

## Bible Study # 3, Answering Objections to Christianity

In our earlier lessons, we observed that Jesus, Peter and Paul all answered objections that were raised to the Christian gospel message. We will follow their example and consider several of the current objections to the Christian faith. We will consider three of the widely publicized arguments that Bill Nye used against Christianity in his debate with Ken Ham several years ago. They are;

1. Ice core data from Greenland proves that the earth is older than what the Bible allows.
2. Ice core data from Antarctica similarly demonstrates that the earth is older than the Bible indicates.
3. Tree ring data reveals that the earth is older than what the Bible says it can be.

In our next study, we will consider other objections to Genesis including the argument that the geological table and fossil record show that Genesis is inaccurate.

In II Corinthians the Apostle Paul described part of our outreach mission as follows:

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (II Cor. 10:5).

Here Paul said that we refute, or *demolish*, any and all arguments that are raised against the Christian faith. One reason we are able to do so is stated by the first Proverb in the book by that name which states: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.”<sup>1</sup> As an example of this proverb, prominent geneticist, John Sanborn, said that it wasn’t until he converted to Christianity that he began to see the problems with evolution. Sanborn explained that as he studied the matter, he proceeded from being an evolutionist, to being an old-earth creationist, to being a young-earth creationist.<sup>2</sup>

Sanford’s odyssey shouldn’t surprise us since it is the Holy Spirit through his Word Who enables us to recognize the truth of Genesis. The book of Hebrews said: “By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible” (Hebrews 11:3).

We also recognize that it is inconceivable for science to explain divine creation, since science describes how nature usually works, and creation is miraculous. Creation is outside the normal operation of nature. For the same reason it is also inconceivable that science can explain or prove an explanation for the origin of life outside of Genesis. When well-known agnostic, Richard Dawkins, was asked, “How did life begin?” he answered by saying, “I have no idea.”<sup>3</sup> The origin of life is a question no one can answer without being enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>1</sup> Proverbs 1:7

<sup>2</sup> As stated by John Sanborn in a lecture given at Bethany Lutheran College several years ago.

<sup>3</sup> Ben Stein’s video, *expelled: No Evidence Allowed*,

At the same time, however, numerous skeptics argue that the Biblical account of creation has been proven false. How should we respond to such claims? As noted above, the Apostle Paul said that “we demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God.”<sup>4</sup> We have additionally observed that Jesus, Peter and Paul answered objections to Christianity by showing that the objections were irrational. Is this also the case with contemporary objections to Genesis? Indeed it is.

In his debate with Ken Ham, Bill Nye used four objections, or arguments, which he claimed demonstrate that the creation account in Genesis is false. All four allege that modern science has shown the earth to be much older than Genesis allows.

It is not surprising that Nye’s attacks on Genesis focused on the age of the Earth. Ken Ham’s own magazine, *Answers in Genesis*, recently said:

Our research also conclusively showed that the issue of the age of the Earth/universe was one of the major factors that caused this generation in American churches [millennials] to doubt that the Bible can be trusted.<sup>5</sup>

One of Nye’s supposed proofs, a common argument of evolutionists, is that the Greenland and Antarctic’s ice caps are 680,000 years old—too old for Genesis to be accurate. Nye said:

My scientific colleagues go to places like Greenland, the Arctic, they go to Antarctica and they drill into the ice with hollow drill bits; ... And we pull out long cylinders of ice, long ice rods. ... And we find certain of the cylinders to have 680,000 layers. 680,000 snow winter/summer cycles. How could it be that just 4000 years ago, all of this ice formed?<sup>6</sup>

And, later in the debate Nye said:

Thank you Mr. Ham, but I am completely unsatisfied. You did not, in my view, address fundamental questions: 680,000 years of snow ice layers, which require winter/summer cycles.<sup>7</sup>

So Bill Nye not only included—he emphasized this argument for an old earth based on ice cores. He brought it up twice in the debate. He said that the ice cores prove that the earth is at least 680,000 years old. Was he right about that? Can we assume, as Nye does, that ice cores can be dated like tree rings with each ring representing a year in time? Are ice cores really meaningful evidence against creation and for evolution?

