

EDITORIAL

CREATIONISTS CHALLENGE CREATIONISTS

There have always been disputations within creationism. Recently, however, the disagreements have taken a notable increase in both number and significance. Of more than passing interest is the observation that some of the most “sacred cows” that have characterized creationism are being challenged by other creationists. Significant issues under consideration include: 1) Is the speed of light changing in a way that points to a recent creation? 2) Are the Paluxy River man-tracks valid evidence of the existence of man in the Mesozoic? 3) Is there valid evidence for out-of-order fossils in the paleontological record? 4) Do pleochroic halos demonstrate instantaneous creation? 5) Does variation in the intensity of the geomagnetic field point to a recent creation? 6) Is there valid evidence for the presence of pollen derived from higher plants in the Precambrian?

These disputations are doubtless of concern to many creationists who see some of their most popular arguments weakening under challenge. Further, evolutionists — who have never fully recovered from their Piltdown Hoax — have not exhibited much reticence in announcing these creationistic disagreements to the public press. Although one might be tempted to ignore these problems within creationism, they should be faced candidly and dealt with reasonably by all concerned.

It is not the purpose of this editorial to pass judgment for or against the creationistic arguments, although the readers of ORIGINS will be aware of some of our past concerns. It is our purpose to place these current discussions within creationism in their proper perspective.

In a sense, it is gratifying to note the progress of this self-evaluating process. Creationists have occasionally pointed out the conflicts within evolutionism. The current multiplicity of ideas vying to replace neo-Darwinian evolution is a noted example. Such disputations generally indicate that the data are not overwhelmingly convincing for any particular viewpoint. Likewise, the current disputations within creationism indicate that some arguments used to support creation may not be that convincing, and the sooner we recognize this, the better.

Science, whether performed within an evolutionist or creationistic paradigm, is still a human endeavor. Science has not shown itself to be a steady, unwavering progress towards truth; and we should not expect it to be perfect. If creationists want to incorporate the endorsement of science in their thought system, they should be willing to accept some of its liabilities, which sometimes includes the necessity to revise conclusions. Creationists have been accused of starting with their conclusions. Parenthetically, it has never been completely clear to me that evolutionists

did not begin without some conclusions of their own. Nevertheless, the current discussions within creationism regarding the validity of some of the argumentation does seem to challenge the close-mindedness sometimes imputed to creationists.

In a broader context, the current disagreements within creationism should not materially affect the major issues, such as whether or not there is a Creator, or, conversely, the inadequacy of naturalistic evolution to answer such questions as the origin, meaning, purpose, and destiny of man. It should ever be kept in mind that truth is broader than naturalistic science, and that one of the great contributions of creationism is its willingness to recognize this. The basic argumentation in favor of creation remains.

The current creationistic disputations should not materially affect the respect many hold for the Bible, its morality, and the meaning it brings to reality. The concept of the primacy of Scripture accepted by so many creationists has a broad rational basis that lies beyond the discussions within creationism. The degree of agreement between the various writers, along with their integrity, and the historical and archaeological authentication of the Bible all appeal to our reason. The fact that the Bible has been and remains the world's bestseller says something in its favor. The American Bible Society alone has produced over 5 billion copies of the Bible (or parts of it); and there have been translations into 1526 languages. Thus far no substitute for the Bible has come forth. Likewise, the basic questions which evolutionism has failed to answer adequately still remain. These include: 1) How did life originate? 2) How does evolution bridge the gaps between major groups of organisms? 3) How did the complex integrated physiological systems of advanced organisms evolve without intelligent design to foresee the usefulness of incipient organs? 4) How does one adequately answer the problem of conflicting time data for Earth's past history?

Creationists should have been more cautious in advancing some of their evidence. We can learn from the past. It is gratifying to see the painful, but necessary, self-correcting process taking place. Creationists should willingly join the rest of the human race by accepting the fact that not all their interpretations may be correct. Certainly, more caution is warranted than has been exhibited in the past. Under all circumstances, only sound arguments should be entertained. Finally, we should keep in mind that the creation concept, which has been around for millennia, will not stand or fall on the basis of the current discussions within creationism. If creationists are willing to learn, these discussions will be a help to all concerned.

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