebrew narrative to give more definite shape and form to the vague legends which had been current for centuries among his own people. We give some quotations (mainly) from the Loeb translation:

Creation

Scarce had the creator thus parted off all things within their determined bounds, when the stars . . . began to gleam throughout the sky . . . The sea became home for shining fishes, earth received the beasts, and mobile air the birds.

Man

A living creature of finer stuff than these, more capable of lofty thought, one who could have dominion over all the rest, was lacking yet. Then man was born . . . the Craftsman of the universe, designing a more perfect world, made man of His own divine substance . . . So then the earth, which had but *late-ly* been a rough and formless thing, was changed, and clothed itself with forms of men before unknown.

Golden Age

Golden was that first age, which, with no one to compel, without a law, of its own will kept faith and did the right . . . Then spring was everlasting, and gentle zephyrs with warm breath played with the flowers that sprang unplanted . . . the earth untilled brought forth her stores of grain . . . streams of milk flowed and yellow honey was distilled from the verdant oak.

Giants

They say that the giants essayed the very throne of heaven, piling huge mountains one upon another, clear up to the stars . . .

Wickedness of the Human Race

Wherever the plains of earth extend, wild fury reigns supreme. You would deem it a conspiracy of crime. Let them all pay the penalty which they have deserved.

Flood

Jove . . . preferred a different punishment, to destroy the human race beneath the waves and to send down rain from every quarter of the sky . . . and now the sea and land have no distinction. All is sea, and sea without a shore. . . . The wolf swims among the sheep, lions and tigers are borne along by the waves. . . .

Saved by Faith

When Deucalion and his wife, borne in a little skiff, had come to land (on Mount Parnassus), they first worshipped . . . there was no better man than he, none more scrupulous of right, nor was any woman more reverent of the gods than she.

Restoration of the Earth

When therefore the earth, covered with mud from the *recent* flood, became heated by the hot rays of the sun, it brought forth innumerable forms of life . . . also the huge Python, a snake unknown before, which was a terror to *new-created* men . . . This monster did Apollo destroy; and in order that the fame of his deed might not perish through lapse of time, he instituted sacred games called Pythian from the name of the serpent he had overthrown. At these games every youth who had been victorious . . . received the honour of an oaken garland. For as yet the laurel tree did not exist . . . (Ovid goes on to tell the Legend of the Laurel . . . how Daphne was turned into a tree to escape the attentions of Apollo)

Note: So far as we know, the Pythian Games were started not earlier than 1000 B.C. Therefore it seems probable that in Ovid's mind the Flood had occurred not more than two thousand years before his own time. Otherwise there seems to be no reason why he should have connected the Python with the Flood.

Juvenal

Juvenal lived in Rome in the first century A.D. and wrote twelve books of Satires on Roman society. He castigates all manner of folly, ignorance and vice, and has some wise words to say on the subject of parents setting an example for their children. Among "bad" examples he includes the Jewish father who "*gives up every seventh day to idleness, keeping it apart from all the concerns of life.*"

Let us pause to think about this. Here we have God's chosen people living at the heart of the world's most powerful empire . . . and what are they noted for? Sabbath-keeping! (circumcision too, but several other races besides the Jews practiced this). For this unique custom they are ridiculed and vilified. This had been going on for six centuries, since the capture of Jerusalem, (i.e. by Nebuchadnezzar), so for 30,000 weeks. And it has continued for a further 100,000 weeks. To date, God's people have celebrated about 130,000 sabbaths world-wide among the Gentiles. Now, did God

mean this to be a witness to what He really did in space and time? Or, is sabbath-keeping a kind of Cosmic Practical Joke, designed to make the whole world laugh at the expense of the Jew? Can we believe that God is good and true if He allowed His people to be mocked week after week, year after year and century after century, for acting out a charade which was in fact a stupendous *lie*? To many it will seem more probable that God gave the Jews this unique Sabbath commandment, unparalleled anywhere in the heathen world, to be a permanent memorial—more impressive than the pyramids—of His unique and unparalleled act of Creation.

Of course this has relevance only to the question time—how long? not to the question time—when? of creation. But if we admit that Exodus 20:11 must be literally true, then there would seem to be good grounds for accepting Genesis 5 and 11, too, as literal chronology . . . as the ancient Jews certainly did.

