

GENESIS ACCEPTED



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A DIRTY LUMP OF COAL

Not very exciting is it? The picture (below) I mean. Just a lump of bituminous coal, culled from the pages of Wikipedia, because so many of us today don't have any nor have seen any for many years now. The Clean Air Acts of the 1950s have virtually removed the word 'smog' from our vocabulary, or at least from our experience; housewives don't dash out to bring in their washing if it starts to rain so it won't get smuts all



over it, and few fires in homes in urban areas now burn it. It was dirty. It left lots of ash to clear away and it wasn't the most effective form of heating either. It is so much easier to turn a switch on a gas fire in the morning than to trundle downstairs in the dark cold of winter and light the fire, before waiting for ages for the room to heat up. And then the smoke would billow out of the grate if the room door was closed rapidly! No, there might be nothing as heart-warming and cheery as a real, living fire, especially on a frosty morning, but most of us would prefer not to have to go back to one if we were doing the work of lighting and maintaining its cosy, warming flame.

A monument to God

We might not regret its passing too much, though many in mining villages were impoverished by the closure of pits in the 1970s and 1980s, but few would see in a humble, dirty lump of coal a symbol of God. Oh yes, we know that much of Western prosperity, which we enjoy today, had its genesis in the coal mines of the country where it could be found, and reasonably extracted. It frequently lay alongside iron ore and limestone deposits, which together fuelled the Industrial Revolution by making steel relatively easy to

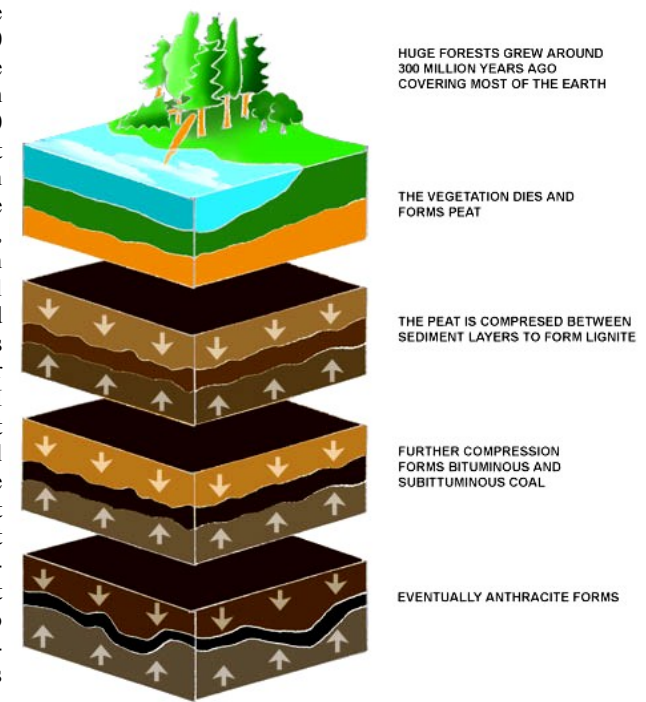
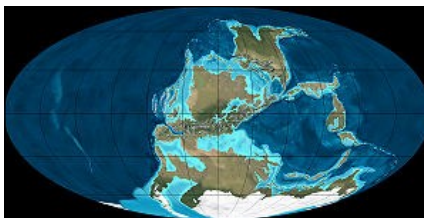
produce on a large scale from about 1750 onwards - as anyone who has studied British History of the past 300 years should know. But God? 'Was Jerusalem [really] builded here among those dark, satanic mills' which arose so rapidly all over our 'green and pleasant land' once this Revolution got under way? Maybe not, but I wish to maintain that coal is still a wonderful monument to the true nature of God and that we should see in it something quite profound as a result. But we'll only be able to do this if we have a biblical view of the world as presented in Genesis and not a uniformitarian, long-ages understanding of when the world was created. Without it coal is simply an accident of geology; with it, it sends a wonderful, yet awesome message to us from the Almighty.

The formation of coal

The one thing you will never have learned at school is how coal was formed. If you did any Geography, I know you will have been fed an explanation - because I used to have to teach it - but that explanation was just a fairy-tale. In fact it is one of the biggest fairy-tales you would ever have been told and it was the realisation of this in the mid 1970s, after I had read the book *Earth in Upheaval*, by Immanuel Velikovsky (see article in *Genesis Accepted* Number 5), that I became a convinced catastrophist and thence moved very swiftly into the ranks of a committed Six-Day, Young Earth Creationist. Velikovsky was no Creationist but his book exploded the myth of the Earth's surface having been fashioned by slow forces acting on it over untold millennia. He demonstrated that 'The Present is [not] the key to the Past': something else is. We find that 'something else' in the global Flood of Noah's day.

The 'normal' explanation of the formation of coal

The simple diagram above is typical of the sort of picture which appears in school textbooks. It begins in the Carboniferous



How coal is formed according to geologists
(Picture from: www.stovesonline.co.uk/img/coal-formation.jpg)

Age, about 300 million years ago, when tropical swamps were thought to cover vast areas of the then land masses - which were not distributed across the Earth's surface as we now know them to be. (The small diagram at the foot of the previous column shows approximately how it is imagined they were spaced, the light blue being shallow waters where coal swamps could develop in appropriate places, and the white is ice, which locked away oceanic waters and lowered sea level.)

As trees died off and fell to the ground they were buried in swampy waters to form peat, so the story goes. The sea-level fluctuated in height as the ice-caps melted and then re-advanced many times over the millions of years involved, and when it did the peaty swamps were variously covered by water and buried under other sediments at some times, and then it rose again allowing the forests to re-establish themselves, thus creating new peat bogs. The older peat was squashed under pressure from the rocks above and the deeper the rocks were buried the greater the pressure on the coal seams, which then graded into coal of differing hardnesses. The most compressed had most of its water squeezed out and became the hardest coal of all, known as anthracite.

This essentially is how the 'Swamp Theory', as it is called, is presented and is thought to work. Under it, coal is classified as a sedimentary rock. On the face of it this seems plausible, especially when the layers underneath the coal frequently contain evidence of the tree roots from the forests in them. They are referred to then as 'seat-earth'.

Diagram from Wikipedia

The fallacy of the Swamp Theory

i) - Time

The first thing which can be said about coal formation is that it does not require millions of years to turn wood into coal. What it needs is heat, pressure and a little water. The Swamp Theory includes all three in its dynamics but if these are swiftly applied a short period of time will do the job. Scientists have created coal in the laboratory in under two weeks by subjecting wood to the right amount of heat and pressure, usually with the addition of some water in the pressure chamber.