We begin with Greenland. We know Nye’s alleged dates of Greenland ice to be false because of the recovery on the Greenland ice of an airplane called “The Glacier Girl” in 1992. During

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<sup>4</sup> II Cor. 10:5

<sup>5</sup> *Answers in Genesis*, October, 2015, p. 2

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.youngearth.org/index.php/archives/rmcf-articles/item/21-transcript-of-ken-ham-vs-bill-nye-debate>.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

World War II, on July 15, 1942, Glacier Girl's squadron was forced to make an emergency landing in Greenland. All the crew members were rescued, but *Glacier Girl*, along with the unit's five other P-38 fighters and two B-17 bombers, was abandoned and eventually buried beneath 268 feet of ice. In 1992, the plane was discovered and brought to the surface by members of the Greenland Expedition Society after years of searching. The aircraft was then restored to flying condition.

### **The Glacier Girl flies again**



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Numerous earlier search parties had attempted to locate and rescue one of these planes but had failed. Why had they failed? An important reason is that the world of science had advised the would-be rescuers that the plane should be down about 40 feet at most (and probably far less than that); 40 feet was one-sixth of its actual depth.

This means that we now know the actual rate of ice accumulation on Greenland. We now know that ice has been accumulating on Greenland at the rate of 268 feet every 50 years. This means

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<sup>8</sup> Wikimedia Commons. This photograph has been released into the public domain by its author.

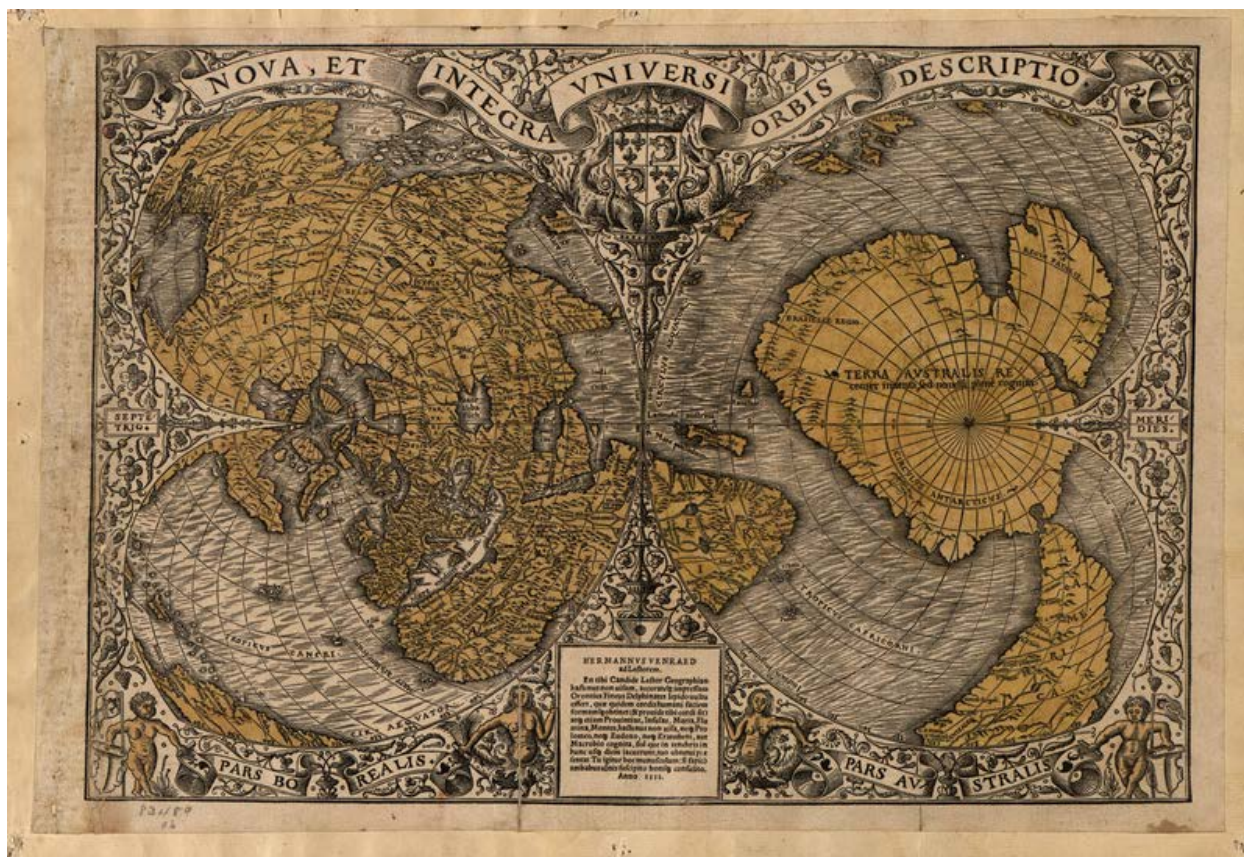
that the scientific consensus regarding the rate of ice build-up on Greenland is wrong—so wrong that it should not be taken seriously. At the known rate of ice accumulation on Greenland, as revealed by the Glacier Girl, it would only take about 1,000 years to accumulate a mile-thick ice cap, which is what we now have.

