

ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

Family Theme:

What Does the Bible Say About Dinosaurs?

Study Text:

Genesis 1:20-25; Genesis 7:1-4;
Job 40:15-24, 41:1-34

Objectives:

KNOW: God created every creature, including the dinosaurs, according to its kind.

THINK: God created all creatures, both living and extinct, and is worthy of my worship.

DO: Worship the great God who created all creatures, including the great and powerful ones.

CHECKLIST:

- FTE 3-23 (teaching outline)
- FTE 3-24 (student outline)
- FTE 3-25 (talk sheet)
- FTE 3-26 (handout)
- FTE 3-27 (Home Connection)

CONNECT



FUSION Teaching Essential 3-23 ("Special Topics Unit Lesson 5: Teaching Outline") can be used as a guide for teaching this lesson.



FTE 3-23

Choose one of the options below to get this lesson started. Then use the transition statement, in your own words, to move into the Learn section.

Option 1: Ask your group to discuss the following questions:

- *In general, what are some of the mainstream beliefs about dinosaurs? (They lived millions of years ago before human beings evolved; they were all killed by a massive meteor strike; they evolved over time; they provide great material for good movies; etc.)*
- *How do these mainstream beliefs line up with Scripture? How should the Christian respond? (As we will investigate today, these beliefs do not appear to align with what the Bible describes. As*

believers, we should always respond with grace and compassion. But, it is important for us to also have an understanding of what the Scriptures actually say.)

Say: Today we will take a closer look at the Scriptures and see what they say about dinosaurs.

Option 2: Use the following questions to drive the conversation toward the lesson material:

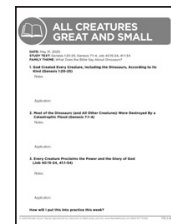
- *What is your favorite movie about dinosaurs?*
- *Why is this one your favorite?*
- *How does this movie fit with what the Bible says about where all creatures came from?*

Say: Today we will take a closer look at the Scriptures and see what they say about dinosaurs.

LEARN



Give everyone in your group a copy of *FUSION Teaching Essential 3-24* (“All Creatures Great and Small”) and something to write with. This outline gives the major points of the lesson and space for taking notes.



FTE 3-24

Teaching Tip

When possible, point your learners to more information about the topic you are studying. This might include books, articles, websites, etc.

The discussion of dinosaurs, especially within the context of historical Scripture, is part of an even larger debate. This debate involves the interpretation of Genesis, how we choose to process or interpret the various physical evidences that have been discovered and analyzed in the scientific fields, and the age of the earth.

God Created Every Creature, Including the Dinosaurs, According to Its Kind

(Genesis 1:20-25)

If the word used for “day” (*yōm*) in the creation account from Genesis 1-2 is intended to be interpreted as a literal 24-hour period, then the earth

is much younger than modern theories suggest. If the word used for “day” is not intended to be interpreted as a literal 24-hour period, but instead an extensive period of time, then the earth would be much older. How one interprets the age of the earth will likely determine his or her belief about dinosaurs being mentioned (or not) in the Scriptures. Our view is that the context of Genesis 1-2 points to literal 24-hour days. (See lesson 2 in this unit).

According to the older earth paradigm, dinosaurs would have gone extinct millions of years prior to human beings ever walking the earth. Therefore, many who believe in the older earth interpretation would naturally agree that Scripture does not mention dinosaurs specifically due to the belief that no one could have seen a living dinosaur. However, if the creation account is read as a literal historical account, with 24-hour periods for each day of creation, then the belief that dinosaurs walked the earth with human beings is a consistent belief. Though the Scriptures do not use the actual word “dinosaur,” as we will discover later, there are some words and descriptions that seem to refer to dinosaurs.

Regardless of the age of the earth debate, it is clear that the God of the universe intricately designed every creature according to its kind, including the dinosaurs. As Genesis walks us through the origin of all things, it is clear in Genesis 1:20-25 that God created categories and divisions and commanded every creature to be fruitful and multiply, according to its kind. There could be variation within the various “kinds,” but only the type of variation allowed by the genetic information given to that kind by God. One kind would never bring forth a different kind. This meant that unlimited evolution was not possible from the moment of creation.

