



The Bible and Origins

Basic Theology #27

Jeff Coleman, 24 July 2022

Upcoming Schedule

Basic Theology — Sundays @ 9am

July 31 - The Creation of Man

August 7 - The Facets of Man

August 14 - The Fall of Man

August 21 - Not meeting

August 28 - The Biblical Concept of Sin

Four Separate but Related Questions

Evolution versus Creation

- How and when did the universe originate?
- How and when did the earth originate?
- How and when did life on earth originate?
- How and when did human beings originate?

Definitions

Science

- **Science (S1)** is “a method of investigating our world through empirical observation, experimentation, and hypothesising that results in knowledge of general laws that operate in the universe.”
- **Science (S2)** is “a close-minded philosophy that requires everything in the universe to be explained by natural causes only. Miracles are not allowed.”
- **Science (S3)** is “an open-minded philosophy of investigating our world that allows for both natural and supernatural explanations. Miracles are allowed.”

Darwinian Evolution

First Major View

- Several billion years ago, chemicals in the sea, acted on by sunlight and cosmic energy, formed by chance into one or more single-celled organisms
- These organisms have since developed through beneficial mutations and natural selection into all living plants, animals, and people.
 - No one denies change and development occur in many areas of creation.
- God is totally unnecessary to the origin and development of the biological life forms we see today.
- Man evolved over long periods of time from simpler, brute forms, and ultimately from an original single-celled creature.

Theistic Evolution

Second Major View

- God invisibly directed, used, and controlled the processes of naturalistic evolution to create the world and all life in it.
- The earth and prehuman life are very old, and the days of Genesis 1 are ages.
- Evolutionary processes were involved in the creation of Adam.
- Two versions:
 - God stepped in only at the beginning (i.e., theistic evolution).
 - God stepped in at key moments (i.e., progressive creationism).

Creation

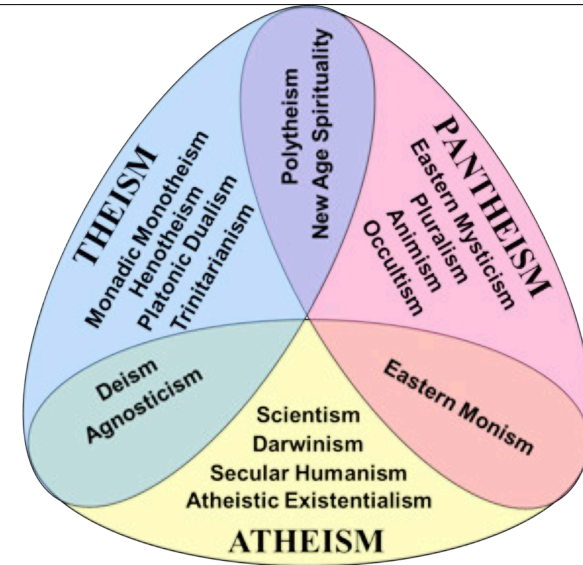
Third Major View

- Science contributes to our understanding, but it must not control our interpretation of Scripture to accommodate its theories, which after all could be wrong.
- God directly created man in his image from the dust of the ground and his own breath of life (Ge 1:27; 2:7). No subhuman was involved.
- However the days of Genesis 1 are interpreted, Adam was the first man, and the account of his creation in Genesis 2 is historical.
- Adam is the first man from whom Eve was formed and the rest of mankind is descended.
- One view holds the account of the creation of Adam and Eve relates only to the garden of Eden and does not tell us anything about what was happening elsewhere (e.g., evolution). Adam was an island of creation in a sea of evolution.

Evolutionism

$$M + NS \times T = E$$

Mutations + Natural Selection x Time = Evolution



Expose the Weaknesses

Darwinian Evolution

- Know and expose weaknesses in the theory of Darwinian evolution:
 - The rarity and harmfulness of mutations
 - Natural selection's inability to preserve beneficial mutations
 - Lack of time necessary for everything to happen by chance
 - Opposition to the second law of thermodynamics
 - Embarrassing gaps in the fossil record

It takes faith to believe Genesis.

