



Issues, Etc.TM

Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio

TRANSCRIPT

Rev. Todd Wilken, Host

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"Creation, Part 7: Dinosaurs, Creation and the Flood"

Guest:

Dr. Joel Heck

Professor of Theology, Concordia University Texas

Author: *In the Beginning, God*

Conference Speaker at "The Heavens Declare: What Astronomy Can Tell Us About Biblical Creation," July 8-10, 2013, Concordia University Wisconsin

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WILKEN: They are the source of fascination for little children and for grown children alike. They are kind of mysterious. I don't know how many times in the course of a week they appear all over the Facebook. And apparently there's a new 3D edition of *Jurassic Park* out, this fantasy about dinosaurs come to life here in the 21st century. Now, how much of what is presented to us by pop culture and by pop

science and by the evolutionary model regarding the dinosaurs, if that's an apt name for these creatures... how much of it is actually true? The big stories are that it's millions, hundreds of millions of years, the giants roaming the earth, and then an asteroid. End of the story for the dinosaurs; we go on with the rest of evolutionary history. Is that simple scenario true as well?

Joining us to conclude a 7-part series we've been doing with him on creation, today, the dinosaurs, creation, and the Flood: Dr. Joel Heck. He's Professor of Theology at Concordia University Texas. He's author of the book *In the Beginning, God*, and he'll be one of the speakers at a conference July 8-10 at Concordia University Wisconsin, titled "The Heavens Declare: What Astronomy Can Tell Us About Biblical Creation."

Dr. Heck, welcome back.

HECK: Thank you for the welcome. It's good to be with you once more.

WILKEN: What is the biggest myth that is propagated, in particular, in service of evolution and that teaching about the dinosaurs?

HECK: I would say that the biggest myth is the idea that dinosaurs became extinct from 65-70 million years ago, that there are no dinosaurs today, and that any dinosaurs that existed have long since passed from existence and are no more.

WILKEN: So in substitute for that myth, what's the truth on those points you just mentioned?

HECK: Well, I would say that the truth is that dinosaurs were made by God. In Genesis 1, we hear about all the different creatures, land and air and sea creatures that God made, and He included dinosaurs in them. That dinosaurs existed in the pre-Flood world, and that Noah took two of every kind of animal – probably not every species, but every *kind* of animal – onto the ark. And most people don't know this, but the average size of a dinosaur is about the size of a sheep. Most people think of the stegosaurus, the brontosaurus, the triceratops, and especially the T-Rex, and they think massive dinosaurs, and they think, "Well, yeah, if Noah had to take dinosaurs on the ark, how is he going to manage with those massive dinosaurs that

are meat-eating and the like?" And yet those are full-grown creatures, the ones that are pictured in the movies like *Jurassic Park* or written about in books. Juvenile dinosaurs would be much smaller, and certainly Noah would have wanted to take younger dinosaurs on board the ark so that they could reproduce at the end of the Flood. So the average size of a dinosaur: about the size of a sheep.

WILKEN: Okay, what about the name that we use. We're stuck with it, but is it itself misleading: dinosaur?

HECK: Yes, the word is a little bit misleading. The word "dinosaur" literally means "terrible lizard." In fact, I would invite anybody to looking up in Merriam-Webster's dictionary or some other dictionary. It simply means "terrible lizard." So it's a term that was coined back in the 19th century. As far as we know it was first used in 1841, invented by Sir Richard Owen, and has been used ever since, of course. But it's simply a word for a reptile. And another thing that most people don't know about reptiles is that they're the only animal that grows throughout its entire lifetime. So if a reptile lives an exceedingly long time, it can become very, very large, and probably in the pre-Flood and the post-Flood world, those dinosaurs, those lizards lived for an awfully long time and became very, very large and were referred to in some parts of literature as, believe it or not, as dragons.

WILKEN: So how do these subjects go together – the dinosaurs and the Flood? You mentioned that if we take the biblical account at face value and dinosaurs exist in the pre-Flood world, Noah is going to take some kind of them – not every variety – but some kind of them with him, as instructed by God. What about the rest of them?

