

Terry Mortenson, Thane H. Ury, editors, *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*, Master Books, 2008. Pages 453-457

The following affirmations and denials reflect the almost universal consensus of the Church throughout history, until the early 19th century. Their substance, rigorously defended by many past and present scholars, is currently rejected by a large portion of the contemporary worldwide church and, sadly, by many Christian scholars involved in explaining and defending the Christian worldview. Therefore, as an addendum to the affirmations and denials of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy and of the International Church Council, the undersigned present these affirmations and denials to the Church as an essential part of the presentation of the Christian worldview to the world of the 21st century.

I. **We affirm** that the scientific aspects of creation are important, but are secondary in importance to the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ as Sovereign, Creator, Redeemer and Judge. **We deny** that the doctrines of Creator and creation can ultimately be divorced from the gospel of Jesus Christ, for the teachings of Genesis are foundational to the gospel and indeed to all biblical doctrines (directly or indirectly).

II. **We affirm** that the 66 books of the Bible are the written Word of God. The Bible is divinely inspired and inerrant throughout (in all the original autographs). Its assertions are factually true. It is the supreme authority, not only in all matters of faith and conduct, but in everything that it teaches. **We deny** that the Bible's authority is limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes and we deny the exclusion of its authority from its assertions related to such fields as history and science.

III. **We affirm** that the final guide to the interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself. Scripture must be compared with Scripture to obtain the correct interpretation of a particular text, and clear Scriptures must be used to interpret ambiguous texts, not vice versa. We affirm that the special revelation of infallible and inerrant Scripture must be used to correctly interpret the general revelation of the cursed creation.

We deny that uninspired sources of truth-claims (i.e., history, archeology, science, etc.) can be used to interpret the Scriptures to mean something other than the meaning obtained by classical historical-grammatical exegesis. We further deny the view, commonly used to evade the implications or the authority of biblical teaching, that biblical truth and scientific truth must remain totally exclusive from each other and that science could never agree with the Bible.

IV. **We affirm** that no apparent, perceived, or claimed evidence in any field, including history, archeology, and science, can be considered valid if it contradicts the scriptural record. We also affirm that the evidence from such fields of inquiry is always subject to interpretation by fallible people who do not possess all information.

We deny that scientific "evidence" used to "prove" millions of years is objective fact and not heavily influenced by naturalistic presuppositions.

V. **We affirm** that the account of origins presented in Genesis is a simple but factual presentation of actual events and therefore provides a reliable framework for scientific research into the question of the origin and history of life, mankind, the earth, and the universe.

We deny that Genesis 1-11 is myth, saga, or any other type of non-historical literature. We also deny that it is a parable or prophetic vision. It therefore should be interpreted with the same care for literal accuracy as any other historical narrative sections of Scripture in, for example, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Kings, the Gospels, or Acts.

VI. **We affirm** that the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 are chronological, enabling us to arrive at an approximate date of creation of the whole universe. We affirm that mankind is essentially as old as the whole creation. While some disagreement exists between young-earth creationists over whether or not these are strict, gap-less genealogies (i.e., no missing names between Adam and Noah and Noah and Abraham), we affirm that Genesis points to a date of creation between about 6,000-10,000 years ago.

We deny that millions of years of history occurred before Adam and Eve. Therefore, we deny that the geological record of strata and fossils corresponds to long geological ages before man. We also deny the big bang and any other naturalistic theory of the origin and history of the universe. We further deny that the radiometric dating methods, which are claimed to give dates of millions of years, are trustworthy and can be used to overthrow or disregard the biblical teaching on the age of the creation. We further deny that the Egyptian, Chinese, or other pagan chronologies are more reliable than the Bible's chronological statements, and we deny that those pagan chronologies can be used to overrule the careful exegesis of the relevant biblical texts regarding the age of the earth and other Old Testament events.

VII. **We affirm** that the days in Genesis do not correspond to geologic ages, but are six, consecutive, literal (essentially 24-hour) days of creation.

We deny that the days of creation are symbolic of long ages or that millions of years can be placed between the days or before the six days of creation.

VIII. **We affirm** that the various original life forms (kinds), including mankind, were made by direct, supernatural, creative acts of God. The living descendants of any of the original kinds (apart from man) may represent more than one species today, reflecting the genetic potential within a particular original created kind. Only relatively limited biological changes (due to such processes as natural selection, mutations, and other biological processes that might be discovered in the future) have occurred naturally within each kind since creation.

We deny that there has ever been any evolutionary change from one of the original created kinds into a different kind (e.g., fish to amphibian, reptile to mammal, reptile to bird, ape to man, or land mammal to whale, etc.).

IX. **We affirm** the supernatural creation of Adam from dust and the supernatural creation of Eve from Adam's rib in a very short period of time (seconds or minutes) on the sixth day of creation.

We deny that Adam was in any way made from a pre-existing hominid (or any other living creature). We further deny the existence of any creatures which looked or acted like man but which did not possess a soul. We deny also that categories of creatures such as "Neanderthal Man" and "Cro-Magnon Man" were pre- or sub-human (rather than being fully human descendants of Adam).

X. **We affirm** that the account of the Fall of Adam and Eve into sin is a literal historical account and that the Fall had cosmic consequences. We also affirm that both physical and spiritual death and bloodshed entered into this world subsequent to, and as a direct consequence of, man's sin. We further affirm that this historical Fall is the reason for the necessity of salvation for mankind through the redemptive work of the "Last Adam," Jesus Christ.

We deny that the account of the Fall was mythical, figurative, or otherwise largely symbolic. While certain aspects of Genesis 1-11 are typological with reference to the work of Christ, we deny that this

in anyway negates or eliminates the literal historicity of the text. We deny that the judgment of God at the Fall resulted only in the spiritual death of man or only consequences for man but not for the rest of animate and inanimate creation. We therefore also deny that millions of years of death, disease, violence, and extinction occurred in the animal world before the Fall and thereby deny that those millions of years claimed by the evolutionary scientific establishment ever happened.

XI. We affirm that the great Flood described in Genesis 6-9 was an actual historic event, worldwide (global) in its extent and extremely catastrophic in its effect. As such, it produced most (but not all) of the geological record of thousands of meters of strata and fossils that we see on the earth's surface today.

We deny that Noah's Flood was limited to a localized region (e.g., the Mesopotamian valley of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers). We also deny that the Flood was so peaceful that it left no abiding geological evidence. We further deny that the thousands of meters of sedimentary rock formations with their fossilized remains were largely produced after or before the Flood or even before Adam.

XII. We affirm that all people living and dead are descended from Adam and Eve and that as such all people equally bear the image of God, their Maker. We therefore affirm that there is only one race of human beings and that the various people groups (with their various languages, cultures, and distinctive physical characteristics, including skin color) arose as a result of God's supernatural judgment at the Tower of Babel and the subsequent dispersion of the people by families.

We deny that the so-called "races" have different origins and that any one "race" is superior to any other.