The same thinking can apply to the creation of diamonds. No doubt as you know, diamonds are essentially made of pure carbon which has been altered quickly under heat and pressure. We mentioned in *Genesis Accepted* Number 19 a response to a question from a reader in the *Daily Mail* of 6th September 2006 concerning the creation of a diamond from the cremation ashes of a loved one. There is a firm called LifeGem which specializes in doing this and I looked them up on the Internet. You can find out all about them there if you wish. The Wikipedia article has this to say on the subject: *These synthetic diamonds are touted as "memorial diamonds" and range in price from USD \$3,499 for 0.20–0.29 carat (40 to 59mg) stones to \$19,999 for stones weighing 0.90–0.99 carats (180–199mg). The company can extract enough purified carbon from one incompletely cremated human body to synthesize up to 50 gems weighing one carat (0.2g) each. As little as 227g of carbonized remains are needed to make one diamond, and up to 100 diamonds can be created from the remains of one individual. Diamonds made from the remains of pets are priced the same as those made from human remains, but the size of the animal may be a limiting factor.* Industrial diamonds too are deliberately manufactured in very short periods of time. To turn carbon into rock of any description you do not even need one year, let alone millions of years! LifeGem tell us that from cremation to stone takes six-months for the cheapest and nine months for the most expensive.

With this in mind, though it is correct to call coal a fossil fuel, it is not accurate to label it as a sedimentary rock. Any rock which is formed by being altered by heat and/or pressure is called a 'metamorphic rock'. That's the geological definition of a metamorphic rock. However, it's not just a matter of simple mislabelling of the rock.

ii) - Thickness

When I was at university in the 1960s doing Geography, the 'bible' for the physical geography course was by a man called Arthur Holmes: *Principles of Physical Geology*. Though now more than 50 years on, it is still an important reference work in the field. On page 441 of my copy, revised and reprinted in 1965, it blandly states: *'It has been estimated that at least a foot of peat is necessary to make an inch of ordinary coal'*. He said, 'at least a foot', which could mean that an even greater depth of peat might be needed - but not less. So let's stick with one inch of coal from twelve inches of peat. Sounds reasonable, doesn't it? Now do the maths!

If we use the 1inch from 1foot ratio a 10-inch coal seam would need a 10ft depth of peat to make it. But 10 inches is hardly worth mining. There are some coal seams of over 200ft. In NE Wyoming and SE Montana, in the Powder River Basin, we find, for example, the Big George seam - the second biggest in the world. It is 61m, which works out at a little over 200ft thick. To produce such a seam by the normally taught, and believed, Swamp Theory, would require a peat deposit of 2,400ft, (200ft being 2,400 inches). There is no peat deposit in the world anywhere near that depth; the notion is absurd.

The alternative

So if the Swamp Theory does not work, what does? Well that's not too difficult to imagine. First of all we are looking for a process which will apply great heat, enormous pressure, and necessary quantities of water, rapidly, thereby metamorphosing woody vegetation into solid carbon rock, of varying hardnesses, in under a year. Though some forests could be altered whilst *in situ* most would be swept away rapidly in enormous catastrophic events where they formed vast rafts of vegetation, of varying thicknesses, which then could be rapidly turned into coal.

In the case of the Big George seam, a vast raft of the appropriate tree vegetation with a height of over 200ft, which was metamorphosed quickly into an enormously thick coal seam, may also be hard to imagine, but it is far less unimaginable than a depth of peat over half the height of Ben Nevis (4,416ft) being squashed into coal. Which theory makes more sense?

Of course there is only one theory which makes biblical sense for there is no room for millions of years slowly metamorphosing vegetation into coal within its time-frame. There is, however, a mechanism which explains how enormous forests could be swept into rafts of vegetation, even to thicknesses of over 200ft, and then being buried, baked and squeezed into rock in under a year - the Flood, of Noah's day. As we have noted in previous

issues, this Flood was global; it was not just an event where gently rising water inundated the land, but rather there were tsunami of epic proportions sluicing around the globe, and no doubt accounting for the layering of the coal seams in the process. The land broke up as the then continent divided and the pieces were redistributed. Volcanic magma - heat, steam and lava - spewed out on to the surface. Lots of other rocks too were metamorphosed at the same time. Here then is the mechanism and here is the time-frame in which it could occur and thereby effect the changes.

Repainting the biblical picture

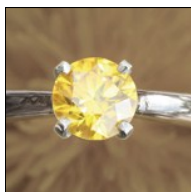
We need to recap on the already established scenario we have painted over the years concerning the antediluvian physical world. This is only a brief summary but it is necessary so that salient points can be made comfortably.

The originally created world consisted of only one huge continent, and, therefore, one ocean. There were no high mountains nor were there great oceanic deeps, and the land was covered by a luxuriant, tropical vegetation, since the climate was warm and gentle. Remember Adam and Eve were not given clothes by God for warmth but rather for modesty (Gen. 3:10-11, and 21). There were no ice caps or glaciers, nor storms or floods or deserts. There is no reason to believe that these conditions did not prevail right up to the Flood. The people of Noah's day laughed at him and ignored his message of a coming disaster. Such things were not a part of their experience, and this tells us amazing things about the faith of Noah who believed God rather than his own experience of things. He trusted in God and not in himself.

Though the people now lived in a fallen world, death was a rare event. We must remember that the ground contained no fossils at all for there had been no flood catastrophes to bury land animals or sea creatures. Creating a fossil is a catastrophic process requiring rapid burial in sedimentary rock. Indeed it is doubtful if there was any sedimentary rock at all, and if there was some in isolated pockets it definitely would not have contained any fossils. 'Millions of dead things, buried in rock layers, laid down by water all over the Earth', namely fossils, are the signatures of the veracity of the Flood.

Antediluvian minerals

Coal and oil are called fossil fuels. Since there were no fossils before the Flood, neither coal nor oil existed for 1656 years after creation. Genesis 2:11 tells us that the river Pishon was one of the rivers that flowed out of Eden and around the land of Havilah, *'And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.'* (Ge 2:12). In chapter 4 we read of

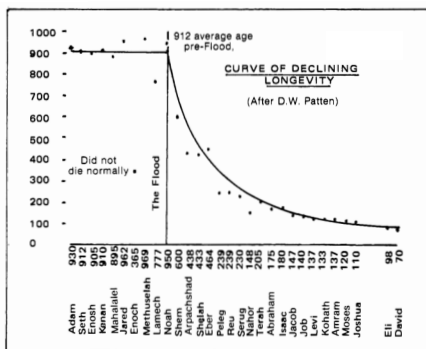


The cheapest diamond they do

bronze, which is an alloy of tin and copper, or, in some translations it is called brass, which is an alloy of tin and zinc, and also iron (Gen. 4:22), but no coal.

