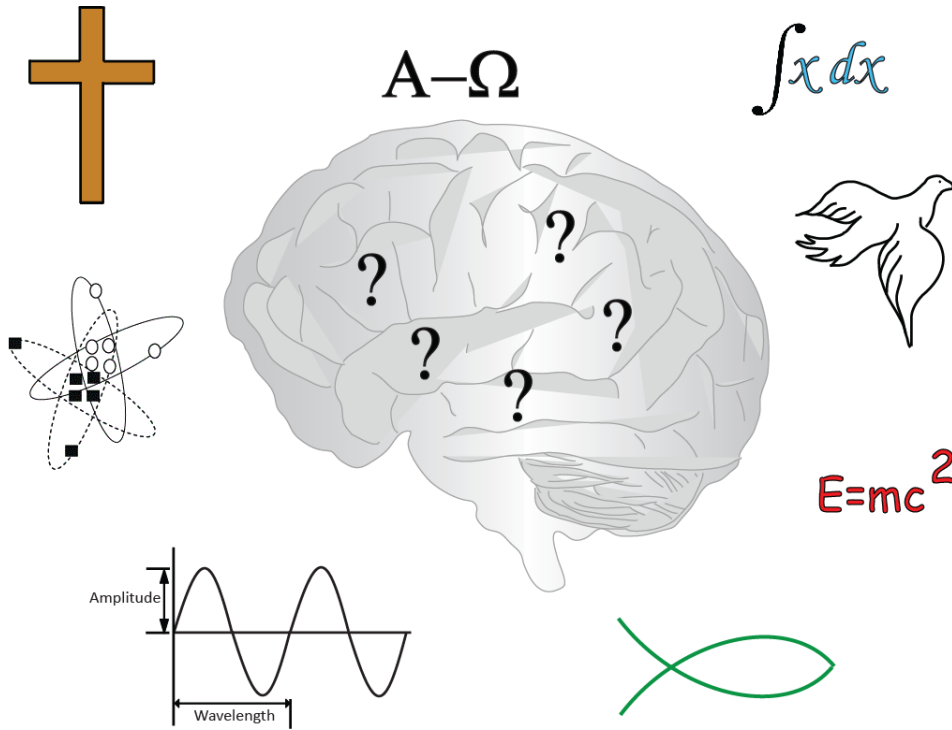


The First Peter Principle:

Know Why You Believe What You Believe



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Meaning and background of title

Most people know what the Peter Principle states, and if you can't immediately recall it, you will probably recognize it when you hear/read it. It states, "in a hierarchy every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence"⁽¹⁾. The point is that people tend to be promoted to higher positions as long as they can effectively perform the requirements of the new position; once someone reaches a level wherein they can't do the new job effectively they cease being promoted; they've reached their level of incompetence. This does not imply that they've reached a level wherein they are considered stupid, it just states that there is a level that most people stop being as effective as they were at other levels. Consider the case of someone who is highly talented in the performance of their discipline, maybe a computer programmer or an electronics technician; if they are promoted to the next level (say Director of Programmers or Director of Maintenance Systems) and they don't have the "people skills" to relate to their subordinates as the superior position or don't have the management skills to direct a group; they have reached a level that their skills are not adept at performing. This is no slap at people, just a statement of how organizational hierarchies tend to behave. This effect was named "The Peter Principle", after Dr. Laurence Peter.

During the period of Jesus' time on earth He had a disciple named Peter. After Jesus was crucified, and raised from the dead, Peter began testifying the truth of what he had seen. He wrote two epistles that were canonized into the Holy Bible. One of the points he detailed is something that I believe to be an absolute truth of life; know why you believe what you believe. The apostle Peter wrote it in this phrase – "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15) I believe that Peter's point was not to tell people "God said it, I believe it, that settles it" and be satisfied that you've answered their question. I think Peter's intention was that we need to be so aware of what we believe that we can give valid reasons for WHY we believe what it is that we believe. Peter was reportedly executed for his testimony regarding the life, sacrificial and atoning death and resurrection of Jesus; he believed it so firmly that he withstood execution for what he *KNEW*. Peter knew why he believed in Jesus as God, and salvation due to Jesus; he lived it, he saw it, it was his life. After Peter saw Jesus post-resurrection, and spent 40 days with Him, he couldn't be quieted; he knew what was right and he knew why he knew it was right. His encouragement is for us likewise.

As the disciple Peter lived some 1900 years before Dr. Laurence Peter I thought it good to title this book "The 1st Peter Principle". The phrase "Peter Principle" is well known, but the disciple's principle was penned first. I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Peter for his wit in coining the phrase; I hope no one is offended by my use, and twist, of the phrase.

Whatever you read in this book, whatever I write, please know that I am NOT trying to tell you what to believe. In the bible, God has already told us what to believe. I make no pretensions of buttressing the bible; it was here long before I was born, it will survive way past my life on earth and if it truly is God's word then God is big enough to back up His own word without my input.

My purpose here is to show that it is hugely significant that you know why you believe what you believe and I would like to put together some ideas that may help strengthen your belief. The apostle Peter told us to be prepared to give an answer for why we have the hope we have – this is an effort in that direction. There is a great deal of information to be put together that makes wonderful sense of the bible so that faith in God can be based on more than "God said it, I believe it, that settles it". I will try and show how, with a little research, you can see some incredible ideas that may not be so evident from first exposure to the information.

Preface

Have you ever considered what you know?

Have you ever considered how strongly you believe what you know?

(*Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?*)

- *Who* taught it to you?
- *What* does it mean to you?
- *When* did you learn it?
- *Where* did you learn it?
- *Why* do you believe it?
- *How* well can you describe it?

If you had to bet your life that $2+2=4$, would you be willing to accept that bet or would you back off and say, “well, maybe it’s not *always* four”? I don’t know of anyone who would argue with $2+2=4$; it is so easily demonstrated with sticks, lines in the dirt, rocks, Cheetos® or anything else that can be separated into numbered groups; people don’t generally argue with the statement.

There ARE people in this world who kill others for not agreeing with them or not looking like them – in other words they kill people for not being like them.

- In the U.S., and elsewhere, there are gangs that kill members of other gangs – because they’re not like them, they don’t dress the same, they’re from another neighborhood, etc.
- You can look on the Internet and find videos and stories of fanatical Muslims killing “infidels”, or non-believers.
- You can read factual stories about people killing doctors for practicing abortions.
- People are killed because of the color of their skin.
- Communist governments have killed citizens for trying to leave their countries to go elsewhere (*I’ve seen many memorial crosses in Berlin Germany where people were shot and killed for trying to cross the Berlin Wall; I lived in West Berlin for three years from 1981-1984*).
- People in China, North Korea and elsewhere are regularly imprisoned or killed for dissenting actions – political and Christian.
- People are robbed and killed all the time – because they look like they have something the perpetrator wants.