Josephus

A contemporary of Juvenal was Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian. Concerning Noah's flood he writes:

*All the writers of barbarian histories make mention of this flood and of this ark; among whom is Berosus the Chaldean; for when he is describing the circumstances of the flood he goes on thus: 'It is said that there is still some part of this ship in Armenia, at the mountain of the Cordyaeans, and that some people carry off pieces of the bitumen' . . . Hieronymus the Egyptian also, and Mnaseas, and a great many more, make mention of the same. Nicolaus of Damascus in his ninety-sixth book speaks thus: 'There is a great mountain in Armenia . . . upon which it is reported that many who fled at the time of the Deluge were saved; and that one who was carried in an ark came ashore on the top of it; and that the remains of the timber were a great while preserved. This might be the man about whom Moses, the legislator of the Jews, wrote.'*⁵

With regard to the long ages of the patriarchs in Genesis 5 and 11, Josephus evidently anticipates some incredulity in his readers, so he adds: ". . . the time is written down in our sacred books, those who then lived having noted down with great accuracy both the births and deaths of illustrious men."⁶ And later:

Now I have for witnesses to what I have said *all those that have written Antiquities, both among the Greeks and barbarians*; for even Manetho, who wrote the Egyptian History, and Berosus, who collected the Chaldean Monuments, and Mochus, and Hestiaeus, and beside these Hieronymus the Egyptian, and those who composed the Phoenician History, agree to what I say here; Hesiod also, and Hecataeus, Hellanicus and Acusilaus; and besides, Ephorus and Nicolaus, relate that the ancients lived a thousand years.⁷

Comment

1. Of course it is always possible to argue that a dozen historians widely scattered over the Near East might have copied the same gigantic lie from some solitary document, but many people will think it more probable

that the longevity of the patriarchs was a *fact* well known to the sons of Noah and passed on to their grandchildren as they dispersed to become progenitors of the different races of mankind.

2. The fact that "all the writers of barbarian histories" mention the Flood argues strongly for the view that it occurred in the third millennium rather than untold thousands of years before.

Tacitus (55-120 A.D.) was the most distinguished historian of the Roman Empire in his day. In his *Germania* he names sixty-three German tribes, records their legends and comments on their manners and morals. Three points are of particular interest:

1. *They trace their ancestry back to a god:*

"In the traditional songs which form their only record of the past the Germans celebrate an earth-born god called Tuisto. His son Mannus is supposed to be the fountain-head of their race . . ."

2. *Their history begins with the Trojan War or a few centuries earlier:*

"The Germans, like many other peoples, are said to have been visited by Hercules, and they sing of him as the foremost of all the heroes when they are about to engage in battle. Ulysses also is supposed by some to have visited German lands and to have founded and named Asciburgium, a town on the Rhine inhabited to this day."

3. *Some tribes were civilized while at the same time other tribes were barbarous and beastly:*

"The Chatti are the noblest people of Germany, and one that prefers to maintain its greatness by righteous dealings. Untouched by greed or lawless ambition, they dwell in quiet seclusion, never provoking a war, never robbing or plundering their neighbors . . ." "Their marriage code is strict, and no feature of their morality deserves higher praise."

"The Fenni are astonishingly savage and disgustingly poor. They have no proper weapons, no horses, no homes. They eat wild herbs, dress in skins, and sleep on the ground . . . the only way they have of protecting their infants against wild beasts is to hide them under a makeshift covering of interlaced branches . . ."

And again these facts fit very well into the Biblical post-Flood chronology and swift divergence of the races after Babel. These facts do *not* seem to agree with the hypothesis of man's slow emergence from an animal ancestry via cave-manhood over millions of years.

