

# How Old Are Dinosaurs?

**Introduction.** From children's books and toys, to Hollywood movies we see the images of these creatures of the past. This is an important subject to study as our children are faced with the teaching of evolution in school with its assertion that the Earth is billions of years old. You cannot watch programs on public television, such as National Geographic, Nova, Nature, Wild America or the Discovery Channel without being exposed to it. And dinosaur fossils and how they are dated play a role in this. But what is the truth of the matter? What do we teach our children? I do not deny their existence. To say that they did not exist is absurd. We have thousands of dinosaur bones that fill our museums. So the question is not did the dinosaurs exist, but when did the dinosaurs exist and how did they come into existence?

Today, the controversy between evolutionists and creationists centers around the matter of when the dinosaurs existed. A chasm exists between these two groups that never will be bridged, so long as each side maintains its present view. Evolutionists advocate that dinosaurs evolved from some ancient reptile 200 million years ago, and that they became extinct roughly 65-70 million years ago. Creationists who accept Genesis 1-11 as an accurate, historical record of God's creative activity oppose such claims, and instead maintain that the dinosaurs were created by God within the six literal days described in the biblical record. Thus, man and the dinosaurs would have been created at essentially the same time, and would have lived together as contemporaries on the Earth.

Before we can teach our children about such things we must know what to teach them. So in our study we want to present some evidences from the Bible and from science, which support the scriptures, that we might answer the question, "How old are dinosaurs?"

## I. ***Why Is The Controversy Over Dinosaurs So Important?***

- A. One point on which both creationists and evolutionists agree is that dinosaurs make marvelous teaching tools. It is rare to find an adult or a child who does not have a keen interest in dinosaurs. These magnificent beasts with the long names capture our attention as we fixate on their massive size and terror they were apparently able to create as they roamed the Earth.
  - 1. From kindergarten through graduate school, dinosaurs often are used as a tool to indoctrinate students regarding the "fact" of organic evolution.
  - 2. Students are told that these wondrous animals evolved from some ancient reptile into what we now know as birds.
- B. What effect does this kind of teaching have on young minds?

3. Because almost all youngsters have a fascination with dinosaurs, as demonstrated in the success of Jurassic Park in 1993, and because teachers are among the most trusted of all adults, children often accept without question evolutionary dogma and its accompanying concept of an ancient Earth.
  4. With what result? If testimony from many of the evolutionists themselves can be accepted at face value, the study of dinosaurs was the deciding factor in their conclusion to give up their belief in God and to accept evolution in its place.
    - a) Evolutionists like Stephen Jay Gould, Robert Bakker, and others are on record as stating that it was the study of dinosaurs, at a young age, that set them on their lifelong path as evolutionists.
    - b) Edward O. Wilson once commented that when he was fifteen years old, he had "great fervor and interest in the fundamentalist religion; I left it at seventeen when I got to the University of Alabama and heard about the evolutionary theory."
- C. Because they are fascinating to children, because they are such an effective teaching aid, and because they are generally used to teach evolution, dinosaurs can represent a formidable tool to be used in robbing students of their faith in God and the Bible. Who could deny that these statements make the controversy over dinosaurs critically important?

## II. ***Does The Bible Mention Dinosaurs?***

- A. There are actually several ways to respond to this type of inquiry.
  1. The word "dinosaur" was not invented until 1842, while the Bible was translated into English much earlier. One would hardly expect to find a word in a book which preceded the word's invention by several centuries!
  2. It should be noted that numerous organisms are not mentioned by name in the Bible, yet such an omission does not cast doubt on their creation or existence.
  3. While the word "dinosaur" is not mentioned in the Bible, there is compelling evidence that dinosaurs are described, directly or indirectly, in the Bible.
- B. Those who reject this possibility do so solely on the assumption that dinosaurs and man were never contemporary -- a view that not only is contrary to principles of sound biblical interpretation, but is, in fact, saturated with evolutionary presuppositions. Were it not for modern-day influences of evolutionary "science," Bible believers would have no problem at all with such passages as this.
- C. The passage containing the most serious implications for this question is Exodus 20:11. If God created the Earth, the heavens, the seas and

everything in them in six days, what does that omit (John 1:3)? Absolutely nothing! Add to that the statements found in Genesis 1:31 and 2:1, and the case is strengthened considerably.