HECK: Well, he would have taken a representative sample from every one of the Biblical kind. The word *min* is the word, it seems to be somewhere in between and

species, and all the other dinosaurs that would have descended from them at the end of the Flood. But then all of the representative types of dinosaurs would have been on the ark, and then rather than having to resort to one of the 16 different theories for the extinction of the dinosaurs – and you mentioned one of them in your introduction, which is certainly one of them: an asteroid that would have affected the atmosphere and somehow spread throughout the entire world, resulting in their extinction. The dinosaurs probably went extinct for two major reasons following the flood. One was the major changes in climate that happened when an ice age began, and also other climate changes besides that; massive amounts of rainfall following the Flood also. And then the other thing was being hunted down by human beings, sometimes for food, sometimes for safety purposes. But the little wrinkle in that is the stories that, if you look, if you look on sites, creation.com is one of the places where they have more than 8500 articles. Type in a word like “dinosaur” or “dragon” or “terrible lizard” and read some of the articles that they have there. I know of one individual who has interviewed over 100 people who claim to have seen a dinosaur. And I’m guessing that some of our listening audience may think that this is kind of like Roswell, New Mexico and UFOs and “Sure, people saw dinosaurs. Give me a break.” But there are lots of pieces of evidence – and I can run through several of them in the rest of our interview today – pieces of evidence, some in buildings that have been constructed, some in photographs, some engravings, some in literature, even something like the Chinese zodiac, which has 12 animals in the zodiac: a dragon and 11 real animals. One could easily ask, “Why would the Chinese choose one mythical animal to go in their zodiac along with 11 real ones?” Doesn’t it make more sense to suggest that the Chinese had 12 animals that actually did exist, and the so-called

dragon was actually some form of a dinosaur?

WILKEN: Even laying those aside, would you say that there are dinosaurs under our noses that we may be missing in today’s creatures?

HECK: Maybe not under our noses, but in certain parts of the world, especially under water, in deep sections of the oceans. One possibility is the Loch Ness monster in Scotland. Some think that it may have been a plesiosaurus. And Loch Ness has a depth of 812 feet, and a surface of 21.8 miles. It’s 25 miles long. So there’s a massive amount of water there in the Highlands of Scotland, and it’s big enough for a significant water-dwelling dinosaur to live. Now, if that’s not the case, that wouldn’t really bother me. But there are lots of other pieces of information. Probably the most intriguing one is this 55,000 square-mile swamp in the area of the Congo in Central Africa, most of which has never really been explored. In fact, there was an article that appeared in the *New York Herald* in 1910 by a guy by the name of Roy Mackle. And the article is entitled, “Is a Brontosaurus Roaming Africa’s Wilds?” And then 38 years later, the *Saturday Evening Post* ran an article on January 3, 1948 entitled, “There Could Be Dinosaurs.” And these periodicals are talking about the potential for there being some dinosaurs that roam the wilds of that 55,000-acre piece of land in the middle of the Congo. And apparently there are some of the people that live there locally who have seen these creatures and are able to describe them to people that come in from the outside but are really scared of this massive beast. So it’d be fascinating to be able to go on a safari of that sort, but I think I’ll let somebody else do that instead of me going on that. That’s a little bit beyond my area of interest. But it’d be fascinating to hear about that and see something that people could bring back.

WILKEN: Is it possible that some of the descriptions, in particular, the Old Testament descriptions, the poetic ones – I’m thinking about the latter chapters of Job – might be describing not just an exaggeration of, say, a big fish or a crocodile, but actual remnants of dinosaur species?

