

Interpreting science from the perspective of religion

The dinosaur existed for a few literal hours on earth!

October 28, 2012

Henok Tadesse, Electrical Engineer, BSc

Ethiopia

E-mail: entkidmt@yahoo.com or wchmar@gmail.com

Abstract

The dinosaur evolved, lived, became extinct and was fossilized within a few literal hours!

Claim1: According to the Christian theology, the universe, the earth and life were created by God only about 7500 years ago. The human being was exceptionally created by God. God created life and the universe according to the laws of nature and the universe He created Himself, with some exceptions, including the creation of the human being.

Claim2: Yet, according to scientific theories and facts, the age of the universe is around 13.7 billion years, the earth was formed about 4.5 billion years ago, life on earth started about 2.5 billion years ago and species evolved through natural selection for billions and millions of years.

How can we reconcile these discrepancies? Fundamentally, we can't comprehend creation of life and the universe by God, *as it is*. However, we can use analogies, models to interpret the scientific theories from religious perspective. If the scientific theories and facts are correct and valid, then...

God completed millions and billions years of evolutionary processes in a few *literal* hours and days!

God SPEEDED UP the evolutionary processes of biology, fossilization, geology and cosmology.

'SPEEDING' up can be interpreted in two different ways. The first interpretation is to think of an analogy with speeding up the playing rate of your DVD player. While speeding up the cosmic evolutions, the evolutions on earth were going normal. And while speeding up the evolutionary processes on earth, the cosmic evolutions were going normal. The dinosaur existed for millions of years from its own perspective; from God's perspective it existed for a few ***literal, real*** hours .

However, the animals and plants never experienced night, because they were born, lived and died during a fraction of time in the daytime. The second interpretation is that from dinosaurs point of view, it existed on earth for millions of years. However, from God's perspective, the dinosaur existed for a few literal hours on earth. The dinosaur evolved, lived, became extinct and was fossilized in a few literal hours. The second interpretation differs from the first one in that the same sun that swept the sky only once on creation Friday from the perspective of God also swept the sky billions of times from the dinosaur's perspective, resulting in billions of days and nights. Rationally this is incomprehensible and perhaps impossible, but spiritually it is possible. However this second alternative interpretation seems to contradict with Genesis because there were no billions of days and nights implied on the Genesis. However we will keep this alternative too. In these interpretations, two time perspectives have been presented. But how do we know which time perspective is real and which one is illusion ?

The only way we know the reality of one time perspective is through our ***consciousness***.

A scientist strongly opposing religious teachings would surely say it was one literal week and

not billions of years, after AWAKENING, if he lived during creation week because he is a **conscious** being. **So consciousness and real time may have relationship**. On the other hand, there is an inconsistency between fossil succession and Genesis. This might be because fossil dating shows when the animals or plants died, whereas Genesis shows when they were created. This has the implication that life spans might have been millions or billions of years during creation time, varying from species to species. The variation in likelihood of fossilization of each species may also have some role.

Introduction

The discovery of the scientific theories on the origin and evolution of life during the last century was one of the greatest achievements in the scientific endeavour. The 'Big Bang' model is another great theory explaining the 'origin' of the universe. These theories are surprisingly supported by evidences, observations and scientific experiments and measurements.

These two theories, despite their tremendous success in advancing science, have caused considerable controversies for several decades because of their apparently conflicting implications with religious teachings.

Different theories and explanations were developed to reconcile the discrepancies between the scientific theories and religious teachings about the origins and ages of the universe and life. The Young Earth creationism (YEC) is the most relevant theory to consider here. YEC attempts to give explanations to these discrepancies.

The two well known puzzles are:

1. If the earth is only a few thousand years old, why do we see the lights from distant stars ?
2. Why do we measure the ages of the earth and fossils to be billions and millions of years?

YEC's explanations are:

'God created the earth and the universe with the appearance of age' and

'God created the stars with their light in transit'.

However, these explanations give rise to another problem: Why God wanted the universe to *specifically* 'appear' that way and specifically why God created the light in transit. However YEC doesn't explain the significance of those explanations.