Changes after the Flood

All was to change after the Flood. The world which existed when Noah and his family went into the Ark was absolutely nothing like the world they came out into after just over a year. Clouds, rain, storms, floods and tempests were to become normal. The land mass had been split, covered with sedimentary rocks (which definitely did contain fossils), temperatures were now volatile and not pleasantly moderate, though the Lord guaranteed the reliability of the seasons (Gen. 8:22). All sorts of new things had to be learned. Clothes now took on a dual function: modesty and warmth. Death became much more common - the length of life began to



drop rapidly and steadily after the Flood, as can be seen in the diagram above. God positively altered the food regulations to allow for the eating of meat (Gen. 9:3), since protein would now be a very necessary part of the diet. He also knew that eating meat was later to play an important part in the religious life of His chosen people. Jesus was not a vegetarian!

So into the newly constructed world came coal. Its potential may not have been instantly recognized, nevertheless God was laying down a provision of blessings for future generations. It was to be a wonderful blessing for the development of civilisation and society, particularly what we now think of as modern society. Without going into copious examples of its known benefits, it is reasonably safe to say that we would largely be living a bucolic, agrarian life rather than a sophisticated urban life with all its attendant benefits. And if we look at this and think if it really has been worth the effort, don't be misled into believing that the world would be a happier place if we could go back to the simpler life. Sin would still be as rampant as ever - it always has been for human nature does not change - we would all live much shorter lives, and First World people would certainly miss the wonderful comforts and blessings which modern industry has brought to them - and most others are trying to catch up!

God's way

There is no doubt that this is exactly how God has always worked throughout time. From Eden to Christ we see it. God is love but He is not soft love. He demands obedience and is quite prepared to punish disobedience. It is easy to focus on His forgiveness, because we all benefit from it and would live desperately useless, defeated lives if He wasn't a loving, forgiving God. Nevertheless He will, does and did take action from time-to-time. But have you noticed that He never punishes without making a provision for the future care and blessing of mankind? This is amazing grace in action.

In Eden the greatest ever sin occurred and punishment was meted out on Adam and Eve, and through them on all mankind. By his disobedience, Adam brought on his head the wrath of God. Death was introduced as a punishment and life became a very much more difficult proposition afterwards. Sorrow was heaped on sorrow as Abel was murdered, and Adam witnessed the rapid moral degeneration of his children - and he knew that everybody was one of his children, both the good and bad; he could never escape from that.

Yet at the very point of sentencing and punishment God showed His gracious love and mercy:

'The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.'

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.'" (Ge 3:14-15, emphasis ours).

Commentators agree that here is the promise of a Redeemer who will come to put things right. Satan will not get away with things for ever. There's the punishment which justice demands at times but even in the depths of despair, God shows His grace to us all. We can still live in hope.

When the Jews were taken into captivity and all seemed lost as Jerusalem was destroyed, God preserved a remnant for Himself and made the promise of a return after 70 years. In the dark days of the captivity, when all must have seemed lost, great king Nebuchadnezzar had a dream and Daniel was the only one who could interpret it for him (Daniel 2). It was of a four-metal statue, which represented four consecutive kingdoms, starting with himself, king Nebuchadnezzar, as the head of gold. During the last kingdom God would establish His Kingdom which would never be destroyed. This was a prophecy which sustained the Jews and in Jesus' day they were clearly looking for its fulfilment. They knew that they were living in the

time of the fourth kingdom of Daniel's prophecy so, when Jesus came, messianic fever was in the air and the people were ready to listen to Him, and to hope that He was to be the one to fulfil it. That He was, but that the fulfilment was not quite what they expected from Him, is another story entirely.

Our dirty lump of coal

God punishes but He always shows grace and mercy to the faithful. That's the sort of God He is and so we return to our dirty lump of coal. It doesn't look much but it 'speaks' volumes about our God.

It's a fossil. Its vegetation died and was buried during the Flood, which was a punishment for sin, and as such it serves to remind us that God will not be trifled with. He is patient *'not wishing that any should perish but that all should reach repentance'* (2 Pt. 3:9). But in Noah's day His patience did run out and punishment was exacted on the sinful, disobedient ones who would not listen. I have fossil fish at home dating from exactly the same event and, fascinating though it is to look at them and think what they represent, they give me no hope for the future. But a lump of coal does. For in that lump of coal lies the gracious provision for our needs as human beings in the future. God may have punished in Noah's day but He laid down a blessing for ours. He didn't have to. He could have left us without any such help or reminders of His love and mercy.

However there is one last twist to the metaphor in our dirty lump of coal. It tells of great wickedness and past punishment in Noah's day; it tells of God's gracious provision for us so that even though He punished, He still thought about how we would survive and even do better for ourselves in this life. But it also reminds us that *'our God is a consuming fire'* (Heb. 12:29). Handled with care, coal is a blessing which warms and comforts; it powers factories and helps make electricity; it helped bring us blessings in our generation, but, if mishandled it will destroy and consume. Those who try to ignore the message and graciousness of God and take His blessings as their right and not their privilege, will one day discover that there is a price to pay. God gives His blessings freely to all. *'... he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.'* (Mt 5:45), but one day there will come a reckoning and those who misused His blessings will feel the heat of His wrath. As Hebrews warns Christians who might be tempted to fall away: *'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'* (Heb 10:31).

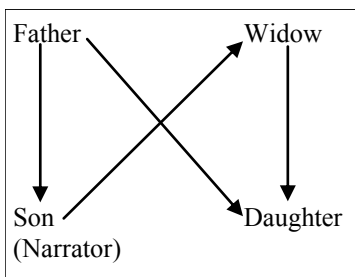
Yes, it's just a simple, dirty lump of coal but beneath its surface are layers of necessary messages about God for those who have ears to hear them.

I am my own grandpa

‘It sounds funny I know
But it really is so;
I am my own grandpa!’

This is the refrain and somewhat silly theme of a comic song from over fifty years ago. The song actually complicates the basic idea until your head is spinning but the idea is really quite simple. Of course biologically no man can be his own grandfather, or ‘grandpa’ as the song calls ‘him’. But if you add the word ‘step’ in front of ‘grandpa’ then it becomes technically possible, and in today’s social climate it’s not at all beyond the bounds of possibility that such a convoluted relationship could arise. Let me explain how.

