

Genesis 1:1 - 2:3

(part one)

Introduction

The observations of natural science are generally taught and thought to have disproved the biblical account of supernatural creation. In fact, however, naturalistic alternatives to God's supernatural creation have *themselves* become more and more suspect as our scientific knowledge has increased! The general theory of evolution, for example, has been increasingly contradicted by the observations of natural biologists during the last century. Microbiologist Michael Denton says:

"Throughout the past century there has always existed a significant minority of first-rate biologists who have never been able to bring themselves to accept the validity of Darwinian claims. In fact, the number of biologists who have expressed some degree of disillusionment is practically endless."¹

These kinds of comments are what you would expect from a creationist; but Denton is not even a *Christian*, let alone a creation scientist! He and a growing number of natural scientists are saying that what can be observed by science actually *contradicts* the theory of evolution rather than proving it.

Astronomers, with all of their amazing discoveries, have still failed to explain how the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars could have evolved into their present form by natural processes. *Geologists* and *paleontologists* have failed to explain how the huge fossil layers were laid down, how mountains rose from the sea, why dinosaurs became extinct, why all the "missing links" have disappeared, and how the ice age began. *Anthropologists* have failed to bridge the gap that separates the lowest man from the highest animal. *Biologists* and *geneticists* have failed to explain how life could have arisen spontaneously, how the DNA code was formed, why all living creatures reproduce after their kinds, and how the theory of evolution can be true in light of the second law of thermodynamics, which states that disorder and not order increases with time.

¹quoted in The Early Earth, by John Whitcomb, p. 24 (footnote 6)

The observations of natural science do not disprove or contradict God's supernatural creation in Genesis One. A careful and honest observer of the natural world can actually draw certain marvelous conclusions about God from His supernatural creation:

#1 Creation Reveals God's Glory To You

#2 Creation Reflects God's Goodness To You

#3 Creation Reminds You Of God's Grace

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#1 Creation Reveals God's Glory To You
(v1-5)

Science does not deal with origins. Both the natural scientist and the creation scientist have only the evidence of the present to analyze. The creation scientist, and the Christian, has an advantage that the natural scientist does not have: God's revelation of special creation in Genesis One. This additional information is crucial to a correct understanding of the observable evidence: Only God can tell us what originally happened because only He was there.

If only God was there, who wrote this chapter? As with all Scripture, the Author is God the Holy Spirit -

2 Peter 1:21 "for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"; 2 Timothy 3:16 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..."

The human author upon whom God The Holy Spirit "moved" was Moses. Exactly how Moses received Genesis is unknown. He may have received it by direct revelation from God. Many commentators believe that Moses may have taken previously written accounts and edited them, under the Holy Spirit's divine guidance and inspiration. Eleven times in Genesis we will read the following phrase: "this is the genealogy of..." It is thought that this phrase is like a signature, ending a section originally recorded by the person referred to. If that is the case, we read in Genesis 5:1, "This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. " God, as creation's author and eye witness,

gave the account directly to Adam, who recorded it to later be compiled by Moses under the inspiration of God The Holy Spirit.

While we might disagree as to exactly how Moses received this account, all of those who are Christians ought to agree that Genesis Chapter One is God's inspired and infallible and inerrant revelation of the literal creation week of seven 24 hour days.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth

The Hebrew is "Beresheth Elohim" - "In the beginning, God." The word for God is "Elohim," a plural word used with a masculine, singular vowel. One God; more than One Person. As the Bible unfolds we come to see God revealed as a tri-unity, Three Persons in One God - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Even here in Genesis One we will see all three Persons of the Godhead active in creation.

"Created" is the word "bara," to create out of nothing. Men can make things and form things out of previously existing materials; but those materials had no previous existence until created by God out of nothing! Often you will hear that, in certain experiments, scientists are "creating life" in the laboratory. They are not; they are adding intelligence to previously existing materials - forming things and making things. They are *not* and *never will* "bara" - create something out of nothing.

You have to believe in either an Eternal God or in the eternal existence of matter. An honest scientist will tell you that the eternal existence of matter is impossible given the laws governing the material universe. The eternally existing God of the Bible, Elohim, is the only other alternative available to you.