This information is consistent with what we know are reliable historical records revealing that Greenland was much warmer 1,000 years ago than it is today, and that because of the favorable climate, some 5,000 Norwegian settlers lived in Greenland at that time. There were two Norwegian colonies there. They were successful until the climate starting getting cold around 1200 AD. The agricultural colony came to an end in about 1350 AD, and the fishing colony ceased to exist around 1500.

So even if we allow for compaction of the deepest layers of ice on Greenland, the entire ice-cap could have easily accumulated during the Biblical time-frame as described in Genesis. The 680,000 year old supposed age of the ice cap has been proven false. This means that an important argument used to discredit Genesis is now known to be false.

Is the ice-core dating system used on Antarctica any more accurate than the one used on Greenland? No. It is the same fallacious system, and we now additionally have verifiable historical records and artifacts which reveal that the ice core dating methods used for Antarctica, like those used for Greenland, are a complete sham. One such artifact is the map of Antarctica and other continents drawn in 1531 by French cartographer (map maker) Oronteus Finnaeus (see below):

## Oronteus Finnaeus Map



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This map pictures the globe from the perspective of the North Pole (left) and South Pole (right). The map on the right shows Antarctica in the center. South America is pictured in the lower right, Africa and Madagascar in the lower left and Australia in the upper left.

There are numerous sensational features of the map—one of them being that it obviously pictures Antarctica as being largely ice-free and does so long before the continent was supposedly discovered in 1820. Secondly, the depiction of Antarctica is extraordinarily accurate—so accurate that modern mapmakers are mystified as to how it could have been drawn with such amazing precision. Obviously the map-making ability of earlier people (perhaps the Phoenicians), including their abilities in mathematics and geometry, was far superior to what has been imagined by modern man.

The map not only shows much of Antarctica as being ice-free, it also pictures the coast of Antarctica in great detail, along with accurate depictions of major bays, rivers and mountain ranges. This means that the evolutionary view that Antarctica has been covered with a mile-thick

<sup>9</sup> Wikimedia Commons. This map is in the public domain.



ice-cap for 680,000 winter-summer cycles is obviously false. It is so off base as to be meaningless.

It should be noted that the authenticity of this map is essentially beyond question. Its author, Oronteus Finnaeus, is a well-known figure of history having been Chairman of the Department of Mathematics at College de France (1531-1555) and having published numerous scholarly works under his own name—including this map.