Lucretius

Our last but by no means least important witness shall be Lucretius (100-45 B. C.), a Roman poet and ardent disciple of Epicurus, founder of the Epicurean school of philosophy. A century ago when Darwinism was the Greatest Show on Earth, evolutionists began to ransack the Classics to find some support for the new-fangled theory of man's origin. Precious little *could* be found, but Lucretius seemed a promising candidate, with his denial of all interference by Deity, and of life after death. Andrew White refers to him a dozen times in *History of the Warfare of Science with Religion*

(1896) and even eight years ago Sir Gavin de Beer thought it worth while to quote Lucretius to lend weight to his own arguments against design in Nature: "Chance was exactly what Lucretius invoked to explain living organisms." (*Adaptation* 1972, page 2). But unfortunately the poet failed to invoke time also, limitless time along with chance; and it will be easy to show that Lucretius' view of the origin of the world agrees much better with the Bible account, God excepted, than with Darwin's. Here are some quotations (all from Book V):

1. Why have no poets sung of feats before the Theban War and the tragedy of Troy (1100 B.C.)? The answer, I believe, is that *the world is newly made*: its origin is a recent event, not one of remote antiquity. That is why even now some arts are being perfected . . .

2. Then it was that the earth brought forth the first mammals . . . it is not surprising that more and bigger ones developed in those days when Earth and atmosphere were young.

3. There was a great superfluity of heat and moisture in the soil . . . the childhood of the world provoked no hard frosts or excessive heat or boisterous winds.

4. . . there never were nor ever can be, creatures with a double nature, combining organs of different origin in a single body . . .

5. The animals cannot have fallen from the sky, and those that live on land *cannot have emerged* from the briny gulfs . . .

6. The name of 'mother' has rightly been bestowed upon the Earth, since it brought forth the human race and gave birth to every beast . . . and *at the same time* to the birds of the air . . .

If you had suggested to Lucretius that the human race evolved from monkey-like ancestors, he would have laughed. The only 'evolution' he postulated is from primitive *man* to civilized *man*, and all within a few thousand years.

7. The varieties of herbs and cereals and trees cannot be produced in this composite fashion: *each species develops according to its own kind*, and they all guard their own specific characters in obedience to the laws of Nature.

8. Another legend tells how water likewise once massed its forces and began to prevail, till many cities of men were drowned beneath its flood.

So, two thousand years ago Lucretius, an atheist philosopher whose driving purpose was to rid the world of 'superstition' by teaching 'science', believed in:

1. A young Earth
2. More and larger animals in (recent) prehistoric times.
3. Original ideal climate.
4. No half-and-half creatures.
5. No conquest of the land by sea creatures.
6. Simultaneous origin of all creatures and man.
7. Fixity of species.
8. A gigantic Flood.

And this is the *best* support that can be found among philosophers of the ancient world, for the modern theory of evolution!

Babylonian Legend

As a postscript we shall glance at the Babylonian version of the Flood—on clay tablets dated not earlier than 2000 B.C. If, as some scholars affirm, the Flood took place at least three thousand years before Abraham (2000 B.C.), how could the story have survived by *oral* tradition over a hundred generations? Note also the Chinese ideograph for ship is the figure eight + mouths, which strongly suggests Noah and his family in the Ark. This would fit in well with the fact that the earliest Chinese writing is dated around 2200 B.C., probably a century or two after the Flood. It does *not* fit at all well with the idea that writing was not invented until thousands of years after the Flood, by which time hundreds of other ship-stories would have become much more familiar than Noah's.

The Sirius Enigma

One of the most puzzling problems for a "molecules-to-man" evolutionist concerns the bright star Sirius. This is thoroughly discussed by Kenneth Brecher, Associate Professor of Physics at MIT, in *Astronomy of the Ancients*.⁸ Sirius is now classified as a 'white dwarf', but the ancient records—Babylonian (700 B.C.), Greek (270 B.C. and 150 A.D.), and Latin (50 B.C. and 10 B.C.), all describe it as copper-coloured or reddish. Now—the theory of stellar evolution supposed that it takes a million years for a 'red giant' to shrink to a 'white dwarf'. How come, then, that Sirius appears to have made the transformation in only two thousand years? The problem has not been solved, and perhaps never will be. But it illustrates a very important principle: *scientific theories* worked out on the drawing-board, and extrapolation into 'prehistory', *must yield to actual observations by ancient writers*. The present theory of stellar evolution cannot be correct, at least as regards *time*, if it fails to account for Sirius changing from red to white.

