

Is the Institute for Creation Research right about death?

By Rev. Phillip D. Mosher, © 2012

Herein I am responding to statements made by the Institute for Creation Research (ICR), using an article on their website by James Stambaugh^a as a source, because their beliefs and biblical interpretations are well represented therein.

After departing to be a missionary in the interior of Brazil in 1966, I became a member of the Creation Research Society, also the ICR. I remained a member for more than 12 years. During that time, I read their quarterly magazine and most, if not all, of their books. I feel that I am acquainted with their teachings and qualified to make this response.

It is important to point out that I believe those at the ICR are Christian brothers. I commend them for their many works that seek to reveal the hand of God in creation and for providing the Christian community with vivid proofs to the truth that God created and that evolution and atheism are false. Though I've read stern condemnation from the pens of some of their writers of people like me, who disagree with their young earth position and some of the biblical interpretations, I want to be brotherly and understanding as much as possible. John tells us that what one believes about the Lord Jesus, His deity and mission, are the point at which to draw the line of division, not on a side issue like this one. It is better to admit ignorance than to promote false interpretations of the Bible.

ICR Doctrines

That institute teaches that there was *no death before the act of sin* that brought the Fall of man resulting in a curse from God upon the world (Gen. 3:17-18). As Stambaugh has put it, "Those who accept the Bible believe that death is a punishment for sin; death must have come into existence after Adam fell." Well, I *accept the Bible* and consider myself to be conservative in biblical interpretation and theology; however, I do not believe that all death is "a punishment for sin."

When speaking of "death", those of the ICR believe that all death is the consequence of the Fall, the spiritual and physical deaths of man and the physical death of all other life forms (animals, fish, birds, etc.) but not the plants. For them, plants do not die, they fade away. Along with this Stambaugh maintains that because God's creative works were "very good", to them meaning a perfect world. The young earthers have established their own definition of what a perfect world would be like, and death of any form does not fit into a pre-Fall scenario.

Secondly, the ICR teaches that until the Fall *both animals and people ate only plants and their seeds and fruit*. There were *no carnivorous animals before the Fall*. In other words, when created, the big white shark was not designed to eat seals; the eagle was not designed to dive to catch the baby rabbit in its talons to feed to her young; the cat was not designed to catch the mouse for her kittens to eat, etc. These people point to passages like Isaiah 11:6-9 and the close of Revelation in an effort to show that after the Lord's return, the animals will again be plant eaters. We are looking at literally tens of thousands of phenomenal changes taking place in nature that God brought about *after* the Fall and will again do *after* the Lord's return—if we accept the young earth position.

^a James Stambaugh in "Death Before Sin?", available at: <http://www.icr.org/article/295/>

A third teaching would be that God created with the *appearance of age*. Though not stated in this article by Stambaugh, from their beginning the Creation Research Society (ICR) has maintained that *God created the universe with the “appearance of age.”*^b

It is my contention that those of the ICR approach this subject with a bias. This bias was stated in *The Genesis Flood* by John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris, written over 50 years ago and has been upheld by the Creation Research Society and its many branches, literature, speakers, and museums. That bias believes in a *very young earth and universe* and blames the Fall of man and the flood on much of what the sciences points to as evidences for an extremely old universe. Having been a member and read their materials, I would add that they believe that science lies to support its theories,^c that any scientist that does not believe as the ICR follows a belief in evolution, and that secular scientists are out to deceive and destroy the Christian faith. Having been the promoter of these things for so long and using these to raise charitable donations, their biases have become super controlling, like blinders placed on a horse.

On our website (www.bbm-inc.org) on the publications page is a chapter on creation in which I deal with many facets of the Genesis account of creation and therein make recommendations of other study materials. This is written to discuss the theological points the ICR is seeking to make from their use of the Sacred Word of God.

Regarding Death

For many years the primary text used by the ICR has been Romans 5:12^d: “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.” Exegetically, they are completely ignoring the context and even what the very verse states: “Death spread to all men.” This passage speaks about human death, a spiritual death caused by sin. The death of animals is not mentioned here.

