

Dinosaurs and the Bible

By Gerald McKibben

To Bible believing Christians, the Bible is a historically accurate account of the creation of the world, and therefore it is the starting point for understanding the distant past. As the Word of God, it is completely trustworthy. With this starting point, things we observe in nature fit the Biblical account extremely well.

Dinosaurs, along with other land animals and man, were created on day six in the creation account. These large reptiles thus co-existed with humans, a notion that is unthinkable to those who believe in millions of years. No one knows exactly why the dinosaurs all apparently died out, but death has been the rule in all animals – and man – since the fall and curse recorded in Genesis.

Dinosaurs are, in some ways, a focal point for major issues regarding the age of the earth and how life came to be here. This is partly because dinosaurs are fascinating creatures, especially the larger ones, capturing the imagination of many. They have been the subject of many movies, such as Jurassic Park. It is my belief that claims of dinosaurs living millions of years ago have more to do with philosophy and world views than with real, experimental science.

Leaving God out of the Equation – What world views are involved? My world view is that there is a God who created everything (I've never known of anything that created itself out of nothing), and He left a historical record of that creation. The prevalent opposing world view is that you can explain everything in the universe by human effort alone, leaving God out of the equation. Honest evolutionists I have talked with readily admit this.

Below: The Author's full-size *kentrosaurus* sculpture. I wanted something really big, but chose one of the plant-eaters instead of *T. rex*, which I think is over-done. Perhaps it is fitting to show this picture made after a rare Mississippi snow, because many believe that dinosaurs died out because the earth's climate became much colder at some point. This could have happened after the Great Flood described in Genesis.



Dinosaurs in the Bible? This writer believes that they are, but not by the name dinosaur. The word, which means terrible lizard, was coined in 1841 by Biologist and Paleontologist Sir Richard Owen. Many believe that, had the term been coined a couple of hundred years earlier, then the King James version of the Bible would contain the word dinosaur.

Is behemoth a dinosaur? In the Book of Job, Chapter 40, verses 15 – 24 contain references to a huge land animal. Not knowing what the creature was, Hebrew scholars translated the word as behemoth, simply meaning a gigantic land animal. In light of our knowledge of dinosaur bones and something about what the animals must have looked like, the

description sounds a lot like brachiosaurus. This large sauropod was estimated to be as much as 85 feet long and weighed 30 – 40 tons.

It is almost comical to read comments, even in some Bible dictionaries, on the above referenced verses in Job. For example, the online American Heritage Dictionary defines behemoth as a “large animal, possibly a hippopotamus described in the Bible.” Let’s see what the description reminds us of:

“Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you; He eats grass like an ox. See now, his strength is in his hips,
And his power is in his stomach muscles.
He moves his tail like a cedar;...” (Job 40:15-17).

While the verses following verse 17 do mention a river habitat that would be characteristic of a hippo, the physical description above certainly doesn’t sound like one. While large, a hippo is small compared with the elephant, if one confines the definition to animals existing today. To be honest, the description sounds much more like brachiosaurus or one of the other sauropods.

The Bible also mentions several times the leviathan (Job 3:8 41:1; Psalm 74:14; Psalm 104:26; Isaiah 27:1), where it is presented as a fearsome sea serpent. These descriptions sound a lot like plesiosaurs and other extinct sea reptiles that, while not technically dinosaurs, are animals known to us only through fossilized remains.

When did they all disappear? First of all, fossils do not come with dates stamped on them, and no direct experimental scientific methods are available to “prove” their age. Time spans of a few thousands of years seem short to many only because of the constant reminders of the millions of years that go along with evolutionary theory.

In the early nineties Mary Schweitzer, a Paleontologist with North Carolina State University, reported finding soft tissue in dinosaur bones dated at 68 millions years old. She later found soft tissue, apparently blood vessels containing red blood cells, inside a partially fossilized Tyrannosaurus rex femur, a real problem if you believe they were in the ground that long.

Those who don’t believe the Genesis account have a difficult time explaining the various cave drawings found around the world depicting animals that look like dinosaurs, and also the many stories from various literature sources of interaction of humans with “dragons”.

Attacks on the Bible are ultimately attacks on Jesus Christ, the God-man who came to earth to die and pay for the sins of a fallen race. “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28).

The Bible is not a book of science, but it is accurate when it deals with science. It provides a framework for interpreting what we observe in nature, including dinosaur remains.
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