People have been, and will continue to be killed for who they are, where they are and what they believe. Do you know why you believe something strong enough to maintain your belief even if facing threats against your life because of it? The writer of the letter to the Hebrews, in the bible, wrote about some of the people who displayed faith in the face of terrible actions: “Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”⁽²⁾ The writer also wrote “Now faith is being sure of what we

hope for and certain of what we do not see"⁽³⁾ To be absolutely certain of things that you haven't seen but that you believe requires a strong reason to believe.

If you were stuck in a cave behind a rock fall and Superman was with you and told you not to worry, he'd break the rocks and get you out, would you be worried or just watch him go to work? You'd probably just watch him work; his reputation as a rescuer is phenomenal. You'd have a good reason to believe in Superman. The goal of this book is to arrange some information into a compilation that gives young Christians, and maybe some who aren't yet Christians, a solid reason to bet their lives on what the bible says about salvation. Let's go ahead and face it, everyone who draws a breath is betting that what they believe is the truth of life, or at least "A" truth of life.

In this writing, there will be no apology for accepting the truth of the bible; it will be proposed and accepted as fact. In the words of Arthur Pink, "No argument is entered into to *prove* the existence of God: instead, His existence is affirmed as a fact to be believed". (*Gleanings in Genesis*)

At some point I hope that the issue strikes home with the reader. One issue is that many, if not all, Christians run into situations where they'd like to know what to say to someone about their beliefs but remain somewhat befuddled about what to say, when to say something or they don't know how to explain a reason for their belief. A fool can ask more questions than a wise man can answer so it is understandable that we can all be confused or at a loss for an answer at times. I believe that all of us have had occasion to witness for Jesus and we've missed the chance by not recognizing it or being afraid to speak. We have reason to speak and to do so authoritatively. Matthew 28:19, 20 says ¹⁹"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Mark 13:11 "Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit." Jesus told us to speak and He told us that Holy Spirit would give us the words to say. We just need to know the topic.

At 18 years of age I knew that my eternal salvation was secured but I didn't know enough about it to discuss it with people who would disagree. In the Bible, the apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed - not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence - continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,"⁽⁴⁾ (*Yes, I know that the words "you" and "your" in this verse are plural and that people sometimes treat these as a directive, but I find no difficulty in assigning this particular edict to myself*). I never really considered the seriousness of "fear and trembling" until I got older. I had always read through that verse and kept on reading; I had been saved and considered the Bible as review material. I never thought much to about working through my salvation, I already had it as a 4th grader, and I never really thought about witnessing to others – I figured that's why we have preachers.

As I got older and my understanding grew I realized that Paul was discussing the seriousness of heaven vs. hell. *EVERYONE IS BETTING ON ETERNITY* in some fashion. Christians believe that we all deserve an eternal death based on our failure to follow God's righteous directives (*sin*) but that Jesus (*one of the three persons of God*) provided an atoning (*satisfaction for something*) sacrifice. He offers forgiveness of our sins to reconcile humans to the almighty and holy creator, God; we have been redeemed (*bought back*) from death to everlasting life. Jews believe that following the Torah laws will suffice for the afterlife (*Olam Ha Ba, and Gan Eden - an idyllic version of this world*). Atheists believe there is no God, or heaven, so there is no eternity of concern; Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Agnostics and everyone else believe their lifestyles will be acceptable to whatever lies beyond death. So whether you do believe in something or don't believe in anything in particular, you are betting that what you acknowledge now will suffice after you die.

A few years ago one of my neighbors was dying of cancer; I took some dinner to him and his wife one evening and tried opening a discussion about what happens after death. He told me that he'd heard it all

before and didn't want to discuss it or hear about it anymore as he was prepared to deal with whatever he faced. He'd always been able to handle life and was confident that he could handle anything he'd ever face in the future. His wife seconded the thought, commenting that he was a very strong man. They then turned the conversation away from any discussion of whatever would occur after his death. He passed away a few weeks later; I have often hoped that somewhere between our last conversation and his death God changed his mind.

I'm convinced that, at some time, we all wonder about what will occur after our lives here are complete and we die. When I pause to consider heaven, hell, salvation and damnation six friends come to mind –

- my dad
- Chris
- Andreas
- my mother-in-law
- Hank
- Earle

My dad, my mother-in-law, and Chris, I knew as strong Christians; two doubted the salvation offering of Jesus and the sixth might, or might not, have been a Christian; he believed in Jesus but I'm not sure he believed in salvation resulting from Jesus' atoning death to redeem the souls of humans who have all disobeyed God's directives. I would bet my life on the outcome of my dad's, mother-in-law's and Chris' lives because I knew them well and I know what they believed; I wouldn't bet a dog biscuit on what the other three believed.

It is VITAL that we not only know *that* we are saved, but that we know *how and why* we were saved as well as how others can be saved and be confident of salvation. We were directed by Jesus to tell people about Him including who He is and what He taught while He was here. Jesus said "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in ^[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Being able to teach people what Jesus commanded includes knowing what He said in the first place. In order to know what He said, we must read the Bible.

After taking lessons on a particular subject a person may know the topic fairly well, but it is certainly better grasped and understood to a greater extent after (s) he begins teaching it to others. Granted a person learns the subject before (s)he can teach it, but teaching it to others solidifies it in your mind better and you learn it more thoroughly when you teach it. The teacher must be able to answer questions regarding not only the what and the how of something, but also the why.

My martial arts sensei requires that after students reach a brown-black belt level (highest level before black belt) they teach many classes, under his tutelage, before being granted a testing opportunity for their black belt. This ensures that he knows that his students know how the techniques work as well as *why* each technique works and *why* the systematic mechanics of each maneuver proceed as they do. As I've spoken with students preparing to test for their black belts, and students who have received their black belts, they all have commented on how much more they've learned while teaching students with lower ranking belts compared to taking a class for themselves. It is with usage that we increase our knowledge. Similar to lifting weights, ballet, Calculus or any other discipline in which we strive to gain expertise – studying and working the discipline increases our performance, knowledge and understanding. There is no doubt that we don't have all the answers to all the questions regarding biblical topics and teachings; however, we should learn and know material well enough to conduct a sensible discussion.

1. Peter, Laurence J; Hull, Raymond (1969). The Peter Principle: Why Things Always Go Wrong.
 2. Hebrews 11:35-40
 3. Hebrews 11:1
 4. Philippians 2:12 NIV Bible
- [a] Or into

I would like to let the reader know at this point that my style of writing consists of including apologetics notes while writing; I like to present my case as I write. Instead of saying Jesus is God and He came to save us I prefer to present supporting information as I present the thoughts. This lends immediate credence to what I am saying as well as gives the reader a better understanding of why it makes sense.

Issues may be better understood if the supporting information is readily available instead of the reader having to run to footnotes and addendums to find additional information. Not to mention it is sometimes troublesome and not everyone is inclined to read footnotes for information validation. Sometimes explanations may seem a bit rigorous and wordy; if you find my style of writing to be more intense than you like, you may skip over the explanations - but keep in mind there is a lot of information in footnotes and explanations.

