

John 3:12

Earthly things, Heavenly things

- A. Nicodemus was reluctant to believe on Christ from the earthly things. By contrast, Nathanael believed on Christ from earthly things he witnessed. **JOH 1:47-51.**
1. Earthly things are observable things of a temporal nature that agree with experimental witness as opposed to the invisible eternal things only knowable by revelation and faith. **2CO 4:18; HEB 11:1.**
 - a. There is an earthly Jerusalem and a heavenly Jerusalem which we know only by faith. **GAL 4:25-26.**
 - b. There is a natural body/house and a spiritual body/house we know only by faith. **2CO 5:1-2 c/w 1CO 15:44.**
 2. God has left abundant witness of His existence in observable nature. **ROM 1:18-20.**
 - a. But sin has so corrupted man's nature that he refuses to believe in God by the evidences and logic available to him.
 - b. It is therefore no wonder that spiritual/heavenly things are foolishness to natural man. **1CO 2:14.**
 3. It is therefore important that we receive God's testimony *in* the earth and the cosmos, and His revelation in Scripture *about* the earth and the cosmos.
 - a. If what God manifests or reveals about the visible and tangible cannot be trusted, then on what basis do we believe His testimony about the invisible and intangible things that are every bit as real?
 - b. If you can't trust what the Bible says about creation, the fall, sin, the flood, history, anthropology, geology, biology, meteorology, cosmology, etc. (which is not in conflict with experimental sciences), then how can you trust what the Bible says about death, judgment, hell, redemption, regeneration, resurrection and eternity?
 - c. The integrity and reliability of God's promises of eternal life in heaven through Christ are diminished or destroyed if His testimony in and of the creation are not considered factual.
 - d. If you don't believe God's plain record in **GEN 1-11**, on what basis do you believe His record in Matthew – John?
- B. The entirety of the Divine revelation is built upon the testimony of creation, the entrance of sin, and the flood given in Genesis.
1. These things show that God the Creator exists, that He is holy, that He will consume sinners and that He is merciful and able to save.
 - a. If there was not a literal, historical Adam created according to the literal, historical record of **GEN 1-2**, and who brought sin and death upon himself, his posterity and the creation itself according to the literal, historical record of **GEN 3**, then the gospel message of the need for the Second Adam (Christ) to take away sin and death is baseless.
 - b. If there was not a literal, historical global flood that consumed sinners, there is no basis for the anticipation of a future global destruction and consumption of sinners, per **2PE 3:5-12.**
 - c. Consider the words of a leading 19th C. antiChrist humanist, Thomas Huxley.
 - (1) In his essay 'Lights of the Church and Science', Huxley states, "I am fairly at a loss to comprehend how any one, for a moment, can doubt that Christian theology must stand or fall with the historical trustworthiness of the Jewish Scriptures. The very conception of the Messiah, or Christ, is inextricably interwoven with Jewish history; the identification of Jesus of Nazareth with

that Messiah rests upon the interpretation of the passages of the Hebrew Scriptures which have no evidential value unless they possess the historical character assigned to them. If the covenant with Abraham was not made; if circumcision and sacrifices were not ordained by Jahveh; if the "ten words" were not written by God's hand on the stone tables; if Abraham is more or less a mythical hero, such as Theseus; the Story of the Deluge a fiction; that of the Fall a legend; and that of the Creation the dream of a seer; if all these definite and detailed narratives of apparently real events have no more value as history than have the stories of the regal period of Rome — what is to be said about the Messianic doctrine, which is so much less clearly enunciated: And what about the authority of the writers of the books of the New Testament, who, on this theory, have not merely accepted flimsy fictions for solid truths, but have built the very foundations of Christian dogma upon legendary quicksands?" (*Science and Hebrew Tradition*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897, p. 207)

- (2) Huxley denied the Genesis record but saw how inconsistent it was of Christians to harmonize evolutionary ideas with it: "I confess I soon lose my way when I try to follow those who walk delicately among 'types' and allegories. A certain passion for clearness forces me to ask, bluntly, whether the writer means to say that Jesus did not believe the stories in question or that he did? When Jesus spoke, as a matter of fact, that 'the Flood came and destroyed them all,' did he believe that the Deluge really took place, or not? It seems to me that, as the narrative mentions Noah's wife, and his sons' wives, there is good scriptural warranty for the statement that the antediluvians married and were given in marriage: and I should have thought that their eating and drinking might be assumed by the firmest believer in the literal truth of the story. Moreover, I venture to ask what sort of value, as an illustration of God's methods of dealing with sin, has an account of an event that never happened? If no Flood swept the careless people away, how is the warning of more worth than the cry of 'Wolf' when there is no wolf?" (Ibid, p. 232)
 - (3) Huxley then gives us a lesson on New Testament theology. He quotes **MAT 19:4-5**, and then comments: "If divine authority is not here claimed for the twenty-fourth verse of the second chapter of Genesis, what is the value of language? And again, I ask, if one may play fast and loose with the story of the Fall as a 'type' or 'allegory,' what becomes of the foundation of Pauline theology?" (Ibid, p. 235-236)
 - aa. And to substantiate this, Huxley quotes **1CO 15:21-22**: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
 - bb. Huxley continues, "If Adam may be held to be no more real a personage than Prometheus, and if the story of the Fall is merely an instructive 'type,' comparable to the profound Promethean mythos, what value has Paul's dialectic?"
 - (4) Huxley understood what many Christians refuse to concede: one must either accept the Genesis record as literal and historical or trash the Genesis record by accepting evolutionary theory and long geologic ages: the two positions are irreconcilable.
- d. If we can't trust Moses' words, we have no basis for believing Jesus' words.