In much the same way, I suggest, the evolutionary theory of man's origin cannot be correct if it finds no support whatever from the observations, legends, and recorded histories of the ancient world. One has only to look at Rome, Egypt, the Incas, Aztecs and Mayas, to see that civilization can run downhill as well as up. But Victorian materialists, "drunk with power" and self-esteem arising from the remarkable technological progress of the nineteenth century, decided that man must always have been climbing upward, drew a graph, and extrapolated backwards until the line hit zero, i.e. the amoeba. Only later did they discover that this theory contradicts just about everything that the greatest minds of antiquity have written about man's origin. So, which shall we choose, to believe—modern theory, or ancient history? Kenneth Brecher's conclusion is challenging:

I would much prefer to learn stellar evolution (i.e. the *actual history* of stars) from the ancient myths of man than from *the modern myths of the computer!*⁹

Conclusion

In all ancient literature there is no suggestion that the

history of Man goes back hundreds of thousands or even tens of thousands of years. The evidence points to the emergence of 'homo sapiens' only a few thousand years ago, with memories of a golden age, and a disaster affecting the whole human race; the re-population of Europe and North Africa from some center in the Middle East; and the *co-existence* of 'cave man' and 'civil' man for hundreds of years B.C. and A.D. If Juvenal or Cicero had known that one day a Briton would concoct a theory of man's ascent from the monkey, they would have regarded it as the ultimate in decadence and folly, and proof of the essential inferiority of the British race.

Biblical Chronology

Now we shall consider the question: Does the Old Testament give a chronology from the Creation?

The answer given by many evangelical scholars today is decidedly no! Typical is the statement in one well-known Bible dictionary: "The compressed chronology of Archbishop Ussher, who assumes an unbroken succession of father-son relationships in Genesis 5 and 11, is untenable in the light of attested archaeological facts"

The *New Scofield Bible* (1967) agrees: "Scripture does not reveal the exact date of Adam's creation . . ." "Scripture does not provide data by which the date of the Flood can be discovered. . ."

Dare we challenge this consensus of opinion among so many learned and devout scholars? I think we may—nay, must—for the following reasons:

I. Every Bible commentator up to 1860 believed that the Old Testament gives a precise chronology running back to the date of creation.

II. Every Bible chronologer before 1860 put the date of creation between 3900 and 5500 B.C.

III. No commentators or chronologers before 1860 suggested there might be gaps in the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11.

IV. Modern archaeology is based upon Darwinian presuppositions.

V. Darwinian presuppositions have been discredited.

Therefore

VI. We have no good reason for doubting that the old chronologers were right!

First, then, let us look at some old commentators:

a. Bishop Joseph Butler (1736) in his *Analogy of Religion*, writes (pp. 270 & 274):

"The Old Testament contains a chronological account of the beginning of the world, and from thence an *unbroken genealogy of mankind* for many ages before common history begins . . . a continued thread of history of the length of between three and four thousand years.

Its chronology is no way contradicted but is really confirmed by the natural and civil history of the world, collected from common historians, from the state of the earth, and from the late invention of arts and sciences . . . the Scripture contains an *unbroken thread of history* from the Creation to the Captivity."

b. The famous eighteenth century commentators,

Table 1. Some dates given by well-known chronologers for the Creation.

Chronologer	Date of writing	Date given for Creation, B.C.
Clinton	1840	4100
Hales	1809	5400
Ussher	1640	4004
Scaliger	1590	4700
Melanchthon	1520	3960
Theophilus of Antioch	250	5500
Josephus	70	5200
The Seventy*	250 B.C.	5200

*I.e., the traditional seventy translators of the Old Testament into Greek. Reasons will be given later for thinking that they were chronologers as well as translators.

Matthew Henry, Thomas Scott, and John Brown, accepted Ussher's dating without question; and many editions included a separate chronological summary. John Brown began his commentary with these words: "In this book (Genesis) we have the inspired history of the great events of 2369 years . . ."

c. Going back to the Reformers we find exactly the same interpretation. Martin Luther (1520) wrote: "We know from Moses that the world was not in existence before 6000 Years ago" John Calvin (1554) agreed. We can even quote William Shakespeare, not indeed as a theologian but as reflecting the common belief of educated people in the sixteenth century: "The poor world is almost six thousand years old . . ." says Rosalind in *As You Like It* (Act IV, sc. 1).

