

Creation Truths

The Mystery of Modern Dating

By Jamie McNab

www.t-cog.net

We are all familiar with newspaper and TV reports, magazine articles and books that tell us that man has evolved from ape-like ancestors, over many millions of years. Every so often, a newspaper will report on a new discovery of “early man”, and give us dates of 10,000 years ago, or 100,000 years ago, or even longer. Dates of 2 million years ago have been given for some of man’s (alleged!) early ancestors.

We hear commonly of SCIENTIFIC DATING of many animals that we are told roamed the earth tens of thousands or millions of years ago.

But the Bible indicates that most of the animals we are familiar with today were created only about 6,000 years ago. Mr. Herbert Armstrong taught that Adam was the FIRST MAN, and was created by God 6,000 years ago.

So — is the Bible INACCURATE, as many critics suggest? Was Mr. Armstrong in error? Has man really been on the earth for hundreds of thousands of years, along with most of the animal life we all know? Is the creation account, in Genesis 1, A MYTH?

Just HOW ACCURATE are the methods of dating that scientists use?

DATING BY EVOLUTION

It is obvious that, when researchers or scientists find ancient remains or fossils, they do not come with a LABEL attached, stating “50,000 years BC!” So just how DO scientists date their finds?

Up until the last 50 years or so, scientists used their belief in THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION itself to put a date to a particular fossil or any “early” remains they had found! Their reasoning was that:

- 1) evolution IS TRUE
- 2) evolution is very slow in its effects



The skull of *Zinjanthropus*, which we are confidently told is 600,000 years old, and is an ancestor of man. But HOW do evolutionists date their finds — and how ACCURATE are they?

3) it would take a long time to get from an (alleged) early form of life to a more complex one

4) scientists can make a rough estimate of how long evolution would take to give us the date!

So, in essence, if scientists thought it would take, say, one million years for some creature to “evolve” into another, they would simply give it a date of 1,000,000 years ago.

The rock formations that fossil remains are found in, are “dated” by the same logic. If evolutionary theory tells us a fossil is one million years old, then so is the rock formation that it is found in. And any other fossil found in the same rock must also be one million years old.

The problem for many people was that such dating was in reality just plain GUESSWORK! And, of course, you couldn’t properly use this dating evidence to PROVE evolution was true, because you’d started with the ASSUMPTION that evolution was true! Many people pointed out that this was a classic example of circular reasoning! What scientists wanted was an objective SCIENTIFIC METHOD for measuring ancient dates.

RADIOCARBON DATING

The longed for breakthrough occurred about 50 years ago.

An American, named Willard F. Libby, showed that it was possible to use the fact that radioactive elements “decay” to arrive at scientifically based dates for ancient remains. There are a number of radioactive elements on the earth (such as the uranium used in hydrogen bombs). Such radioactive

elements gradually breakdown, or “decay,” into simpler elements. Scientists believe they know how long it takes for such decay to happen. By working out the proportion of a radioactive element which has decayed, compared to what should have been there to start with, scientists can calculate how much time has elapsed—and hence, how old an item might be.

All living things — plants, trees, birds, animals, mankind —are composed of many elements. Carbon is one such major constituent. A small amount of the carbon found in living things is radioactive. When a living plant or creature dies, the radioactive carbon no longer enters its system, and what was there to begin with gradually decays away. From the amount of radioactive carbon which is left, scientists can date the time when the death occurred.

Willard Libby was awarded the Nobel prize for his work on radiocarbon dating. In subsequent years, scientists developed other forms of dating using radioactive principles. The processes are known by the general term, radiometric dating. Other common examples are uranium-to-lead and potassium-to-argon dating (radioactive uranium decays into lead, and radioactive potassium decays into argon, at a rate scientists believe they can measure).

Scientists could now demonstrate ACCURATE DATING, scientifically.

Or could they?

Do radiometric dating methods replace the previous “evolutionary guesswork”? Can scientists now produce objective PROVEN dates? Was the biblical city of Jericho really a thriving community 11,000 years ago as some

historians claim? Does man's history go back tens of thousands of years, or even millions of years, as some evolutionists assert? Has the Bible been shown to be grossly in error?

EXAMPLES OF RADIOMETRIC DATES

Unfortunately for scientists, all has not gone too well with this "super-accurate" system of dating. There have been some very embarrassing results. Consider, for example:

A freshly-killed seal was tested by radiocarbon dating, and shown to have been dead for 1,300 years!