Basics of this book: a preview/synopsis

The purpose of this book is to make some information in the bible more easily understood in light of what we know outside the bible itself. For example, have you ever considered how the *orders* of creation and evolution match so well (*before getting ruffled, please note that I said the order matches well; I did NOT say that God used evolution, nor did I say that the orders are the same*), have you ever wondered how “something” can be created from “nothing”? I will address these and more. The beauty of it is, in line with Gen 11:6, we can understand much of what happened.

Hopefully this preview will allow the reader to see what I intend to cover in each section; in the event the reading becomes tedious the reader can refer back to this preview and decide if a particular section is worth their time and effort in understanding. I believe it is all worth your while; it is my prayer that you will as well. There will be some Greek and Hebrew text shown for explanation of bible terms; if you don’t read or speak Hebrew or Greek don’t let that bother you. Just treat those words like a picture of a tree or a rock; the English equivalent term will always accompany those words, they are only there for someone to validate my proper use of terminology (*and there’s always someone who wants to double check*)

I am writing this based on what I know and believe; there are plenty of people who disagree with my positions and I’m fine with that. This is not an exercise to get people to believe what I believe, it is an effort to show that you must reason for yourself what you believe.

First, I begin the book with discussing the bible’s purpose.

The purpose of the bible

We didn’t know from where we came, nor did we know why we’re here until God told us. We were made to serve a purpose and we had to be told what that purpose is, otherwise we would miss out on accomplishing the goals set for us. The bible tells us not only what our purpose is, but how we fell from any chance of completing it and how we have been restored to a position of being able to achieve these goals.

Seeming Biblical dichotomies

I mention these first because the issue is very important to the topic of this book. You need to know what you believe and why you believe it; sometimes Christians disagree over what the bible says so be prepared for disagreeing Christians as well as non-believers. I won’t venture into every dichotomy known or very far into any of them – I’m sure there are contradictory positions of which I am unaware; I’ll just introduce a couple and discuss the importance of researching your own position. Myriad churches have split over these issues. While that speaks volumes for human nature it doesn’t speak much for our studies and understanding.

What I knew when I left home

I only knew what my dad, preachers and Sunday school teachers had taught me. Since then I’ve realized that God demands so much more attention from us; He deserves our every thought and will have our acknowledgement of who He is whether we like it now or not. Obviously, I didn’t know nearly enough when I left home and had to study to learn more. The universe and all in it are made for Jesus and by Jesus; we are His and owe Him our total attention. Nothing is about us; it’s all about Jesus. Colossians 1:16 “For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.” When the apostle Paul wrote this, he said that we are created for Jesus; there is no allowance that we were made to satisfy ourselves – though we struggle to do so.

Some study includes knowing what terms in the bible mean. The reason I discuss this is that some doctrines hinge on definitions of words. The Gap Theory is based on the definition of the word “was” in Genesis 1:2 and other scriptures but the definition of that word is huge for that point. Knowing what you believe about the Gap Theory has a huge bearing on how you view the creation account detailed by Moses. Most people probably aren’t even aware that there is a Gap theory, much less what they think of it – but they’re willing to argue it. When I left home I had no idea any of this mattered, I just knew Jesus saved me and I was going to heaven; it turned out that I quickly realized I didn’t know enough to behave properly much less know enough to tell others what I believed. When I left home I was truly ignorant, you might say I was as dumb as a box of rocks; I’ve said it.

Not learning isn’t an option

With so much information presently available there is no acceptable reason for not learning the most important information that you can know. It is understandable that if you are a History major in college you won’t be required to take Calculus and Physics courses; likewise, if you are an Aeronautical Engineering major you won’t be required to take Liberal Arts and Law courses. However, we are all humans; we live and we will die. After we die, we will all face whatever is on the other side of death. Will it be a continuance of life as we know it, some other form of life, cessation of existence or what? There is plenty of information available to learn enough to know what you believe about life after death. If you are an Atheist there are many books to teach you that there is no God. If the God of the bible truly exists and has given us directions for what we will face we are compelled to figure it out. Matthew 7:7, 8 “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.” If God’s word is true then we can ask Him to show us the truth; we can look for the truth and find the truth. Notice that we are directed to actually make an effort – “seek”. God did not say just ask and He’ll give it to you. Here is our first research on a word (*or two*).

The Greek word translated as “ask” is αἰτέω (aiteō - Strong's G154) and it means:

1) to ask, beg, call for, crave, desire, require

The Greek word translated as “seek” is ζητέω (zēteō - Strong's G2212) and it means:

1) to seek in order to find

a) to seek a thing

b) to seek [in order to find out] by thinking, meditating, reasoning, to enquire into

c) to seek after, seek for, aim at, strive after

2) to seek i.e. require, demand

a) to crave, demand something from someone

There is an intensity to these words that requires effort to accomplish. This “ask” is not akin to pulling up to a drive-through at Burger King, asking for a burger and getting it because you have a couple of dollars in your pocket; this word details begging and craving. Similarly the word for “seek” indicates a craving for which a person strives. I would imagine a heroin addict is a good example of the meaning of this term; this person needs heroin just to keep going; we need God just to keep going rightfully.

With libraries, books and the Internet there are many ways to research topics. You can discover what makes sense and what falls short. Above all, if God truly exists then why don’t we read His directions (*the bible*) more and ask Him for our bearing? He is the source of all knowledge and wisdom and is the primary reference; unfortunately, we don’t always hear His answers and direction nor do we easily understand what the bible says without assistance from others. Also unfortunately, it won’t matter what excuse we have prepared to answer for our lack of studying and learning, God will not accept weakness or ignorance as a plea. Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” God issued the decree, not Paul – 2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,” If study is a directive, what is the acceptable excuse for not following a God issued decree?

Beginning from a perspective upon which you can agree

If you are going to discuss the bible, or any topic for that matter, what is the best way to approach the discussion? Should you begin speaking from a point upon which everyone agrees or open up and let them have it with both barrels of your religious shotgun? Paul said in Romans 12:18 "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" and Peter said in 1 Peter 3:15 "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect," Clearly, from a biblical perspective, you don't begin a conversation telling someone they will burn in hell for eternity if they're not a Christian. It's great for shock value, but completely void of compassion and love. You can begin from a point upon which all can agree and discuss without fighting - "we are all born and we all will die. What happens after we die? Does life mean anything? Do we cease to exist, or do we continue existing in another circumstance? Is that circumstance based on anything done in this life or do we start all over from nothing?" If it is based on something from this life, what is it that counts?

If you're going to discuss the bible with anyone, believer or not, you need to understand some ground rules. You cannot sensibly argue bible vs. science. There is not a lot of cause and effect testing allowed by the bible to support its claims. Parting the Red Sea by holding a staff cannot be repeated by humans in a test. "Jesus walked on the water" cannot be proven or disproved much less replicated by science; it must be believed or not. There is room for discussing science in light of the bible or the bible in light of science, but it has to be agreed that the bible is more of a historically based document and a book of prophecy than a physics text.