II. Secondly, *every Bible Chronologer before 1860 put the date of creation at 3900 to 5500 B.C.* Some of the best known are given in Table 1.

III. Thirdly, *no commentator or chronologer before 1860 ever suggested that there might be gaps in the genealogies.* One reason for this is obvious: if gaps existed, all their labour would have been in vain. Chronologers would be out of business if there were no chronology. But, in fact, many brilliant scholars and mathematicians (including Sir Isaac Newton) devoted years of their life to Bible chronology, in the firm conviction that *God invented dating*, and we miss something important if we neglect this part of His revelation.

Why were these scholars so sure they were *not* wasting their time?

A. Because it is obvious that the Old Testament is basically *history* with a superstructure of *prophecy*, and for both of these an accurate chronology is essential. Every child wants to know his/her own age, most children enjoy looking at their parents' wedding photographs, and some are even interested in the *date*. The Bible is the Family Album of the human race, and since the dawn of history most people have wanted to know how they began and when.

Now let us look at the number of times 'year' or 'years' is mentioned in the Old Testament, as given in Table 2.

Table 2. The number of times the words "year" or "years" occur in the Old Testament.

Books	Number of times
Genesis	112
Exodus—Deuteronomy	177
Joshua—II Samuel	53
Kings—Esther	234
Prophets, etc.	124
Whole Old Testament	700

Seven hundred is a lot of times, even in a book of one thousand pages. When we look more closely, we find a tight chronological system running right through, from the end back to the beginning.

1. There is the period of sixty-nine weeks in the prophecy given to Daniel. This is usually taken to mean 483 years from the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the time of Christ. Here we have no time to go into the details, but scholars agree that from Nehemiah's day to the Crucifixion was about four hundred eighty years.

2. Before that we have the seventy years of captivity prophesied by Jeremiah and fulfilled over the lifetime of Daniel. The seventy years was not an arbitrary figure but planned by God as a punishment fitting the crime . . . because for four hundred ninety years the Jews had failed to obey the command to let the land lie fallow every seventh year (Lev. 26:34).

3. From the Captivity back to Solomon, time was reckoned by Kings' reigns—about four hundred fourteen years.

4. Then in I Kings 6:1 we are given a total of four hundred eighty years from the Exodus to Solomon's Temple.

5. Back from the Exodus, time was measured in terms of the length of the Israelites' sojourn in Egypt—four hundred thirty years (Exodus 12:40).

6. Moses now had a 'problem'—how to link the personal chronology of Jacob's family with the national epoch of Israel's migration to Egypt. The problem is neatly solved by Jacob's interview with Pharaoh, at which he confesses that he is *only* one hundred thirty years old (Genesis 47:9).

That the method of computing time *changes* at this point is made abundantly clear by the fact that we are *not* told the age of Joseph at the age of the birth of his sons Manasseh and Ephraim, although Joseph was evidently Jacob's spiritual heir and the 'prophet' of Israel after his father's death. We do know Jacob's age at the birth of Joseph because Joseph was thirty-nine when his father was one hundred thirty (41:46 with 45:11 and 47:9), and *from Jacob back to Adam the precise age of each father at the birth of his spiritual-her son is carefully noted.*

Here it may be objected that I am begging the question, that I am stating as a fact what I have yet to prove. So I shall re-phrase my last sentence:

We can say with certainty that from Joseph back to Abraham in Genesis 12 there is a precise chronology based on each father's age at the birth of his son; so the presumption is very strong that the same writer would

use the same method to continue his chronology right back to the beginning of the human race.

Professor S. R. Driver wrote, in 1902: "There is a systematic chronology running through the book almost to the end, so carefully and methodically constructed that every important birth, marriage, and death, has its assigned place in it."

So, if we accept that Genesis 5 and 11 are chronological, we can view the Old Testament as a self-consistent whole, a yard-stick by which to measure all human history. But, if we believe the gaps-between-the-godly-theory, we are saying that the first eleven chapters are totally different from the rest of God's Book in that they include no meaningful measurements of time but only a mass of *meaningless* figures.

B. Another argument against the gap theory stems from the fact that five of the connections in Genesis 5 and 11 *must* have been from literal father to literal son:

1. Adam and Eve named Seth
2. Seth named Enos
3. Lamech named Noah
4. Noah was clearly the literal father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth
5. Terah was clearly the literal father of Abraham.

