

30.05.2020 GENESIS AS FOUNDATION. PART 2

“The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork” Psalm 19:1

Cosmology, the science of the origin and development of the universe has its true foundation in the Bible which tells us that *‘In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth’ Genesis 1:1.*

The work of the scientists of the scientific revolution from the 15th to the 19th century was based on Christian belief.

The scientists believed in 2 books:

1. the book of God’s words - the Bible
2. the book of God’s works – Nature (the world and the universe)

Since the Bible showed God to be a rational, reasonable Being, and it is possible to know Him through study of the Bible, it therefore followed that it was possible to understand His works by the study of nature. And since God is a God of order and reason, it would follow that there was order and reason behind His works and by studying and observing His works one could come to conclusions about nature. Since God was Creator and Lawgiver, He has implanted laws in nature which man can discover. From studying effects – man can arrive at the causes. However, since Man’s reason was fallen due to sin; therefore, the conclusions Man came to, in whatever field, must be subject to the Word of God, which alone is true.

Scientists who believed in God were Copernicus, Vesalius, Galileo, Bacon, Kepler, Newton, Pascal, Descartes, Faraday, Ross, Kelvin, Maxwell, Henry Drummond, and many others.

The passages below revealed God the Creator and His relationship to Man to these scientists:

Genesis 1 and 2; Deuteronomy 4:32, Psalm 19, 104, 139; Isaiah 42:5, 45:18; Jeremiah 33:22, 25; John 1:1-4; Hebrews 1:2; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 10:6, 14:7; Acts:14:17; Matthew 5:45.

“I study God’s two books - the Book of His words and the book of His works.” Francis Bacon

“God has been pleased to work in His material creation by laws and the Creator governs his material works by definite laws resulting from the forces impressed on matter. The laws of nature, as we understand them, are the foundations of our knowledge of natural things.” Michael Faraday

These were the principles that scientists of the Scientific Revolution followed. After the French Revolution there came a major shift. Reason replaced God and we are seeing the consequences in society today.

A Flat Earth?

Many ancient cultures believed that the earth was flat. The first idea of the earth as a sphere was suggested in the 6th century BC by Pythagoras and later in the 4th century BC by Plato. Around 330 BC, Aristotle provided empirical evidence that the earth was a sphere.

The Old Testament Bible, which preceded these men, informed its readers that the earth was a sphere.

Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers,

Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. Isaiah 40:21, 22

He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.

He binds up the water in His thick clouds, yet the clouds are not broken under it.

He covers the face of His throne, and spreads His cloud over it.

He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters, at the boundary of light and darkness. Job 26:7-10

Job 26:10 teaches that God has inscribed a circle on the surface of the waters at the boundary of light and darkness. This boundary between light and darkness (day and night) is called the “terminator” since the light stops or “terminates” there. Someone standing on the terminator would be experiencing either a sunrise or a sunset; they are going from day to night or from night to day. The terminator is always a circle, because the earth is round.

‘The Universe confirms the Bible’ from Dr Jason Lisle’s book ‘Taking back Astronomy’ is available at: <https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/the-universe-confirms-the-bible/>

Creation in Ancient Literature and Pagan Myths

It is claimed that there are striking parallels between the creation myths of the ancient Near East (especially the Babylonian epic known as “Enuma Elish”) and the Biblical account of creation in Genesis 1. But what is remarkable about the Babylonian and the Biblical stories is not their similarity but their dissimilarity. So far from copying the Babylonian account, Genesis 1 critiques and challenges its basic theology. In the Babylonian myths the gods, amoral and capricious, squabble and fight with one another. Marduk, the loftiest of gods, attacks and kills Tiamat, the mother-goddess. He then proceeds to split her body in two, half of it becoming the sky and the other half the earth. From this crude polytheism we turn to the simple words of the Bible...‘*In the beginning God created...*’

A popular Egyptian myth was related in the book known as the Book of the Evolutions of Ra. Like the Mesopotamian myth, originally there was a chaotic watery mass known as the deity Nu. The sun-god Ra brings forth from the midst of Nu two gods: Shu (the god of air, light and heat) and his mate Tefnut. According to some myths about Shu, he was said to separate two lovers that mingled in the waters of Nu: Nut (sky) and Geb (earth). In this separation Shu lifts the watery heavens of Nut above Geb forming the heavens and the earth. The Egyptians believed that the heavens were actually a sea of waters in which the sun and moon floated. It was believed that the rising and setting of the sun was Ra sailing his boat across the watery heavens.

The Biblical account shares three things with these pagan myths: **1. Water.** All describe an initial watery mass. In the Biblical account this mass is not pre-existent, but the creation of God (Genesis 1:1-7). **2. Chaos.** All describe a universe of chaos being brought into order. In the Biblical account God brings order out of chaos (Genesis 1:2). **3. Separation of the Waters.** All describe a separation of waters above and below an expanse of heaven. In the Bible, this expanse doesn’t separate lovers or reflect anthropomorphic battles. Instead, these things are simply the elements that compose the atmosphere (Genesis 1:6, 7).

Here is where the similarities end. First, in the Biblical account God is above and separate from His creation (Genesis 1:1). Second, in the Bible the elements which God creates and with which He forms the earth are just that. The earth is not a deity. The sky is not a god. Things are simply things! (Genesis 1:1-19). Third, in the Biblical account the waters above the firmament are not portrayed as heavenly seas in which the sun and moon literally sail (Genesis 1:9). These “waters” either refer to the water vapours of a cloud canopied pre-flood earth, or to the fluid elements from which God would compose the heavens. The Jews understood this. The book of Job says that God hung the earth “on nothing” (Job 26:7). There are no “sun-boats” taught in Biblical cosmology.

