

indicate separate species. The great range of dogs, from Great Danes to Chihuahuas, from wolves to dingoes, are all one species of dog. All horses, from Clydesdales to Shetland ponies, belong to the one species.

We must take care not to credit the evolutionary interpretation of the fossil record and its corresponding dating system with the authority to challenge clear Scripture. God wrote these important words in stone: “for in six days the LORD [Yahweh] made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is” (Ex. 20:11). That is, Yahweh made everything in our universe in six literal days about 6,000 years ago, and this repeated scripture excludes all other interpretations of Genesis 1.

The Fiat-Age theory proposes that God made creative pronouncements over six days, but that these took effect in progressive creations over billions of years. Such a theory is not based on any scripture, and is a concession to atheistic geology. There is no harmony between this theory and the Genesis record of Creation. If we accept the evolutionists’ fabricated geologic column and dating we will also be required to concede that mortal humans lived up to, and for many years before, Adam’s time. This would be a step onto seriously shaky doctrinal ground, contradicting Paul’s teaching that “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men” (Rom. 5:12).

The truth is that Adam was the first man, and all humans spring from him. His nature was changed at the Fall and he became mortal and prone to sin. The ground rebelled under his cultivation as he rebelled under God’s instruction. Eve’s physiology changed, as did the serpent’s anatomy. Sin altered creation suddenly, dramatically and visibly. Animals that once lived in harmony killed one another, and Cain killed Abel. All these tragedies were the results of Adam’s sin. No wonder “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together” (8:22). One day soon it will all be fixed.

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I would like to comment on the three “Theories of Creation” at the end of the article, “Was the creation cursed?”. I believe that the earth, sun, moon and stars were in existence before the Almighty began His creative works as recorded in Genesis 1, but consider it important that we accept the account as it stands, namely that Crea-

tion took place in six literal days. I can think of seven reasons for this, as follows:

- 1 Everything in the early chapters of Genesis is literal.
- 2 The only way to understand Moses’ words in Exodus 20:9-11 concerning the sabbath is that he is referring to literal days.
- 3 The sense of the words, “He spake, and it was done”, in Psalm 33:9 conveys the idea of the creative works following immediately upon the command of the Lord God.
- 4 The seventh day must have been literal, otherwise Adam could have been a very old man before the day came to an end, which is absurd.
- 5 The works of creation are interdependent. The trees and plants, which were created on the third day, were dependent on the bees, which were created on the sixth day, to pollinate them. If these days were long periods, then the plants would not have survived without the insects necessary for their continuance.
- 6 If we fail to believe that the Lord God was able to carry out these mighty creative works in six successive and literal days, and instead believe that they occupied long periods, how can we believe in the resurrection to life, which will take place in “the twinkling of an eye” (1 Cor. 15:52)?
- 7 The Bible was written, not for the wise of this world, but for the simple, and a mind uneducated by the wisdom of this world would apprehend that Genesis chapter 1 is speaking of seven literal days.

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### Israel’s dwelling safely

It seems fairly clear from recent correspondence that reaching any kind of conclusion as to the actual timing of Gog’s invasion (Ezek. 38,39) by looking at the term ‘dwell safely [*betach*]’ (38:8,11) and the use of this Hebrew word *betach* in the Old Testament is not as easy as some would imagine.

Perhaps in focusing so much attention on this point we might be neglecting other important details in these chapters. There are several significant points here, on top of those mentioned by Brother Cave ([Jan. 2002, p. 22](#)) and others, that, I would suggest, together form a formidable weight of evidence in favour of the idea that

the events of these chapters are to take place *prior* to our Master's glorious appearance—the same time as is referred to in Zechariah 14. The following points are taken from chapter 38:

- v. 8. The statement “which had long been desolate”<sup>\*</sup> here might seem like an insignificant remark, but is surely a hint at what time the chapter is fulfilled. Can these words make sense if Gog comes down when Christ is on His throne, unless there is a long gap between a previous invasion (yet to happen) and the Lord's return in which they are fulfilled, which Zechariah does not seem to suggest? These words would apply if Gog's invasion were prior to the Lord's return, when the land has been desolate for 1,900 years. It is doubtful if the term “latter years” here would apply to the new age with Christ on his throne.
- v. 13. If Christ is already in the land when Gog invades, then surely his rulership would be the issue, as in Psalm 2, rather than “spoil”. That there will be spoil in Israel before the Lord's return is beyond doubt (Isa. 2:5-11; Joel 3:5). Again, if the Lord is on his throne, why is it not he who questions Gog? It is unlikely that Tarshish would be a spokesman for Christ, particularly as several passages suggest she will be punished at the Lord's return. The reference to “lions”, beasts of prey, is likely to be a reference to warlike nations, but what use would the Lord have for mortal armies in the land?
- v. 14. Why the subtle emphasis in the phrase “will you not know it?”? What is God telling us here? How would Gog “know it” if Israel's security was because of Christ's rulership? Is this perhaps a hint at a Tarshish/UN-brokered peace deal, which is looking very likely at present?
- v. 17. This is most likely a pivotal verse. The aggressor brought against Israel has been foretold (see also 39:8). For what purpose is he brought against Israel? During his reign, it seems that Christ will judge rebellious nations in their *own* land, not Israel (Zech. 14:17). Is the invasion not firstly to judge a disobedient Israel? Hence there is much emphasis in chapter 39 on a chastised and corrected Israel (vv. 2,7,22,23,25,28). These verses make far more sense in this context than if Israel had already been dealt with prior to this invasion. We can then look to prophecies such as Deuteronomy 28:47-50, Isaiah 5:26-30 and Jer-

emiah 5:15 as the sources of these words. What other scriptures could this passage reasonably apply to?

- vv. 19,20. Is the reference to “jealousy” here related to Israel's infidelity? Note 36:5,6 and 39:25. The inference is that the earthquake of these verses has also been spoken of before. There is a reference to such in Isaiah 24:19-23 where Israel and “gathered” (v. 22) nations are judged together (*cf.* Ezek. 39:7). There is an obvious difficulty here if Israel have been judged and reconciled to the Lord prior to these events. This earthquake ruins the land of Israel. Would this include the same buildings that have just been rebuilt in 36:10, here previously ruined by the nations? The implication of “all men . . . shall shake” suggests that all, including the Jews, will suffer because of this earthquake.

There are clearly difficulties looking at Ezekiel 38–39 from either viewpoint, but why do we seem so eager to push these chapters into that period when the Lord is sitting on his throne with the immortal saints, when our Father has revealed it in significant detail for us now? Will not specific details about the Kingdom age be revealed when necessary? It is interesting that when Gog is mentioned in Revelation 20, concerning the time toward the end of the Millennium, the detail is minimal.

The importance of all this is surely tied up to our own readiness for Christ's return (Heb. 10:25) and our use of the knowledge of these sure events in our witness to this world. A time of trouble is coming such as has never been; has the world been warned?

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### Jesus Christ and A.D. 70

With reference to Brother Ebbs' comments (Jan. 2002, p. 21), we were very surprised to see him use the term ‘invisible presence’. We are used to seeing this term in Jehovah's Witnesses' publications, but not in Christadelphian writings. They try to use *parousia*, ‘coming’, attaching the idea of invisible to it, to prove that Jesus came invisibly in 1914 and is now ruling over the earth or towards the earth. For example: “Jesus told his

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<sup>\*</sup> Quotations are from the NKJV.