

Biblical Evidence of Primary Causation

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Most young-age creationists believe the universe and the earth is young because they are convinced that the Bible makes that claim. There are, however, those who have as strong a belief in the truthfulness of Scripture but who do not accept the claim that the universe and earth is young. Some of these people believe that God created by using secondary causation—i. e. working through physical processes (which would necessarily require great amounts of time). Here we wish to briefly list Biblical and theological reasons to suggest that God utilized primary, not secondary causation, in the creation—i.e. He created directly (or by processes not characterized by the natural laws and processes of the present universe).

1) God created space, time, and matter, so God is independent of these entities. Unless He had specific reason to create otherwise, it would be expected that God's "normal" or "usual" mode would be to create without using physical process.

2) God and His angels are spiritual beings. It might be expected then, that interactions among members of the Godhead and between God and His angels, would not involve physical process. Man, in contrast, is both a spiritual being and a physical being— significantly restricted for the duration of his lifetime within the bounds and perspectives of space and time. As a result, interactions between God and man might often be expected to involve physical process. Given that man was the last of God's creation, humans were not around for a great majority of the creation period. The creation event might have communicated the nature of God—for example to the angels (Job 38:4-7). However, since man was absent during most of the creative week there is no compelling warrant from man's nature or position which would require God to have utilized physical process prior to man's creation.

3) Many examples of divine activity are described in the Bible—both cases where He utilized primary causation and cases where He utilized secondary causation. Based upon the Biblical account, while Christ was on earth the frequency of primary (versus secondary) causation seems to have been very high. This may, in part, be due to the fact that primary causation is Christ's usual mode—even when He was incarnate in the form of a spacio-temporally constrained human. Given that Christ was the Creator (John 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 1:16) it would be expected that He utilized primary causation in the creation as well.

4) God created by divine command ("and God said" is found ten times in the creation account; Psalm 33:6,9; Matthew 8:8). Not only does this not imply a physical process, it seems to preclude it.

5) In 2 Peter 3:3-7 the Creation, the Flood, and the future judgment are three events contrary to "the way things continue" in the present. This passage strongly implies that the creation came into being via causes which could not be inferred from a study of the present universe. Since we do infer natural process from a study of the present universe, this passage strongly implies that the creation did not involve natural process.

6) Even if God did create using a process it seems most likely that He did not create using a process involving death of animals or man, disease, suffering, toil, or any process which would evidence such things. This is because a) God is loving (Romans 5:8), merciful (Psalm 108:4), and compassionate (Psalm 86:15); b) The new heavens and the new earth (often paralleled with the creation) seem to lack these things ; c) God repeatedly labels the creation "good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25) and finally

“very good” (Genesis 1:31), suggesting perfection of all kinds—including physical and moral (it being hard to imagine a world with death, suffering, and disease to be labeled “very good”); d) death, suffering, toil, and increased pain came with the curse (Genesis 3:16-19); e) Romans 5:12-21 indicates that death came with man’s sins and seems to suggest that more than human death is included; f) no carnivory preceded the Fall (Genesis 1:29-30); g) man’s judgment very often involved animals (e.g. animals, and

not plants, judged in the Flood: Genesis 6:7; sin sacrifice involved animals and not plants), so it is reasonable to assume that the curse of death placed on man at the Fall was also applied to the animals; h) The repetition of the phrase “and he died” eight times in the first genealogy following the creation (Genesis 5) but in no other genealogy suggests that death was new to the creation with Adam; i) The toil and pain of the whole physical creation associated with the “bondage of corruption” in Romans 8 would be consistent with the whole physical creation being subjected to this at man’s Fall; and j) The ancient Hebrews seem to have accepted this position universally.

7) In Genesis 2:7 we read “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (KJV). “Living soul” in this verse is a translation of the same Hebrew phrase utilized to describe animals in Genesis One (KJV: “moving creature” in vs. 20; “living creature” in vss. 21 and 24; “living thing” in vs. 28; “thing... with life” in vs. 30). This verse indicates that the infusion of God’s breath gave life to man—life earlier in the creation week was available only to animals. Man was not created (or evolved) from an animal (living flesh)—that is, a “living organism” did not become man, rather, man became a “living organism”. Genesis 2:7 also indicates that man was created from the dust—to which (we learn in Genesis 3:19) man is to return when he dies. When humans die they decay into soil, they do not devolve into lower forms of life. Thus, even if it could be argued that God utilized process in the creation, in two separate ways, Genesis 2:7 indicates that God did not create man from a lower form of life (e.g. apes).

In summary, there are several Biblical and theological reasons for believing that in the creation event, God utilized primary (rather than secondary) causation.