C. A third argument against the gap theory is this: When Moses wished to denote an ancestor-descendant relationship, he used a different phrase altogether. We see this in 4:20 and 21, and 17:5. Here the word 'father' (Hebrew *ab*) is used, obviously in a non-literal sense. So if Moses had wished to say that the patriarchs were only the *ancestors* of their 'sons', he could have easily done it by the use of this word. The fact that he did *not* choose to use *ab* is, I believe, strong evidence that he wished to make it crystal clear that the succession of men of God was father-son throughout.

Here I regard it as my painful duty to comment on the footnotes in the *New International Version* on Genesis 5 and 11 . . . painful because I am sure the NIV is in most respects an excellent translation. But, footnotes state that the word 'father' in *these* chapters may mean 'ancestor'; whereas no footnote is given to explain the metaphorical use in 4:20-21 and 17:5! In fact, the word *yalad*, translated 'beget', 'bear' or 'be born' in the King James Version, is *always* used of a literal father-son or mother-son relationship, with four exceptions only out of the four hundred and fifty *other* places (i.e. not in these chapters) in the Old Testament. The four exceptions are: Genesis 46:18 and 22, Deuteronomy 4:25, and 23:8. In each of these the meaning is perfectly clear because *both* the children *and* the grandchildren are mentioned. There are no 'gaps'. So throughout the Old Testament not one example can be shown of '*yalad*' meaning 'became the ancestor of'. The NIV footnotes are, I suggest, unfortunate and unwarranted. Let us hope they will be removed in the next edition.

D. The fourth reason why older commentators accepted these chapters as chronology is found in Genesis 1:14, where God clearly states that He made the sun, moon, and stars as *timekeepers*. So far as we know, the earth's orbit round the sun serves no biological purpose. We would live just as long if the earth simply rotated on its axis in one spot and the stars looked exactly the same

every night. But that was not the way God wanted it. He invented dating!—and told Adam all about it. How else could Adam have measured his age? He must have looked up at the stars the first night after his creation and *memorized* what they looked like. The Hebrew word for 'year' means 'repetition', and when the stars were again in exactly the same position as on that first night, Adam knew that one year had passed and he *re-corded* it. Why? . . . we can never fully answer any 'why?' about God, but we can say that this counting of years and keeping of birthdays answers to something deep down in man's nature. God created man with a time-keeping mind, and He appointed the stars, especially, to mark that time by their repetition. The fact that the *first* man was able to tell the years of his life is strong evidence, I suggest, that *God intended all mankind to know the age of the earth*. This is confirmed by the enormous interest in astronomy which we find in ancient civilizations.⁸

Of course from Abraham onwards the chronology serves another important purpose . . . to show how God's promises were precisely and literally fulfilled (e.g. the four hundred years in Egypt, forty years in the wilderness, seventy years captivity, etc.). But in Genesis 5 and 11 there are no prophecies, so the *only* purpose seems to be to show (a) how the patriarchs overlapped one another by many centuries and (b) how long was the span of years back to Creation.

E. The fifth argument against gaps brings us back to the seventy translators of the Old Testament into Greek. These Jews living in Egypt around 250 BC were no doubt well acquainted with the Egyptian chronology, which claimed an antiquity of five thousand years for their civilization. Thus the Jews were under pressure to conform their Hebrew figures to the Egyptian, because every race likes to think it is the 'original' or oldest. Now there are two ways to stretch a chronology: 1. to insert more names into the pedigree; and 2. to increase the age of each father before the birth of his son. Remember that the Seventy had access to hundreds of documents now lost, and to the whole oral tradition of the Hebrew race. Nevertheless they did not attempt to interpolate new names (except possibly Cainan in 10:24). They *did*, probably, increase the age of some fathers before their sons were born. This seems to be strong evidence that: 1. the Seventy regarded Genesis 5 and 11 as a chronology standing in competition with the Egyptian chronology; and 2. two thousand years ago Jews had never heard the slightest whisper of a suggestion that names had been omitted from the genealogies. If they had had any such suspicion, those names would almost certainly have been restored to the list in order to increase the aggregate of years.