In verses 20-21, the Bible explains that God created the sea creatures, great and small, and winged birds, all according to their kinds. He declared it good. In verses 24-25, the Bible describes that God created all of the land creatures, great and small, all according to their kinds, and once again, God declared it good. All of the land animals were created on day six, which was the same day that man was created. Again, old earth creationists (as well as evolutionists) propose that dinosaurs roamed the earth and died out millions of years before humanity. However, Genesis states that both land creatures, which would include the dinosaurs, and man, were created on the same day. Therefore, if Genesis 1-2 is read literally, mankind and dinosaur walked the earth at the same time.

D6 DOORPOST

Genesis 1-2 reveal that *God created the universe and everything in it.*

EXPLORE

Implications of a biblical worldview regarding dinosaurs:

1. God created all water dwelling creatures on day five and land animals on day six (Genesis 1:20-25).
2. God created everything by verbal command and pronounced it all very good (Genesis 1:31).
3. Death was the consequence of Adam's sin, not a mechanism of evolution (Romans 5:12).

APPLY



View the dinosaurs as part of God's design and creation, along with all other creatures. God's Word reveals that God created everything. No creature developed by accident or evolved into a greater creature over long periods of time. In the beginning when God created, He created everything exactly as He wanted it, every creature according to its kind. Adam was created fully mature and fully human. Eve was created fully mature and fully human. Creatures were created fully mature and fully according to their kind. Discussion:

- *What are some possible contributing factors to the belief of a majority of our culture that dinosaurs were "pre-historic," meaning they lived before people lived? (There are several. Most secular scientists operate and evaluate what they see from an evolutionary worldview, which would influence mainstream outlets like media, secular books, science-fiction, cinema, etc. The desire to eliminate a moral authority—God—naturally starts by trying to explain a world that doesn't require Him; that the universe started on its own, etc.)*
- *How does the Genesis account lead us to understand that all creatures, including the dinosaurs, walked the earth with human beings at creation? (The evidence for a literal reading of the Genesis creation account indicates that all the sea and land creatures, including dinosaurs, occupied the earth at the same time as human beings. Dinosaurs were created according to their own kinds, and did not evolve from other kinds of creatures.)*

Most of the Dinosaurs (and All Other Creatures) Were Destroyed By a Catastrophic Flood

(Genesis 7:1-4)

The question is raised: If the dinosaurs existed alongside human beings at some point in history, then what happened to them? Human beings still exist, but dinosaurs do not. Did something catastrophic take place? These are valid questions and rightly deserve a proper response.

Our culture's mainstream belief about the beginning and the end of dinosaurs is exclusively grounded in evolutionary theory. According to data that is presented as factual from the Natural History Museum, dinosaurs are believed to have appeared in history during the Triassic Period, 250-265 million years ago, long before human beings supposedly evolved. It is suggested that their history is recorded in the fossil layers on earth, with more deposits of fossils being added year after year for millions of years. This theory states that during the Triassic Period the world was a single giant land mass or "supercontinent" called Pangaea. However, toward the end of the Triassic Period and entering into the Jurassic Period, there were a series of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions that contributed to the Pangaea breaking apart, causing mass extinction among many large land animals. Despite the massive amounts of death among land animals, the theory states that some dinosaurs survived and enabled the species to evolve more and increase in number.

According to the theory, more and more varieties of dinosaurs evolved and eventually ruled the earth during the Jurassic Period. However, it was during the third and final "pre-historic" period, the Cretaceous Period, that the landmasses began to separate even more, looking more like the continents we understand them to be today. Sea levels supposedly rose and fell much more frequently during this period, creating large and small bodies of water that separated land masses. This supposedly resulted in more diverse evolution, allowing creatures like snakes to form, as well as the first flowering plants, etc. According to this theory, it was during the Cretaceous Period that the dinosaurs were completely wiped out. It is believed that the evidence suggests a massive asteroid was the reason for their extinction about 65 million years ago. It supposedly caused more volcanic eruptions that would force large-scale climate changes. All dinosaurs were killed, except for the birds that we have today. Their descendants were evolved from dinosaurs.

As elaborate as all of that sounds, it is simply unfounded and is entirely hypothetical, based on inconsistently interpreted data from the fossil layers. If there were no human beings existing during this time, with no

witnesses and no records to account for it, how can we declare with any level of certainty (supposedly hundreds of millions of years removed from these incidents) that the events transpired in these ways? There is, however, a completely reasonable explanation for the extinction of most dinosaurs, the extensive movement of the landmasses, major climate changes, and the many layers of fossil records. It was a catastrophic event as the evidence shows, that transpired rapidly as a result of the biblical Flood. Historic records and fossils align with a catastrophic flood such as the one described in Scripture. Creationists and evolutionists examine the same physical evidence, but come to drastically different interpretations and conclusions because of their worldviews.