It takes more faith to believe in Darwinian evolution.

Creationism

Presuppositions

The Bible and Origins

- Although the Bible is not a science textbook, this does not mean it is inaccurate when it reveals truths that belong to the arena of science.
- Whatever the Bible reveals in whatever area of knowledge (history, psychology, sociology, astronomy, biology), it is true, accurate, and reliable.
- The Bible does not answer all our questions about origins, but what it does reveal must be acknowledged as truth.
- The Bible says more about origins than most are willing to admit.

Presuppositions

Faith

- By *faith* we understand the ages were framed by the word of God and that what is seen was not made out of visible things (Heb 11:3).
- There were no human spectators to creation. The first man was placed in an already existing universe.
- We must accept by faith what God has revealed about creation. This faith is reasonable, not blind.

Presuppositions

Facts

- The present theories of science can never be accepted as absolute truth.
- By contrast, the facts God has revealed in Scripture are absolutely reliable, including the facts revealed in Genesis 1-2.
- The sequential acts of creation and the temptation of Adam and Eve transpired in our space-time-matter universe (they could have been marked on a map and a calendar).
- Genesis records facts, not myths or legends.

Presuppositions

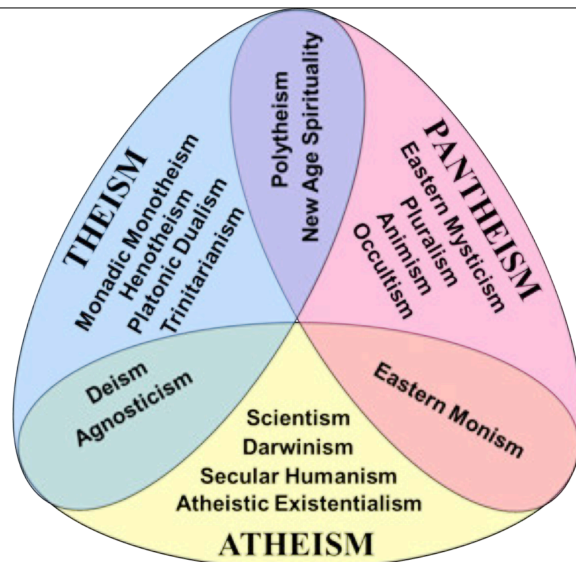
Facts

- Genesis was written by Moses.
- Whatever sources he may have used, he was a man trained and educated, and God superintended his writing.
- If we cannot believe Moses, we cannot believe Jesus.
- **Jn 5:47** 47 But if you do not believe [Moses'] writings, how will you believe my [Jesus'] words?

The God of Creation

Yahweh Elohim

- **Ge 1:1** 1 In the beginning, God (אֱלֹהִים) created the heavens and the earth.
- **Ge 2:4** 4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Yahweh God (יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים) made the earth and the heavens.
- The identification of *Yahweh Elohim* as creator refutes atheism, polytheism, and pantheism.



Creation ex Nihilo

- God did not use any preexisting material to create the universe.
- **Heb 11:3** 3 By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.
- Matter is not eternal, as confirmed by recent scientific discoveries.
- Of course, God did use previously created inorganic materials in forming Adam.

Does God exist?