Another passage used by this group in support of their teaching that all death came after the Fall is Romans 8:18–21

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility,^e not willingly, but because of

^b John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood*, © 1961, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., see page 233

^c Those of the ICR may have some justification on this point, but they too distort facts to support their theories as well. See *A New Look at an Old Earth, What the Creation Institutes are not Telling You about Genesis*, by Don Stoner, ed. 1992

^d Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotes have been taken from the *New American Standard Bible*, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, & 1995 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

^e Futility: **ματαιότης, ητος, ή** (*mataiotēs*), vanity, nothingness, transitoriness
The noun refers in Eph 4:17 to the *nothingness* of the purpose of the lives of the Gentiles (ἐν ματαιότητι τοῦ νοῦς αὐτῶν) and in 2 Pet 2:18 to the presumptuousness of false teachers “who speak pretentious words *without sense*” (ὑπέρογκα γὰρ ματαιότητος φθεγγόμενοι). According to Rom 8:20 the creation has been subjected by God to *nothingness / transitoriness* (τῇ ... ματαιότητι ... ὑπετάγη) because of the sin of humankind. Paul’s hope is that this situation of transitoriness, with its

Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption^f into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

The following commentaries are quoted here for reference:

Comments from Kenneth Wuest:⁹

(8:19–21) The words “earnest expectation” are *apokaradokia* (ἀποκαραδοκία), “only here and in Philippians 1:20. From *apo* (ἀπο) away, *kara* (καρᾶ) the head, *dokein* (δοκεῖν) to watch. A watching with the head erect and outstretched. Hence a waiting in suspense. *Apo* (ἄπο) from, implies abstraction, the attention turned from other objects. . . . “Creature” is *ktiseos* (κτίσεως), “the non-rational creation viewed collectively, animate and inanimate. Equivalent to all nature” (Vincent). “Waiteth” is *apodechomai* (ἀποδεχομαι), “assiduously and patiently to wait for.”

Denney comments; “First testimony to this glorious future: creation sighs for it. In some sense the hope and promise of it is involved in the present constitution of the world. . . . In Paul, however, the spirit of the passage is rather poetic than philosophical. Its affinities are with Genesis 3:17, where the ground is cursed for man’s sake: he conceives of all creation as involved in the fortunes of humanity. But this, if creation be personified, naturally leads to the idea of a mysterious sympathy between the world and man, and this is what the apostle expresses. **Creation is not inert, utterly unspiritual, alien to our life and its hopes. It is the natural ally of our souls.** What rises from it is the music of *humanity*—not apparently so still and sad to Paul as to Wordsworth, but with a note of hope in it rising triumphantly above all the pain of conflict.” “Manifestation” is *apokalupsis* (ἀποκαλυψις), “an uncovering, a laying bare.” That is, the non-rational creation, subject to the curse put upon it because of man’s sin, is expectantly waiting for the glorification of the saints, that it also may be delivered from the curse under which it now exists.

“Was made subject” is *hupotassō* (ὑποτάσσω), “to arrange under, to subject, put in subjection.” “Vanity” is *mataios* (ματαιός), “idle, resultless, futile, aimless.” **It describes something that does not measure up to that for which it is intended.** Here the creation is viewed as originally created, a perfect creation to glorify God. When the curse was put upon it, that purpose was interfered with in that a perishing and decaying creation cannot perfectly glorify Him. It was rendered relatively futile in that respect.

This cursing of the creation, Paul says, was not done willingly, but “by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope.” Vincent says, “God, not Adam nor Satan. . . . Adam’s sin and not God’s will was the direct and special cause of the subjection to vanity. The supreme will of God is thus removed ‘to a wider distance from corruption and vanity’ (Alford).”

Denney explains, “It was on account of Him—His righteousness might be shown in the punishment of sin—that the sentence fell upon man, carrying consequences which extended to the whole realm intended originally for his dominion. The sentence on man, however, was not hopeless, and creation shared in his hope as in his doom. When the curse is completely removed from man, as it will be when the sons of God are revealed, it will pass from creation also; and for this, creation sighs. It was made subject to vanity on the footing of this hope; the hope is latent, so to speak, in the constitution of nature, and comes out, in its sighing, to a sympathetic ear.”