Genesis 7:1-4 clearly states that God instructed Noah (a real person who existed alongside real dinosaurs) to load the ark with pairs of land creatures, and that He would send a deluge that would wipe out every other living creature from the face of the earth. All creatures that were not on the ark were destroyed. We have discovered scientifically that it does not take millions of years for fossilization to occur. It simply requires the right conditions. The necessary pressures, along with the burial of millions of plants, marine life, animals, and even people, are easily explained by a worldwide deluge exactly like the one described in the book of Genesis. This wasn't a simple thunderstorm; it was a cataclysmic flood that has never been matched. The Flood that is described in Genesis would result in volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, continental shifts, and the elimination of most creatures. Though most were destroyed during the flood, God commanded Noah to take pairs of each "kind" of land animals on the ark. It is more probable that the remaining dinosaurs eventually died out completely due to a combination of dramatic climate and environmental shifts of the post-Flood world, and that they were persistently hunted by human beings to the point of total extinction.

EXPLORE

See websites such as icr.org, answersingenesis.org, creation.com, and creationmoments.com for more information on biblical explanations for the Creation we see around us. Recommend these sites to your learners. These and other sites are listed on *FUSION Teaching Essential 3-26* (See Respond Option 1).



Realize that the biblical account of the flood fits the evidence we see in the fossil record. It is quite remarkable how much the biblical flood accounts for the evidence that science points to today. It is a reasonable explanation. It is recorded in ancient documents (not just the Bible) by ancient civilizations. Once again, Scripture provides an accurate picture of history. Ask some of these questions to further the discussion:

- *Do science and the Bible conflict?* (Though the assumption is often a “yes,” they actually compliment one another. Only some scientific *theory* conflicts with the Bible. Science is simply how we can discover and observe what the Creator has set in place, and how the laws of nature that He establish work to maintain all that He has made. If done honestly and objectively, science will always point back to an intelligent Designer.)
- *Why is a worldwide cataclysmic flood a good explanation for the fossil record and the extinction of most dinosaurs?* (The conditions necessary for what we see in the fossil record would have been present in such a cataclysmic event. Almost all land-dwelling dinosaurs would have been wiped out by such an event; only those in the ark could have survived.)

Every Creature Proclaims the Power and the Glory of God

(Job 40:15-24, 41:1-34)

The word “dinosaur” is not found in Scripture, nor will it be found in any other form of ancient documentation. The word wasn’t coined until the mid-1800s. In the early 1800s, Dr. Gideon Mantell discovered some unusual bones and teeth in a rock quarry. He realized that what he found was quite unique and believed he had discovered an entirely new group of reptiles. By 1941 several different types of reptiles had been unearthed, and scientist Dr. Richard Owen coined the term “*dinosauria*,” which meant “terrible lizard.” (See bit.ly/AiG-dinosaurs.)

Even though the term is not used in the Bible, there are some references to creatures that seem to be descriptors of dinosaurs. After Job had experienced great suffering and loss, his friends came to visit him. After initially bringing comfort by simply sitting quietly with him, Job’s friends

soon accused him of sin, believing God would not allow such suffering for someone not guilty of sin. Much of the book is the various conversations between Job and his friends, although some portions are of Job expressing his anger and brokenness to God. Near the end of the book, the Lord spoke directly to Job through a storm. The Creator and Sustainer of all things offered a humbling reminder to Job of who was God and who was not. He used the examples of powerful creatures to teach Job humility. In Job 40:15, God referred to the behemoth as the mightiest of all creatures. God had created this creature just as He had created Job. God described this creature as having a tail like a cedar tree (verse 17)! Though some suggest that God is referencing a hippo or an elephant, neither of those animals has a tail like a cedar tree. Yet, there were dinosaurs that definitely had massive tails that could be described like a thick tree. As God was teaching Job a lesson on how powerful He was as the Creator, He used the examples of the behemoth (Job 40) and the leviathan (Job 41), both great and powerful creatures, to describe how mighty He is. While scholars are divided on exactly what creatures are described in these passages, the descriptions could very well describe dinosaurs that would have been known by the people of that day.

