

In the Beginning

The Truth Behind Genesis

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by
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Prologue

The Bible is first foremost a spiritual book. Its intent is to define the purpose and relationship between God and humanity. In doing so, it defines our relationship to all of creation, including each other. Explaining the origins of the universe is not the intent of the Bible, but it does give us a brief overview from a spiritual vantage point. Therefore, the Genesis creation narrative may not be as clear-cut as it appears. This will become apparent when we look at the story of Adam and Eve.

“The Old Testament scribes were not concerned with factual information about bygone events, but with their religious significance. In Scripture God’s pleasure or displeasure with something is the focal point, not historical meticulousness. Victory or defeat in war, peace or social unrest, abundance of harvest or famine, only serves to demonstrate the virtue or sinfulness of the nation [Israel] and to forecast its future destiny.”¹

One of the main features of the Bible is its declaration that it is the Word of Truth. If this is the case, time should reveal the validity of the claims in scripture. Science and Religion have been at odds for centuries, but in my opinion, this should not be the case. If the Bible is stating fundamental truths, then science should be able to corroborate at least some of its claims.

Science - knowledge or a system of knowledge covering general truths or the operation of general

laws especially as obtained and tested through scientific method.²

What does this really mean? Science refers to a system of acquiring knowledge. This system explains natural phenomena based on observation and experimentation. As science exposes to us the how's and why's of things that are recorded in the Bible, the mystical should give way to the practical and we should begin to see the Truths of God, more clearly.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Genesis 1:2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Unfortunately, science cannot confirm everything in the Bible. Genesis chapter one, verse one states, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This first statement in the Bible tells us two things immediately. First, God created our universe. Second, it does not explain His origins. It is not the intent of Genesis or the Bible to explain the Creator. We do however derive from the very first sentence God is outside of time. Since, our concept of time begins with the creation of the universe. Without matter, we cannot measure time.

Since the Bible contends, God created all matter. He is outside of time. Science will never prove the existence of God. Why is this, the case? In order for science to prove God exists. He must first, be observable. Then we need to test, what we observed.

St. John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

*Exodus 33:20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for **there shall no man see me, and live.***

The book of St. John declares no one has ever been able to observe God. The book of Exodus takes it one step further and states, “No one can see God and live.” This does not mean if we could see Him, that our heads would explode. I believe the writer is expressing that our current human form is not compatible with God’s composition. It also seems to imply after this life, we will be able to see Him. However, after death, we might obtain full knowledge of God and yet He could remain invisible to us. We may find the Lord to be comprehensible, but eternally imperceptible.

1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

I know Paul said we would see Him, face to face. However, the Bible uses the same language concerning Moses. The book of Exodus states, “The Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.” This of course was poetic language, meant to convey the relationship not the physical encounter between them. Moses never saw God’s face.

We cannot see God. This does not indicate He is not real. Oxygen under normal circumstances is invisible, but it is certainly real. In modern times, we have found ways to test for the presence of it. Even though today we understand the properties of air, we still cannot see it. It may be the same with God.

The Bible proclaims in the beginning God made the heavens and the earth. The writer is stating creation is not an accident or happenstance. He declares it was the intent of the Lord to create the world. This statement seems to be in direct opposition to science.

Stephen Hawking in his book the *Grand Design* states, “It is reasonable to ask who or what created the universe, but if the answer is God, then the question has merely been deflected to that of who created God.”³ This assertion is not entirely true. For instance, if you see your friend with a beautifully carved chair and you ask, “Who made it?” If he responds, Robert made it. Just because you do not know who I am, does not mean I did not make the chair? Does it mean your friend deviated from the question? The answer is no, of course not.

The real problem science has with God being the creator of the universe is the fact that it cannot define God. Therefore, the Genesis’s claim of God creating the heavens and earth may be valid, but it is frustrating from a scientific standpoint.

So how do we know God created the universe? The quick answer is because the Bible says He did. The underlying assumption is the Bible is the unerring Word of God. Faith then is the criteria and justification for everything the scriptures express. “Faith is not blind trust. Unfounded belief is foolishness. Faith is rooted and grounded in the truth of God’s Word, not man, not Church doctrine or theology.”⁴ So, if biblical faith is not blind, what is it?

*Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is **the substance** of things hoped for, **the evidence** of things not seen.*

Hebrews states faith is both substance and evidence. Substance means material. It is normally something tangible or concrete. Faith is also evidence. Evidence is the proof, sign, or substantiation of something. Based on Hebrews faith is the following:

- The tangible material of things hoped for
- The proof of things not seen

The proof and tangible material referred to here is not scientific proof, but rather the type of proof used in a court of law. Courts use the law of evidence, as proof. The most common form of evidence used in courtrooms throughout history, are the testimonies of witnesses. We cannot use the rules and standards of courts today when viewing scriptures. We must use the standards of their day in order to see what constitutes proof. Fortunately, we do not have to research history to obtain the norm. The Bible gives us the gauge.