A LIVING shellfish was dated by radiocarbon methods, and shown to have been dead for 2,300 years (must have been a very confused mollusc)!

Some LIVING snails were dated as being dead 27,000 years ago!

Some rock paintings found in South Africa were dated by radiocarbon methods as 1,200 years old. They were confidently claimed to be an excellent example of early native art ... until the lady that had actually painted them a few months earlier in her art class recognised them! They had been stolen some time before from her home, and sold to a museum!

Some lava from a volcano in Hawaii was dated by different radiometric methods as being between 160 million and 3 BILLION years old (quite a range of dates!!). However ... the embarrassing problem is that the volcano in question erupted, not 160 million years ago, but only in 1801! The lava is just 200 years old!

Lava in CURRENTLY ACTIVE volcanoes has been dated as 22 million years old!

And the list goes on.

ASSUMPTIONS

Unfortunately for scientists, radioactive dating methods are themselves based on a number of fundamental ASSUMPTIONS.

Some of these assumptions are UNPROVED. And over the past few decades, some of the other assumptions have been DISPROVED!

At one time for example, it was thought that radioactive decay happened at a fixed, CONSTANT rate. It was absolutely reliable. It is now known that decay rates can *be speeded up* enormously by changes in cosmic radiation or the earth's magnetic field. Imagine how difficult life would be if your wristwatch kept speeding up every so often!

For radiocarbon dating, Willard Libby assumed that the amount of radiocarbon in the atmosphere had reached "equilibrium". It would take about 30,000 years for a "new system" to reach such a steady state. Since the earth and its life forms had been around for many millions of years (as evolutionists thought) it seemed rather obvious that the amount of radiocarbon *being formed*, would have reached equilibrium with the amount *decaying away*, millions of years ago.

Whoops! Measurements now show that radiocarbon is being formed *a lot faster* than it is decaying! So there obviously haven't been 30,000 years yet since the atmosphere was formed! In fact, Libby's own equations now

give a date for the age of the earth's atmosphere of around 10,500 years!!

And bearing in mind other factors, even that date is probably too high. The Bible dating of around 6,000 years ago for the "renewal" of the earth and its atmosphere, described in Genesis 1:2 and onwards, seems to be supported by radioactive dating!

So, ironically, radioactive dating methods (insofar as they can be relied upon at all!) actually support the Biblical account!

In the book, **The Age of the Earth**, issued by the Institute of Geological Sciences, a remarkable admission is made:

"[the] analytical error inherent in age determination [means] that isotopic ages [i.e. dates using radioactive methods] are unlikely to rival or replace FOSSILS as the MOST IMPORTANT means of dating".

So — despite all the excitement when radioactive dating methods were first developed, geologists now admit that they have to use THE FOSSILS to assess age. And as we saw earlier, fossils are dated according to the time evolutionists think it would take them TO EVOLVE.

Many people think that the main methods of radiometric dating actually date the fossils themselves or the rocks they are found in. NOT SO! Fossils are found only in sedimentary rocks (rocks laid down by water). But radiometric dating only dates the original rocks from which the sediment was eventually made up —and the original rocks could have been around for one million or a thousand million years before!

In the book, **The Facts of Life**, by science journalist Richard Milton, we read:

"But — almost incredibly — radioactive dating is otherwise QUITE USELESS to evolutionists, since it cannot be used directly to date sedimentary rocks — the rocks in which fossils are found. That this is so, will astonish many teachers of geography and geology, who have been led to believe that radioactive dating is the ultimate authority for the assigned ages of rock strata and the fossils contained in them".

So what does all this mean for us?

When we read in the Bible that God made man, and the creatures that populate this world, 6,000 years ago, WE CAN BELIEVE God's Word! When Mr. Armstrong concluded that Adam was the first man, created 6,000 years ago, he was correct.

Despite what the TV broadcasters tell us, or the newspapers and magazines, scientists have not been able to find any PROOF of "prehistoric man". And those of us who believe in the Bible account of the renewal of the face of this earth 6,000 years ago, and the creation of man at that time, are not in conflict with the TRUE FINDINGS of science.

Although the KJV translation of I Timothy 6:20 may not be the most accurate today, it's hard to disagree with its admonition that we should avoid the "oppositions of SCIENCE FALSELY SO CALLED"!

God's Word will always agree with TRUE SCIENCE!