Adapted from: John Stott and K Pope

Most of the Creation myths are associated with violence. In contrast, the Genesis account is of a God who ‘spoke and it was done’, a God who created out of nothing. The creation myths also describe multiple gods and goddesses (polytheism) in contrast to Biblical account of the one God, Yahweh who creates heaven and earth.

Creation and Time

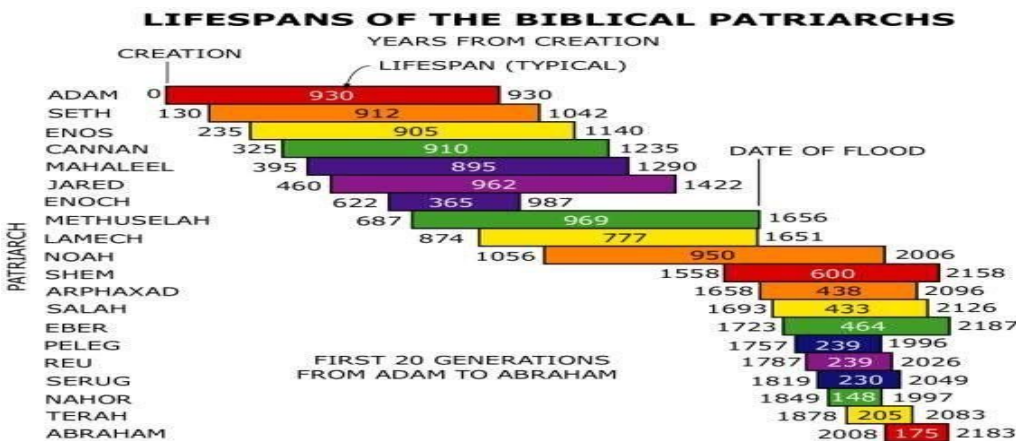
The genealogies of the Bible, particularly the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 are crucial in establishing the historical account of the Bible. Since these genealogies show an unbroken line from father to son and generation to generation (also called ‘closed’ genealogies), we are able to calculate dates concerning the creation of man and the universe.

Since the French Revolution and the ideas that arose from it, the Bible's historical account of a six day Creation and a 'young earth' are not believed by many Christians and Christian leaders today. Because they believe the earth is actually billions of years old, they try to convince people that the genealogies in the Bible have gaps that may span years or centuries.

Furthermore, to fit the idea of billions of years into Scripture, many Christian leaders, since the early 19th century, have reinterpreted the days of creation to mean long ages. We saw last week, that the Bible shows clearly that the word 'day', as used in Genesis 1 for each of the six days of creation, means an ordinary, 24-hour day.

A straightforward addition of the chronogenealogies yields a date for the beginning near 4000 B.C. Chronologists working from the Bible consistently get 2,000 years between Adam and Abraham. It is accepted that Abraham lived around 2000 B.C. Many Christian leaders, though, claim there are gaps in the Genesis genealogies. One of their arguments is that the word 'begat', as used in the time-line from the first man Adam to Abraham in Genesis 5 and 11, can skip generations. If this argument were true, the date for creation using the biblical time-line of history cannot be worked out.

But nowhere in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word for begat (yalad) used in any other way than to mean a single-generation (e.g., father/son or mother/daughter) relationship. The Hebrew word *ben* can mean *son* or *grandson*, but the word *yalad* never skips generations.



<http://bridgetthenson.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Lifespan-of-Adam-to-Abraham.jpg>

Creation in Scripture

The story of Creation as found in Genesis 1:1-2:3 is frequently referred to throughout the Bible. There are at least 75 references, either direct or indirect. An indirect reference is where certain words or ideas are taken from the Creation text – see 2 Corinthians 4:6 for an example. A direct reference is where a Bible quotes the creation text verbatim – see Hebrews 4:4 for an example. Psalm 104 follows the Creation sequence of Genesis 1.

One of the strongest arguments for Creation is the Bible itself. A Divinely inspired Book written by several authors who were moved by the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:21), these authors wrote at various periods of history over a period ranging from about BC 1500 to AD 100 and all of them are true to the Creation story of Genesis 1. Above all, Christ Jesus who was Himself the Word of God, the *Logos* by Whom God has spoken to us today (John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:1-3) also affirmed the Creation story while on earth.

All man's philosophy is vain if it does not rest on the foundation (presupposition) of an omnipotent God of mercy and justice, a God who exists, who is transcendent and who is not silent – He reveals Himself and communicates His will to mankind.

It is not surprising therefore that when Paul speaks to the Greek philosophers on Mars Hill in Athens, he tells them of the One True God. He starts by describing the reality of nature and their existence and speaks to them of God the Creator, who is also their Redeemer and Judge.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being...Acts 17:23-28

Other references to the Creation story in the New Testament:

John 1:1-3: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*

2 Corinthians 4:6 *For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

Hebrews 4:4 *He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works".*

James 3:9 *With the tongue we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.*

2 Peter 3:5 *...by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water...*

Colossians 1:16 *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*

"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power;

For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created." Revelation 4:11.

Below is a list of Creation References in the Bible (it may not be exhaustive).

It is available at: http://www.gospelway.com/creation/creation_list.php

Conclusion:

"Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion?

Can you bring out Mazzaroth in its season?

Or can you guide the Great Bear with its cubs?

Do you know the ordinances of the heavens?

Can you set their dominion over the earth?" Job 38:31-33

When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,

The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,

What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?

For You have made him a little lower than the angels,

And You have crowned him with glory and honour.

O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! Psalm 8:3-5, 9
