

A Rebuttal of Matthew Harrison's article, "Concerning Six-Day Creation"

The Lutheran Witness magazine. (January 2018).

For documentation on these matters see my website: www.christianityontheoffense.com

1. Dr. Harrison's opening sentence negatively prejudices the remainder of his article by falsely pitting science against biblical faith as though they are in opposition to each other (p. 1). They are not! Indeed his error firstly includes his failure to make the crucial distinction between the distinct concepts of 1) "science" (an analysis of physical entities and the naturally-caused interactions occurring between them) and 2) "scientists" (people who subjectively embrace assumptions that have a bearing on belief in God's existence. He also appears ignorant about the limitations of scientific knowledge. Science, for example, has no epistemological authority to make *scientific* judgments about non-scientific entities, including the existence of God and angels, and the soul. Consequently his confusion on these matters contributes to his faulty insistence that miracles are contrary to science and reason (pp. 1, 22). Yet for what possible reason? After all, once it is posited that the God of the Bible is, then His existence becomes that causal agent who would have the capacity to intervene in His world through miracles which include, first of all, creating the universe out of nothing in a manner like the Big Bang (BB) as described in Genesis 1:1.
2. By his refusal of the notion of "*an earth [being] somehow millions or billions of years old*" (p. 1), Dr. Harrison exposes his ignorance of the ramifications which logically follow from the exegetical fact that Gen. 1:1-2, by its standing apart from Creation Day 1 (beginning in 1:3), entails a period of **un**-specified duration. Such a timeframe could easily have spanned billions of years---a very trivial sum of time to the transcendent God who stands outside of our time (2 Peter 3:8)!
3. Further, despite Dr. Harrison's insistence that the celestial bodies were all created late in the week on Day 4, it is a simple matter to reconcile the notion of their creation at the beginning of creation in 1:1, with their later appearance as *distinct* objects which only became visible as distinct objects on earth only later on Day 4 after the darkness referenced in 1:2 abated.
4. Dr. Harrison commits the *black or white* fallacy by his insistence that "*the account in Genesis 1-2 is [either] myth, or it is history*" (e.g. in the young-earth creationist (YEC) sense). In the absence of substantive rebuttals, he merely dismisses the *day-age position* out-of-hand. He also commits both the *straw-man* and the *hasty generalization* fallacies by his insistence that detractors *necessarily* deny that Adam and Eve are literal or historical (p. 1). In truth the organization, *Reasons to Believe*, which embraces the *Old-Earth Creationist'* (OEC) position, believes both.
5. Dr. Harrison falsely insists that the Scriptures "*categorically reject*" death in the animal kingdom prior to the Fall of Adam (p. 1). That is false! Yet truth be told, neither the Bible nor the Book of Concord ever makes that assertion.
6. Although Dr. Harrison doesn't explicitly attack the BB, he instead ignores the subject altogether by effectively forcing the creation of the entire universe into creation Day 1. In order to do so however, he must ignore the clear exegetical data which specifies that the creation of the entire

universe preceded the first creation Day. See my essay, *“How Genesis 1:1 Easily Accommodates the Big Bang.”* Harrison furthermore appears to blindly follow Martin Luther in his decial of the “day-age” (DA) view of the creation days on the latter’s allegation that the DA position entails allegorizing. Since, however, Luther’s *Lectures on Genesis* are not included in the Confessional Document anyway, why then is Harrison obligated to follow him; especially since Luther supplied virtually no exegetical evidence to support his view on this matter in his lectures?

7. Dr. Harrison claims that the Scriptural fact that Jesus embraced Adam and Eve as historical persons amounts to proof that the YEC interpretation of Gen. 1 is correct (p. 22). Yet the former doesn’t logically lead to the latter. Furthermore, Jesus’ words lack any level of specificity that is necessary in order to give any support at all to Harrison’s assertion.
8. In the absence of even attempting to establish on *exegetical* grounds that the YEC is the correct interpretation of Genesis 1-2, Dr. Harrison instead illogically concludes, *“If I reject what Scripture teaches as history about creation, why should I not then reject everything else (including the resurrection itself) that appears contrary to reason?”* (p. 22). In reply, it is my judgment that even if the first half of this statement was true (which I emphatically deny), it is utterly fallacious to suggest that the latter consequence logically follows from the former. Since, for example, C.S. Lewis didn’t embrace YEC, by Harrison’s logic, we would have to render Lewis’ apologetic concerning the historicity of Jesus, including concerning His resurrection from the dead, suspect.

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