

# Dinosaurs: Important to the Gospel

By Phoebe Kautt

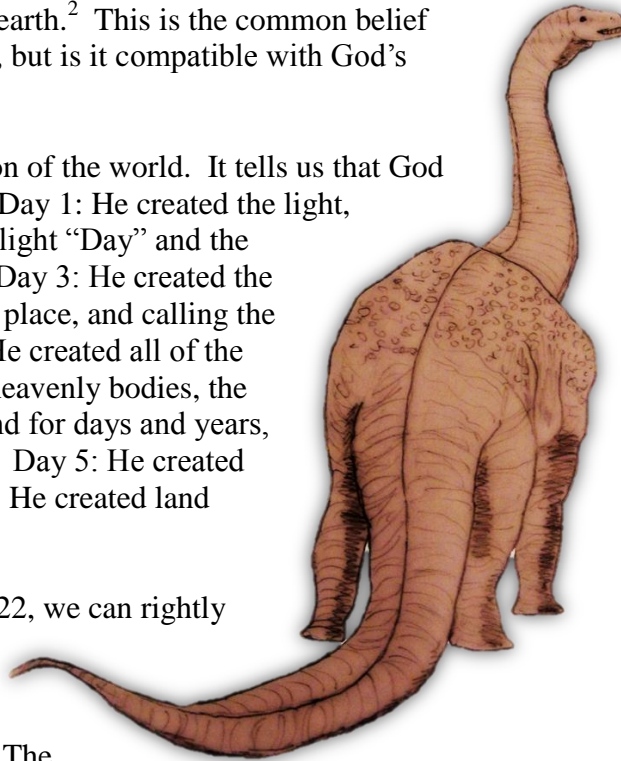
Today dinosaurs are widely thought to have evolved from other reptiles over 230 million years ago, during the 'Triassic' period, and lived on earth long before men ever put a foot on this world.<sup>1</sup> They are believed to have gone extinct sometime around 65 million years ago, by an asteroid strike to the earth, or by some such event that wiped them off the face of the earth.<sup>2</sup> This is the common belief about dinosaurs within the science community, but is it compatible with God's Word?

Genesis chapter one is the record of the creation of the world. It tells us that God created the whole world in six, 24-hour days. Day 1: He created the light, and separated it from the darkness, calling the light "Day" and the darkness "night". Day 2: He created the sky. Day 3: He created the dry land, gathering together the water into one place, and calling the dry land "earth", and the water "seas". Then He created all of the plants and vegetation. Day 4: He created the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon and stars, "for signs and seasons, and for days and years, and for light in the firmament of the heavens." Day 5: He created all sea and flying creatures. And, lastly, day 6: He created land animals and humans.

Now, taking the information from verses 20 – 22, we can rightly conclude that dinosaurs would be among the "great sea creatures" (sea dinosaurs) and "every winged bird" (flying dinosaurs), even though they are not mentioned by name. The same goes for verses 24 & 25; dinosaurs would be included in the "everything that creeps on the earth". Thus, we come to the understanding that dinosaurs (along with every other living creature) were created on days 5 and 6.

If that is true, then that would immediately answer the question of whether or not dinosaurs lived at the same time as humans. Genesis 1:24-31 very clearly states that all land creatures were made on the same day as humans: day 6. Also, reading from Genesis chapter 2, verses 19 & 20, we learn that God brought all the animals (which would include dinosaurs!) to Adam for him to name them.

We can also examine passages like Job 40:15-24, which mentions a creature called Behemoth. Many believe that what Job is talking about here was an elephant or a hippopotamus. But, let's consider the description in verses 15-18: "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." Now, if we were to stop here, we could rightly assume that this is talking about some kind of a creature like a hippo or an elephant. But, in fact, the passage continues, "He moves his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are tightly knit. His bones are like beams of bronze, his ribs like bars of iron." Have you ever looked at the tail of an elephant or a hippo? Would you call it a 'cedar'? Maybe a better description would be 'twig'. Job is not describing an elephant or a hippo here! He is describing a sauropod (4-legged) dinosaur, possibly an Apatosaurus or Brachiosaurus, which have long necks and huge tails, resembling a massive cedar tree.



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<sup>1</sup> <http://palaeo.gly.bris.ac.uk/communication/boulton/evolution.html#anchor3>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/03/100304142242.htm>

Now, you may say that Job did not live with these dinosaurs, he just wrote about them. However, when you look back at verse 15 again, you'll see that Behemoth was "made along with [Job]." A very clear indication that man and dinosaurs lived together.