4. In Genesis 1:31, as He surveyed everything He had made, God proclaimed it "very good" -- the Hebrew phrase representing completion and perfection. In Genesis 2:1, He then stated that the creation was "finished," indicating an action once and for all completed, not continuing into the future.
  5. According to Genesis, no animals were created before day five, at which time God created sea-dwelling creatures and birds (Genesis 1:20-23). On day six (Genesis 1:24-25), God created the "creeping things" and "beasts of the earth" -- descriptions which would certainly include dinosaurs. Since man likewise was created on day six (Genesis 1:26-27), men and dinosaurs lived on the Earth as contemporaries.
- D. Through the years, attempts have been made to introduce into the biblical record the idea of an ancient Earth so that evolutionary concepts could be made acceptable to Bible believers. These attempts, generally known as the Day-Age Theory and the Gap Theory, have failed because the premises upon which they were developed were false. While the conclusion that men and dinosaurs coinhabited the Earth is at odds with current evolutionary thought, it is the only conclusion which respects the Bible's inspiration.

### III. **"Behemoth" And "Leviathan"**

- A. David Matthews, in his article, "The Pronouncements Of Science" said, "Christians should keep in mind that it is much easier to reinterpret the Bible than it is to compress billions of years of history into a six or ten thousand year time frame."
  1. Of course, he can only assume billions of years of history yet is willing to "reinterpret the Bible" to satisfy his position.
  2. Christians who bow down to evolution and/or uniformitarianism must be willing to "reinterpret" and surrender the clear teaching of scripture for their earthly wisdom and scripture-twisting theories.
- B. Unfortunately, it does not end there, for they will have to reinterpret every kind of evidence so that they may hold their unscriptural beliefs. Shane Scott affords us with an example of this in his article entitled, "Dinosaurs and the Bible." He writes against the young earth position saying, "Warning! If you take this view, avoid a few common young earth creationist mistakes: a) The claim that human footprints have been found along dinosaur prints; and b) The claim that 'behemoth' and 'leviathan' are dinosaurs."
- C. We will now consider some of the physical evidence that man and di-

nosaurus were contemporaneous.

1. Cave drawings.

- a) In the early 1900s, Dr. Samuel Hubbard, who was the honorary curator of the Oakland Museum of Natural History, made a trip to a canyon in Arizona. Dr. Hubbard had suggested that the Indians had lived in that area long before our knowledge of them.
- b) Because of his findings, his theory was proven to be true. But he not only found some artifacts, he also found something else of interest. On the canyon walls, in a beautifully preserved state, carved in solid rock were some wall drawings. And in the wall drawings he found such creatures as cattle, sheep, buffalo, oxen and dinosaurs!
- c) He wrote of these drawings, "Taken all in all, the proportions are good. The huge reptile is depicted in the attitude in which man would be most likely to see it. Reared on its hind legs, balancing with the long tale, either feeding or in a fighting position, possibly defending itself against a party of men." If these Indians had never seen a dinosaur, them having supposedly lived millions of years before, how would they know how to draw one? And, why draw it along with other animals they saw during their time?

2. Dinosaur fossils.

- a) If dinosaurs and men are supposed to be contemporaries, the question becomes, "Were did the fossils come from and how old are they?" Just because something is "fossilized" does not mean that it is millions (or even thousands) of years old. When conditions and materials are right, a bone can become filled with minerals fairly quickly. The main ingredients for fossilization are a quick burial, the right amount of water and suitable minerals.
- b) Conditions during the Flood were ideal for fossilization.
  - (1) All across the planet, large numbers of animals are found -- broken, buried and fossilized that were created by violent Flood waters. But in spite of the intense popular and scientific interest in them, only about 2,100 articulated dinosaur bones (two or more aligned in the same position as in life) exist.
  - (2) Researchers have found that chicken bones and wood can be replaced with minerals in just five to ten years. Civil war buttons have been found imbedded in coal. A hammer head was found in one of these coal shafts with its wooden handle already coalified.
  - (3) A huge dinosaur bone might take hundreds of years to fossilize, but certainly not millions. In fact, many dinosaur remains are still not completely turned to rock. More than half

of the fossil is still original bone. Some even have chemicals from the living animals such as proteins and amino acids! When some dinosaur fossils are cut, the odor of burning bone can be smelled.