F. Finally, the learned Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, writing about the same time as our Gospels were written, *adds up the total* number of years from Adam to the Flood. This proves that Josephus regarded the figures as a chronology. Of course he was not inspired or infallible, but few would question that his belief was typical of all Jews of his day and, in fact, of all Jews since the time of Moses.

These then are some of the reasons that led sixty

generations of Christians to believe that Genesis 5 and 11 are intended to be a literal strict chronology.

Let us now briefly consider three modern objections to the chronological interpretation:

Objection Number 1

There are ten names from Adam to Noah, and ten names from Shem to Abraham. It is alleged that this congruity cannot be natural but must be artificial. "One or other of the branches has been lopped to give an appearance of symmetry."

I would be more impressed by this argument had I not, as a boy, been an avid reader of Ripley's *Believe It or Not*. Coincidences happen every day, and it is possible to point to many both inside and outside the Bible. Jacob had twelve sons, but so did Ishmael (Genesis 17:20). In the last five hundred years there have been four Houses of Kings and Queens in England: five *Tudor* monarchs, six *Stuarts*, five *Hanoverians*, and six of the House of *Windsor*. 5 - 6 - 5 - 6 . . . what a coincidence!

Who would have predicted that three out of the first five Presidents of the United States would die on Independence Day, two of them on the Fiftieth Anniversary? Four thousand years from now a sceptical historian might well attribute these dates to a superstitious chronicler . . . yet it happened, just so. Truth is indeed stranger than fiction, and we have no reason to doubt that the ten names in each list represent one more minor coincidence in the vast kaleidoscope of history.

Objection Number 2

"Since there are gaps in the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1, therefore we may assume that there are similar gaps in Genesis 5 and 11." In my book *The Great Brain Robbery*, Appendix D, I have answered this objection, so it need not detain us here.⁹ Suffice to say that Luke's genealogy is obviously the definitive one for the generations *before* Abraham, and there is no evidence that he has omitted *any* names from the list of seventy-five.

Objection Number 3

"If Noah was the only righteous man on earth before the Flood began, Methuselah could not have lived to the very year of the Flood, as the no-gap interpretation would require."

But, when we turn to the verses supposed to prove this, we find:

a. Genesis 6:9 does *not* state that Noah was the only righteous man on earth. It says he was "*perfect in his generations*". Genesis 7:1 repeats (almost) the same phrase, "*in his generation*". Noah's generation was not Methuselah's generation because Methuselah was Noah's grandfather. So there could have been two righteous men on the earth (three, if we include Lamech, who died five years before the Flood) at the same time, each unique *in his own generation*.

b. Even if Genesis 7:1 implies that Noah was literally the only righteous person alive on earth at that precise moment (but what about his family, weren't they

righteous too?), notice that these words were spoken just one week before the Deluge. Therefore Methuselah was probably dead already, having died the very *year* of the Flood but not necessarily in the last *week* before the Lord shut Noah in.

So, the no-gap interpretation still makes very good sense; whereas this objection seems to be clutching at a straw or the shadow of a straw.

Summary So Far

- A. Ancient Records outside the Bible indicate that man's history goes back *certainly* no farther than 7000 BC and *probably* no farther than 4000 - 5000 BC.
- B. The chronology of the Bible dates Creation about 6000 years ago.

Proposition IV. Modern Archaeology is Based Upon Darwinian Presuppositions

This is admitted by almost all archaeologists. Here are two quotations:

1. "It needed a revolution in men's conception of the nature and antiquity of Man, before the bare notion of primary prehistory could take birth. Such a revolution was wrought by the publication in 1859 of Charles Darwin's 'Origin of Species' . . . In Huxley's words, *acceptance of Darwin's views made it essential* to "extend by long epochs the most liberal estimate that has yet been made of the Antiquity of Man."¹⁰

2. "Archbishop Ussher's date of 4004 BC for the Creation was still widely believed in the 1830's and in the absence of any convincing proof to the contrary it was difficult to get any general acceptance of the concept of the prehistoric archaeology . . . the final proof of the antiquity of man was not to come until 1859. . ."¹¹

Proposition V. Darwinian Presuppositions Have Been Largely Discredited

Ample evidence in support of this statement has already been adduced by Creationists—and others. Here I shall content myself with one quotation . . . from Norman Macbeth's brilliant little book *Darwin Retried*.