But now, the controversial question of how dinosaurs became extinct must be answered. Did they die because of an asteroid strike, or because of starvation, or indigestion? Or, were they wiped out because of the world-wide flood of Noah's day? Let's take a look at God's Infallible and Holy Word to find the answer.

First off, we read in Genesis, chapter 6 that God commanded Noah to build an ark, in which he and his family, and all the animals aboard would survive the flood. Many criticize the ark, saying that it was not big enough for all of the animals to fit, and especially not dinosaurs and other large animals. However, the text is very clear as to the size of the ark: 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. The common length of a cubit is approximately 18 inches, which would make the ark 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. Doing some simple math we see that the capacity of the ark would have been approximately 1,518,000 cubic feet, equivalent to the capacity of 569 modern railroad stock cars. Each stock car can accommodate 250 sheep-sized animals. Using the liberal approach to counting animals, there would have been approximately 16,000 animals on the ark, which would have only used 64 of the 569 railroad stock cars.<sup>3</sup> And, even the large animals, such as dinosaurs and elephants, would have been taken onto the ark as "teenagers", not "newborns" or "senior citizens", but "teenagers", because they would have had the longest life-span, and the best capability of reproducing once off the ark. The younger ones would also have been the smaller ones, since even the largest dinosaurs started out small, (the largest dinosaur egg that has been found is the about size of a football) and the average size of a dinosaur is about the size of a sheep. So, we see that there would have been no problem fitting dinosaurs on the ark.

But, Noah did not take all of the dinosaurs, or all of the other kinds of animals, on the ark. So, what happened to the ones outside the ark? They died. They were buried in the floodwaters and became what we call fossils. This process did not take millions of years.<sup>4</sup> The flood lasted for a just under a year, and that is when most of the fossils, canyons, rock layers, etc., were formed. A cataclysm of the proportion of Noah's Flood (a worldwide flood) could easily be accredited with the making of things like fossils, rock layers and the Grand Canyon.

We can see, on a small scale, what Noah's flood would have looked like, *today*. In the state of Washington on May 18, 1980, Mount St. Helens erupted, making the beautiful "adventurer's heaven" turn into something that looks like the landscape of the moon. Thousands and thousands of tons of molten lava came spewing forth, creating things like a scour slope, floating log mats, and petrified trees, all within a matter of hours. Mudflows carried 3.9 million cubic yards of material miles away. And then a few years later, after erupting again, massive mudflows drained into craters (that were created by steam explosions), blew out the opposite end of the crater, and created a small scale 'Grand Canyon', all in one afternoon. This is evidence, in our world today, that rock-layers, fossils, petrified trees and canyons can be formed within weeks, days or even hours – not millions of years.<sup>5</sup>

The dinosaurs that went onto the ark, along with all of the others animals on the ark, obviously survived the flood. But, most of them were killed off by such things as starvation, unhealthy environments and frightened humans. However, there still could be a few around today.<sup>6</sup>

So, what does this have to do with the Gospel? Everything! Just think about it: if the Bible is not true when it

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<sup>3</sup> For a very good lecture on this topic, watch Dr. Terry Mortenson's, *Noah's Flood: Washing Away Millions of Years*.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.icr.org/fossilization>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.icr.org/article/mt-st-helens-catastrophism>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.icr.org/article/search-congo-dinosaur>

tells us about such things as the creation, dinosaurs and the flood, then why should we base our *salvation* and eternal destiny, on the very same Word? Who is to say that the Bible is not wrong in the New Testament, where it tells us about Jesus' life, death and resurrection?

You see, if we undermine the authority of the Word of God in Genesis, we undermine it everywhere else. But, if Genesis is true, reliable and accurate, then we can truly trust the Word of God when it comes to our salvation and to life beyond death!

Back in Noah's day there was a judgment coming, but there also was a way to be saved. Noah preached that judgment was at hand during the entire time they were building the ark, but no one believed him, and no one (except Noah and his family) was saved from the flood. After the flood, God put a rainbow in the sky as a covenant between Him and man, that He would never again destroy the earth with water. Yet, there is another judgment coming – one not of water, but of fire<sup>7</sup> - and there *is* a way to be saved! God has once again provided an Ark of Salvation, and anyone who enters it through the Door will be saved.

“Then Jesus said to them again, “...I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved.” John 10:7, 9

“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” John 14:6

“Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3

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<sup>7</sup> 2 Peter 2:3-7