“In hope” is literally, “upon the basis of hope.” Nestle construes it with the contents of verse 21. “Because” is *dioti* (διότι), which is also translated “that.” Vincent suggests, “the creation was subjected in the hope that also the creation itself will be liberated from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory

(historical) beginning, will also have an (historical) end in the liberation of creation to the freedom awaited by the children of God; cf. also 4 Ezra 7:11f.; 2 Bar. 15:32f.; ματαιος (bibliography). (from: Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider, vol. 2, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 396-97, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990-)

^f Corruption: *phthorá* (φθορά); gen. (*phthorás*), fem. noun from *phtheíō* (5351), to corrupt. Spoiling, corruption, destruction, ruin, decay, generally a fraying or wasting away. (from: Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed., Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000)

⁹ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, Ro 8:18–19 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

of the children of God.” He says, “the hope is that of the subjected, not the *subjector*. Nature ‘possesses in the feeling of her unmerited suffering, a sort of presentiment of her future deliverance’ (Godet).”

Dr. Wuest was a Greek teacher at Moody Bible Institute and a moderate Calvinist (did not hold to limited atonement). This bias could cause him to state that the creation was to “glorify God”. Where in the Bible does it state that God created to bring glory to Himself? God created the universes, our galaxy, our solar system, and Planet Earth with one objective—humankind—the crown of His creative acts; and *He created man for fellowship*. Man’s rebellion broke that sweet communion between the Creator and those created in His image. In the prophetic future, we see that fellowship restored, when man will be glorified to a position of being sons of God and joint heirs with Christ. Though man will give glory to God and will praise Him throughout eternity, that is not why God created us in His image. *He created us for fellowship*. The grasping of this truth will impact a lot of theology.

Wuest’s quote from Denney is excellent because it goes to the Jewish worldview. When man fell, that impacted the whole. In western thought, because of the influence of Greek philosophy upon us, we tend to be dichotomists and to break things into parts; but the whole is from God and is a part of God, a unit, a truth that Paul knew and one that is in the background of this passage. The material and lower life forms created by God are part of the whole, of which man is the pinnacle. God created it for man and man for fellowship. It was a harmonious whole. That communion and good working relationships between God and man and man and his environment were broken by man’s rebellion. It will become a harmonious unit again when the Lord brings the redeemed to that dwelling place He is preparing. May it be soon!

Comments from New American Commentary: ^h

8:20–21 Paul spoke of the creation being “subjected to frustration” (v. 20). That was not because of some inherent fault in creation but because that is what God decided. In punishment for his disobedience, Adam was to garner his food from ground cursed with thorns and thistles. But the curse was not permanent. The **physical universe was frustrated** by Adam’s sin, yet there is hope. . . . The day is coming when the created order will be set free from its bondage to decay. Freed from corruption, it will share in “the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (literal translation). The scene is eschatological. Some have suggested that this points to life during the millennium, but it is better to see it as the entire created universe celebrating together the glorious state of final redemption and restoration. Paul’s use of personification is striking. As sin brought the curse of death to the physical universe, the day is coming when a new heaven and earth will be in place (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1). They will take their place with the children of God in the perfect freedom of a sinless universe.

Acting in fairness, I have included this quote from the New American Commentary to show that it, like the ICR, interprets “corruption”, in verse 21, as “death”. Commenting on this verse, Godet writes: “This reign of death which prevails over all that is born cannot be the normal state of a world created by God” (page 314 of his commentary on Romans). “Death” seems a logical conclusion since corruption usually follows death. However, following the context principle, “futility” and “corruption” are used here as synonyms as they refer to the same thing—the condition of the earth after the curse. The Fall made it so that man was no longer in harmony with his environment, just as he was out of fellowship with his Creator. As Ecclesiastes analyzes and concludes, “All is vanity.” Going to Genesis 3, we learn that whereas the Garden, where the Creator placed the man and woman, had been one in which they lived in harmony with the animals, the plants, and all around them, now, being expelled and in the world, life has become difficult, harsh, and in conflict with man. Whereas the animals were not afraid of him, now they are. Whereas the earth fed him, now it grows

^h Robert H. Mounce, vol. 27, *Romans*, The New American Commentary, 184-85 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995).

weeds and thorns. Life for all has become futile and has been slowly decaying away from God's original plan.

It is very important to remember that the Garden of Eden was a specially created place for man. When Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden, they encountered the real world. That world had weeds and biting bugs. But also, because of God's curse, it became hostile to man. "All is vanity."