JOH 5:46-47.

2. Christ and the apostles taught us to accept as literal, historical fact the events recorded in Genesis. **MAT 19:4-6; LUK 17:26-30; ROM 5:12-19; 1CO 15:21-22; 2CO 11:3; HEB 11:3-7; 2PE 2:4-6.**
 3. The literal record of Genesis is the foundation which establishes:
 - a. The entrance of sin.
 - b. The wage of sin.
 - c. The need for redemption.
 - d. The purpose for clothing.
 - e. The proper pattern of marriage: one man and one woman.
 - f. The seven-day week.
- C. Ponder what God requires us to believe about creation in **GEN 1-2.**
1. The first verse of the Bible refutes all of man's false philosophies about origins and the meaning of the world.
 - a. It repudiates atheism because the universe was *created by God*.
 - b. It repudiates pantheism because *God is transcendent* to all that He created.
 - c. It repudiates polytheism because *only one God* created all things.
 - d. It repudiates materialism because *matter had a beginning*.
 - e. It repudiates dualism because *God was alone* when He created.
 - f. It repudiates humanism because *God, not man, is the ultimate reality*.
 - g. It repudiates evolutionism because *God created all things good*.
 2. God created by His word. **PSA 33:6; 2PE 3:5.**
 3. God created the heavens, the earth and all their host in six, twenty-four hour days.
 - a. The primary meaning of “day” as used to describe the creation days is, “The time occupied by the earth in one revolution on its axis, in which the same terrestrial meridian returns to the sun; the space of twenty-four hours, reckoned from a definite or given point.”
 - b. The phrase “evening and morning” establish that a twenty-four hour day is under consideration. The Hebrew *yom* (S.R.N. #3117) with the phrase “evening and morning” (or its forms) appears 38 times in the O.T. Every time it means a literal, ordinary day.
 - c. The numerical adjectives (first, second, third, etc.) further confirm this. “Yom” with a number attached appears 359 times in the O.T. Every time it means a literal, ordinary day.
 - d. The plural form appears 845 times.
 - e. In none of the above 1242 references does the word mean anything other than a literal twenty-four hour day. The context is clear.
 - f. Why is it that accommodationists don't contend that “yom” can't be speaking of an ordinary day anywhere else outside of **GEN 1-2**? The answer is obvious: there is clearly no other place in the Bible's chronology to insert millions or billions of years.
 - g. If the days of **GEN 1-2** are actually eons of time, then how could Adam be formed on Day 6 and still be alive on Day 7, and yet said to live 930 years? **GEN 5:5.**
 - h. The six creation days with a seventh day of rest following were the basis upon which God established the later sabbath law. **EXO 20:8-11.**
 - (1) God's six-day work-week is a PATTERN for man's six-day work-week.
 - (2) The pattern breaks down if the six creation days are anything but normal twenty-four hour days.
 - (3) Mind that **EXO 20:8-11** makes clear that the ENTIRE creation was

- accomplished in the six days of **GEN 1**.
- (4) On the seventh day, God ended His work of creation and rested from ALL His work which He *created and made*. **GEN 2:1-3**.
 - (5) These facts dismiss the notion of a *primeval creation* which *preceded* the six days and the notion of subsequent ongoing creation through evolutionary processes.
4. The Genesis account of creation requires us to accept a physically and biologically mature creation.
- a. The animals were created mature enough to multiply.
 - b. Adam and Eve were created adults capable of fulfilling great responsibility and capable of multiplying.
 - c. This highlights a great weakness in the various dating methods for determining the age of the earth, since the earth was created with the appearance of age.
 - d. Jesus demonstrated this power to create a mature product without it having to develop through normal processes. **JOH 2:1-11; 6:9-13**.
- D. **HEB 11:3** is in agreement with the revelation of God in nature and with genuine science.
- E. God has plainly told us of earthly things and we should believe them that we may properly believe in heavenly things.