The box below lays out the necessary



set up. The father is a widower and has a son, who narrates the song. They meet a widow who has a daughter. However, the father falls in love with the widow’s daughter and marries her. The son falls for the widow and they too get married. That’s all there is to it. Now you can work out the various relationships:

- 1) The daughter becomes the son’s mother (stepmother, of course).
- 2) Her mother must now be the son’s grandmother.
- 3) The man married to the grandmother must, of course, become the son’s grandfather,
- 4) However the man married to the ‘grandmother’ is actually the son himself.
- 5) So he has become his own grandfather!

You can play around with the various relationships applicable to each one of them to your hearts’ content. The widow is married to her grandson. The father is married to his son’s daughter, so she must be his granddaughter too, and his mother-in-law is his son’s wife - which makes her also his daughter-in-law, etc. The song actually has both of the women bearing a son and then the tangle becomes almost impossible to unravel with nieces, aunts, uncles, great-aunts and so on all becoming most confused. It’s great fun and actually very complex if you try to match up the possible combinations for them all. But, as we said, the basic set-up is easy to fol-

low and once you grasp it, it all becomes obvious.

The Law on marriage

I sometimes wonder how Moses felt when God gave him the definitive Law on marriage. He had been raised in Pharaoh’s household and the Pharaohs most often married their sisters to keep it all in the family, as it were. We look at them and think how decadent and incestuous they were but their civilisation sprang quickly from the post Babel scattering, so had existed for about 800 years before the Law was given. Since they neither knew the Law which God gave to Moses nor even recognized his God as authoritative, it is hardly surprising that they saw nothing immoral or wrong in any way with these close relative marriages. They made a sort of sense to them, and though we see them as wrong, it would be remiss and unfair of us to judge them too harshly from our distant vantage point.

When God gave His people His marriage laws through Moses, they too had no history of the illegality of close relationship marriages. All we read of in Genesis is that ‘*a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*’ (Ge 2:24). There’s nothing there about where he shall get her from, nor could there have been in those very early days, just that once they become ‘one flesh’ they are independent of their parents: a separate family unit.

So what did God finally say?

Prohibited marriage laws were first given to mankind approximately 2,500 years after creation. That’s a long time of not thinking that there might just be something wrong. Initially there was no need for any prohibitions. First of all the children of Adam and Eve had no option but to marry their sisters and brothers. Critics of the Genesis record frequently ask, ‘Where did Cain get his wife?’ as if they had trumped the story by their originality and brilliance. What they are doing is not showing how clever they are but rather how ignorant. Genesis 5:4 tells us quite clearly: ‘*The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters.*’ Adam and Eve were parents of a tribe of children of both sexes; it’s just that we’re not told about them individually. Jewish legend tells us that every time Eve gave birth she had twins, a boy and a girl. However, according to this tradition (for which there is not a shred of biblical evidence!), they were prohibited from marrying their twin but had to marry another sister (or brother), of course. The legend continues that Cain’s twin was beautiful but Abel’s was not and

Cain would have preferred to marry his beautiful twin. Hence he resented Abel, who got the ‘smasher’ while he was stuck with the plain Jane! It’s an interesting thought but it can go no further than that.

There is a sound biological reason for prohibiting close relation marriages. Initially Adam and Eve were perfect and their genes were not corrupted in any way at all. The Fall opened up their metabolisms to damaging mutations and corruption of the gene pool, but this would take many years before its effects would be seen. [See the box on ‘Mutations’ on the next page.] It did not happen instantly overnight. Thus in those early years there was no need to worry about the dangers of congenital defects in any ensuing offspring. Once there was, God put a block on them for our own good. Though there is no biblical prohibition on first-cousin marriages, as practised mainly by Muslim societies today, this has now become a biologically unwise form of marriage union and is not encouraged in the West. Muslims resent any interference in this, because it is their custom and tradition but their children are now very much in danger of suffering because of it. What then is prohibited?

The Levitical Law

In Leviticus 18 we read the following: ‘*And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the Lord your God. You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the Lord.*’

None of you shall approach any one of his close relatives to uncover nakedness. I am the Lord. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s wife; it is your father’s nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father’s daughter or your mother’s daughter, whether brought up in the family or in another home. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your son’s daughter or of your daughter’s daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s wife’s daughter, brought up in your father’s family, since she is your sister. You shall not uncover the naked-

ness of your father's sister; she is your father's relative. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's relative. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife, you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and of her daughter, and you shall not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are relatives; it is depravity. And you shall not take a woman as a rival wife to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive.

You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. And you shall not lie sexually with your neighbour's wife

and so make yourself unclean with her. You shall not give any of your children to offer them to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the Lord. You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. And you shall not lie with any animal and so make yourself unclean with it, neither shall any woman give herself to an animal to lie with it: it is perversion.” (Lev 18:1-23).

The first five verses - the first paragraph - tell us that the practices God was about to consider were very much a part of both Egyptian and Canaanite social life, but His people were to obey Him and not follow after them. His point is that it doesn't matter what other people think and do, those who are His do what He says if they want to live, i.e. spiritually and eternally.

We extended the quotation to include in the third paragraph the godly prohibition against intercourse with a menstruat-

ing and immediately post-menstruating woman, fornication and adultery, child sacrifice, homosexuality and bestiality, some of which, though thankfully not yet all, are being seen, practised and taught as 'normal' in our day and generation - a valid life-style choice, as some put it. Jesus did not nail these moral laws to the Cross (Col. 2:14) - they are still extant - and we will do well to remember this!

Over in Leviticus 20 there is a follow-up on this: *'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for that is to make naked one's relative; they shall bear their iniquity. If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.'* (Lev 20:19-21). This last verse, about taking the brother's wife, is the one invoked by Henry VIII when he wanted to

MUTATIONS

Photo from KSAT.com



but word got out and it was saved, especially after he realised that he could make some money out of exhibiting the poor creature. Its two extra legs are useless and actually get in the way when it is trying to feed. The picture shows the extra legs. The lamb is a healthy hermaphrodite being male at the front and female at the rear.

In *Genesis Accepted* Number 10, in the article on 'Giants', we showed a photograph of my hand because I was born with six fingers on both hands (so also was my mother). This condition is known as polydactyly and it affects males more than females, and black people groups more than white. My extra fingers would have been useless but some people have fully functioning extra fingers, and sometimes extra toes too, on their hands and feet. Neither of

Mutations occur when genes become corrupted. This is much more likely to happen with close interbreeding because there isn't a healthy mix in the gene pool. Any weaknesses in the genes can be exaggerated and become dominant as a result. Congenital defects then arise and they are usually disadvantageous to the person or the animal concerned. In humans they often cause mental as well as physical problems. Sometimes they can produce a temporary advantage under limited, restricted conditions but they give no advantage to that species as a whole.

