

Battle for the Beginning – Chapter 5
Lights in the Heavens
By Greg Neyman
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First Published 3 August 2005
Answers In Creation Website
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MacArthur gives no significant arguments in the introductory pages of this paragraph. He continues his theme of "instant creation." As we have seen in previous passages, there is no indication of the length of time between God's proclamations and the final product...we just don't know how long God took to create. Surely some events were instant, others were millions of years. This does not mean that God is weak...think of it this way, can you create a functioning world by yourself in 20 billion years? No you can't. Only God can, and did it. Time is of no matter to God. If He took 6 days or 60 billion years, it doesn't matter.

Separation (Page 108)

MacArthur gives several pages of general information about the sun and moon, none of which has anything to do with their age. On the last page, he gives a very brief discussion on the formation of the moon, which is meant to show that scientists don't have a valid naturalistic model for the formation of the moon. This is known as the "God of the Gaps" Fallacy. If science cannot explain it, then God must have done it. For more on this particular argument concerning the moon, see this review of Battle for the Beginning (<http://www.dctech.com/physics/features/1002.php>).

Regulation (Page 112)

The author gives a discussion on the earth's seasons, none of which bears on the age of the earth. He then proceeds into a small discussion about intelligent design, which also has no bearing upon age.

Illumination (Page 115)

At the beginning of this section, MacArthur says the "and it was so" phrase used by God was a technical term meaning it was made permanent. He claims this is against the idea of progressive creationism. This is the same argument from fiat...God said it, and it was so, but we have no way of knowing how much time elapsed between the declaration by God and the finished product. MacArthur cannot authoritatively say it was instantaneous, just like I cannot authoritatively say it was 1 billion years. No time interval is implied within these statements.

From here, he goes into a discussion of light and its necessity for life. At the end of the first paragraph, he again uses a God of the Gaps fallacy, saying scientists don't fully understand how the sun produces energy. He makes the statement, "It is yet another

example of how scientific theories are in constant flux--in contrast to Scripture, which never changes.

There are two issues here. First, changing scientific theories is a wonderful concept. As new things are discovered, theories are altered or even discarded in favor of new ones. Science, by its very nature, must change. This is a good thing, but MacArthur makes it sound bad...he contrasts it with Scripture, which according to him, never changes...which brings up the second issue.

I agree with MacArthur...Scripture does not change. However, how we interpret the Scriptures is changeable. As new evidences come along in the form of scientific facts, we compare these scientific truths with the Bible. In some cases, we must change our interpretation of the Scriptures. We are not changing the Scriptures, but we are changing our understanding of them. Young earth creationists such as MacArthur think we change Scripture...we don't. We merely interpret it differently.

Next, he continues his assault, proclaiming fiat (instant) creation of the sun, moon, and stars. Consider it this way. The note in a journal from a corporation that produces sprockets contains the following statement;

The boss said, "Let there be a sprocket with 20 teeth," and it was so.

Does that mean the sprocket immediately appeared...no it doesn't. The financial managers analyzed the proposal, calculated its cost, sent it back to the boss for approval, who then sent it to the engineers, who drew up the plans, and they sent it to the fabricators, who built the molds, and then they gave the molds to the production line, and they poured the metal in the molds and made the sprockets. This process may take months in some corporations. In looking at the original statement by the leader of the corporation, it gives no indication of how much time passed between his proclamation and the final product.

On page 118, he brings up the problem of how light from billions of light years away reached earth in only 6,000 years. He claims that "God accelerated the light so that it would reach the earth in an instant." Thus he avoids the argument of "apparent age" for the stars...or so it would seem. By this method, all of the stars in the universe would give the appearance of having been 6,000 years old. By this model, the stars were all created in one 24-hour period, and then their light was accelerated so as to reach earth the same day. The light that is now hitting earth from these stars should all give evidence of stars that are all 6,000 years old. When we look at stars, however, they give varying evidences for their ages...we have stars in varying degrees of development, from new stars to black holes, a whole range of variance is present. Naturally, the young earth believer would say God made stars of all types and ages. This however, denies MacArthur's theory that all things were created mature. Man, and all the animals, trees, insects, etc., were created fully mature...but stars were not.

Overall, nothing in this chapter presents any threat to old earth belief. It is interesting that he uses quotes from C. S. Lewis to support his position and close out this chapter. C. S. Lewis was an old earth creationist...and a theistic evolutionist at that! For more see [Notable Christians Open to an Old Earth Interpretation \(http://www.reasons.org/resources/apologetics/notable_leaders/index.shtml\)](http://www.reasons.org/resources/apologetics/notable_leaders/index.shtml).