In this passage (Romans 8:18-21), "creation" refers to the material world including both plant and animal life—life that has no spirit. These verses are speaking of creation's hope. All are waiting the day the curse will be removed, anxiously anticipating the conditions on earth being restored to God's original plan of harmony and peace with humanity. Paul points to the fact that man and nature will again be in harmony, once man has been glorified in the presence of the Savior. To make this passage refer to "death" in general is to go beyond the underlying intent of the text. The word is "corruption", and that is not "death". Interpreting it as "death" is out of harmony with the message of the text and is presumptuous. We should not carry our biases to the Bible. We should always interpret in context. We should never add to God's Word. We must admit ignorance when interpreting some passages. Some may disagree with me on this interpretation; but if so, I challenge them to find another proof text, because Romans 5:12 and 8:18-21 do not prove that all forms of death are the result of the Fall and came after it.

Regarding the ICR interpreting all "death" as the punishment for sin, it is clear, especially in Romans 5, that man's spiritual death is and possibly his physical death. But, any teaching beyond that is pure speculation and comes from a biased worldview that is without any Scriptural foundation. It is my conclusion, as presented above, that Romans 8:18-21 is not talking about death at all but about a world that is out of sync, deeply frustrated, and corrupted from the Designer's intent; and it is longing to be restored to the harmony and fellowship that existed before the Fall and curse.

The main question demanding an answer is: "Did any form of death occur before Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit?" Those holding to the position that our earth is very young, perhaps 6,000 years old and no more than 10,000 like those of the ICR, believe and teach with much emphasis and zeal that all death came about after the Fall and that there was not any form of death before it. *It cannot be shown that the Bible teaches this.*

Those of the ICR maintain that since the Bible states that God pronounced His creation to be "very good", that all "death" resulted from sin. This position is bringing to the Scriptures a preconceived belief that all forms of death are bad. We know that man's spiritual death and his physical death are bad, both from our personal experiences and from the doctrines of the Bible, but what about the deaths of other living things? Let's look at some biblical facts:

In Genesis 1:22 we read: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." Every form of life, the moment God created them, has been given the ability to reproduce. Since, according to the ICR, all death came after the Fall, then why were all forms of life created with the capacity to reproduce? It would appear that some types of death had been on the Lord's drawing board in His Ivory Palaces. The only explanation for all of the plants, fish, animals, and birds having reproductive powers is so that each kind can be maintained, because all will eventually die. (Here we are not including man. Man dies because of sin.)

When did God create the crab, the buzzard, the hyena, etc.? Isn't their God-given function to clear the earth of the dead? There are creatures so designed in every category of animals. If physical death to animals resulted from the Fall, why did God create such animals? Or, maybe I should ask, "When?", since the ICR has God performing creative acts after the Fall. Since Genesis 2:1-3 states that God completed His creative acts and rested and nowhere indicates that He went back to creating after the Fall, those promoting the teachings of the ICR are faced with a dilemma (truthfully several).

Let's deal with a problem that I feel our American culture has produced in us. Ruth and I spent 12 years with Nambiquara Indians who did not think at all as we. To the Nambiquaras, physical death is a part of life. What I learned from that culture has changed my thinking on many issues and has helped me understand the mindset of most humans in the days of Moses. Once one has made a pet of an animal, seeing it die is like losing one's own child—it hurts down deep. Because of this, we tend to cringe and feel pain when we see an animal die. I have met people who couldn't stand to see anyone kill a fly. With this mental attitude, it is no wonder we think of death as bad. So when God made an evaluation of His creation and said that it was "very good", according to James Stambaugh and the ICR, that has to mean there was no death before the Fall. What if originally God had created the food chain as we observe it today? And, I believe He did. The spider eats the fly. The Venus Fly Trap dissolves the bug. The lions eat the buffalo. The blue whale eats the krill, etc. Didn't God create the shark with his dinner to be a seal? Didn't God create the alligator with her dinner to be a duck? Bacteria are probably one of the earliest life forms that God created. It is foundational to all life on earth. Its average life span is 20 minutes. If the death of these things were in the Creator's original design, then would He not pronounce it as being "very good"? Who would we be to say it isn't?