Fundamentally, no one can ever comprehend creation of the universe by God, *as it is*. However, despite our inability to comprehend how God created the universe, we can create theories, analogies, and models, to interpret the scientific theories and facts even though we know that theories (scientific or other) will never be absolutely correct and complete and always need changes or modifications when we have deeply understood them and their limitations, which often takes a long time. But why do we need such theories, analogies or models?

The scientific theories about the origins and ages of life and the universe are surprisingly supported by observations and are so coherent that it has become impossible to reject them rationally. These scientific thoughts have become so powerful as to become 'reasons' for people to discard religion. Science cannot be a 'reason' to reject religion, only our free will determines our choice. Reconciliation of science with religion not only mitigates the ever existing controversies but also can open a new way to do science.

The interpretations presented in this paper and their implications should not be interpreted as suggesting on what actually happened, which is a divine act beyond our comprehension. In this paper we compromise on how to interpret scientific theories and facts while strictly maintaining our religious beliefs and teachings.

The two related questions that this paper attempts to answer are:

1. Why do scientific dating methods show ages of billions and millions of years and why do we see the lights from distant stars if the earth was created only about 7500 years ago?
2. How can theories of evolution and Big Bang be interpreted?

Discussions

Why do we measure ages of millions and billions of years and why do we see lights from distant stars if life and the universe were created only 7500 years ago?

The theory of biological evolution is a well established theory both by its conceptual coherence and by evidences of fossil records. It is inconsistent with religious teachings that life and the universe were created about 7500 years ago. The Big Bang theory is also a conceptually coherent theory supported by observations and measurements. Of course, we believe that religious teachings are always absolute, where as the correctness of scientific theories is always relative. However, if we assume the correctness of the scientific theories and facts, it is possible to figure out the reconciliation idea: **God completed millions and billions years of evolutionary processes in a few *literal* hours and days!**

The dinosaur species existed for around 165 million years on earth according to science. However, according to Genesis, God completed creation of all life in three literal days. Therefore, the whole dinosaur species existed on our earth for only a few *literal* hours. **The dinosaur evolved, lived, became extinct and was fossilized in a few *literal* hours.** This means God 'speeded up' the evolutionary processes hundreds of billions times. God did not speed up biological evolution in isolation, He speeded up all the evolutionary processes in the universe: biological, fossilization, geological and cosmic. The 'SPEEDING UP' can be interpreted in two different ways:

1. The first interpretation

The first interpretation is to think of an analogy with speeding up the playing rate of your DVD player. Suppose you speed it up a thousand times. You will not identify any

thing in the movie you are watching. Imagine speeding it up a billion times! To interpret the scientific theories from the perspective of Genesis, we divide creation works into two: creation in the heavens/space and creation on the land, the sea and air. According to Genesis the six creation days were literal days.

On Sunday God created the heavens and the earth ex nihilo¹. The universe was created in its initial form on Sunday. When the universe was just created on Sunday, the age of the universe might have been, roughly, some value less than 11.2 (13.7 minus 2.5) billion years. (2.5 billion being the age of life on earth). He completed the whole evolution with enormous speed up.

On Monday, God created space, dividing between the two waters: the heavenly waters and the sea.

On Tuesday, God speeded up the evolution on earth separating land from sea and oceans through geological processes. He also speeded up the evolution of plants on land until the emergence of plants on land.

On Wednesday, God speeded up the cosmic evolutionary processes until the formation of the stars, galaxies, the sun and the moon. The cosmic evolutionary processes might have been completed up to the 13.7 billion years time point, which is the age of our universe estimated today. Thus, the evolutionary processes on earth might have been some billion years (less than 2.5 billion) behind those of the heavens/ cosmic.

On Thursday, God speeded up the evolutionary processes on earth up to the evolution/ evolving of sea/water creatures and birds. The evolution of land plants (which started on Monday) might have continued on this day too.

On Friday, God speeded up the evolutionary processes on earth up to the evolution of land animals, the animals we see on earth today. On this day, sea creatures and land plants also continued to finally evolve to those living on land and in the sea today. On Friday, all evolutionary processes had already been completed: biological, fossilization, geological and cosmological. On this day the dinosaur and many ancient animals and plants had already become extinct and their bodies fossilized. On Friday, God created Adam and Eve Himself in His image. So Adam and Eve were not results of evolution.