The bible was written as an historical and prophetic account not a scientific account/explanation.

It's amusing, or maybe just sad, that people argue science issues against the bible. I can understand people arguing historical points based on something they've learned differently, but to argue science against a non-science book is nonsensical. There are many points in the bible wherein one can suppose something could, or could not, have happened based on whether we can, or cannot, replicate the event. "God said let there be light" is not replicable. Moses wrote that he saw a burning bush that wasn't consumed by fire. Can we believe that? We can't replicate it. Jesus healed a blind man by smearing mud on his eyes- really? How? (John 9: ¹⁴ Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵ Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see.") We can't do that by telling someone to just see or by smearing mud on some blind person's eyes. It's not scientific; it's God. God said He made man from the dust of the earth and breathed life into Him, Genesis 2: ⁷ "the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." Apparently, He just used some more dirt to restore a human function.

I think that a more appropriate way of considering science and the bible in the same conversation is to look at science from the viewpoint of the bible. If the bible is an historical document, then why not look at science from an historical perspective? History is not a chemistry topic, nor is it a physics topic; but both chemistry and physics are historical issues. We can look at the changes in scientific knowledge over the millennia and compare it to what the bible has always said – without changing.

We can discuss the order of creation compared to the proposed order of the theory of evolution and find some amazing correlation. Over 3,400 years ago, Moses detailed the account of creation; in the past 150 years science has "discovered" an order that almost matches what Moses wrote. This particular section focuses on the bible being an historical/prophetic account and yet people try and argue scientific theory against what it says about history. Let's try and focus on the bible being an historical account and see how science matches what history says.

Evolution order similar to Creation order

I had read the bible plenty growing up and after I left home, but it wasn't until I went to college that I started realizing that I had to think through some issues and have a good reason for what I believe. It was probably my first biology class that made me begin looking at what science proposes and thinking thoroughly through issues. If Moses said God created the heavens and earth, then said that all the dry land was in one place, then said that plants were the first life forms followed by underwater animals and birds then land animals, then man; well... how different is that from what science says? In the beginning was a big bang, then all the dry land was in one place, then plants were the first life forms followed by underwater animals and birds then land animals, then man. As it so happens there is considerable correlation between the two, but there are also considerable differences. Hopefully this review and comparison will help some readers see some similarities and encourage them to learn enough to handle a creation side of this discussion.

Create

From what Hebrew term did we get the idea that God just made stuff because He said for it to become? Does it make ANY sense that something can come from nothing? This brief section sets the stage for discussing how something can be "created". Granted, this is a discussion regarding what we understand of physics and God can do whatever He wishes beyond what we understand; nevertheless we can understand something that makes sense of things created from "nothing".

Create vs. Form

This is a very brief section detailing the difference between creating and forming things. Arthur Pink wrote a masterful comparison of the creation account the plan of salvation and I just had to get it in here.

Creation 24 hour day?

The creation account says that God created the heavens and earth in six "days" and then rested on the seventh. No mention is made of what He did on the eighth day. There are several ideas on what time frame was intended by the word "day" in the creation account. Have you ever paused and taken notice that the bible was not written in English; that the Hebrew word that was translated into English as "day" may carry a different connotation than a 24-hour period? Does it really mean a specific 24-hour period? Let's look at this word and see what it means. How can it have an effect on what we think?

Recorded/measured time began on fourth day

Genesis 1: ¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

I didn't write this account; Moses wrote it by God's direction. Even while Moses called the first three creation periods יום (yowm), and that was translated into English as "day", God had yet to produce the system that marks time. Notice it was on the fourth "day" that He created the sun, moon and stars – and He stated that they were created to "serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years".

Light and Darkness on the first day, with no sun or moon?

Science proposes that the universe all developed from the instant of the big bang. All of a sudden, the massive energy moment that comprises our entire universe exploded and spread away from the point of origin; all of the matter in the universe comes from that energy. As the equation $E=mc^2$ shows, energy equals mass times the speed of light squared; if energy equals mass times a physical constant then the two may interconvert. All the mass in the universe came from this incredible energy that formed the big bang.

However, the bible says that the sun didn't exist until the fourth day - after plant life had begun to exist. Just how did plant life exist with no light? Was the big bang the first event, or were there things already in existence when the bang occurred?

Teknon vs Huois – Jesus IS God

The authors of the New Testament penned some letters that detail something quite interesting. The words they used had/have specific meanings. Have you ever noticed that Jesus was/is called the Son of Man and the Son of God many times? He was only called son (*by birth*) twice (*Mark 6:3 and Luke 2:48*). What's the difference? What do they mean? How could He be the Son of man and the Son of God at the same time? Why should we care?

Every time He was called the “son” of man, and every time He was called the “son” of God, the writers used the same Greek term that was translated into English as “son”. That word does NOT connote the idea of someone being someone else's offspring. Jesus was never called God's son/offspring in the sense that His life began after Mary became pregnant.

The Greek words that were translated into English as “son” are **ΤΕΚΝΟΝ** (teknon) and **ΗΥΙΟΣ** (huios); their definitions are discussed in this section.

Something from nothing – energy mass conversion

In the section above titled “Create” I asked if it made sense that God could create “something” from “nothing”. In this section, I will answer that question; it should make sense that not only is it possible, but you can understand how He did it. We cannot understand the mechanics of God telling something that doesn't exist to just “become” but at least we can see the idea of how it is reasonably possible. However, with understanding of what we now know, we can believe it all the more.

Science, Big Bang

Science has proposed a big bang for the event that caused the universe and all that is in it. If Genesis 11:6 is correct “The LORD said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.”, then God actually knew that we are intelligent enough to figure out how things work and make things work for us. Scientists have reasoned some of what probably occurred in sequencing and physics - they don't give attribute to God for causing it, but they've come to understand some of the reasons for the order of said events. If we understand why things played out as they did we have all the more reason to believe Moses' account from over 3,400 years ago – and he did it without the aid of several millennia of scientific study. He got his information from THE God who did the work.

Creation atmosphere

This is a brief discussion of the early atmosphere of earth. Moses wrote of the waters and the Holy Spirit separating the waters below from the waters above. Of what were those waters composed? Why did they need to be separated? Were there any benefits of, or reasons for, that situation? If you review the Hebrew term Moses used that was translated into “waters” not every definition intends H₂O water; the word can certainly imply an amine (*heavily nitrogen laden*) atmosphere. Nitrogen is vital for plants and a heavily nitrogen atmosphere would certainly aid in plant growth. Plant life was, indeed, the first life form mentioned by Moses and the first life form mentioned by scientists regarding evolution.

Evolution atmosphere

This section gets into some thought and speculation that is more intense than much of what has been presented already. I present this information in a format that does not deter from science but does explain how it matches with the Bible. My standpoint is biblical truth, the Bible is always correct. Any time

something agrees with the Bible I do not view it as supporting the Bible – the Bible does NOT require support from man or what we learn; either the Bible supports what we learn, or what we learn is wrong. When we can see how our knowledge matches the Bible it lends to stronger faith.