EXPLORE

Ever wonder why so many ancient civilizations have records or stories of dragons and mighty creatures? See this video from The Institute of Creation Research: bit.ly/ICR-dragons

APPLY



Worship the great God who created all creatures, including the great and powerful ones. God used great and powerful creatures to teach Job a lesson about his human limitations and God's power and glory. As God's image bearers, we must recognize the glory of God revealed in all creatures, big and small, and exalt His name. Ask the following questions to open up the conversation:

- *What can we learn about God from considering all the creatures He created?* (He is very creative; He is intricate in detail; He is full of intelligence; He is full of beauty; He is full of might and power;

He sees all and sustains all. He knows more than our finite minds can ever comprehend; etc.)

- *How do these characteristics motivate us to worship our great Creator? (They demonstrate His greatness and worthiness to be worshiped.)*

Use *FUSION Teaching Essential 3-25* (“Let’s Talk About What the Bible Says About Dinosaurs”) as a discussion starter in or out of class. It can also be copied and given to parents to use as a discussion starter at home.



FTE 3-25

RESPOND



Use one or more of the following options to help your group members put to work the principles they have learned in this lesson.



FTE 3-26

Option 1: Use *FUSION Teaching Essential 3-26* (“Defend the Faith”) to help your group members prepare to defend their faith when it comes to questions about Creation versus Evolution, or other issues. Have them complete the handout and then encourage them to take time in the coming days and weeks to use the resources listed on the handout to help them prepare to defend their faith.

Option 2: Have a closing discussion about the following questions:

- *How does one’s worldview influence beliefs and scientific interpretations? (A naturalistic worldview looks for natural explanations for everything. Everything supernatural is ruled out. A biblical worldview places the highest authority and reliability on the Word of God, which makes specific statements about the Creation and the Flood as being literal, historic events brought about by the design of God.)*
- *How should the Christian read and process scientific explanations for the origin of things? (We should always read it and interpret it through the lens of Scripture. Do not be scared of science because it actually points to the creativity and power of the Creator. So, we should embrace science as long as we process it appropriately, allowing it to bring glory to the God who created all things.)*

Websites such as icr.org, answersingenesis.org, creation.com, and creationmoments.com can help us see how the scientific evidence fits what we find in the Bible.)

- *What are some of your favorite things in creation that remind you of the power and glory of God? (The ocean, the lion or the elephant, the birth of my children, the Grand Canyon, etc.)*

Encourage your group members to worship God this week as the Creator of all things.

Encourage parents in your group to use **Home Connection** (FTE 3-27) this week.



FTE 3-27

Option 3: Ask and discuss the following:

- *How does Noah's flood provide explanations for what we see in the fossil records?*
- *How does Noah's flood provide explanations for what happened to most of the dinosaurs?*
- *With whom could I respectfully share some of these explanations this week?*

Encourage your group members to read the creation account in Genesis 1-2, the flood account in Genesis 6-9, and Job 40-41 this week and to worship God as the Creator of all things. Challenge them to spend time reflecting on the truthfulness we can discover in these passages, and how we can be confident in the veracity of Scripture.

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in *FUSION* or *FUSION*Next devotional study guide this week to help them apply and respond to this lesson. Encourage parents to go to d6home.com for free resources to help them disciple their children, and to talk with their children this week about the devotions they all are working through in their devotional study guides.

Resources for Defending the Faith

In addition to your pastor and other knowledgeable church leaders, the following websites can be used as resources to gain knowledge in how to respond to questions or objections about our faith.

reasonablefaith.org

carm.org

probe.org

seanmcdowell.org

icr.org

answersingenesis.org

creation.com

creationmoments.com

ratiochristi.org

truelife.org

comereason.org

oneminuteapologist.com

crossexamined.org

While Randall House may not agree with every view presented on these sites, they are useful resources for defending our faith.

D6 | **DOORPOSTS**

key principles that frame a biblical worldview

Deuteronomy 6:5-9

The Bible is God's Word.

God is a personal, spiritual being.

God created the universe and everything in it.

I am a special creation of God, with an eternal soul.

I am engaged in a spiritual warfare.

Sin brought death and destruction into the world.

Bad things happen because the world is a sinful place.

I cannot save myself; I need a Savior.

God offers salvation and forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ.

The home is the first institution God established to make disciples and transfer the faith.

The church is the second institution God established to make disciples and transfer the faith.

Jesus Christ is the Sovereign Lord of all.