*Deuteronomy 19:15 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: **at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.***

So, in order for our faith to be based in truth and not merely having blind faith, we must have two or three witnesses. When we talk about faith, understand it is not static, but a growing, steady process within a person. First, we will look at the evidence of faith and then the substance of it.

The evidence of faith is the Word of God. How can scripture serve as a witness? The sixty-six books of the Bible represent various authors' testimonies of God stretching across two different ages. Therefore, in order to

establish biblical evidence we need agreement from two or three different sources. I personally think the best criteria would be to find two or three scriptures written by different authors. The harmony or agreement of the witnesses is the foundation for faith.

In a court of law after hearing all of the evidence, either the judge or the jury must make a ruling. All rulings from courts are subjective, because they are the judgments of someone. Likewise, when viewing the Word, the person reviewing the scriptures must make a judgment. Consequently, faith is subjective proof.

This brings us to our next component of proof, the substance of faith. Tangible faith is an oxymoron. In what way is faith tangible? First, based on the evidence of faith (the scriptures), a person must make a judgment as to what they believe. Then, if you believe the Word is true, you must follow with some sort of action. Otherwise, as the apostle James says, “Faith without works is dead [useless].”⁵

“True faith has three components, belief, words and actions.”⁶ Faith works by what we think, say and do. Prayer must also have these elements in order to be effective. Belief springs from the Word of God, also known as our evidence. Our words are not just our prayers, but also our inner dialogue. They must be in agreement with our beliefs, in order to achieve any results. Likewise, our actions must agree with our words or our faith will be void. When all three agree, there will be an answer to our prayer. That is not my opinion. It is what the Bible declares.

The question still remains, how can faith serve as proof? Answered prayer is the substance or tangible evidence of

our faith. Again, this proof is not objective, but subjective. In order to get an answer we must first believe. In order to believe, we must make a judgment about the Word of God. Consequently, if you judge the scriptures false, then you will not believe. If you do not believe, then you will not pray and if you do not pray, then you will never have tangible proof of God. This is why the Bible says, if we seek God with all our heart and soul [mind] we will find Him.”⁷

Back to original question, how do we know God created the universe? We know because of the witnesses of scripture and the substance of our answered prayers. In other words, we have confirmed it through our faith. We are confident because of our faith. We believe the whole Word of God, is true. This type of confidence in the Word builds progressively.

Psalms 119:160 declares, “God’s Word is true from the beginning and endures forever.” From a biblical standpoint the witness of scriptures and the proof of answered prayers validates the Bible is true, in its entirety. Therefore, faith is not the ignorant beliefs of foolish people. Faith consists of biblical proof and deductive reasoning. True faith requires logic, not blind acceptance.

1. The Word of God is true (major premise)
2. Answered prayer is proof of its correctness (minor premise)
3. Therefore, answered prayer proves the Word is true, progressively (conclusion)

The first premise is absolute truth. The second premise is subjective proof, but it substantiates the first. So, the test of the major premise depends solely on the minor. Meaning the personal subjective proof (small scale), gives us

confidence in the correctness of the absolute truth of God's Word (large scale). This is the model of faith.

The truth is the truth, whether we believe it or not. Faith does not alter facts. However, believing does affect what we perceive to be true. This does not mean it is all in our heads. Quantum Theory (Physics) states, "The act of watching directly affects the observed reality. In fact, experiments have shown, the greater the amount of watching, the more the observer influences what actually takes place."⁸ This is exactly how an individual's belief or faith affects their prayers. To boil it down, our perception (belief) becomes our reality (subjective truth).

Science for the most part discounts the Bible. Consequently, their theories eliminate the stipulation for a God. The book, *The Great Design* makes the conclusion, "Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing. Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist. It is not necessary to invoke god to light the blue touch paper and set the universe going."⁹

I am neither a scientist nor a theologian, so I will try to tread lightly here. Nevertheless, spontaneous creation fails to explain why the laws like gravity would be in place prior to creation.

Gravity - a fundamental physical force that is responsible for interactions which occur because of mass between particles, between aggregations of matter (as stars and planets), and between particles (as photons) and aggregations of matter, that is 10^{-39} times the strength of the strong force, and that extends over infinite distances but is dominant over

macroscopic distances especially between aggregations of matter.

In others words, gravity causes objects to move towards each other. However, if there were no objects (matter), why would the law of gravity exist? The Bible states, something from nothing is how God made the earth. Science has come to the same conclusion.