The two previous sections regarding atmosphere are not strictly biblical. The bible does not speak directly of the “atmosphere”; it speaks of the waters that Holy Spirit divided. Hopefully these two sections will lend some understanding. If you read it and don’t agree at least maybe you’ll have a new viewpoint from which to speak.

Back to the bible

This section is just a little more discussion of science compared to biblical truths.

Sun, moon and stars

The bible records that the sun, moon and stars were created during the 4th period; science assumes they all came from the same event that caused the earth. While it certainly makes sense that everything came from the same event we must keep in mind that God said His thoughts and ways are as high above our thoughts and ways as the heavens above the earth. How far above the earth is heaven? We don’t know, but surely it’s a long way (unless we’re only slightly removed by a wormhole in space). If, in fact, the earth was here four “days” before the sun, moon and stars, why the delay? If the earth was here, doing well, why did we need the sun?

Flat earth, static universe

I have previously discussed a bit of how science has changed over the years but the bible has remained the same. In this section I address it further to speak about the fact that God’s word does not change. Three times the writers of the New Testament record Jesus saying that Heaven and earth will pass away, but His word will never pass away. (Matt 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33). God has already addressed the spherical earth and the dynamic universe.

Flood of Noah, separation of continents

There is much disagreement about the global flood of Noah mentioned by Moses. Moses said it was a global event that killed every living thing that was not on the ark (excepting underwater life)

Humans are smart enough to figure it out (Gen 6), humans are dumb enough to miss what we learn (Romans 1)

Scientists have figured out much of what happened, to include why it occurred in that order. Moses wrote what happened over 3,400 years ago but did not detail *why*, only *that* God said for it to happen that way. We, as a race, are smart enough to figure out the order of what happened, but as a race we are dumb enough to ignore that this was all told millennia ago and we refuse to attribute the events to God – who told us He did it.

Effect without cause? How did it happen with no catalyst or purpose?

If a rock falls on your foot and breaks some bones there is a cause and effect. The falling rock caused your bones to be broken. Cause= falling rock, effect = broken bones. For something to happen there must be a cause. Events do not occur “just because”. Did the universe really happen just because? The bible says it happened because God told it to occur. Science says it happened because the situation was right and *just happening* was the next thing that occurred. There was no purpose, it just happened. Science also requires that there be a cause for an effect. How could there be an effect, accepted by science, without the cause it also requires? Granted, scientists are looking for the cause of the big bang, but God detailed the cause of creation.

Science and religion

Keeping in mind that the bible was written first, long ago, and hasn't changed a single word while science has not been around nearly as long and has continually changed –matching the bible more – it seems simple to understand which is true.

Some “Ifs”

I present some “if” propositions; syllogistic reasoning, if you will. “If this, then that”; if this is true then it leads to that conclusion. Paul wrote some “ifs” when he wrote his epistles/letters in the New Testament. These things ought to be considered when thinking of the importance or lack of importance of the bible, i.e. if there is no god, why should we care? If there is A god, what does it want? If there is God (THE God, not A god), what did He say and how do we know it?

Hell is eternal

This section is a basic review of the topic of Hell; I've capitalized it because it is a proper noun, the name of a place. It exists; it serves a purpose and it has been described. This is not a dissertation regarding hell. Many people have written regarding what they believe the bible says about hell; some say it is just temporary, some say it doesn't exist. Jesus lived and fulfilled prophecies from hundreds of years before His incarnation – He gave stern warnings regarding Hell. These are surely stalwart exhortations.

Prophecies of Jesus the Messiah/Christ/Savior

This is a list of some of the prophecies of Jesus along with their fulfillment.

Reasons to believe the bible and reasons to not believe others

This is pretty much a restatement of what has already been presented. When I was in the Air Force I heard someone describe the best way to present information; he said that you should tell your audience what you are going to tell them, then tell it to them, then tell them what you told them. Basically, deliver a synopsis, cover the information and then briefly rehash everything. This section is the wrap-up. Surely this book does NOT cover all the reasons to believe in the bible; no one could cover that. Faith is the reason to believe the bible.

[The purpose of the bible](#)

The bible tells us who God is, who we are, how He relates to us and how we can relate to Him.

Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” The bible begins with God and who He is - the creator of everything that exists. If it were to just say “In the beginning God.” and stop there, that would be enough – after all, when telling Moses who He is He said “I am that I am”.⁽¹⁾ God did not get into a long dissertation regarding who He is or what power He possesses; He basically just said I’m me, I did it because it’s what I wanted, deal with it.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.⁽²⁾

The first mention of man is regarding our position on earth – we were assigned as made in God’s image and put in supreme authority over all things on earth. Strong’s exhaustive concordance defines “dominion” (רָדָה radah, Hebrew term = H7287) as: to rule, have dominion, dominate, tread down. Clearly, according to God’s word, we were created to run planet earth.

The second mention, in almost the same breath details that we, above all else, were created in the image of God. Why would we be created in the image of God, the supreme sovereign ruler of all that exists? He didn’t create earthworms in His image, and we named the planet after them, or did we name them after the planet? If God created us in His image, we must have a special purpose. Everything else was just made, nothing in His image until He got to man.

God told man to “Be holy because I am Holy”.⁽³⁾ God did not tell giraffes or cats to be holy; they are not equipped with the cognitive processing brains that we have. For the most part, animals behave according to developed behaviors learned due to positive and negative feedback. We can’t sit down and discuss with a dog why it’s a bad idea for him to have a bowel movement in the house, but if we train a dog correctly we can get him to behave in a desired fashion. Humans, on the other hand, can process why certain behaviors are better than others. We have the ability to mentally process so much because much is required of us. Being holy is our directive. That IS hard to do. I recall talking with my dad once when I was in my twenties; we were discussing how to be holy and why we should be holy. I made a very basic observation and said something along the lines of “you know dad, being holy isn’t really all that hard; all we have to do is look at every thing we do as a single choice and then make the proper choice.” He looked at me and replied something like “yep, that’s all we have to do – look at every little thing as a choice and make the right choice. Good luck with that son. Do you realize how many choices we make every day?” I get it now; we are so busy with things running at us and past us that we hardly ever stop long enough to consider what we’re doing much less take the time at every moment. It’s a sad commentary on our focus, but it’s a rare individual who can consider God at every moment of the day. As we are supposed to be holy – at every moment of life – we need to consider holiness as a lifestyle and make it a way of life. It’s truly difficult, but it’s expected and required. It’s part of why we are here.

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.⁽⁴⁾ Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹² In a loud voice they were saying: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” ¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and

under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!”⁽⁵⁾ We will be praising God in heaven. God created us, in part, to praise Him. You may think that it’s egotistical, to create people to worship Him, but give it a moment of thought. Can anyone else, in all of creation, do what God can do? Surely He’s worthy of praise – the apostle John said that He receives praise, from all in heaven at their own choice.