3. Fossilized footprints.

a) Fossilized human footprints were discovered in coal veins of Kentucky by Dr. Albert Ingalls. According to the evolutionary geologist, the coal veins are supposed to be in the Carboniferous period (a period, according to evolutionists, that was millions of years before the rise of the dinosaurs and men).

(1) What is more astounding is that Ingalls found the prints not only in the coal veins of Kentucky, but also in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Missouri and even westward toward the Rocky Mountains.

(2) The tracks show five toes and an arch which is unquestionably human. The tracks are 9.5 inches long and 4.1 inches broad at the heel. The width at the forward end of the track, by the toes, was 6 inches. The being that left the tracks was a biped that walked uprightly like a human.

(3) Ingalls stated, "If man, or even his ape ancestor, or even the ape ancestor's early mammal ancestor, existed as far back as in the carboniferous period in any shape, then the whole science of geology is so completely wrong that all geologists will resign their jobs and take up truck driving."

b) It is completely unthinkable, in evolutionary terms, that dinosaurs and advanced mammals (like elephants or giraffes) could have co-existed. But Dr. Samuel Hubbard discovered fossilized footprints of both the three-toed carnivorous dinosaurs and the imperial elephants in the same locality. If, as it appears, both of these creatures left their footprints at approximately the same period, then the dinosaurs continued to survive for millions of years later than scientists once thought, or else that imperial elephants appeared on earth millions of years before their supposed arrival.

4. The Natural Bridges National Monument petroglyph.

a) Natural Bridges National Monument is located in southeastern Utah. Visitors to this site will see where the White River has carved meandering paths through the sandstone rock. Three natural bridges have formed where these wandering streams have undercut the above rock formations. It is at the Kachina Bridge where an Indian petroglyph depicting a dinosaur was discovered. In fact, visitors to the site can see three or four drawings that appear to be dinosaur-like creatures.

- b) There is a petroglyph there that bears a startling resemblance to a dinosaur, specifically a *Brontosaurus*, with a long tail and neck and small head. In the San Rafael Swell, there is a pictograph that looks very much like a pterosaur, a Cretaceous flying reptile. If *National Geographic* is correct in stating that “no human being has ever seen a live dinosaur,” then how did they draw these petroglyphs?
5. Inca burial stones.
- a) Javier Darquea came into possession of his first burial stone (from the Inca section of the country of Peru) when he was given one as a paperweight for his birthday. Dr. Darquea sought out the origin of his unique gift, in an effort to amass a collection of these unique stones, and eventually assembled over 11,000 of them.
  - b) The rocks turned out to be ancient burial stones that the Inca Indians placed with their dead. Almost one-third of the stones depicted specific types of dinosaurs (such as *Triceratops* and *Stegosaurus*) and various pterosaurs. The type of art form represented by these stones, and their location, dated them to the time of the Inca Culture, c. A.D. 500-1500. How could these ancient Indians have known the anatomy of these creatures if they never had witnessed them firsthand?
6. The Acambaro figurines.
- a) In July 1944, Waldemar Julsrud, a German merchant in Acambaro, Mexico, found himself riding on horseback on the lower slope of El Toro Mountain. From his elevated vantage point, Mr. Julsrud spotted some partially exposed, hewn stones and a ceramic object half buried in the dirt.
  - b) Eventually, over 33,500 figurines and artifacts of ceramic and stone (including some in jade) were uncovered. A key feature of this discovery was the fact that many of the artifacts were highly detailed dinosaur figurines.
7. Historical records of flying reptiles.
- a) Herodotus, a fifth century B.C. Greek historian, wrote, “There is a place in Arabia ... where I went to learn about the winged serpents. When I arrived there, I saw innumerable bones and backbones of serpents: many heaps of backbones, great and small and even smaller. [2] This place, where the backbones lay scattered, is where a narrow mountain pass opens into a great plain, which adjoins the plain of Egypt. [3] Winged serpents are said to fly from Arabia at the beginning of spring, making for Egypt; but the ibis birds encounter the invaders in this pass and kill them” (The Histories, 2.75.1-3).