General Revelation

Special Revelation

Creation

Conscience

Canon

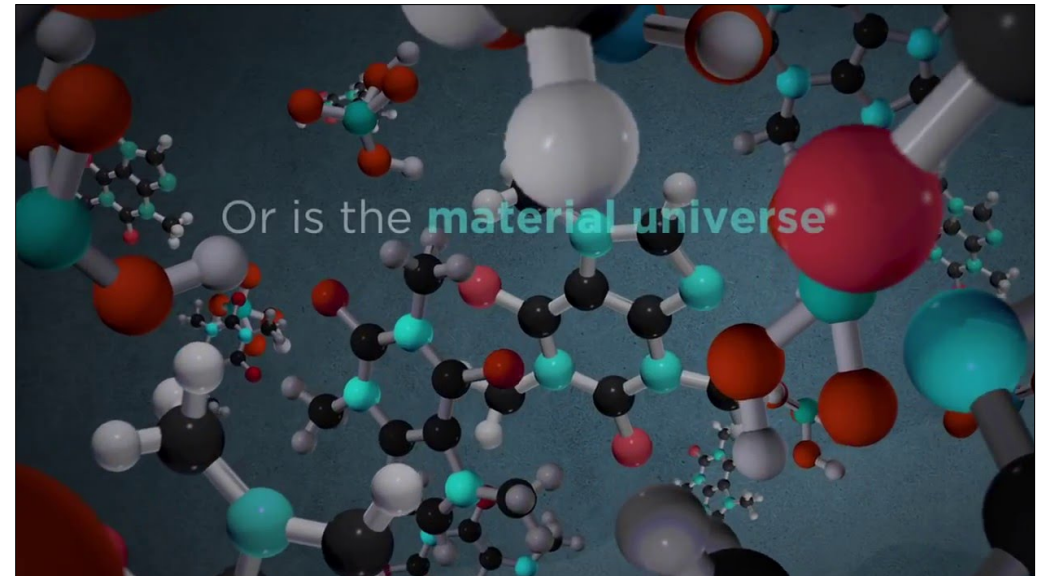
Christ

Causal Argument
Fine-Tuning Argument
Design Argument
Information Argument

Mind Argument
Free Will Argument
Moral Argument
Evil Argument

Old Testament
New Testament

Jesus' Life
Jesus' Death
Jesus' Resurrection



The Time of Creation

- Ge 1:1 seems to refer to the creation of the space-time-matter universe.
- **Ge 1:1–2** 1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
- It is an absolute statement, not a dependent clause related to v. 2
- Did it occur in 4004 bc or 4.5 billion years ago?
- Note: some understand Ge 1:1 as introducing a refashioning of a judgment-ridden earth in preparation for a new order of creation.

The Time of Creation

Five Views among Christians

- All creation is recent, including the universe, earth, life, and man.
- Life and man are recent, but the universe and earth are not.
- Man is recent, but the universe, earth, and life are not.
- Adam and Eve are the only specially created humans; all other humans evolved from subhuman species.
- All humans, including Adam and Eve, evolved from subhuman forms.

The Time of Creation

Man Is Recent

- Adam and Eve are the first humans.
- They were both specially created on the sixth day.
- The genealogical tables of Ge 5 and 11 are historically accurate (even if a few generations are skipped).

The Gap Concept

Plants, Animals, and Man Are Recent—the Earth Is Not

- The gap concept is also called the ruin-reconstruction theory or the restitution theory.
- It proposes a way to harmonise Genesis with long periods of geologic time.
- It was first popularised by Scotsman Thomas Chalmers in 1814.
- It was incorporated in the notes of the *Scofield Reference Bible* (1909).
- It's defended by Eric Sauer and Arthur C. Custace.

The Gap Concept

Plants, Animals, and Man Are Recent—the Earth Is Not

- The original creation of Ge 1:1 was perfect, beautiful, and possibly populated with plants and animals.
- In the gap between Ge 1:1 and Ge 1:2, Satan rebelled and brought sin into the universe.
- God judged the earth with a global flood, darkness, and an ice age during which all life was destroyed.
- V. 2 pictures the state of things after this judgment.
- The six days of creation describe a recreation or restoration, not the original creation.

The Gap Concept

Further Explanation

- **Ge 1:1–3** 1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 [Now] the earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.
- The *waw* of v. 2 is “disjunctive.”
- *Tohu wa bohu* (תהו ובהו) signifies judgment.
 - **Je 4:23** 23 I looked on the earth, and behold, it was without form and void. And to the heavens, and they had no light.
 - **Is 45:18** 18 For thus says Yahweh, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!)....
- Darkness is not good, so v. 2 cannot be describing the original creation.
 - **Ge 1:4** 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.
- God tells Adam and Eve to “replenish” the earth.
 - **Ge 1:28** 28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it....