Hebrews 11:3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Paul states the invisible made the visible. The apostle reveals God is the invisible instigator of the cosmos. Science describes it as spontaneous creation. Paul proclaims faith gives us this understanding. This tells us why science comes to one conclusion and religion another. The observers are affecting their own outcomes.

Whether you believe God created the universe or it formed spontaneously. Both views claim something emerged from nothing. I believe in this instance we could paraphrase Shakespeare and call it, "A rose by any other name."

If through faith we believe God exists, then we can confidently go forward and study how He created the universe. We should never study the Bible in a vacuum, but in light of life itself. Therefore, since creation is a natural phenomenon, we should look at it in conjunction with science not apart from it. Einstein had this to say about it, "Science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind." I would have to concur with him on this point. Therefore, this book will attempt to look at

the Bible with the eyes of faith and compare it to what science has discovered.

In Genesis 1:2, at the start of creation there was only darkness. Connected to this declaration is a curious occurrence, the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. The waters referred to here are not oceans or seas, but space. In ancient times and even today, space is likened to water. Notice, in verses six through eight the sky (expanse) separated the water under and over it. There is no actual water over the sky, only space, which is deep, dark and mysterious like the seas. The question before us is, why is the Spirit hovering over space or darkness?

In order to understand this image we must look at the tabernacle or temple of God. The tabernacle is composed of three parts, the Outer Court, the Inner Court and the Holiest of Holies. The Outer Court receives light from the sun. The Inner Court receives light from the candlesticks or lampstands. The Holiest of Holies never receives light, natural or manufactured. This is the dwelling place of the Spirit and it is always dark.

So, what is the meaning of the Spirit hovering over the darkness of space? The Spirit of God hovers over the mercy seat in the tabernacle and rules Israel. God is symbolically declaring before there was anything, I existed and was sovereign.

Why does the Lord need to make this statement? Remember, the book of Genesis originated after Israel's exodus from Egypt. God needs to undo four hundred years of polytheism. Therefore, He declares, I am God and there is no other.¹⁰ This is the first statement of Genesis and from there He begins creation.

Before we delve into the days of creation, it is important to note God hides spiritual truths throughout His Word. Consequently, we must always pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal the meaning of scriptures, even the seemingly straightforward ones.

The Golden Rule of Interpretation

When the plain sense of scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise.

Rules of interpretation are needful when trying to understand any biblical text. However, we must recognize the golden rule of interpretation will only give us the most rudimentary understanding. Knowing scriptures have dual meanings, cryptic images, hidden implications, we cannot always adhere to the “seek no other sense” clause.

Proverbs 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

This why we must we must cry out for knowledge, lift up our voices for understanding, seek wisdom like silver and search for it like hidden treasures (Proverbs 2:3-4). We can never stop seeking other meanings from the Bible, since it is the distinguished quality (glory) of God to conceal things in His Word.

This means the story of creation may not be as literal or straightforward as we originally thought. This is important

to keep in mind, when we look at Genesis chapters two and three.

The next chapter will look at creation narrative given in Genesis 1. Since the Bible uses the law of evidence as proof, I will describe the story of creation in two different formats. The first will be in the normal narrative form and the second is to be read as a courtroom proceeding. It is not necessary to read both. The bulk of the information is in each account. So, choose which version you want to read and skip the other.

The Story of Creation

Day 1

Genesis 1:3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Genesis 1:4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

Genesis 1:5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

The first action of God is the creation of light. He says, "Let there be light." Consequently light appeared. The point the writer is trying to convey is God spoke and it happened. How can God just speak something into existence? He does so in accordance with the law of faith.

*Romans 3:27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by **the law of faith.***

Faith has three components, belief (what we think), words (what we say) and actions (what we do). God operates according to faith. Why would God need faith?

Faith is a law. It is not something reserved for religious people. It is how we create what we need and want in this life. Nothing created in this universe came into being without this law.

Therefore, we have the ability to create, just like God. In fact, we do it all the time. How did we build the first airplane? It all started with an idea (thought or belief in the mind). Once someone believed they could fly, they began to align their words with their actions. Their counterparts probably said, "If God meant for us to fly, He would have given us wings." The Creator gave us something better than wings. He gave us the law of faith.

Not only do we see God in the first chapter of Genesis creating the world. He is also laying down a pattern for us to mimic.

The Bible claims light was God's first creation, is this true? Remember, the Bible uses the type of proof used in a court of law and not scientific proof. Does this mean we exclude science, not at all? How does science fit in to the courtroom scheme? Science will be our expert witness and their findings will serve as evidence.

According to science, what happened in the beginning? "The Big Bang Model is a broadly accepted theory for the origin and evolution of our universe. It postulates 12 to 14 billion years ago, that the portion of the universe we can see today was only a few millimeters across. It has since expanded from this hot dense state into the vast and much cooler cosmos we currently inhabit."¹¹

In an attempt to corroborate this theory, NASA sent a probe into space. The Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP) launched in June 2001 to make fundamental measurements of cosmology -- the study of the properties of our universe as a whole.