Finnaeus would have used source maps to make his map. Another map-maker of that era, Piri Reis, said that his source maps included those in use at the time of Alexander the Great—325 B.C. Based on his source maps, and using his mathematical expertise, Finnaeus drew this map of Antarctica. Finnaeus, it should be added, calculated the value of pi to be 3.1410, a figure known to be quite accurate. Finnaeus was a brilliant mathematician and cartographer.

There are other ancient maps that show Antarctica ice free or at least largely ice-free.<sup>10</sup> One of them is the PiRi Reis map of 1513. This map, also, is universally recognized as authentic. As noted above, PiRi Reis said that his source maps dated back to the time of Alexander the Great (325 BC).<sup>11</sup> Reis, like Finnaeus, was an accomplished mathematician and cartographer.<sup>12</sup>

The notion that Antarctica has been covered with a mile-thick ice-cap for the last 680,000 years is proven false by these maps. The dating methods are based on assumptions that cannot be verified. The maps picture real history. The thesis that ice cores proves Genesis to be wrong is totally discredited, and it was one of Nye's primary objections to the historical accuracy of Genesis.

Why doesn't the scientific community admit that the ice-core dating system is a sham? And when the Pharisees learned from the soldiers who were posted at Jesus' tomb that an angel had come and rolled away the stone, and the tomb was empty, why didn't these Pharisees admit they had been wrong? In answer—as the proverb says, “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge”<sup>13</sup>—don't expect those who reject God's word to be rational about the big questions of our existence.

The third objection presented by Bill Nye focused on a famous spruce tree in Sweden. About this tree, Nye said: “There is a famous tree in Sweden that is 9550 years old.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The Mercator World Map of 1538 also shows the Antarctic and its coastline in great detail, and the Bauche Map of 1737 show Antarctica consisting of two land masses, something unknown to modern cartographers until it was revealed by sonograms in the early 1950's. The Hadji Ahmed Map of 1559 also shows Antarctica as well as a land bridge from Siberia to Alaska.

<sup>11</sup> See <http://www.ancientdestructions.com/piri-reis-map-of-antarctica/>.

<sup>12</sup> For an analysis of the Reis map, see <http://ancient-wisdom.co.uk/pirireismap.htm>.

<sup>13</sup> Proverbs 1:7

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.youngearth.org/index.php/archives/rmcf-articles/item/21-transcript-of-ken-ham-vs-bill-nye-debate>.

The tree in Sweden to which Nye referring is a Norway spruce called “Old Tjikko” (Lief Kullman, the man who discovered the tree, named it after his late dog, Tjikko.)<sup>15</sup> The tree lives on a mountaintop in Sweden.

### Old Tjikko



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<sup>15</sup> [www.wired.com/2010/03/old-tree-gallery/12/](http://www.wired.com/2010/03/old-tree-gallery/12/).

<sup>16</sup> [Karl Brodowsky](#), Wikimedia Commons. The author grants the right to others to use this photograph.

Bill Nye included a power-point photograph of this tree during the debate. With the picture of the tree on the screen in the background, he asked:

You can try this yourself, everybody. I don't mean to be mean to trees, but get a sapling and put it under water for a year. It will not survive. Nor will its seeds. It just won't make it. So how could these trees be that old if the Earth is only 4000 years old?<sup>17</sup>

The audience for the debate likely expected that the age of this Swedish tree had been determined in a reliable and verifiable manner, normally by counting growth rings. Not so. Nye didn't mention how the supposed 9,000 plus date for the tree had been calculated. He forgot to mention that the tree in the picture, according to an article in *National Geographic*, is only a few hundred years old.<sup>18</sup> A few hundred years old is a long way from the 9,550 years of age that Bill Nye claimed.

So where does this 9,550 year-old date come from? It was supposedly calculated by means of Carbon-14 dating methods used on tree roots found underneath the tree. That means we are operating in the realm of assumptions, not proven facts. And Carbon dating can only be used on plant and animal matter after it has died.

This brings us to the question: Could dead Norway spruce roots survive for over 9,000 years in moist soil without rotting away?