In January 2012 there was a report of a lamb born with six legs in Velistikhe, Georgia, (see picture above) The farmer was going to kill it



My hand showing where my extra finger was.

my children have them.



This picture taken from a Web search, raised by googling 'six-fingered men', clearly shows a man with a fully functioning couple of extra fingers. Maybe he'd make a good goalkeeper in football!

divorce Catherine of Aragon, who had been his brother's wife. Needless to say, he chose it because it was the closest convenient verse he could find. It was not relevant to his situation at all, since his brother Arthur had died, so the prohibition did not apply. And, of course, she wasn't childless; she just failed to produce a son. But such piffling technicalities were not going to bother Henry!

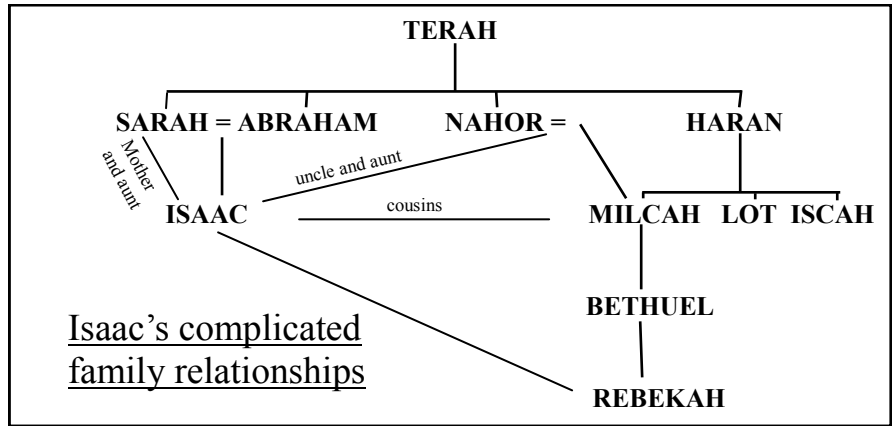
Some case studies

So, as we see some of the marriage relationships unfolding amongst the patriarchs, we note that Abraham married Sarah who was his half-sister; they had the same father, Terah, but not the same mother. This we learn finally in Genesis 20:12 where firstly he had passed her off as his sister when they entered Egypt, and later he did the same thing with the Philistine king, Abimelech. It was the half-truth which Abraham used to protect them - and especially him so he thought - from being murdered for his beautiful wife. He finally owned up to Abimelech that *“she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.”* The Bible doesn't tell us whether Terah was a polygamist or a widower, but it does tell us that he was an idolater (Joshua 24:2). I would guess, therefore, that the former was the case. He was either a polygamist or Sarah's mother was his concubine, which would probably be the most likely option - I could find no tradition about this in my books.

Abraham's and Isaac's cases

It is interesting that in *The Book of Jubilees* we read this account: *'In [the] thirty-ninth jubilee, in the second week in the first year, Terah took to himself a wife, and her name was 'Edna', the daughter of Abram, the daughter of his father's sister. And in the seventh year of this week she bare him a son, and he called his name Abram, by the name of the father of his mother, for he had died before his daughter had conceived a son.'* (Chapter 11, verses 14-15). Terah therefore married his cousin Edna, though other books call her Ametelai or Emetelai. (As a source, I find 'Jubilees' to be much more factual and far less fanciful, so I prefer their version of a tradition if there is a conflict.) Edna's dad was called Abram, so she named this son after her dad because he had died before the lad was born.

So, in the tradition of working out complicated relationships, Sarah was both Abraham's wife and sister. This means she was Isaac's mother and aunt, but the man married to his aunt must be his uncle, therefore Abraham was Isaac's father and his uncle. Nahor, Abraham's brother was Isaac's uncle, but he married his niece, Isaac's cousin, Milcah. So Milcah was both his aunt and cousin. She was Abraham's and Sarah's niece and sister-in-law.



Milcah's granddaughter was Rebekah but Milcah was also Rebekah's great-great-aunt. Rebekah was Isaac's first-cousin-twice-removed as well as his wife. Are you getting confused? You should be. You can play around with these interlaced and complicated relationships all caused by close intermarriage.

Moses' case

So the great patriarchs and matriarchs of Israel were frequently in very strange relationships because of close-relative intermarriages. You can imagine how Moses felt, as we said at the beginning, as the author of Genesis, when God revealed that these relationships were now to be against His will. To think that God ultimately saw these as being incestuous relationships, though there needed to be no shame about this pedigree because they had no way of knowing God's will in the matter until God told them. The hurt must have hit closer to home for Moses than Abraham and Isaac because his own father and mother too were in a to-be-forbidden union. Exodus 6:20 tells us quite clearly that, *'Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses'*. We can now play around with these relationships and devise that Jochebed was Moses' mother and great aunt and Aaron was both his brother and cousin!

Incidentally, there are critics of the Bible who would have us believe that these laws were made up out of the imaginings of the human mind. Had Moses been making it all up there is no way he would have invented a marriage relationship by which his own parentage could be called into question. Nephew/aunt unions would definitely have been allowed if such had been the case, or we completely misunderstand the psychology of the human being. These little things point to the true source of the 'Laws of Moses' being the Laws of God through Moses.

Conclusion

The Bible really doesn't bother with the complications of the relationships thrown up by these close relation marriag-

es. It recognizes just the primary relationship and rightly so because anything else would create amazing difficulties working out who was who. As it is, that can be a minefield when studying what we have.

Making things easier for us to study, however, was not the reason why God forbade such marriages. As in all of God's dealings with mankind, He does things for our benefit and not just to spoil our fun! Many a person has been vigorous and healthy since God forbid such marriages in both mind and body because the right mixture of genes was preserved.

Looking at this topic also throws the question of the various dispensations into clearer relief. The Patriarchal Age was indeed very different from the Mosaic Age, and the Mosaic Age is likewise different again from the Christian Age. God's moral laws are clearly defined under Moses and both they, and the religious, ceremonial laws heralded a very different form and type of religion than had operated from Adam to Sinai. Our assessment of these times must always reflect this. As Christians we might well be shocked if there was such a thing as a time machine and we could go back and meet these people. It might be a salutary lesson in understanding what is meant by saving faith and salvation by grace through faith for we might well find their spiritual and social behaviour quite unacceptable. Nevertheless their faith is an example to us and reaches down the millennia to strengthen us on our walk with God. Whatever their failings, we have to remember that they had no Bible at all for reference so they could not turn even to the Pentateuch to discover God's will, let alone to a whole Bible-full as we are privileged to be able to do.