We were made to be loved by God. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”⁽⁶⁾ But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁽⁷⁾ God made us in His image and loved us enough that, after we sinned, He, himself, actually paid the price of His justice to restore us to a position in which He could still have us with Him.

The purpose of the bible is to tell us these truths about ourselves and God. The bible tells us the history of Israel, His chosen nation, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; it tells us prophecies of things to come for Israel and prophecies of the coming of the Christ – Jesus, God Himself. The New Testament details the fulfillment of the prophecies of Jesus.

Everything we need to know for eternity is in the bible. If you are an Aeronautical Engineer and you know the value of the square root of pi (*1.77245... for those of you who are curious*), that information won’t help for eternity. If you are a CEO and you can quote the projected business plan for your company for the next five years; that information won’t help you for eternity. The only thing that will help you when this life is complete is knowledge and belief in the salvation provided by Jesus. ***NOTHING ELSE WILL MATTER.***

1. Exodus 3:14
2. Genesis 1: 26-28
3. Leviticus 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7; 1 Peter 3:16
4. Revelation 4:11
5. Revelation 5:11-13
6. John 3:16
7. Romans 5:8

Seeming Biblical dichotomies

A dichotomy is an event wherein there are mutually exclusive, or contradictory, positions on a single topic.

Jesus is God and Jesus is the son of God

I'm not sure how to address this issue at this point of the book. I address it in the section titled "Teknon vs. Huioi – Jesus IS God". Jesus is, in fact, God and Jesus is, in fact, the son of God. The two are NOT incompatible in this case; the Greek terms make it clear.

Free will vs. predestination/election

A popular dichotomy is people aligning with election/predestination of our eternities (*God's sovereign right and position as almighty creator and ruler of the universe*) or free will (*the role a person plays in his/her own salvation*). There are myriad scriptures that detail God's sovereign right and position to predetermine our individual destinies; Romans chapter nine is a great place to begin researching this topic. It compares us to clay and God as the potter; the clay doesn't get to question the potter as to whether it will be a nice vase or an ashtray, it is made for the purpose that suits the potter. People who align with free will tend to read John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." as saying that "whoever believes in Him" implies our ability to choose to believe or not. Each of us should do our own research and find what the bible says, not what we want the bible to say. There are very few things the bible says about us that are comforting; the things it says about God/Jesus are very comforting (and terrifying when we cross Him), but not so much about us, our abilities, our choices, our performances, and our righteousness, ad infinitum.

We should know what the bible says because when we are discussing it with people we do not have the freedom of position to say what we want; we can only say what the bible teaches. I have an uncle who, when discussing the topic of predestination/free will, said "if this issue affects the way in which I witness to people I am in trouble anyway"; his point being that when witnessing to someone your only concern must be that person's salvation and his/her understanding of the gospel and salvation message; we cannot be sidetracked by our thoughts of "well, maybe God didn't elect this person to be saved so I don't have to put any effort into this one" or "this person is a jerk and won't ever submit to God and accept salvation so I don't need to put effort into this one" or "I'm going to witness to this guy until he accepts Jesus, he has to understand it some day".

I have a friend who wanted to read this section about seeming dichotomies when I completed it, so I emailed it to him for his review. When we spoke about it he said that I left him wanting to know where I stood on this issue – free will or election. I told him that I wasn't trying to give an answer to what I believe as it is up to the reader to figure out which to believe. He told me that he didn't want to figure it out, it was my job to tell him what to believe and why to believe it. I've known him for quite a few years and he already has a position on this, but was making a devil's advocate argument trying to get me to lay out my position for a reader. So... I believe in God's absolute right of choice. In the Old Testament text, King James Version does not use the word "sovereign", NIV uses "sovereign" 303 times; the Hebrew writers did not use a specific word meaning "sovereign", it was implied by position of God being almighty.

In the New Testament the writers used the Greek word *despotēs* (δεσπότης) four times. This particular word is amusing to me in that it is one of the words in a particular sentence I recall from my Greek class in college over 20 years ago. I never thought it would be anything more than a funny phrase to me, and

only me. In classical Greek that phrase is “ὁ δεσπότης οὐκ ἐστὶν χαλεπός” which translated is “Oh master, don’t be so difficult”; it’s just a phrase from my text book that’s been in my head for a long time – maybe for just this specific purpose. δεσπότης is the Greek term for “master” or “Lord”; it is used four times to declare that God is the master of the universe. Our English word “despot” (a ruler with absolute power and authority; a person exercising power tyrannically) is derived from δεσπότης. In Rev 6:10, especially, God is addressed as Master and asked how long He will refrain from judging those on earth. This lends to His position as absolute ruler and completely in charge of judging people. Considering God is the autocratic ruler of all that exists, and is called the “despot” who judges, go read Romans chapter 9. ¹⁰Not only that, but Rebekah’s children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. ¹¹Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: ¹²not by works but by him who calls—she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” ¹³Just as it is written: “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” ¹⁴What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! ¹⁵For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” ¹⁶It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. ¹⁷For Scripture says to Pharaoh: “I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” ¹⁸Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. ¹⁹One of you will say to me: “Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?” ²⁰But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” ²¹Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?” Paul said that God loved one boy and hated another before either was born and had ever done anything. The Greek term for “hated” is miseō (μισέω) and actually means “to hate, pursue with hatred, detest”; Esau hadn’t yet been born and God said He hated him. Paul also writes that even if people are, like clay pottery, made the same way from the same material, we lack the position to question God in His choice of how, or why, we are formed. It is very clear that God will have mercy on whom He chooses to have mercy – it is His choice, not ours; it’s not even ours to question and He obviously decided before we were born. That doesn’t sit well with our mindset of being in control of anything, but God pretty well details that He is what the universe is about, not us. In light of this, amongst other scriptures, I am completely convinced that God elects us to salvation; we do not make the choice. And I think that the granddaddy verse of them all, on this topic, is John 15:16 “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.” *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you ...”*; this leaves no room for believing that we have the free will to make the choice. That may hurt someone’s feelings or cause a disagreement, but I didn’t write it, God said it. It’s not my job to defend God, only to tell what He said. To bring in an idea from my father – *how could we choose to love and fear an invisible, undetectable God unless He makes Himself known to us by His choice?* The term predestination does not apply to every little thing we do in life; the key part of the word is destination. The destiny of salvation or destruction is decided before we are born. What I’ll have for dinner tomorrow night is foreknown, but probably not forced upon me by God; it’s not a destiny issue. Whether I will exercise today is foreknown, but probably not predetermined and forced upon me. However, when I was a kid, my dad knew that I was going to eat collard greens for dinner before I knew it; I didn’t like them, EVER. But I had to eat them when mom made them – and that was predetermined and as far as dinner was concerned it was predestined.

I agree with my uncle that predestination cannot play a part in with whom or how I will share the gospel. I have no idea who God will save so I must treat everyone as though they will be saved. I have no option to be picky; Jesus said to witness to everyone. But for the sake of my friend’s curiosity, my position is that God chooses/elects who will be saved. After saying that, I cannot allow that anything can supersede God’s sovereignty, so if, in fact, He has designed every motion I make, that’s fine and I have to live with it, but I will consent that God allows us to act according to our own desires at times and holds us responsible for our actions.