Using passages like Isaiah 11:6-9 (and 65:25), which speaks of the wolf resting with the lamb and the leopard with the goat, over many years I read various ICR authors proclaiming that this passage proves that after the Fall the dietary habits of animals changed. James Stambaugh does the same. For most of these animals this would mean a change in their metabolism and needs related to the foods they would eat, even in the structures of their bodies, like carnivorous teeth in place of those more efficient for eating plants. I suppose the Lord created the polar bear so that he'd eat sea weed. Wow, thinking about all of this, it has to mean that God made a lot of changes in His creation in just minutes after the Fall! All because ICR vehemently maintains that there was no death before the Fall and that all life forms ate only plants. In other words, the leopard grew dangerous claws and sharp teeth with a mouth that would open wide. His back and leg muscles changed so that he'd become better at running and jumping. These changes would help him in catching animals like deer, rabbits, etc. Plus, cats require a diet that's high in protein, so overnight their metabolism would have changed as well. When originally created, the lion could not have been designed to kill deer and would never have eaten a lamb. According to ICR teachings, all of these changes, physical death, eating habits, body structures, etc. are all the result of the Fall and God's curse on the earth. This would indicate that God preformed creative acts after the Fall. No, these theories about death and diet are distortions presented because of a strong bias: "The earth is young;" "God made everything in 6 days" (144 hours); and "All death came after the Fall."

I request the answer to two questions: "Where in the Bible can one find proof for the teaching that all physical death was not in God's plan and came after the Fall?" "Where in the Bible does it say God changed animal life from being herbivores to being carnivores and therefore changed the physical bodies and habits of many fish, birds, and animals?" I request a

minimum of two passages as proof text for each and that they speak clearly to the subject—no imagination permitted, no verses that use metaphors and figurative language, and no twisting of the text to fit an agenda. We shall follow sound Hermeneutics (go to <http://www.bbm-inc.org/Publications.html> and click on Hermeneutics).

Since those holding to a young earth, like those following the doctrines of the ICR, teach that drastic changes occurred in many animals, some even believing that thorns, biting bugs, etc. were made after the Fall as part of the curse, I direct them to Genesis 2:1-3. These verses are not difficult. They are very clear. After the sixth day, it states that *God* ceased from creating. There is no time stamp on the seventh day, God's Sabbath rest, indicating that it is not a 24 hour day. No Scriptures can be cited as proof that after the Fall God returned to creating and made tremendous changes in His creation. With the creation of man, the peak of His creative acts, God took a rest from creating; and there are no biblical proof texts that state that He returned to doing so. Assumptions can lead to error.

Regarding Diet

Proponents of the ICR position on diet and the time that death began cite Isaiah 11:6-9 as a proof text. We usually do not make doctrines with one proof text; and those of the ICR are vehemently dogmatic on this, though quality proof texts are few or absent. Most pre-millennial commentators place Isaiah 11:6-9 in the Millennium, not father away into the future eternal state, though that is where Stambaugh places its fulfillment. Another is Isaiah 65:25:

“The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain,' says the LORD.”

Note that in this verse it tells us, “They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain,' says the LORD”. All three of these Isaiah passages are promising that Zion will become a place where there will be total tranquility. Isaiah 35:5 proclaims that, “No lion will be there, Nor will any vicious beast go up on it; These will not be found there. But the redeemed will walk there.” In other words, no vicious, carnivorous animals will be permitted on God's Holy Mountain, the worship center for the entire world during the millennium. God's saints will be safe from physical harm.

If I were the ICR, I would prefer to say, “I'm unsure,” than to build a teaching that divides brethren over a doctrine based mostly on assumptions and analogies. It is best to treat these prophetic expressions as figurative, because they are found in poetic literature where metaphorical and figurative language and styles are used extensively. No one can be dogmatic on what these passages are communicating to the point of creating a doctrine of *absolutely no form of death* before the Fall and again during the future millennium?

These few passages in Isaiah are painting a very tranquil millennium, one where the curse that brought frustration between man and his environment is reversed. When studying these passages, one must carefully compare them with Leviticus 26:6; Jeremiah 5:5-6; Ezekiel 5:17; 14:15; 34:25; Hosea 13:6-8, etc. God's laws will be written on the hearts of the Jews (Jeremiah 31:10-40). They will become that kingdom of priests to all nations that God originally ordained them to be (Exodus 19:6); and God's promised blessings will be poured out upon them, which includes the absence of wild, dangerous beasts, as promised in the Mosaic Covenant. There will be no sickness, no fighting, and no harm for the saints of God. Humankind will again live in harmony with his surroundings. Though man will have dominion over the animals, no passage indicates that those animals will cease from being carnivorous. These passages in Isaiah are looking to the time when God's covenant relationship with

Israel will be restored. He promised the Jews in the Mosaic Covenant that for obedience and faithful service the Promised Land would not be bothered by wild beasts. These Isaiah verses are not stating that all wild, carnivorous animals over the entire face of the earth will become pure vegetarians. They are saying that if the bear were to stray into Zion, he will eat grass. I believe that the lion will continue to seek, kill, and eat deer (much like a goat). The blue whale will continue to eat krill. The hawk will still eat rodents. Et cetera.