- b) Josephus, a first century A.D. Roman historian, wrote, "When the ground was difficult to be passed over, because of the multitude of serpents (which it produces in vast numbers ... some of which ascend out of the ground unseen, and also fly in the air, and do come upon men at unawares, and do them a mischief) ... [Moses] made baskets like unto arks, of sedge, and filled them with ibes [i.e., birds], and carried them along with them; which animal is the greatest enemy to serpents imaginable, for they fly from them when they come near them; and as they fly they are caught and devoured by them" (Antiquities of the Jews, 2.243).
- B. Whether the evidence is physical in nature or whether it is in the scripture, it always must be "reinterpreted."
1. The genuineness of scientific evidence would never be questioned were it not for the geologically sacrosanct evolutionary time table.
  2. For the same reason, they conclude that the "behemoth" and "leviathan" could never be dinosaurs since the Bible shows them as contemporaries with man. Sadly, the controversy over the days of Genesis has occurred because of the same mindset.

#### IV. ***What Exactly Were The "Behemoth" And "Leviathan"?***

- A. Some say, as brother Scott suggests, that the "behemoth" was a hippopotamus and that "leviathan" was a crocodile. But there is nothing in scripture to suggest an image of a hippopotamus or crocodile in Job. Are these creatures explained away because we have been "evolutionized" into thinking that dinosaur and man could never have been contemporaries? Unfortunately, that seems to be the reason for some.
- B. Are "behemoth" and "leviathan" literal or figurative?
1. Some assert that "behemoth" and "leviathan" were figurative creatures. Whatever "behemoth" was, it was something that was made along with man (Job 40:15).
  2. Furthermore, "behemoth" "eateth grass as an ox" (Job 40:15). What is it about "behemoth" that would make one think he is figurative? "Behemoth" was not an ox, but he eats the same kind of diet as that of an ox.
  3. "Behemoth" "trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth" (Job 40:23). Is the Jordan literal or figurative? If "behemoth" were figurative, we would have a figurative creature made with man, eating grass like an ox and confident when the Jordan rages into his mouth! Let us accept the evidence, "behemoth" was real; there is no indication given in scripture that he is figurative.
  4. Since "behemoth" is literal, why would "leviathan" be any different as he is the next creature in God's argument (Job 41:1, 8-10)? If "leviathan" were figurative, then God's point of standing against

him is absurd and without reason. False doctrine often does just that, it makes our reasonable God unreasonable.

C. Was "behemoth" a hippo?

1. Think how weak a hippo makes God look. God describes "behemoth" in Job 40:19. Can we think of a hippopotamus being the "chief of the ways of God"? It seems ludicrous to ascribe such a lofty title to such a tubby and round creature. Furthermore, only God can "make his sword to approach unto him."
2. God speaks of him as moving "his tail like a cedar" (vs. 17). A hippo has a tail like a stick not a cedar tree! The "behemoth" had a tail that moved like the swaying of a cedar tree. A hippo has no such thing.
3. He "drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares" (vss. 23-24). Can it be said of a hippo that he is confident in a raging and gushing river? Can it be said of a hippo that he is confident even when he is pierced in the nose with a snare?

D. Was "leviathan" a crocodile?

1. One has as much authority to believe that "leviathan" is a crocodile as one does to believe the creation week consisted of billions of years, or that "singing" in Ephesians 5:19 is accompanied by mechanical instruments.
2. The following are some reasons why leviathan cannot be a crocodile.
  - a) "Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?" (Job 41:9). Does a crocodile have that effect on a person? Does the very sight of a crocodile cast us down?
  - b) "When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves" (Job 41:25). How high does a crocodile rise? He does not raise himself up much higher than a serpent who crawls on his belly! Can we describe a crocodile as one that rises and frightens the mighty with his "breakings"? If a crocodile could make "breakings," would it crash enough to make the mighty afraid or bewildered?
  - c) "Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire" (Job 41:30). We have all seen men wrestle alligators and crocodiles. When they turn crocodiles over and expose their undersides, do we see "sharp stones"? Is it not rather smooth? When a crocodile goes through mire, does it leave "pointed things"? Only if it is upside down!
  - d) "He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a

pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary" (Job 41:31-32). Have you ever seen a crocodile go out into the deep blue sea and make it boil? Would his wake make you think the deep has white hair? Again, we must answer in the negative.

- e) "Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron. His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth" (Job 41:19-21). Perhaps this is one reason why people are apprehensive to embrace "leviathan" being literal. But again, why would "behemoth" be literal and "leviathan" figurative? When a person considers that electric eels can produce enough electricity (500-600 volts) to stun a horse without ever shocking itself, that anglerfish and fireflies can manufacture "light," that the Komodo dragon can store deadly bacteria inside its own mouth and that bombardier beetles can produce a caustic, noxious fluid that can be expelled from their bodies at a temperature of 212 degrees Fahrenheit, it is not difficult to accept the possibility that certain dinosaurs or dinosaur-like, water-living reptiles were capable of expelling certain hot, gaseous fumes that might ignite.