We know that being our own grandpa (or grandma if we want to feminise it) depends not on a blood relationship but rather on a marriage relationship. It's a bit of harmless fun but it throws up some interesting ideas about these very early days.

ASTEROID THREAT

In previous issues of *Genesis Accepted* we have outlined the theory that astral bodies from outer space flew closely by the Earth in times past (e.g. see Number 11, 'Towards a Flood Mechanism'). As they did so their gravitational attraction produced tidal forces both in the seas and the rocks which had devastating effects on the landscape - including driving the global Flood in Noah's day. The extent of the devastation depended on the size of the body and its composition - we surmised that the one causing the Flood and the Ice Age was largely composed of ice, but others have been all rock - and its trajectory, i.e. how close it actually came to the Earth. These flybys were much more threatening in days of old, when people were obsessed with studying the skies and created 'gods' out of planets, building observatories, such as Stonehenge, to assess such things and their effects (see Number 16, 'The Stonehenge Enigma').

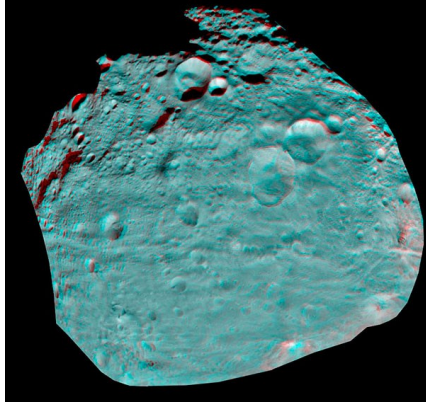
The Asteroid Belt

Such a suggestion is laughed out of court by most uniformitarian scientists today. They don't mind the notion of such events deep in space and way back in time but not within human history on the Earth. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that the astrocatastrophic scenario we favour is actually surprisingly accurate. Between Mars and Jupiter lies the Asteroid Belt. Asteroids are rocks of varying dimensions ranging from a few hundred feet to several miles in size, and which now orbit the Sun on what, it is not unreasonable to assume, was once the path, or orbit of a planet. They are now strung out along the whole length of the orbit and not just confined to one spot at any one time, as are the planets.

Summarizing our theory

It is our suggestion that it was a rogue icy planet which entered the Solar System in Noah's day, interacted with the outer planets knocking a moon of Neptune out of its orbit to become what we used to call the planet Pluto, reversing one of Neptune's moons into a retrograde orbit, tilted the axis of Uranus almost 90°, pulverized an icy moon of Saturn thus creating its beautiful rings, nearly collided with a planet between Jupiter and Mars smashing it into the bits we now see as asteroids, dumped water on to the surface of Mars, and finally reached the Earth in the year 1656 *anno mundi* (after Creation) as Noah was entering the Ark, which did the damage. It drenched our Moon and helped drown the Earth's surface, killing all but

(Taken on 24th July 2011 by NASA's Dawn Spacecraft.
Picture from *Mail Online*)



Asteroid Vesta

the people and land animals safe in the Ark. It then interacted for many years with the Earth, dumping most of the ice which was left mainly on to the polar regions creating the Ice Age, about a little over 100 years later. (This, as you will appreciate, is a very quick summary only of what we have already presented on this topic.)

Modern-day fears

Despite the fact that 'our' scenario (which we believe to be true though we certainly did not invent it) is derided by most scientists, nevertheless they are still obsessed with the possibility of such an event occurring some time in the future, and in the not-too-distant future at that! On 18th August 2011 the *Daily Mail* carried a small article entitled 'Rocket's mission to save mankind'. Some scientists are worried that a small asteroid could come hurtling to the Earth thereby wiping us all out. Note, it couldn't have happened in the past but it certainly could in the future!

The report says this:

'Scientists plan to smash a spacecraft into an asteroid - so they are prepared for the possibility they will have to stop one hurtling towards Earth. The news came as Nasa moved to calm fears that a comet is on a collision course with our planet.'

'The plans for a test mission to stop an asteroid from colliding with Earth come from Nasa's cousin, the European Space Agency. In the Hollywood movie Armageddon, Bruce Willis attempts to blow up a huge asteroid hurtling towards Earth. In real life the mission, called Don Quixote, will see two spacecraft launched. One will be fired at an asteroid at break-neck speed in an attempt to push it off its course. The other will analyse data with the aim of informing future missions in which the future of mankind may be at stake.'

'One potential target for the test mission is a 1,600ft-wide asteroid called 99942 Apophis, which has a tiny chance - around one in 250,000 - of hitting Earth in 2036.'

'Nasa scientists yesterday took the unusual step of officially dismissing claims sweeping the internet that comet Elenin,

discovered by an astronomer last December, is on a deadly course. Scare stories include the comet plunging the Earth into darkness for three days by blocking out the Sun, colliding with Earth, moving tides or continents and throwing the planet off orbit...

'But the space agency said Elenin will never come closer to Earth than 22 million miles and will not compromise our planet in any way. An official said: "The truth is that Elenin has received much more attention than it deserves due to a variety of internet postings that are untrue..."'

How the world will end

We can note that the devastation expected from a small asteroid sounds very familiar to us. The Apostle Peter, writing under inspiration, described how it will be in the future when the Lord returns:

'The day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.'

'Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.' (2 Pe 3:10-13).

The Apostle Paul had said earlier in 1 Thessalonians 5:

'Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.' (1 Th 5:1-3).

The day will come like a thief, without warning, and there will be nothing any scientist can do about it to prevent it. No rocket will be able to divert the Lord from claiming His own and destroying the wicked. The Earth will be consumed by fire, as scientists too predict its demise will be, but not for biblical reasons or in a biblical time-scale. We are 'safe' for another 5,000 million years, so they think.

Christians know better and they need to be prepared. We need not fear the asteroids but we do need to fear the Living God whose world this is and who alone will destroy it in His time not ours. We are to watch and pray and be ready at all times, for He **IS** coming!

Jesus as Creator

The people who walked and talked with Jesus knew they had met something, some phenomenon, which was absolutely extraordinary. The apostle John opened his First Letter by emphasizing this almost in tones of amazement: *'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life — the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us — that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you...'* (1 Jn. 1:1-3).

There's a wealth of study available in this small quotation alone. The opening of 'That which' rather than 'He who' spells out the conceptual difficulty John had of pinning Jesus down and putting Him into a comfortable pigeon-hole. Here we see Him as both 'the word of life' made manifest and a corporeal being who was heard, seen, looked upon from afar, and touched from close to. This 'Word' was as human as we are yet He was also as abstract as a word. He was as timeless as the beginning yet He was manifest in time and had boundaries of birth and death as we do.