What God created was "the heavens and the earth," literally, "space and matter." "Earth," or matter, is a reference to the basic elements of matter - the materials which God would afterwards organize during the succeeding five 24 hour days of His creation.

God is said to have done this "in the beginning." Here is Dr. Henry Morris' paraphrase of verse one:

"The transcendent, omnipotent Godhead called into existence the space/mass/time universe."

When did God do this? Science, especially astronomy, says the universe is at least 20 billion years old. The most renowned system of biblical chronology is that of James Ussher, who placed creation at 4004BC, less than 7,000 years ago!

How can we account for this apparent discrepancy between science and the Bible? What scientists like the astronomers fail to take into account is the fact that, when God created the universe, He created it with an appearance of age and maturity. The calculations requiring 20 billion years are based on the speed light travels; but when God created light on the first day, it simply filled the universe! It didn't take any time at all to reach earth from the farthest part of the galaxy. It simply existed at the command of God. If a scientist applies present principles of measurement to this event, he or she will fail to accurately describe what occurred because it was a moment of special creation that cannot be quantified in that way. Science cannot prove the age of the earth; vast periods of time are merely speculations which happen to be required by the theory of evolution.

Genesis 1:2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Some Christians see this verse as the result of a catastrophe which destroyed the original creation of verse one. This is the Gap Theory we discussed last week. They say that words like "without form," "void," and "darkness" prove this.

The use of these words is not proof of a previous creation and a catastrophe. "Without form and void" simply means "unformed and uninhabited." The matter God created in verse one was in the form of basic elements which seem to have existed in a watery matrix, "the deep." God would energize and organize these elements as the week progressed.

"Darkness" on the "face of the deep" means that the universe was without energy of any kind - *not* that the universe was fallen and evil and needing re-creation. The materials God the Father created out of

nothing were ready for God the Holy Spirit to act upon them, which He did by "hovering over the face of the waters."

Another translation says the "Spirit of God moved"; the word "moved" means to shake or flutter. The modern scientific term would be 'vibrated.' In other words, the Holy Spirit energized and set the universe in motion - motion that can be measured now in terms of wave vibrations! Scientists describe waves as rapid back and forth movements which must be initially produced by a wave generator. The wave generator of the universe is God the Holy Spirit, Who initially set the universe in motion and Who continues to empower it.

Here is an interesting point. While the Bible does not claim to be a science textbook, it will never be contradicted by any scientific discoveries. On the contrary, many *more* things would be discovered and properly understood if you took supernatural creation as your scientific bias rather than natural evolution. A thoughtful scientist, reading Genesis One, could speculate that the energizing of the universe by God the Holy Spirit would produce vibrations that could perhaps be measured by waves. I am not aware of the history of science in the area of wave motion, but I can confidently state that many truly remarkable and enduring discoveries of science *were* made by men who were creationists. It frustrates me that it is generally believed that creationists are not scientific. That is simply untrue!

Sir Isaac Newton was a creation scientist who discovered the Law of Gravity. It was on the first 24 hour day of creation, centuries earlier, that gravitational forces were first activated by God the Holy Spirit. As they were, the matter God had created came together to form a great sphere moving through space, the planet earth.

By the way, it may interest you that astronomers have yet to discover even one other planet outside of our solar system. The earth is absolutely unique in God's created universe - uniquely created to sustain human life.

Genesis 1:3 Then 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 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

God established the rotation of the earth on its axis, producing the cyclical succession of days and nights. We pointed out last week the normal meaning of day, night, morning, and evening is literal, 24 hour cycles. They are not long geological ages during which God used evolutionary processes.

The "light" did not have as its source the sun; the sun, the moon, and the stars were not even made until the fourth 24 hour day of creation.

How can you have light without the sun? The only reason you even ask that question is because of the indoctrination of the theory of evolution. You were taught that all life depends on the sun and its energy. That's not true! God makes it clear that all life ultimately depends on Him.

Here is something else to consider: In Revelation 21:23 the Bible says that, in the future New Heaven and New Earth, "The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light."