Note that, according to the interpretations presented in this paper, God speeded up all evolutionary processes on earth at the same time: not only biological evolution, but also geological and fossilization. On the other hand, the cosmic evolution was going normal while evolution on earth was being speeded up and vice versa. The rotation and revolution of the earth should be normal on all days because all the six creation days were literal days. On each day, God completed evolutionary processes which would have normally taken millions and billions of years. And the dinosaur species, from its

own perspective, existed for millions of years. However, all animals and plants lived in the day time, experiencing no nights.

To explain the two perspectives of time we may use an example.

Suppose that you started living on creation Friday at 12 PM, at noon, and that there were already different animal species on earth. Suppose you had a dog and a cat and you lived in a hut. Then, after years, your dog and cat died normally. Then you continued to live for millions of years. Over million years you had changed your living areas and built and abandoned huts many times. You had lived so long that you eventually forgot about your dog and cat completely. Then, after millions of years, you had a dog and a cat again (which evolved and were different from the ancient ones). For millions of years living in the day time, you never looked at your watch. Then you were AWAKENED suddenly and looked at your watch: it was only 2 PM, you were AWAKENED! Only two literal hours had passed since you started living! You KNEW that these were *real, literal* hours! Then you looked around: 'How did I come to live in this hut! Two hours ago I was living in a different hut and had a different kind of dog and cat!' You never knew what happened between 12PM and 2PM. You would have almost no reference as your memory of the past had vanished because of the vast length of time that had passed. All you know was you had a different kind of cat and dog two hours ago than those you had then. Your ancient hut, which you lived in two literal hours ago, could only be discovered by archaeology, if at all. And the bodies of your ancient dog and cat had been fossilized.

2. The second interpretation

God created all life on earth (except humans) during three literal days through biological evolutionary processes which would have normally taken millions or billions of years. The dinosaur existed on earth for around 165 million years *from its own perspective*. *Form God's perspective* the dinosaur existed for a few *literal* hours, between dawn and dusk, with the sun sweeping the sky only once. Of course, God's perspective is not limited; we say this only to explain the two perspectives; only God can take both perspectives simultaneously. From dinosaur's perspective, however, *the same sun* swept the sky billions times, resulting in billions of days and nights. Scientifically this is difficult or impossible to accept or understand. Spiritually it is easy to accept (but difficult to comprehend) because we believe nothing is beyond God's ability. However this interpretation seems to contradict the Genesis because there is no such implication there. However, this interpretation can serve us to enhance our ability to create new ways of interpreting science, so we will keep it.

Suppose you lived during the 6 days of creation week. When you rose up **in the morning** of one of those six days, on creation **Thursday**, there were no fish, no birds, no

land animals at all on the earth and you 'heard' God saying He would create sea creatures and birds that day. There were already different kinds of plants on the land, as they had been created (delivered by land as commanded by God) on Tuesday. So you waited until sunset to see birds and fish, but none appeared. You waited for one year, still no birds or fish appeared and you might have thought that God didn't keep His words. Then suppose you continued to live for millions of years. During this era biological evolution continued, different sea creatures and birds evolving, old species becoming extinct, new species emerging, bodies of dead creatures being fossilized, evolutionary, fossilization and geological processes all working in parallel. Eventually you would have forgotten all of your ancient history and what God said one morning millions of years ago. For you, the days and nights and everything were no special and were all normal.