The amazing fact of the Incarnation

We are used to the notion that Jesus was perfectly God and perfectly man as well, even if we have absolutely no chance of ever explaining how this could be or could have happened. We fail so often to understand what an extraordinary thing it was for anybody to imagine that a human being of flesh and blood, who could be heard, seen and touched - and was by those who were telling the story - could come to be viewed as God the Creator and maker of the very universe we all inhabit: the galaxies, stars, planets and all. It may not have been beyond the belief of those who followed the Greco-Roman gods to accept that somebody they saw as a man was in fact a god. The gods in their pantheons apparently were always interacting with humans, frequently immorally and lustfully. But not the Jews. They were fiercely monotheistic and so revered Jehovah, and the concept of Jehovah, that scribes would frequently perform ritual ablutions before writing the word 'Jehovah' into a text on a scroll. Ascribing deity to a human was the very height

of blasphemy, punishable by death. Such notions were so ingrained into the Jews, any Jews, it is almost impossible to imagine how any of them could harbour the thought that the man, Jesus, was deity, even of a lesser variety, let alone the very Creator of the universe living here on Earth. Yet there were thousands of them by the time John wrote his epistles. How come?

Jesus claims divinity

Right from the start of His ministry Jesus laid claims to be God, either directly or indirectly. Indeed one of the first encounters we meet comes in Mark's gospel with the healing of the paralytic. Mark reports that His ministry began with an explosion of healing of various sorts, showing His authority over unclean spirits, demons and all sorts of diseases. But with the paralytic He 'upped the ante', as we say, and openly forgave sins. Marvelling at His healing powers was one thing but stepping directly into God's shoes and forgiving sins was an entirely different matter in many eyes. We remember that the paralytic's friends took the tiles off the roof and lowered their pal down to Jesus, who then deliberately did not heal his body but rather He healed his soul: *"My son, your sins are forgiven."* (Mk. 2:5). This provoked the expected, and probably intended, response from the religious authorities present, so Jesus challenges them: *"Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins he said to the paralytic— 'I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.' And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We never saw anything like this!'"* (Mk 2:9-12).

Jesus demonstrates His divinity

Even during the early stages of His ministry when Jesus was calling His special disciples, He produced amazement to the point that one, Nathanael (who is better known to us as Bartholomew), declared Him to be 'the Son of God', long before Peter made that same definitive statement at Caesaræa Philippi. *'Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him,*

"Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" (Jn. 1:47-49).

The ability of Jesus to see people when He was not even in their vicinity convinced Nathanael to some degree that here was a very special man but His mastery over the elements introduced His power over nature. The best known incident of this was when He stilled the storm on Galilee. Several of the disciples were very familiar with the Sea of Galilee and its various moods but this storm had them all worried. Jesus was asleep, quite unconcerned but they shook Him; *'He awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?"'* (Mk 4:39-41). The disciples had been present at the wedding in Cana and witnessed His mastery over the creative processes by turning water into wine in an instant (Jn. 2:1-11). This earlier incident served to help cement the realisation of the power Jesus had over nature. And when He fed both five thousand men, plus women and children, and then four thousand, with only a few loaves and fishes the amazement amongst the apostles must have been intense. They knew He was indeed far more than a miracle worker and had powers only God could have.

As the time came for His death, Jesus



Jesus stills the storm

(Picture Christian Computer Art)



The Raising of Lazarus
(Picture Christian Computer Art)

ran into very serious opposition. He sent out confusing signals to the Jews. He was in the Colonnade of Solomon, in the temple, and they asked him plainly to tell them if He was the Christ. It must have been normal practice in those days because He rarely gave them what we would call 'a straight answer'. Why He couldn't simply say, "Yes, I am the Messiah," I don't know but He would point them to what He was doing and then invite them to work it out for themselves. On this occasion He gave some teaching and finished it by saying: "I and the Father are one." This further inflamed the situation and 'The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?" The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.'" (Jn. 10:30-33).

Jesus' power over death

It is one thing to claim to be God, many have done this before and since Jesus was here on Earth, but final proof, or rather final demonstrations to His disciples were necessary. His friend Lazarus died in Bethany and Jesus had apparently ignored a plea from Lazarus's sisters, Mary and Martha, to come to their aid and help them. Four days had gone by. This was crucial because the Jews believed that the soul only departed from the body after three days - so Lazarus, after four days, was demonstrably dead by everybody's calculations. Mastery over diseases, and even over water, wine, loaves and fishes

and Galilean storms, amazing though they all were, could not compare with the power over death. Jesus was soon to demonstrate that not only did He have this power to raise others, like Lazarus, from the dead, He also had the power to raise Himself from the dead. If this assertion seems bizarre, consider carefully what we learn in 'The Good Shepherd' passage from John 10. There Jesus tells us that "...the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. **I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.** This charge I have received from my Father,"' (Jn. 10:17-18, emphasis ours). We read elsewhere in scripture that 'God raised him from the dead' (Acts 13:30, Rom. 10:9), which of course He did, but only in the sense that He empowered Jesus and told Him that he had done so. When Christ was in the grave there was nothing the Father could do to help Him. Jesus had to exercise that power for Himself and by Himself. Once the realisation truly sank in that Jesus had complete power over life, death and the grave there could be no other conclusion than that He was "My Lord **and my God!**"' (Jn. 20:28, emphasis added), as Thomas declared thereby shedding the last vestiges of his doubt.

Jesus the Creator

Having arrived at the monumental conclusion that the Man they knew as Jesus was, and is, God, how then did they come to decide that He was actually the Word of God and the very Creator of the universe itself? I mean, we all know the famous opening verse of, 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God,' (John 1:1). We all know, because we have been told in the Bible, that: 'All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.' (John 1:3). This has been spelt out even more specifically in passages such as these: 'Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, **through whom also he created the world.** He is the radi-

ance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and **he upholds the universe by the word of his power.**' (Heb 1:1-3, emphasis ours).

And,

'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For **by him all things were created,** in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things were created through him and for him.**' (Col 1:15-16, emphasis ours).

But we know this because this conclusion has been clearly made for us. The first Christians did not have our scriptures to tell them these truths yet they made the connections long before they were written down.