"WMAP found that the universe is 13.7 billion years old. The universe began with an unimaginably enormous

density and temperature. This immense primordial energy was the cauldron from whence all life arose. There was matter and antimatter. When they met, they annihilated each other and created light. Somehow, it seems there was a tiny fraction more matter than antimatter, so when nature took its course, the universe was left with some matter, no antimatter, and a tremendous amount of light.”¹²

Science and the scriptures agree the first thing created in our universe was light. Since this is an agreement of two or more sources (Big Bang Theory, NASA and Genesis), we can confidently say, this is true.

Although the first thing created was light, it was not the light of the sun. The first light came from the radiation emitted by the Big Bang and later stars formed. The sun, which is also a star, did not form for almost 8 billion years after the bang.

No wonder Paul calls Him the God of patience.¹³ I would have gone for the quick method.

Currently, there is some debate in the scientific community as to what was before the Big Bang. Some say nothing existed and others insist something must have been there prior to the event. The Bible does not clearly tell us. It just states, “Darkness was upon the face of the deep and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” We will have to wait on science to find out what, if anything existed before our current universe.

In Day 1 the scriptures states, God divided the light from the darkness. Darkness is simply the absence or relative absence of light. Therefore, God would not have to separate light from darkness, when He created light, darkness would naturally vanish. Another peculiar thing to

note is the statement, “God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.”

So, what is really happening here? Well, we know from science the universe started by combining matter and antimatter, the Big Bang. It is plausible the writer is describing the separation of matter from antimatter.

“Modern theories of particle physics and of the evolution of the universe suggest, or even require, that antimatter and matter were equally common in the earliest stages of time. So why is antimatter so uncommon today? The observed imbalance between matter and antimatter is a puzzle still requiring explanation. Without it, the universe today would certainly be a much less interesting place, because there would be essentially no matter left around; annihilations would have converted everything into electromagnetic radiation by now. So clearly, this imbalance is a key property of the world we know. Attempts to explain it are an active area of research today.”

We know why God would separate matter from antimatter. If He did not, there would be cosmic explosions, sporadically happening all over the universe. We are still looking for our expert witness (science) to explain how this happens. Consequently, anything else is simply speculation, for now anyway.

The last thing we need to look at in these verses is the statement, “The evening and the morning were the first day.” A literal understanding of the seven days of creation, is to say the least, a little shortsighted. Since we understand the sun, stars and all of the planets are the result of an immense explosion. It would be an impossibility to cool off the earth in time for humanity to arrive literally on the sixth day.

So, to what are the seven days of creation referring? The seven days would be better thought of as, seven eons or ages of creation. So, how did we get to where we are today, if it did not happen in seven days?

“The 20th century saw a giant leap in how humans perceive the cosmos. No longer did people assume the universe was static in size. By looking at how distant galaxies recede from us, we learned the universe is expanding in volume. Tracing the expanding universe backward in time, we imagined a dense, hot beginning of our universe in a finite past. In the middle of the century, we found nuclear reactions in this hot early universe accurately account for the previously mysterious abundance of helium and deuterium. Moreover, we detected a faint afterglow of the big bang that occurred billions of years ago. The universe began with a big bang is essentially conclusive and may stand as the most profound discovery humans have ever made.”¹⁴

Therefore, the seven days of creation are seven distinct eons, not 24-hour cycles. An eon is the largest defined unit of time. They divide into eras, which split into periods, epochs and ages. I will use the terms interchangeably in this book. Every day of creation has some distinct event, which sets it apart from the others.

- Day 1** - Light created
- Day 2** - Sky created
- Day 3** - Continents & Plant Life created
- Day 4** - Seasons created
- Day 5** - Sea Life & Birds created
- Day 6** - Beasts & Man created
- Day 7** - God rested

The periods that I have listed are mainly geological. I say mainly because geology is a science that deals with the history of the earth and its life, especially as recorded in rocks. However, we know creation encompasses more than just the earth. Still, I believe a geological timeframe is the best match to Genesis because the Bible focuses on the formation of the earth when it speaks of creation.

Each day in Genesis may not match up perfectly with a specific geological period. However, what occurs in each day should line-up with the sequence that science has discovered.

Day 2

Genesis 1:6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

Genesis 1:7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

Genesis 1:8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

In Day 2, we see God creating a firmament or expanse between the waters. The waters referred to here are both space and oceans. We derive that from its usage, the waters under the expanse and above it. The firmament called Heaven means the sky and clouds. Therefore, the waters above the sky would be outer space and the below it are oceans and seas.

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