I was originally going to just stop here and leave the topic as is, but after some consideration I thought this may sound a bit hard core if I just leave it at I believe in predestination – God decided it, I believe it, that settles it - and that's that. But to leave the reader with a bit more thought on the matter I will defer to someone with much better skills than I possess; Loraine Boettner wrote a book titled The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination in which he details, as follows, arguments on the Calvinist and the Arminian sides of predestination vs. free will.

“It is a fact that in His providential government of the world God does not confer the same or equal favors upon all people.” Boettner then discusses peoples of all walks of life, rich, poor, young, old, in Christian societies and families, in pagan societies and families, etc. and the influence those situations have on people constrained to them. Would the same kid born into a rich Christian family be likely to grow to be the same adult as a poor kid raised in a broken pagan family had he been born in the same circumstances, and vice versa? Boettner's point is that it is inarguable that people are born into and placed into different circumstances and it is by our creator's choice, he continues “And if we are to believe that the world is governed by a personal and intelligent Being, we must also believe that these inequalities have not risen by chance or accident, but through purpose and design, and that the lot of every individual has been determined by the sovereign good pleasure of God. “Even Arminians,” says N.L. Rice, “are obliged to acknowledge that God makes great in the treatment of the human family, not only in the distribution of temporal blessings, but spiritual gifts also, - a difference which compels them, if they would be consistent, to hold the doctrine of election If sending of the Gospel to a people, with the divine influence accompanying it, does not amount to a personal election, most assuredly the withholding of it from a people amounts generally to reprobation.”

Boettner goes on to make the following point(s): “There is, in fact, no single member of this fallen race who is not treated by his Maker better than he deserves. And since grace is favor shown to the undeserving, God has the sovereign right to bestow more grace upon one subject than upon another. “The bestowment of common grace upon the non-elect” says W.G.T. Shedd, “shows that no election does not exclude from the kingdom of heaven by Divine efficiency, because common grace is not only an invitation to believe and repent, but an actual help toward it: and a help that is nullified solely by the resistance of the non-elect, and not by anything in the nature of common grace, or by any preventive action from God. The fault or the failure of common grace to save the sinner, is chargeable to the sinner alone; and he has no right to plead a fault of his own as the reason why he is entitled to a special grace.” (Calvinism. Pure and Mixed, pg 59)

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” This is an opportunity to be saved; and nothing outside the man's own nature prevents his believing. Shedd has expressed this idea very well in the following words: “A beggar who contemptuously rejects the five dollars offered by a benevolent man, cannot charge stinginess upon him because after this rejection of the five dollars he does not give him ten. Any sinner who complains of God's passing him by in the bestowment of regenerating grace after his abuse of common grace, virtually says to the High and Holy one who inhabits eternity, ‘Thou hast tried once to convert me from sin; now try again, and try harder.’” (Calvinism. Pure and Mixed, pg 51)

Boettner follows with: “When the Arminian admits that Christ died not for the fallen angels or demons, but only for fallen men, he admits limited atonement and in principle makes the same kind of a distinction as does the Calvinist who says that Christ died for the elect only.”... “We may give to one beggar and not to another for we do not owe anything to either.”... “If ten men each owe a certain creditor one thousand dollars and he for reasons of his own forgives the debts of seven but collects from the other three, the latter have no grounds for complaint. If three criminals are sentenced to be hanged for having committed murder and then two of them are pardoned – perhaps it is found that they have rendered distinguished service to their country in time of war – does that render the execution of the third unjust? Plainly, No; for in his case there is no intervening cause as to why he should not suffer for his crime. And if an earthly prince may justly do this, shall not the sovereign Lord of all be allowed to act in the same manner toward His rebellious subjects?”

Sons of God

Another seeming dichotomy – a favorite of mine – is found in Genesis 6:2&4 “²the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. ⁴The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.” Most people tend to align with two major positions on this one; some think the “sons of God” were angels, some think they were the “male descendants of Seth” (a 3rd line of thought on this is that the “sons of God” were rulers or princes, or “gods”. The word “God” in this phrase is “Elohiym” which includes “rulers”, “judges” in the definition, so this use would allow “God” to refer to sons of human rulers, etc – but this doesn’t generally get much consideration in the grand scheme of “the major thoughts” and that would probably force the phrase to be “sons of Gods”, plural) It has also been proposed that the “sons of God” were demons who possessed human men who then had sex with women and produced large offspring – the Nephilim. I don’t hold to that idea very much as a human mating with another human would generally produce normal human offspring, wouldn’t they? That’s the way we breed now; there aren’t, presently, any groups of exceedingly large people on earth.

I will readily admit that I’m not completely sold out on any position here. I can easily understand the thought that “sons of God” refers to rulers and princes at the time. I can also understand sons of God being angels in the text; “sons of God” and “daughters of men” - just seems too extreme a delineation for them to be of the same lineage.

The folks who believe the phrase refers to angels usually look at this phrase and compare it to others of the exact same terms in Hebrew text in Job 1:6, 2:1 and 38:7. As the exact same phrase is employed in these specific, and identifiable, discussions of angels in Job, there is good reason to accept that this phrase is referring to angels in Gen 6.

In his *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, pg 199, Theissen says, speaking of Jude 6, “It may be that Jude has the Septuagint reading of Deut 32:8 in mind. There God is said to have divided the nations “according to the number of the angels of God.” It is assumed that God appointed one or more angels over each of the nations. The fact that various nations are thus under one or another of these angelic “princes” is clear from Daniel 10:13, 20; 11:1; 12:1). To leave their own principality might thus mean that they became unfaithful in the performance of their duties; but more probably it means that they sought to obtain a more coveted principality.”

Deuteronomy 32:8 “When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the people according to the number of the sons of Israel. (Masoretic text; Dead Sea Scrolls (see also Septuagint) *Sons of God*).” Theissen discusses that the Septuagint says that the angels are appointed over nations and principalities and that Deuteronomy 32:8 delineates these angels as the “sons of God” when translating from Hebrew to Greek. Here we have another instance wherein angels are referred to as “sons of God”.