It is in Luke's Gospel that we have the first recorded words of Jesus. He had gone to the Temple in Jerusalem at 12-years-old and when his mother finally caught up with Him and chided Him for going missing, he said: 'Why [is it] that ye were seeking me? did ye not know that in the things of my Father it behoveth me to be?' (Lk 2:49, Young's Literal Translation). Many versions record the latter part of His words as: "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (ESV). The ESV, however, has a footnote which accords



The Boy Jesus in the Temple
(Picture from Christian Computer Art)

with many other translations as reading: "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (NKJV). It wasn't just that Jesus naturally had to be in the Temple but that He was there doing what His Father wanted Him to be doing. He wasn't there as a tourist but rather He was already starting to work! However, His time had not yet come so He went back home with Mary and Joseph until all other things were ready.

Jesus just doing as the Father tells Him

Once He started on His mission He makes it clear many times how He operated and what He was doing. Though Jesus

was/is God, and He told us that “*I and the Father are one*” (Jn. 10:30), they do not do the same things, or, if you will, function in the same way. Throughout His ministry Jesus said that He came to do the will of the Father. Indeed He said, “*Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.*” (Jn. 5:19). And again, “*I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.*” (Jn. 5:30). He also said that even His words are not His: ‘*So Jesus answered them, “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.”*’ (Jn. 7:16), and later He said it again, “*I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.*” (Jn. 8:28).

The Son in the Trinity

So it is clear that the Son does the will of the Father. In fact He does nothing independently of the Father’s will because His will and the Father’s will are the same. The rôle of the Son in the Godhead is to carry out the will and wishes of the Father. The Father plans; the Son carries out the Father’s plan and the Spirit upholds and sustains. That’s a ludicrously simple picture of how the Godhead operates but it works in the fields of Salvation and Creation. The Father’s will was to save mankind so the Son had the task of carrying out the plan. It could not be the Father who came to die for us; it had to be the Son. So too, in Creation, it was the Son who carried out the wishes of the Father and created the universe as the Father had willed it. And how did He do it?

God spoke the creation into being

A simple and easy reading of Genesis chapter 1 indicates quite clearly how it was done: ‘*And God said...*’ Seven times we read those words when there was a deliberately creative action to be performed. Only in the creation of man and woman was a different approach used. They were very special. God threw all of His creative energy into those made in His

image: the pinnacle of His creation!

The Psalmist knew how the worlds were created. There we read:

‘By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

7 He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

9 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.’ (Ps 33:6-9).

It was ‘By the word of the Lord’ that the heavens and the earth came to be, ‘for he spoke’ and that was all that was necessary (cf. Ps 148:5).

Jesus as the Word

Thus Jesus spoke the words the Father gave Him and came to do the Father’s will. It was by words, speaking and commanding the worlds into existence that they were made and Jesus, the Son, was



All the Saviour’s work: ‘He made the Stars also.’

the One who spoke the Father’s words. Now it becomes obvious how He came to be seen as ‘The Word of God’. This was His ‘function’ in the Godhead. Since the worlds were created by God’s Word, Jesus - the Word of God - has to be seen as the Creator, and therefore Creation was the product of His labours. This is easy enough to deduce, write and say, but the concept that a man whom the apostles and many others had eaten with, walked with, talked with, listened to, touched and han-

dled (1 John 1:1-3) was the very One who actually made the Sun, Moon and Stars at the beginning of time, is amazingly mind-blowing. And that these men and women were Jews who had very positive views about Jehovah and would not budge from those views for any human being or philosophy, makes the transitional thinking from the form of monotheistic Judaism to an astonishingly different form of monotheistic Christianity all the more remarkable. Something most profound happened in Judæa some 2,000 years ago.

Creation is Jesus’ work too

When I was growing up, it was common, and indeed still is, to have an attitude of showing little interest in the Book of Genesis - because the ‘important’ part of the Bible is contained in the Gospels, and in the Epistles as well. This is to deny a significant study of the work of the Word of God. Genesis is as much a part of the story of salvation and the love of Christ and it contains as much important teaching as the New Testament, because it is foundational to it. You cannot build a building suspended in the air with no foundations at all. This has possibly been the price we have paid for our emphasis on being a New Testament church. It has inadvertently excluded serious consideration of the other aspect of the work of the Word of God. That we emphasize our affiliation especially to the New Testament is because so many in Christendom see the Old Testament as having the same authority for their religious practices as the New and have produced a ‘pick ‘n’ mix’ form of faith, not recognizing the significance of the different dispensations in religious matters. Thus the baby (of Genesis) has been thrown out with the bathwater of the Mosaic Law.

We cannot get a complete picture of the amazing work of the Saviour unless we study Him as the Creator as well. And for this we need Genesis - and this is part of the rationale for producing *Genesis Accepted* as we do. Studying Genesis is the vehicle for studying Jesus as Creator.

Genesis Accepted is published three times a year. All correspondence and cheques to:

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All quotations are from the *English Standard Version* of the Bible (Anglicized version, 2002), unless otherwise indicated.

The Future

With this issue I complete eight years of the magazine. Many of you have been with me from the start, for which I thank you. I currently print 95 copies, which is about the average over the years. It's not a huge readership but with spouses and others reading the one copy the readership must be over 120 - which is nice but against the total membership in our churches is somewhat disappointing. The Lord knows best, however, and the readership is just about what I can cope with as a one-man band (or a two-men band when my loyal proof-reader, aka 'The Boss' (my wife, Barbara), is also rightly in the picture).

However, my health has not been good for over 18 months now. Producing *Genesis Accepted* and *The Christian Worker* has helped preserve my sanity and given me some meaningful purpose in life. I want to continue with both magazines but, as far as this one is concerned, I'm not certain about being able to sustain the effort of producing the content - at least not on time. (With the *CW* the content is largely sent in to me but I have had to generate all of it for *GA*.) The next issue is due out in September. This, of course, coincides with a new publication year and a request for subscriptions to most not on the *gratis* list.

Since, at the moment, I can't guarantee I'll even be able to make the effort and produce another one, I don't want to request subscriptions for a further year along with this May issue, as I usually do. What I propose is not to ask for any subs now but to leave that until I see if I am going to be able to run for another three issues (currently a further year). Then, if I think I can, have subscribers who wish to continue, send me their subs. I'll post notices on this in *CW*, and with issue 25, and we can take it on from there. I may have to be irregular in publication but I hope that will be better than nothing at all! I do not want to let you down, nor do I want to collect subscriptions and then not be able to fulfil the promises contained in them and generated by them.

Thank you all once more, and God bless,

Graham

P.S. As I go to print at the very end of April, my gut feeling is that I WILL be able to continue. My diagnosis is heart failure and I'm having tests to see whether it is at a 'little more than a minor inconvenience' level or a 'don't rush to buy me a Christmas present' level. I suspect it's the former!