"Classical Darwinism has slowly been abandoned piece by piece but the public has not been informed . . . it has become increasingly evident that there are serious difficulties even with neo-Darwinism, and many mysteries . . . remain intractable."¹²

One of the *most* intractable mysteries is the origin of Man. The frantic hunt for the "missing link" has left a trail of fraud and fallacies unprecedented, I think, in the history of Science. One need only mention Java Man, Pekin Man, Piltown Man, Nebraska Man, and Neanderthal Man. The gross errors associated with these "discoveries" clearly stemmed from faith in Darwinism.

Conclusion: Proposition VI. We Have no Good Reason for Doubting that the Old Chronologers were Right!

To a candid and impartial observer there can be little doubt that the gaps-in-the-genealogies theory was a

desperate expedient invented by frightened men. Anxiously eyeing the dark clouds of Darwinism on the theological horizon, and hearing the roar of an approaching storm, they decided to jettison the Bible dates in hope of saving the ship of Christianity. Vain hope! The storm swept over them and swallowed up the dates, but that was just the beginning. Next the Pentateuch, then the whole Old Testament, then the Gospels, came under attack. What was left of Christianity after the self-styled "experts" had finished battering the Bible, bears no resemblance to the Faith of our Fathers.

Looking back over one hundred twenty years we can see, I think, that the strategy of men like B. B. Warfield and W. H. Green of Princeton was mistaken, though well-meaning. Their great reputation carried the day . . . but in this matter the reputation of One greater than Warfield or Green is at stake: that is, the reputation of God Himself. God is the greatest Communicator of all time. He had at His disposal all languages, all verbs and all shades of meaning, when He caused these genealogies to be written. Moreover He foreknew, we must believe, that these chapters would be translated into a thousand tongues and distributed by the million in every corner of the globe. Are we to suppose that He was so idle or so incompetent as to leave one hundred generations of His people groping in darkness, fondly imagining that the date of Creation could be computed by simple addition, when in fact the ages of the patriarchs have *nothing to do with dating*, as Warfield and Green affirm? Would any human father so carelessly allow his children to be misled? On the contrary, we agree with Dr. H. C. Leupold's comment:

"There is no reason for doubting the correctness of the chronology submitted by the Hebrew Massoretic text . . . No other nation has anything to com-

pare with it . . . The claim that the Scriptures do not give a complete and accurate chronology for the whole period of the Old Testament that they cover, is utterly wrong, dangerous, and mischievous."¹³

The ones who have been misled, I suggest, are the archaeologists who followed Darwin down the garden path and (like the biologists) have "engendered fragile towers of hypothesis based upon hypotheses, where fact and fiction mingle in an inextricable confusion"¹⁴

It was of such people that David wrote: "He who sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision".

And among all the saints in glory, none, I think, will enjoy the merriment more . . . than Archbishop James Ussher!

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⁷*Ibid.*, p. 39.
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SATELLITE OBSERVATIONS CONFIRM THE DECLINE OF THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD

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Measurements by the NASA's Magsat satellite, between October 1979 and June 1980, corroborate the conclusion which had already been reached: that the Earth's magnetic field is decreasing—not oscillating, but decreasing monotonically and exponentially. In this article the evidence for a young Earth which such a decay provides is considered; also the question, what will happen if the present decay continues.

Decay Evidence

New evidence of the decline in the earth's magnetic field has been provided by NASA's Magsat satellite which orbited the earth from October 1979 to June 1980. Dr. Robert Langel, chief project scientist, stated that if the present rate of decline continues the earth's magnetic poles will reverse in about 1,200 years.¹ A decline in the earth's magnetic field had been noted in

other spacecraft observations for several years prior to this. However, Langel's news release is in reference to the findings from Magsat, which is the first American spacecraft expressly designed to study earth's magnetic properties.

There is nothing new about the fact that the earth's main magnetic field, its *dipole* field, is decreasing at a rapid rate. Sidney Chapman reported in 1951 that the earth's magnetic field is decreasing at a rate that is "unparalleled" by any other geophysical phenomenon. He described its rate of decay as a *few per cent per cen-*

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