Often Genesis 1:29-30 is quoted: “Then God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, *I have given* every green plant for food’; and it was so.”

These verses are simply giving permission. There is no command here. It says that humankind and beasts have the liberty to eat from the plants. Does this passage teach that all life on earth was commanded and restricted in what they ate and were vegetarians? A simple reading of the English may imply this, but it surely does not say that humans and animals are prohibited from consuming any other foods, like meat. Yes, the domestic animals that Adam would be raising would be eating plants, and probably Adam and Eve did while in the Garden and before the Fall. But, what about the hundreds of thousands of non-domestic animals in the sea, on the land, and in the air that are flesh eaters—many of them being completely carnivorous?

When I read Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”, though I agree with that translation of the Hebrew, I know that “earth” as we understand that word today (a celestial ball) is not the meaning of the original. The Hebrew word (אֶרֶץ *’ereṣ*) here speaks of “land” (like the Land of Israel). In the biblical Hebrew or Greek there is no word for “earth”, meaning a globe that travels around the sun. Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) and Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) were God-fearing scientists who changed the understanding of our world from it being a flat surface to it being a ball that rotates on an axis and revolves around the sun. It took the church a few centuries to catch up, but the scientific evidences that have enlightened us have caused us to use “earth” in the first verse of the Bible. *We have imposed our worldview upon the Bible translation.* Truthfully, we do a lot of this with our Bible interpretations and translations.

My first response to verses 29-30 is that plant life is the foundational food for all life on Planet Earth. Though it appears that at least while in the Garden that Adam and Eve were vegetarians, can we dogmatically state that the tiger ate grass like cattle? Did the killer whale eat sea plants? Did the osprey eat only grass and berries? These verses in the Genesis creation account would not cause me to form such a conclusion as the ICR has. I lean more to the meaning of this passage being that plant life is the foundational food.

What about after the Fall, since the ICR believes that humans were vegetarians until after the flood of Noah? Since the first 11 chapters of the Bible cover a history of the earth (really the universe) from the beginning of time until around 1,500 BC, we should be careful in trying to squeeze too much juice (doctrine) out of those verses. The whole of Scripture should be our guiding star.

In Genesis chapter 3, we are given the story of the Fall. After man’s sin was exposed and confession was obtained, God prepared coats of skins for Adam and Eve. Having the rest of

the Old Testament in our minds, we conclude that the pre-incarnate Savior taught Adam and Eve the need for a substitute to cover their sins and an animal was sacrificed. In Middle Eastern culture, to sit and eat with someone is to indicate friendship and agreement. (See Revelation 3:30, where the Lord promises to dine with the saints.) Anwar Sadat was assassinated because he had been too friendly with Israel and ate with Egypt's enemies. The Scriptures are not clear here; but I propose that after Adam sinned and while still in the Garden the Lord taught Adam to prepare and offer sacrifices and that the incarnate Savior ate a peace-meal with Adam and Eve, just as Jesus ate the last Passover with His disciples.

In Genesis chapter four we have the story of Cain and Abel. Cain was a gardener. Able was a shepherd. Would we be right to assume that Abel raised sheep only for wool and skins to make clothing? What happened to the carcass? Can one prove they wore clothes? I can't, though I'd like to think so. *Does what I think matter?* I surely should not take what I think and read it into the Bible. Were people eating from their flocks? There are others who believe as I that they were. In no way can we be dogmatic about what humans ate before the flood.

In the Old Testament, when people worshiped God and offered a sacrifice of a dead animal, they ate some of the roasted meat. It is my understanding from the prophetic Scriptures, especially from Ezekiel, that during the millennium there will be animal sacrifices. We have no scriptural indication that would assure us that people will not be eating meat in the millennium. They will be observing the Passover, a meal that centers on the eating of a roasted animal and symbolizes the peace and protection from God for the redeemed.

