

- C) It is of critical importance to understand two key aspects of the Genesis text for these types of "creation vs. science" styled arguments:
- i) First, Genesis is not written as a scientific explanation of the creation account. Genesis is written in "functional" language (art as opposed to science, e.g. "let their be light" as opposed to "let their be electromagnetic radiation which falls within the perceptible wavelength of the human retina"). Thus, the text is more interested in the function of the creation (light, sun, stars, earth, sky, rain, etc.) than the structural make-up (photons, gaseous balls of fire, high/low pressure weather systems, etc.).
 - ii) Second, we must recognize the enormous pressure in Western culture to define truth in scientific terms, particularly in relation to cosmology (science of origins). We must guard against believing that science is the "true" method of communicating truth (scientific imperialism). In the same way it would be foolhardy to make scientific assertions about human anatomy based on the artwork of Pablo Picasso, it would be equally foolhardy to dismiss Picasso's artwork as being irrelevant because it doesn't relate to our scientific "reality."

3) What About Barney?

- A) Dinosaurs are not a myth or evolutionary hoax. They truly existed. In the creation account, dinosaurs would have been created on both days 5 & 6. The bible even indicates their existence with names such as "behemoth" (Job 40:15-18) or "leviathan" (Job 41:1; Isaiah 27:1; Psalm 74:14).
- B) Dinosaurs probably faced gradual extinction after the flood of Noah in a colder world climate (more on that in a later sermon). Some excellent resources for the detailed (and sometimes technical) facts behind these ideas are *Thousands... Not Billions* by Donald B. DeYoung & *Dinosaurs and Creation* by Donald B. DeYoung.

The Fingerprints of God

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 19th, 2006 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**THIS IS THE ACCOUNT OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WHEN THEY WERE CREATED, IN THE DAY THAT THE LORD GOD MADE EARTH AND HEAVEN.
~GENESIS 2:4 (NASB)**

1) Textual Creation Theories

- A) **24/7-Day Creation.** Views Genesis literally as a sequential report of the creation, with a telescopic literary technique for description and significance purposes only.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>

- B) **Day/Epoch Creation.** Views each day of creation as representative of large epochs of time. Unlimited amounts of time often assigned to each day of creation.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>

- C) **Prose/Poetic Creation.** Views the first eleven chapters of Genesis as prose/poetic approach, and therefore, not literal. The narrative (from this view) has nothing to do with time. The purpose of the creation story was simply to show order and establish the Sabbath.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>

- D) **Two/Three Phase Creation.** There are gaps between Genesis 1:2 & 1:3, and also gaps between 2:3 & 2:4. No real stance toward time, or length of day.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>

- F) **Pre-Existent Creation.** There was a creation before Genesis 1:1, an entirely previous world which was populated by pre-human soul-less "people" and beasts.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>

2) Non-Textual Creation Theories

- A) The Gap Theory. There is an unlimited amount of time (a gap) between Genesis 1:2 & 1:3. Theory was very popular as science began to publish increasingly earlier dates for the earth's age (currently around 4.56 billion years, or 4,560,000,000 years, about 1/3 the age of the universe, calculated at around 14 billion years old).

- B) Intelligent Design*. A hybrid view of both science and theology which is heralded as the intellectually responsible view for Christians and the scientifically insightful view for scientists. A highly complex, but increasingly popular view.

* Intelligent Design (ID), the theory that life and the universe are far too complex to have come into existence by chance and thus reveal an intelligent designer, is the latest effort by both those of religious background and scientific background to provide a link between science and theology. ID is feared by many in the scientific community because of the belief that it is simply creationism in disguise (considered the end of scientific exploration). ID is equally feared by many in the theological community because of the belief that synthesizing theology and science is a hopeless reductionism of God to science. ID proponents counter that it is intellectually and theologically responsible to consider the claims of ID, and that it is the future of both fields of study (that is, scientific and theological cosmologic explanations). ID has become a hot-button issue in American culture with the battlefield of public High School biology classes being the front lines. Followers of Christ would do well to engage the arguments, careful to resist a "bandwagon" acceptance of the science or theology of ID. Thus far, courts in the USA have decided that ID is actually creationism of some sort, and have consistently removed any possibility of ID being taught in public school settings. However, as the scientific and theological communities continue to progress, it appears there is a strong possibility that ID could be offered as a theory of origins, without displacing the entrenched theory of evolution and adaptation introduced and popularized by Charles Darwin in the mid-19th-century. An excellent recommended resource for deeper study of ID issues is *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science & Theology* by William A. Dembski.

Creationism vs. Naturalism Tension Spectrum