If you believe Revelation 21 for your future, why not Genesis One about the past? This is a crucial question. If the Bible cannot be trusted when it tells of creation, how can it be trusted when it tells about salvation? If God cannot be trusted in Genesis One, how can He be trusted in John 3:16?

Creation scientists point out that all the types of force and energy which interact in the universe involve only nuclear forces, gravitational forces, and electromagnetic forces. Nuclear forces were activated by God the Father when He created the basic matter of the universe; gravitational forces were activated by God the Holy Spirit when He brought form and motion to these materials; and now the electromagnetic forces were activated by God the Son when He called light into existence!

The Word of God brings light. This is Jesus, the Second Person of the Tri-une God, God the Son, active in the Creation of the universe.

John 1:1-3 & 14 "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. (v14) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory..."

Colossians 1:16 "For by Him [Jesus] 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."

Jesus Christ is God - the God of creation. He Himself is not created; He is the Creator, along with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

The work of the first 24 hour day of the creation of the heavens and the earth reveals the Glory of God to you. You are told that it does in the Psalms:

Psalm 19:1 "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork."

Psalm 97:6 "The heavens declare His righteousness, And all the peoples see His glory."

Creation reveals at least two things about God's Glory: His Presence in the World and the Power of His Word.

His Presence in the World is Glorious.

It is glorious in that it provides a definite and an irrefutable witness to all men everywhere of His pre-existence. God expects men to learn of Him from creation. Psalm 19 goes on to say,

Psalm 19:1-4 "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

Abraham Lincoln once said,

"I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he could look up into the heavens and say there is no God."²

Creation shows all men everywhere the work of God's hands; Calvary shows men who hear the Gospel the work of God's heart!

²quoted in Exploring Romans, by John Phillips, p. 26

This often raises an objection from unbelievers: What about those people who are unevangelized? What happens to them?

Your answer depends on your Scriptural view of the character of God. Here's what I would say:

Proverbs 8:17 "I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently will find me."

Proverbs 8 describes Jesus, with God the Father in Creation, and clearly says that those who seek Him will find Him. Does God save the unevangelized on the basis of their limited knowledge but diligent seeking? Does He see to it that those who diligently seek Him somehow receive the Gospel? I don't know - and neither does anyone else! I do know His heart, though, as revealed in Scripture. In Acts 17, Paul uses creation to witness to the unevangelized, and says in verses 26 and 27,

"He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed 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..."

The real answer to the unbeliever's objection, though, is to point out that they are *not among* the unevangelized! God will hold them personally responsible for His witness in creation *and* for the additional witness of the Gospel.

The Power of His Word is Glorious.

God spoke and it was done. Ten times at least we are told in Genesis One that God spoke and it was done. The power of His Word created and formed the material universe. His Word is indeed awesome in power!

Seeing the power of His spoken Word in creation, we need never doubt the power of His written Word in our circumstances!

We read in Psalm 33:6-9,

"By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses

Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."

The psalmist then relates the power of God's Word in creation to his own circumstances:

Psalms 33:18-22 "Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy, To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name. Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, just as we hope in You."

The God of creation is still God in your circumstances! The power of His Word is sufficient for you.

Conclusion

Design demands a Designer; Creation demands a Creator. Only the fool says in his heart "There is no God." ³

The wonder of all wonders is not creation itself, however. It is that the Creator Himself, Jesus Christ, came to earth to pay the full price for human sin and to make it possible for those who believe in Him to be saved.

The real "Gap Theory" involves the age in which we live. The original creation was marred by a catastrophe - but not between verses one and two. Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden. God's creation is now described in Romans 8:20, 21, and 22 as being "subjected to futility," as being in "the bondage of corruption," and as "groan[ing] and labor[ing]..." up until the present day.

God will create again *after* this age! We read in Revelation 21:1, "Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. "

The "gap" is the time inbetween, the time in which we live. During that time the Gospel is especially being preached to the Gentile world - to people often with little or no Bible knowledge or background. God's special, supernatural Creation is an appropriate message to such a people in such an age as this.

³Psalms 14:1