Regarding the Appearance of Age

This is more a philosophical argument than a theological one. There is absolutely no verse in Scripture that addresses this issue, though the ICR tries to make such when pointing to verses about death and diet. Here I will be brief. It is beyond the purpose of this paper to give a lengthy debate on this subject. Internet searches are abundant with the pros and cons of this issue. There are fine books, some recommended in the chapter on Creation on our website: www.bbm-inc.org.

Stambaugh does not address this point. In the book by John Whitcomb and Henry Morris, *The Genesis Flood*, regarding creation they write that "it had an appearance of being 'old' when it was still new. *It was created with an 'appearance' of age.*" (page 233, emphasizes theirs) To support their theory, the young earth creationists will argue that God created fully grown trees with rings; He created Adam as an adult; He created fully grown animals; Jesus made wine from water; etc. all having the "appearance of age".

If we were to examine closely the Genesis account of the third day (Gen. 1:9-13), the original word translated "sprout" in the NASB ("bring forth" in KJV) is דָּשָׁא (*dāšā*). This Hebrew word indicates a very young and tender plant, a plant as it first starts to grow from the seed, never a full grown plant, herb, or tree. The verses are telling us that God created seeds or very young plants sprouting from seeds. This verb is not saying that God created fully grown trees that were instantly producing fruit and that they were created with growth rings. The picture painted in the Hebrew text of Genesis 1:9-13 is one of many years, not minutes or even hours. It takes years for a tree to develop into being a fruit and seed producer. This is one of the arguments used by the day-age believers to prove their belief that it was not a literal 24 hour day. (We won't get into that here. I refer the reader to my chapter on creation.)

We should not confuse the issues by imposing what God says about the Garden of Eden to the rest of the world. That Garden was a special place made specifically for Adam and Eve—a protected, friendly place where weeds did not grow and wild beasts did not devour. Israel will be thus during the Millennium. When they disobeyed their Creator, Adam and Eve were expelled from that environment. God does not tell us how He planned, nurtured, and developed that Garden for man or how long it took Him to bring it to maturity. Anything said beyond the text is an assumption and not biblical theology.

Regarding the fish, birds, and animals, since many of them need some motherly care, it is assumed that God created them fully grown and able to reproduce their kind. Just because the first in a kind is created mature and able to reproduce does not give support to a theory of the “appearance of age”. Regarding man, I believe that they were created an adult couple able to reproduce. But, was he created with a belly button? Those of the ICR persuasion think so because that would support their belief about God creating with the “appearance of age”. I do not think he had a belly button, but what I think does not qualify as “sound doctrine”. In my way of reasoning, seeing their belly button would have testified to Adam and Eve that they had a mother, which would have been deceiving and supportive of evolution.

To maintain that God created this world with the “appearance of age” is to imply that *God is a deceiver*. He has never told us that he did so. He has told us to dominate our environment. To do so, we must learn from it. Doing as He has ordained has been very helpful to geologists in finding petroleum (full of fossilized plankton). When we dig and find fossils from microscopic creatures on up to the bones of enormous dinosaurs, we automatically think “age”. When we see literally thousands of feet of sediment, some with layers that average two tenths of a millimeter in thickness, normally representing one seasonal cycle (one year), and these layers are full of fossils, many that are microscopic, we think “age”. To declare these as God creating with the “appearance of age”, when He has nowhere told us that He did so, is to make God the creator of most of the dead matter we are finding on earth and to lower Him into being the biggest perpetuator of fraud that there has ever been, like those who invented the Piltdown Man. God did not create strata full of fossils. He does not deceive.

The things that were made by God (Romans 1:19-20) give evidence to great age. Those of the ICR must do something to excuse that evidence, and “the appearance of age” is one of their approaches in an effort to remove the geologists’ findings from the case files. The area of the Islands of the Bahamas is 14,500 feet of calcium carbonate resting on bedrock. That limestone is full of fossils, and under normal conditions it would have taken over 14 million years to form. Since the biblical flood of less than 150 days could not have produced the Bahamas, and many other strata that give evidence to age, Dr. Morris and the ICR have invented an unbiblical hypothesis of God. They believe He created with the “appearance of age”, it being in His design plan. Trees were created with rings; rocks were created with layers full of fossils; etc. Their teachings do not fit the evidences on earth and cannot be proven from a sound exegesis of the Scriptures.