Then one **Thursday, at sun set**, after living for millions of years, you discovered that (**a revelation!**) that day was *the same* day, the creation Thursday, on which God said He would create fish and birds millions of years ago! And 12 hours ago! God awakened you! You had a clear and fresh memory that He said he would create birds and fish *in the morning of that same Thursday*. In the morning (you clearly remember) there were no fish, no birds, no sea creatures, but then, at sun set, you see them here and there. And the environment, the land surfaces, mountains, forests had drastically changed, due to geological processes, erosions, **but you clearly know and feel it to be the same** area that existed in the morning, 12 literal hours ago! You would have a clear and fresh memory of that morning as if you never passed through those millions of years! But you would have no memory of what happened in between! What would you feel? You feel as if you never lived for millions of years and as if you had been dreaming. You would certainly be a millions years old man. This can be interpreted as follows: even though you didn't *really* live for millions of years, you were 'biologically' millions years old. The same may be true for the ages of fossils and rocks. During those millions of years you thought you lived very very long, but after AWAKENING you realized and felt you lived only for a single literal day.

The above interpretation can be applied to the creation of the heavens and the earth on Sunday, the separation of land and sea/oceans on Tuesday, and to all the events that took place from Sunday to Friday (except creation of Adam and Eve).

Which perspective of time is real? How can we know which perspective of time is real?

In the above two interpretations two perspective of time were shown.

Which one is real ? Is it the millions years or the single literal day? Fossil ages of millions and billions years are not real, literal ages. They are illusions. This means that only God's perspective is real. Genesis tells us that the days were literal days, so they were literal days. The state of evolution, fossilization and geological processes are equivalent to millions and billions years' processes from the perspective of the speed of these

processes observed today. Scientists simply extrapolate the time needed for these processes to reach their present state by assuming that the rate of these processes has been constant throughout the history of the universe.

But how can we know real time? I think the only way we can know the reality of the million years or the single literal day is ***through our consciousness***. ***We just know*** that one time perspective is real and the other one is illusion. If this is true, then, a scientist strongly opposing religious teachings would surely say really it was one literal week and not billions years, after AWAKENING, if he lived during creation week because he is a ***conscious*** being.

Therefore, the 7500 years of the Christian theology is true, literal time whereas billions and millions years of science are simple extrapolations based on *currently observed rate* of these evolutionary processes and are illusions.

An analogy to two perspectives of time is to think of a person starting from some place and making a journey to another destination. He took a path which was 30,000 kilometres long to the destination. He might have travelled for 10 years before arriving at that destination. And when he arrived at the destination after ten years, he thought that he was very far away from his starting place, but immediately it happened to him that he was almost *at the same place* that he started from ten years ago! He noticed a mysterious path which was only 10 kilometres long to the same destination! What would he *feel*?!

Inconsistencies between fossil succession and Genesis and implications

When we look at the succession in fossil record², we see that typically the ages of the fossils are, from longest to shortest: snails, fish, some plants, mammals, birds. But, according to Genesis, plants were the first to be created, and birds were created before mammals. This inconsistency might be related to the fact that Genesis tells us about the succession of creation, whereas fossil succession tells about the succession of death. Therefore the difference of life expectancies may have brought these inconsistencies. Perhaps the life spans could have been millions of years, varying from species to species. Additionally the variation in likelihood of fossilization of each species may have a limited role.

Conclusion

Finally, which of the two interpretations is 'correct'? Are these interpretations *correct* at all?

The purpose of this paper is to show a way of interpreting science from the perspective of religion, and is not to explain what actually happened. So this paper is not strictly concerned with the *correctness* of both interpretations.

On the other hand, we can describe some limitations of the interpretations. The first interpretation, although simple to understand, has some problems. From scientific point of

view one of the questions that arise is: if the dinosaur existed for a few literal hours in the day time, and for millions of years from its own perspective, then the dinosaur had never experienced 'night'. Plants also had been living in eras of day time. And these may pose difficulties scientifically. But should we see these as problems? I think no, because if one accepts the idea of two time perspectives these should also not pose any problem because it is hard also to understand two perspectives of time scientifically. The problem with the second interpretation also is that it is incomprehensible scientifically or rationally.

The first interpretation implies that God can speed up different processes independently: in this case the evolutions in the heavens AND the evolutions on the land, sea and air. If you speed up the playing rate of your DVD player everything speeds up in proportion. However, according to the first interpretation, God can speed up the two evolutions (heavens and earth) independently. The two evolutions should go independently to match with Genesis.

References

1. Holy scripture
2. Fossil succession <http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/fossils/succession.html>