

PART III. THE PROBLEM OF IMPROVING THE SCIENTIFIC QUALITY AND ACCEPTABILITY OF CREATIONIST PUBLICATIONS

1. Introduction

There is currently a great problem because of the apparent inability of professional scientists and science teachers to recognize creationists' work as being scientifically valid. Young-earth creationists frequently complain about this lack, and yet seem to do very little to improve the situation. We have already mentioned, in Part I, some of the severe problems which arise from the fact that the creationist leaders do not maintain any appreciable amount of communication with professional earth scientists, and seldom seriously use the research reports of sedimentary geology. This being the case, one could hardly expect geologists to develop confidence in these leaders.

Then, there is the problem of the impression which professional scientists receive when they review published creationist books and periodicals. The fact that evolutionary scientists have been paying particular attention to what creationist leaders have to say about earth science and astronomy was pointed out in several of the sections of Part I. And the National Center for Science Education has for a few years offered for sale their Reviews of Thirty-one Creationist Books. This is an extensive work, prepared under the editorship of Stanley Weinberg, a leading anti-creationist. So there is the major problem of what scientists find when they examine creationist publications. They of course find some good arguments against abiogenesis and macroevolution; but a part of these contain at least moderate weaknesses and inconsistencies. On the other hand, most of the young-earth creationist writings on the subjects of geology and astronomy usually provide a major source of amusement for earth scientists and astronomers. Here they find many cases of what at least appears to be outright rejection of research data and denial of well-known geologic and astronomic realities. A considerable number of these seeming rejections of research data have already been mentioned in this paper, and many more appear in the anti-creationist books and articles we have cited. We grant that most, or perhaps all of such rejections and denials may have been caused by simple ignorance of what exists in nature, on the part of the authors. Nevertheless, these inexcusable and disgraceful blemishes are "right there" in the creationist books and periodicals, to be read and scoffed at by those who are seeking reasons for downgrading Christianity and the Bible.

2. Questions as to Why the Present Condition Exists

Why the creationist leaders show no concern to correct these glaring blemishes in their work is very perplexing. Several of us who are old-earth creationists have made many attempts to help these leaders see why such corrections are of great importance. To date, these efforts have been practically without success. Might it be that at this advanced stage in the public disgrace of creationism we could appeal to the young-earth creationists by using two examples of their teachings which have brought much ridicule from geologists? The two examples which we want to cite briefly are (1) the assertion that the sedimentary layers of the Grand Canyon are only a few thousand years old, and (2) the assertion that there is no evidence which obligates Christians to accept the existence of naturally-formed coral reefs and evaporite strata in many of the oil fields of the world. Apparently the paramount question here is, what is there about recognizing the geologic data in these two areas which could be sinful or a dishonor to God?

We will not immediately plunge into the task of elaborately enumerating possible answers to this question, but a few preliminary observations should be appropriate. First, in both cases we are dealing with parts of the earth's sedimentary