

EDITORIAL

IS CREATION SCIENTIFIC?

One of the most common arguments used against the inclusion of creation in the United States public-school science curriculum is that creation is not scientific. It is asserted that the biblical account of beginnings is beyond the realm of scientific investigation because it describes the miraculous. The especially abundant verbiage against the term “scientific creationism” has included such labels as semantic fallacy, glorious fake, pseudoscience, the equivalent of medical quackery, and oxymoron. Creationists have countered by asking whether evolution might not also be a religion.

Actually, the question of whether creation is scientific is trivial because it is too simplistic. I shall illustrate this with only three points, although several more could be added.

- 1) Science can be pursued without a knowledge of primary causes. Many extensive scientific endeavors have flourished even though the investigators remained ignorant of the basic causes for the observed phenomena. An outstanding contemporary example is the plate tectonics concept. Though it has generated many thousands of scientific papers, at present we remain woefully uninformed as to a good mechanism for the movement of plates over the surface of the earth. Likewise, the scientific study of gravity or the earth’s magnetic field has also proceeded without an understanding of primary causes.

If science can operate without a knowledge of primary causes, it can also operate whether those primary causes are naturalistic (evolution) or supernatural (creation), as long as the subject is consistent enough to be analyzed by the methodology of science. Thus the effects and products of both creation and evolution are subject to some scientific analysis, and creation does not negate science.

Although present concepts of science tend to exclude the supernatural (e.g., creation), creation and science were not mutually exclusive concepts when the foundations of our modern science were established. Many leading pioneers of science believed in creation and used science to discover the law and order the Creator had placed in nature.

There is no question that the current capabilities of science are unable to analyze the primary causes conceived for either creation or a worldwide flood as described in Genesis. On the other hand, expected effects of these events such as the complex nature of life systems or the evidence for catastrophism as seen in the rocks are very much amenable to scientific analysis. Hence, creation and science are compatible, and to label creation as unscientific is in disharmony with the scientific

practice of not requiring knowledge of primary causes for scientific study.

- 2) The academic limits of science, like those of most other disciplines, are ill-defined, and it is difficult to categorically state where science ends and another area begins. For instance, should the history of science be classified as history or science? Is the philosophy of science categorized as science or philosophy? The creation concept is pertinent to both the history and philosophy of science, and the attempt to exclude creation from the science classroom as being unscientific is intellectually restrictive. Science which prides itself on openness and revisability finds itself stymied when evolutionists suggest that anything related to the concept of creation must be rejected. It causes one to wonder about a hidden agenda. Creationists have been accused of trying to impose their religion in the public schools under the guise of creation science, but the evolutionist's argumentation is likewise suspect.
- 3) Both evolutionists and creationists use the scientific method to evaluate creation. A commonly voiced objection to creation as science is that creation does not meet the testability requirement stipulated for good science. Although evolutionists state that creation as a miraculous event cannot be tested by science, some of their recent books (e.g., *Science Confronts Creationism*, edited by Laurie R. Godfrey) are prima facie evidence that they try to test creation with science. The claim that creation is not testable by science loses credibility when science is used to test it, and methodology becomes suspect of bias. Both creationists and evolutionists are using present scientific data to test past events that are difficult to establish, but nevertheless are subject to some evaluation by science.

As I have stated earlier, the question of whether creation is science is trivial. It revolves around varied definitions of science and conflicting scientific practices. By promoting the proposition that creation is not scientific, evolutionists are directing their energies to a non sequitur that distracts from the more basic question of origins, *C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre!* (This is magnificent, but this is not the war). The real question is whether evolution or creation is true.

Furthermore when the question of origins is being considered, it would seem appropriate to consider many approaches. Until science can find more cogent explanations for the great questions of ultimate origins, purposes, and the duty and destiny of man, wisdom dictates that we look beyond science for answers. To limit our inquiry into the question of origins entirely to naturalistic causes and to exclude other realms such as creation under the guise that they are not science is obscurant and counterproductive.

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