The Gap Concept

Problems with This View

- “Formless and void” doesn’t necessarily imply judgment.
- Darkness is not inherently evil.
- **Ps 104:19–24** 20 You make darkness, and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest creep about. 21 The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God. 22 When the sun rises, they steal away and lie down in their dens. 23 Man goes out to his work and to his labor until the evening. 24 O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all. The earth is full of your creatures.
- There is no biblical proof Satan’s fall resulted in judgment on the earth?

The “Days” of Genesis 1

Four Views

- Literal, solar, 24-hour day view
- Day-age view: the days are long ages
- Solar days with long intermediate gaps view
- Revelatory day view: the “days” relate not to God’s work of creating but with his revealing these matters to Moses

Arguments for 24-Hour, Solar Days

- In the OT, the word “day,” when used with a number, always indicates a solar day.
- The repeated phrase “evening and morning” supports the 24-hour day view.
 - In the OT, these words always mean a literal evening and a literal morning.
- Exodus states God made everything in six days.
 - **Ex 20:11** 11 For in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
 - **Ex 31:17** 17 It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.

Arguments for Age-Days

- The word “day” sometimes refers to a longer, indefinite time.
 - **Ge 2:4** 4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the *day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.
- Because the sun was not created until the fourth day, we must assume the first three days were of an indefinite length of time.
- The seventh day on which God rested was longer than 24 hours; therefore, the first six days were longer than 24 hours.
 - **2 Pe 3:8** 8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Arguments for Age-Days

Rebuttal

- In Ge 2:4, “day” just means “at the time when.”
 - **Ge 2:4** 4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Yahweh God made the earth and the heavens.
- There must have been another light source on the first three days, because the text says there was light.
 - **Ge1:3** 3 And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.
 - **Re 21:23-25** 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there.
- Peter does not say a day *is* a thousand years.

Solar Days or Age-Days?

Summary

- Exegetically, the burden of proof rests on proponents of the age-day theory.
- Normal interpretation of the passage, the use of the word day with numbers, the repeated phrase “evening and morning,” and the two cross references in Exodus constitute strong evidence that the days were 24-hour days.
- If God wished to convey the idea of 24-hour days, how could he have said it more clearly?

The Appearance of History

- Any act of creation will necessarily carry with it the appearance of history.
 - The first vegetation, the sun and moon, animals, and Adam and Eve all would have looked older than they really were.
- This is normal for miracles.
 - Jesus turning water to wine (Jn 2:1-11)
 - Jesus feeding the 5000 with five loaves and two fish (Mt 14)
- God created with no more appearance of history than was necessary and without any intent to deceive us.



Concluding Observations

The Bible and Origins

- There was an factual, historical, supernatural creation of the heavens, earth, plants, animals, and man by God.
 - See Ex 20:11; 31:17; 1 Ch 1:1; Job 38:4-7; Mt 19:4-5; 1 Co 11:7-8
- We do not know for how long the unformed/unfilled condition of the earth lasted.
 - **Ge 1:2** 2 Now the earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
- The original earth might have been old, but the fashioned earth, vegetation, animals, and man are recent.

Concluding Observations

Summary

- Ultimately we have to believe what God has revealed about creation.
- No human being was present at creation, and we can't reproduce creation in a laboratory.
- God gave his revelation through Moses, who was educated and reliable.
- Genesis 1-2 should be exegeted in the same way as other Scripture.
- The truths revealed in Genesis are attested elsewhere in the Bible and by Jesus himself.

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General Revelation

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Causal Argument
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Design Argument
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Conscience

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Canon

Old Testament
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Christ

Jesus' Life
Jesus' Death
Jesus' Resurrection

Questions?