HECK: Yes, I certainly think it is – in particular, in the 40th chapter of Job. Job says, “Look at the behemoth.” That’s in Job 40:15. God says, “Look at the behemoth, which I made along with you, which feeds on grass like an ox.” And He seems to be describing the largest of creatures so as to impress Job. And He goes on to say, “What strength he has in his loins, what power in the muscles of his belly,” and then in verse 17, even though the first couple of verses I just read may be described as an elephant, it sounds a little bit like an elephant, He goes on in verse 17 and says, “his tail sways like a cedar.” So the elephant’s tail might be compared to a lot of things, like a rope or something small and flimsy, but to compare an elephant’s tail to a cedar tree is, I think, making a huge mistake. There’s something a whole lot larger than an elephant that’s envisioned there in Job 40.

WILKEN: Dr. Joel Heck is our guest. We’ll be right back to talk more about dinosaurs, creation, and the Flood, concluding our 7-part series on creation.

[BREAK]

WILKEN: Welcome back to *Issues, Etc.* I’m Todd Wilken.

Ten minutes left for your questions or comments about dinosaurs, creation, and the Flood. Dr. Joel Heck is our guest, Professor of Theology at Concordia University Texas and author of the book *In the Beginning, God*.

Dr. Heck, let’s talk a little bit about Hell Creek, Montana and a very recent –

relatively speaking – archaeological discovery there. What is it?

HECK: Yes, this is a discovery by Dr. Mary Schweitzer of Montana State University. Apparently this happened sometime in the early 90s, because as far as I’m able to track it, an article about this discovery appeared in *Science Magazine* in 1993. And she cracked open some bones of a Tyrannosaurus Rex and put the contents under a microscope and discovered red blood cells. She also discovered soft tissue, fibrous tissue, blood vessels that could stretch and go back to their original shape, and the odd thing about it is that she says, “If you take a blood sample today and you stick it on a shelf, you have nothing recognizable in about a week. So why would there be anything left in dinosaurs?” End of quote. So in other words, what she’s saying, and she herself, though a Christian, is an evolutionist, and she buys into the long ages of the world, of the earth, and of the universe. She thinks that the earth is billions of years old; yet she looks at this evidence that shouldn’t be there if dinosaurs had been extinct for at least 65 million years. Really strange to have this kind of a discovery there, and yet she has found it. She’s been attacked by evolutionists for coming up with this data, and yet she is an objective scientist. She’s describing what she actually found there. In fact, she’s been very, very careful in her experimentation. One of the experiments that she did, she did 17 times before she would come to the conclusion that she did. And so we end up with a story here that illustrates the unwillingness on the part of many in the evolutionary community to believe the evidence of their eyes. This has to be the logical conclusion that one should arrive at, that dinosaurs didn’t go extinct tens of millions of years ago, but they are a relatively recent phenomenon, and the whole scenario of the earth being hundreds of millions, if not billions, of years old, is wrong. But it seems as though the direction

the evolutionary community is going, because they have closed minds towards this kind of evidence, is to say, “Well, there must be a way for blood cells to be preserved over tens of millions of years.” So they’re trying to figure out a way in which that can happen. And it’s just not the most logical direction to go based on the evidence that Dr. Mary Schweitzer has discovered.

WILKEN: So at the very least, a discovery like that is left unexplained by the assertion that at some point, tens of millions of years ago – if not hundreds – the dinosaurs went completely extinct.

HECK: Yes, it does run counter to the evidence. This Hell Creek, Montana discovery totally contradicts the scenario that dinosaurs went extinct 65 million years ago. She did some studies of how long you can keep things together. The molecules of the material that she put under a microscope – she says the most optimistic predictions had collagen, and she did discover the protein collagen not surviving even 3 million years at freezing point, and surviving less than 200,000 years at only 10 degrees Centigrade, and less than 15,000 years at 20 degrees Centigrade. So obviously the higher the temperature, the more quickly something is going to deteriorate. So she did those experiments, and the evidence is that it just doesn’t fit with the great age of the earth, or the age at which the dinosaurs are alleged to have gone extinct. So the most natural explanation is that the dinosaurs went extinct much more recently – hundreds or thousands of years ago – or, as I suggested in the first half of our program, that there are some dinosaurs that are even alive today in different parts or remote parts of the world. Maybe not Tyrannosaurus Rexes – those end up growing to be big enough that we would see them; sooner or later we’d be able to discover them in the various land masses, even the remote ones of our globe

– but some of the other dinosaurs are probably still around in parts of our world.