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<sup>17</sup> [www.wired.com/2010/03/old-tree-gallery/12/](http://www.wired.com/2010/03/old-tree-gallery/12/).

<sup>18</sup> [njoysweden.se/en/object/old-tjikko-oldest-tree-in-the-world/](http://njoysweden.se/en/object/old-tjikko-oldest-tree-in-the-world/).



**Norway spruce trees Southern Minnesota**



**Stump of a Norway spruce that has been dead 50 years:**



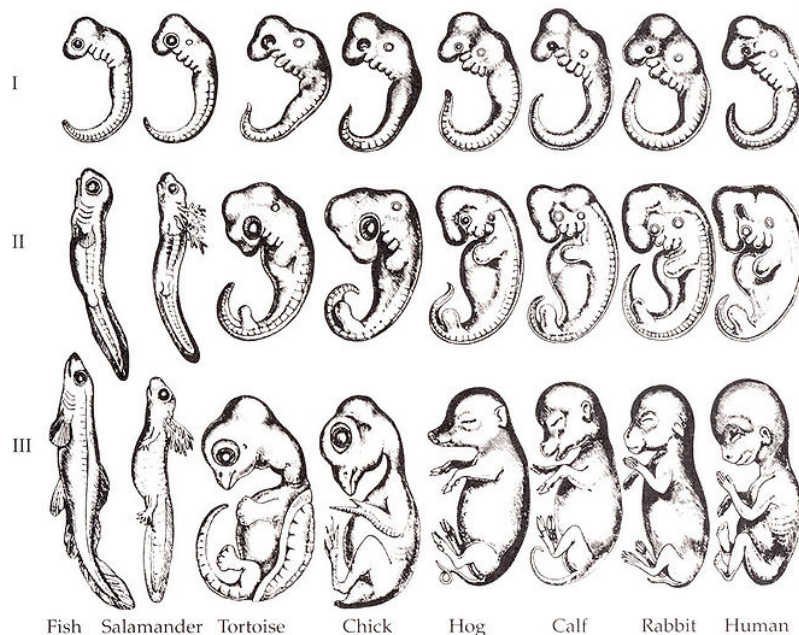
Normally Norway spruce roots rot away in something like 50 years as can be seen from the roots on the Norway spruce pictured above. How could roots from Old Tjikko survive 200 times that long? Such a claim is simply unbelievable. It appears that the argument is totally made up.

Regarding the time of creation, however, we should note that WELS Seminary Professor, John Brug, has said:

... the Bible presents creation as relatively recent. An age of not less than 6,000 years and not more than about 12,000 years fits with the biblical presentation. An age of millions or billions of years does not.<sup>19</sup>

But would those who wish to discredit the Bible simply make up supposed evidence? The Pharisees of Jesus time certainly did, and people today are no different. One of Darwin's foremost apologists, Ernst Haeckel, presented now famous drawings of various embryos to supposedly demonstrate that organisms retrace evolution in their embryonic development. These drawings are commonly included in biology textbooks as supposed evidence for evolution.

## Haeckel's Embryos



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Haeckel's drawings are intended to show that all embryos look basically the same. The truth of the matter, however, is that they are very different. Noted British embryologist Michael

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.wels.net/news-events/forward-in-christ/december-1999/origins-earth-and-people?page=0,1>.

<sup>20</sup> Wikimedia Commons. This diagram is in the public domain.

Richardson who examined the Haeckel drawings in detail, said, “It looks like it’s [Haeckel’s embryos are] turning out to be one of the most famous fakes in biology.”<sup>21</sup>

Can we count on critics of the Bible to speak the truth? We cannot. We do much better to look to the person who is the truth. Jesus said:”The reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me" (John 18:37). Jesus also said: “I am the way, the truth and life. No man comes to the Father but by me” (John 14:6). We do well to put our confidence in Him. The history of His critics recorded in Scripture tell us that we dare not trust the critics to tell us the truth.

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<sup>21</sup> Michael Richardson, *Anatomy and Embryology*, August, 1997.