

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Driscoll Essay

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Old Testament Orientation I

by

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## 1. My Creation View

I tend to lean towards Historic Creationism, as laid out by Driscoll. I have struggled over the years somewhat with what I believe in regards to creation. I grew up in churches that only ever taught one view, a literal, six 24 hour day creation period, with the implication being that if I did not accept that view, than I did not believe the Bible.

College was a shock to my system; my Old Testament Survey class stunned me when the professor laid out many of these views and treated them all as valid. In the years since, I have been grateful for her rocking my theology that day; it challenged me on how I approached the topic. As I said in the opening sentence, I *tend* to lean towards Historic Creationism. The evidence supports an old earth, with a relatively new human population, so I accept the idea of a period of time between the creation of a formless planet, and the creation of man. At the same time, like the miracle of the water turning to wine, I accept the possibility that God could speed up the process resulting in a universe appearing to be older than it actually is, much like the wine that would have seemed far older than it actually was.

I *tend* to believe in literal 24 hour days of creation, yet I recognize the writing style as poetry and possibly not literal. I question the measurement of time when the sun, moon and stars were not created until the fourth day. It also brings in to question the age of the earth as the creation of stars would have been after the gap referenced in the Gap Theory, yet would have taken far more time for their light to travel the distance to our planet.

All that to say, I tend to accept the Historic Creationism view, but I recognize strongly that it is very possible that none of us will have a complete understanding of creation until we are with God in eternity, so I am not aggressive in defending or asserting my interpretation of

something that in my opinion is not a piece of theology impacting salvation or relationships with God.

## **2. Genesis 1-3**

There are three details in the first three chapters that jump out at me and influence my interpretation of the creation story.

The repeated refrain at the end of each day, marking the passing of evening and morning, give weight to a literal 24 hour day. At the same time, this is not a passage written strictly as history, as other parts of Genesis are, which could lend support to these refrains being placed more as a type of rhythm in the story. How many centuries was this story told and passed on before Moses wrote it? It certainly explains the tone of the rendition.

The creation of the sun, moon and stars midway through the week is the perhaps the most challenging part of the creation story for me to explain. Because of the astrological data regarding the speed of light, I wrestle with the actual length of the days. Waiting for the starlight to appear would certainly explain the age of our planet, but would make a literal 24 hour day implausible.

I do believe in a literal Adam and Eve, with a literal original sin. I struggle at times with their lack of surprise to a talking serpent, and wonder at times how the story has been simplified or changed over the generations. Were they used to speaking creatures? Interacting with angels in different forms? Did the retelling of the story generation after generation gradually weed out elements of surprise or other pieces of information and center on the core issue of temptation and man's fall?

## **3. Age of the Universe**

Over the last five years I have come to accept an old universe view. Much like Driscoll points out on page 95, this does not conflict with a literal 24 hour day view, other than my previously mentioned observations, and can be reconciled with Genesis 1-11. My interpretation lines up with his in that man was created within the last 10,000 years by God on what may have been an already ancient planet.

Granted, God could have created a young earth that appeared old, but why? In the case of the Jesus transforming the water to wine, creating something that would have been assumed to be much older than it actually was, it was made clear to the reader that that was the case.

I do accept the idea of tracing the age of humanity based on the genealogies in the Bible. Great importance was placed in the culture on recording the firstborn son and the age of the father at the time, so as long as their calendars were reasonably accurate, we can make some general assumptions about the age of mankind based on the Bible's genealogies. Science seems to affirm the Biblical account in this matter by claiming man has been around for less than 10,000 years.

#### **4. Biblical Evolution?**

I have never been able to rationalize the view that involves God guiding an evolutionary process. I feel strongly that science would need to confirm the concept and have not yet seen compelling evidence to that end. The lack of fossil record for the different stages of evolution, and the reality that the creation story in the Bible seems to present an earth with birds, animals and man created together, and existing much as they do today other than minor adaptations to climates and regions, both of these issues are the primary causes of my reluctance to accept this interpretation.

While evolution is widely accepted, when pressed most would admit it is still called a theory because it has not been proven to date. Unlike the evidence for an old earth, the data just does not seem to support the type of massive evolutionary change proposed by many. In every other scenario, history and science tend to agree with and affirm the Bible. Cultures cited in scriptures have been discovered. Historical data has been confirmed in other sources. There is room in the creation story to support the scientific and astrological evidence of an ancient universe. However, evolution would seem to contradict the creation story; God created and said it was good – if it was good, why would change be necessary? And is not supported convincingly in science.

In our culture it is a significant issue, and believers should be ready with an answer. However, at this point in my faith development, I just do not see it as a viable piece of theology that I can accept or defend.