## V. ***Where Did Dinosaurs Go?***

- A. Many theories have been suggested to explain the extinction of the dinosaurs, but none fits all the available facts or is provable. Daly documented over twenty explanations for the dinosaurs' disappearance in 1972, and since the publication of his work, additional theories have been advanced as well. The idea most often suggested to explain the disappearance of the dinosaurs centers around a sudden climatic change over all the Earth -- a change so drastic that the dinosaurs could no longer survive.
1. The latest dinosaur extinction theory suggests that the Earth was struck from space by a six-mile-wide meteorite. Supposedly this collision threw three billion tons of dust into the air, blacking out the sun for several years and causing most plants to die, and so the dinosaurs died from a lack of food.
  2. However, the problem with this theory is that scientists have not found a six-mile-wide crater where the supposed meteorite struck the earth, and if it did and what they say did happen, then why did other forms of life survive? No one knows for sure and the God did not reveal this in the scriptures.
- B. Some ask how the dinosaurs survived the Flood, and the only answer must be that they survived in the same way as the other animals: on

the ark. But was Noah's ark large enough to hold all the animals, including the dinosaurs, that it had to carry? There are at least four parameters to be considered in responding to this question.

1. Since God Himself designed and created the animal kingdom, it is safe to conclude that He was similarly able to design a boat large enough to carry a portion of those animals to safety.
2. The ark had just over 100,000 square feet of cargo space. Noah was instructed to take into the boat land-dwelling, air-breathing animals. Today the number of species of animals that fit that description is about 20,000. Assuming that another 20,000 species have become extinct since that time, Noah would have to fit approximately 80,000 animals into the ark. Since the average size of all those animals has been calculated to be that of a sheep, only about half of the space on the ark would have been required to house the animals. This, of course, would leave the other 50,000 square feet available for food, living quarters, etc.
3. It may be that God allowed Noah some latitude in regard to the animals that were taken onboard. For example, perhaps it was not necessary for Noah to take adult animals; rather, immature animals may have been stowed.
4. It is possible that God may have placed some, or all, of the animals into hibernation, thus making them easier to care for. The point is that the Flood was initiated and controlled by God from beginning to end. The notion that dinosaurs could not have fit on the ark is false.

C. Creationists generally believe that the dinosaurs' extinction may be tied, at least in part, to the compelling evidence which indicates that the pre-Flood world was much different than the post-Flood world. The devastating effects of local floods are well known. What kind of damage could be expected from a Flood that covered the Earth (Genesis 7:19)?

1. Many creation scientists believe that the dinosaurs survived for a time after the Flood, but because of the hostile conditions, eventually became extinct. The careful Bible student can see that this hypothesis has just as much merit to it as the evolutionist's theories of the dinosaur's demise.
2. However, from statements in the Bible concerning the Flood, and the changes that took place on the Earth as a result of the Flood, may explain what happened. It is believed that the Earth before the Flood had a great canopy of water vapor around the Earth (Genesis 1:7). Therefore, it would seem that before the flood the Earth had never received rain (Genesis 2:6).
3. This would have maintained a fairly uniform, mild climate, with

none of the wide temperature changes that cause the necessary conditions for rainfall. There was no rain, and therefore no rainbows. So the Earth's climate after the Flood was radically different from its climate before.

4. One final option would be that the dinosaurs simply did not have enough available food to sustain the species. As we have seen, there is evidence to show that dinosaurs existed until fairly recent times. Species on Earth go extinct on a relatively regular basis. Many years ago, the dinosaurs could have gone extinct because of food availability. Regardless of the reason for their extinction, the fact remains that they did live and die within human history.

**Conclusion.** Today, we still stand in awe of them. And what a grand teaching tool they make for our children, who need to know that the same God who created these awesome giants also created them. All of this is simply a reminder of the great power of God. All that men do to disprove the Bible ends up proving it to be true for it is inspired by God (Matthew 24:35). Let us not fail to teach our children these important lessons. If we do not teach them the truthfulness of the Genesis record, someone else may undermine their faith by teaching them the error of evolution, and maybe use dinosaurs to accomplish the task.

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