WILKEN: Somebody is going to say, “Look, we’ve explored the planet pretty thoroughly. If they were there, we would have found them by now.” Is there a certain kind of hubris in that statement? I mean, I think there have been several points in history where science has declared that we’ve found everything we’re going to find. What are your thoughts there?

HECK: Yes, a closed mind, a certain amount of hubris, or pride, that people have. They’ve got their commitment to Darwinian evolution and in some cases, not in all cases; maybe not even in most cases, but in some cases, it’s necessary to maintain what Philip Johnson calls the myth of the 20th and 21st century, Darwinian Evolution, in order for them to be able to hold on to their atheism or agnosticism. So they will defend the story of Darwinism, no matter what the evidence is that faces them, because they have – and they may not even realize this, but deep down inside they have to know that things aren’t right between them and God. And so ultimately, it becomes a spiritual issue for many evolutionists: “If I admit that the earth is young, I’m probably going to have to admit that there is a God. And if there’s a God, then I’m gonna have to recognize the fact that my relationship with Him is not what it ought to be. I’m participating in certain kinds of behavior that are wrong and I have to admit that. I have to repent of that, I have to somehow deal with the problem of my sin.” That’s, for some – and I don’t know what percentage, if it’s 2% or 80% of evolutionists – but for some, that’s part of the road block that gets in the way of them actually looking at the data objectively and allowing the data to lead them in the direction that it naturally goes.

WILKEN: Is part of the issue here not only that, but the fact that human discovery of dinosaurs in an organized way, an

archaeologically organized way, is really a very, very recent scientific lineage, and to draw rock solid conclusions about their total extinction or the nature of that extinction may be premature?

HECK: Yes, I think so. You do wonder about some of the kinds of reporting that occurs, and certainly some people are – there have been hoaxes that have been perpetrated on the American public, the European public. There’s a recent hoax that some Chinese alleged to have found Noah’s ark, and then a closer look at the wood showed that there was evidence of a power saw used to cut the wood into the shape that it was to create the beams for the ark. And so they realized that this was a hoax. There have been lots of hoaxes on the evolutionary side, the tilt-down man and the Java man, for instance, that were supposed to be transitional forms between ape and humans, and turned out to be reconstructed skeletons based upon a Java pig, or the tooth of an orangutan or something. So there have been hoaxes on both sides of it, and Christians do need to be careful and look at the evidence objectively. We don’t want to be taken in by something, but we want to look at the data carefully and seriously, and this discovery at Hell Creek, Montana is one of the more remarkable ones that ought to lead an objective person to look at it and conclude that dinosaurs have existed in the relatively recent past.

WILKEN: Dr. Joel Heck is Professor of Theology at Concordia University Texas, and he’s author of the book *In the Beginning, God*. He’s going to be one of the speakers at a conference July 8-10 at Concordia University Wisconsin, titled “The

Heavens Declare: What Astronomy Can Tell Us About Biblical Creation.” With about 20 seconds here, just give us a brief preview of that conference, if you would.

HECK: Yes. Dr. Danny Faulkner from *Answers in Genesis* and Dr. Donald DeYoung both know a good deal about astronomy. And because astronomy and the vast distances of the universe and outer space are one of the major concerns that creationists have, to be able to explain those vast distances and the billions of light-years is a difficulty for many Christians. And so we’re going to tackle that issue head-on at Concordia University Wisconsin this July 8-10, and those two individuals are going to be our keynote speakers, addressing those. And they’ll be available for questions and answers, there will be a panel discussion at the end, and there will be some one-on-one time if people want to approach the speakers and ask their own personal, specific questions relative to astronomy in particular and its impact on the creation-evolution debate.

WILKEN: Dr. Heck, thank you very much for this series.

HECK: Once again, it’s my pleasure.

WILKEN: I’m Todd Wilken. Thanks for listening to *Issues, Etc.*