Conclusion

God gave us two revelations. One we call the “Holy Scriptures”. The Bible gives us information that is written in words, through the pens of some 40 men under the guiding hand of the Spirit (2nd Peter 1:21) over some 1,500 years. It is a progressive revelation. Another progressive revelation is God’s creative works, given to us over a much longer period of time. Psalm 19:1-4 makes it very clear—creation reveals God. Paul tells us in Romans 9 that the written Word came through the Jews. In chapters 9 through 11, he is answering the Jewish question related to justification by faith. Being the bearers of God’s Word and commanded by

God to read it, Paul posed a question: “But I say, surely they have never heard, have they?” (Romans 10:18). One would think that in answering that question, he would remind them of the written Laws in their possession and read weekly in the synagogues; but that is not the case. Paul answered that question by citing Psalm 19:4a, pointing to God’s revelation in creation: “Indeed they have; THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.” The “voice” and that “word” are coming from God’s works. It speaks loudly and clearly. All of humanity, the Jews and the Gentiles, are responsible for the truths proclaimed by God’s Book of Works (Romans 1:18-20). God’s *Book of Words* and His *Book of Works* agree. They have the same author. Are we listening? The Jews weren’t.

An approach that admits ignorance and places assumptions out in the open is desired and appreciated. As I have stated, the ICR’s teaching comes from a bias of the earth’s existence being no more than 10,000 years old. They are forcing the Scriptures in hopes of gaining scriptural support for their belief system, but their exegeses are very faulty.

God told Adam to dominate his world. It is his obedience to that directive and the principle that Proverbs teaches that has brought improvements to man’s living conditions. He was made king over his environment; and until the Fall, he lived in complete harmony with it, and it with him. Man’s sin and God’s curse changed that. Man was expelled from the Garden, a special, protected place where God had placed him. He was pushed out into the real world, one where weeds would grow in his garden, where bugs would eat his produce, where there would be seasons of drought and hunger, and where wild beasts would endanger his food sources and life. God created everything we see and those we can’t without special equipment. God created the sandspur, the scorpion, the stingray, the grizzly bear, the vulture, etc. all before He created man—not after the Fall. That world was declared to be “very good” by the Creator. We are not in the position to tell God what is “very good” and what isn’t. I firmly believe that what has been created meets the Designer’s specifications to the minutest detail. If there are areas I do not understand, it’s best to say so. To bring theories and imaginations up to the level of biblical truth is sin. The evidences of the food chain, bigger animals eating smaller ones, are everywhere, both living around us and in the fossil records. Since God created that world and expects us to learn from it, I believe it has something valuable to tell us. One is that it is very old, but that’s a separate topic (Go to <http://www.bbm-inc.org/Publications.html> and click on Creation).

Because of what science, good science, has taught us and our acceptance of those evidences as truth, in Genesis 1:1 scholarship has translated אֶרֶץ (‘ereṣ) with “earth” rather than using its true meaning “land”. Because of our current understandings of our world and galaxy, when in Job 38:4 we read, “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?” (אֶרֶץ ‘ereṣ = land), we automatically convert the meaning of passages like this in our minds into being something stable because God is holding things in place, rather than to assume our earth (אֶרֶץ ‘ereṣ = land) is supported by large boulders. We should learn from these things and take special care when forming doctrines that disagree with overwhelming proofs of age in literally thousands of feet of strata full of fossils, all giving massive evidences of great age and death before the Fall. We should reject any statement that portrays God as a deceiver of men. We should avoid building doctrines on a foundation of sand and a scant number of passages using faulty exegesis, as the ICR has done.

When Copernicus and later Galileo, through sound science, spoke against thousands of years of traditions saying “the earth is round and travels around the sun”, the established church excommunicated them and prohibited the use of their writings. Church leadership believed the Bible contradicted what science had discovered. Some 200 years later, the Pope recognized that those men had found the truth and overturned a prohibition against their writings. Man is to be a student of both of God’s revelations, the *Book of Words* and the *Book of Works*. Christians should be very careful in how they interpret these Books, avoiding exaggerations. We should not be building high walls of separation over minor issues such as these.