

interpreting the fossil record?

My quest for scientific knowledge of creation continued. New theories abound as to why the dinosaurs vanished 63 million years ago -- the latest is that a giant meteorite from outer space struck the Earth. The resulting dust and debris either choked the dinosaurs to death or caused climatic changes that the dinosaurs could not tolerate. Following the extinction of the dinosaurs, the mammals diversified, multiplied, and filled the Earth.

And what of animal life in the sea? A few traces of organisms have been found prior to the Cambrian explosion of marine life, but the Cambrian period in historical geology is still the basic beginning of the fossil record. The curtain in the drama of animal life rises abruptly 570 million years ago. The waters of the Earth quite suddenly teemed with swarms of living creatures.

I went back farther in geologic time, to a time before the ozone screen transformed sunlight from a lethal killer to a source of beneficial energy, back to the beginning of the first vegetative life. What exactly was the primordial soup? How did the first life

come into being? Did it happen by random chance? Or was there some presently unknown selective, directive, or creative force involved? Do scientists feel Darwin's theory of evolution is still valid? Or does it need a major modification to make it fit the latest evidence?

I searched farther into the remote past. When did the first continents rise above the surface of the sea? Was the Earth once completely covered with water? I found that it had been, and that there had been a time before that when there was no water on the Earth at all. And a time before that when there had been no atmosphere. The Earth used to look like the moon -- a naked body of cratered rock without air or water.

And where did the planet Earth come from? What about the stars, the galaxies, the Universe? Have they always existed, as some scientists convincingly argued thirty years ago? Or was there truly a beginning? Where did energy, matter, space, and time come from? Did the Universe truly begin with light?

This book will attempt to answer these questions in the light of current scientific

A NOTE TO THE READER ON TIME

Some readers may have trouble with the concept of time used in this book. I have chosen to use the time frame accepted by modern science throughout this presentation. For those readers who may have difficulty

with this choice, I suggest reading Chapter 12, entitled "Ages and Days," and Chapter 14 "His Way, His Time," before proceeding with the historical presentation.