Aligning with the “sons of God” being the male descendants of Seth is usually due to a person not accepting that angels are the sons of God who mated with human females and made offspring because they are not of “like kind” and only like kinds can mate and reproduce. In Genesis chapter 1, everything that reproduced did it amongst their own kind; so it is reasonable to assume that only like kinds can mate. Have you ever seen a monkey-dog, or a cat-tree? No; monkeys can’t mate with dogs and cats cannot mate with trees. There is some good sense to this position. However, when you read in Isaiah 6:² “Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar”. As this angel probably appeared in his natural form one can easily note that seraphim (angels) have faces, feet and hands – implying a head, arms and legs upon which to mount said appendages. I would guess (*even though it’s not mentioned*) that they probably have torsos upon which to attach their legs and arms. Reading in Genesis 18:¹ “The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. ² Abraham looked up and saw three

men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.” One of the “men” was the LORD, the other two were angels whom God sent on to Sodom to remove Lot before blowing those towns up. The bible records these individuals as “men” thereby implying that they had the same physical form as Abraham. To say that humans cannot mate with angels is speaking beyond information given in the bible. We are told that there is no marriage in heaven (Matthew 22:30), and for angels to have come to earth to marry women almost counters this idea – except that these marriages were on earth. We are not told of angels’ reproductive abilities, or the absence of such. To assert that human females cannot mate with individuals who were described as “men” (Moses didn’t say they looked like men, he said they *were* men) is to go beyond what the bible says and take literary license with God’s word.

To accept “sons of God” as intending male offspring from Seth’s lineage is to ignore the meaning of the word “God” in the phrase; Strong’s Concordance (reference: H430 – *élōhiym* אֱלֹהִים) defines this use of “God” as Elohiym:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) (plural) | a) god, goddess |
| a) rulers, judges | b) godlike one |
| b) divine ones | c) works or special possessions of God |
| c) angels | d) the (true) God |
| d) gods | e) God |
| 2) (plural intensive - singular meaning) | |

According to www.blueletterbible.org, King James version details 2606 times this term was used in the Old Testament in the following manners: God 2346, god 244, judge 5, GOD 1, goddess 2, great 2, mighty 2, angels 1, exceeding 1, God-ward + 04136 1, godly 1. It details the usage in Gen 6:2&4 as intending “God” (definition “2e” above). To assign Elohiym as an attribute, or name, for Seth is beyond where I am prepared to venture with my beliefs. Some people accept that; you must decide what you believe on each topic you study.

David was called “a man after mine own heart” (Acts 13:22); Abraham was called “the friend of God” (James 2:23); the bible says that “The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend” (Exodus 33:11); neither David, Abraham or Moses were called God, nor their descendants called “sons of God”. Abraham and David have been called righteous, Seth is barely mentioned in the bible and righteousness is not one of his detailed attributes. To lend the title of Elohiym to Seth is not intellectually honest.

Strong’s also defines “son” (reference: H1121 – *ben* בֶּן) as:

- 1) son, grandson, child, member of a group
- a) son, male child
- b) grandson
- c) children (pl. - male and female)
- d) youth, young men (pl.)
- e) young (of animals)
- f) sons (as characterisation, i.e. sons of injustice [for un- righteous men] or sons of God [for angels])
- g) people (of a nation) (pl.)
- h) of lifeless things, i.e. sparks, stars, arrows (fig.)
- i) a member of a guild, order, class

As God doesn’t have any physical offspring (*except considering Jesus {God} as the physical offspring of Holy Spirit’s {God’s} impregnation of Mary*) none of these physical offspring attributes can be applied to any humans living during that time; definitions “f”, “g” and “i” can apply as angels. However, Adam was termed “son of God” in Luke 3:38 so we know that calling humans “sons of God” can be appropriate.

Recall, “²the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. ⁴The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.” then consider that Moses wrote “the sons of God” and “the daughters of humans”. IF “the sons of God” were Seth’s descendants/offspring, what sense does it make to state that these daughters to which they were attracted were delineated as humans? Isn’t it a given that the male offspring of Seth would be attracted to female humans? Why is there a delineation of the women being human if the *sons of God* were human also? It seems akin to me introducing my wife by saying “hello, this is my female human wife Suzanne; we are mated because we are of the same kind”. I think that when God put this in the bible He did so in the specific language He used it was stated in proper speech of the time when Moses wrote it, but over the course of time languages change and we need to be sure that we understand what was written and it’s meaning.

I find it much easier, and more intellectually honest, to accept that “men” (*angels*) with arms, legs, hands, heads and faces, etc, about whom we are never told of their reproductive abilities, are able to mate with women – who also have arms, legs, hands, heads and faces, etc, than to assign Seth the title of Elohiym. Considering that all of Seth’s descendants, except Noah, died in the flood speaks poorly of the position that his offspring were righteous “sons of God”. (Exception(s) – we don’t know if Noah’s wife, or his sons’ wives, were strictly from Seth’s lineage or maybe from some other offspring of Adam and Eve; no matter, in any case they were ONLY saved due to Noah’s righteousness, not their own). All of Seth’s offspring except Noah deserved, and received, death by drowning.

Recall that in Genesis 1:27, God made Adam in His own image. Moses wrote in Genesis 5:3 “When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.” this was after Adam had sinned and been expelled from the Garden of Eden. Seth was made in Adam’s fallen image, not in the righteous holy image of God. To assign Seth the title of Elohiym is not acceptable to me.

These arguments have been going on for centuries and no one has yet shut down other views in total; it seems that we will have these discussions until Jesus returns - just find your position and know why you hold to that. Be ready to change your mind in the event you are later convinced that another position is correct.

In line with this last sentence, I have done much studying and wondering about my position on this particular topic recently, especially because a long time friend and I have hammered away at each other over this exact topic for the past couple of years. I held tightly to the “sons of God” being angels position, she held to descendants of Seth. However, recently I’ve been reading Alexander Hislop’s “Two Babylons, or THE PAPAL WORSHIP proved to be THE WORSHIP OF NIMROD AND HIS WIFE” and Mr. Hislop has written something that presents a great enlightenment as to the way we should look at this text. Hislop is discussing how Nimrod and his wife, Semiramis, can be referred to as brother-sister, husband-wife, father-daughter, mother-son, etc. Mr. Hislop has, at this point, presented part of his case establishing Cush, also known as “Bel” or “Belus” as the father of false beliefs and having man’s language confounded by God. Cush was the father of Nimrod (Gen 10:8) and Nimrod was also known as Ninus – husband of Semiramis (she was also known as Rhea and Cybele). There is a lot of cross-referencing of names amongst the folks in this story, as it spreads across many civilizations and languages. Nimrod has also been identified as Kronos and Saturn. I will now refer to Mr. Hislop for further clarification...

“Now there is no reason to believe that Semiramis alone (although some have represented the matter so) built the battlements of Babylon. We have express testimony of the ancient historian, Megasthenes, as preserved by Abydenus, that it was “Belus” who surrounded Babylon with a wall.” * As “Bel” the

Confounder, who began the city and tower of Babel, had to leave both unfinished, this could not refer to *him*. It could refer only to his son Ninus, who inherited his father's title and who was the first actual king of the Babylonian empire, and, consequently Nimrod. The real reason that Semiramis, the wife of Ninus, gained the glory of finishing the fortifications of Babylon, was that she came in the esteem of the ancient idolaters to hold a preponderating position, and to have attributed to her all the different characters that belonged, or were supposed to belong, to her husband. Having ascertained, then, one of the characters in which the deified *wife* was worshipped, we may from that conclude what was the corresponding character of the deified *husband*. Layard distinctly indicates his belief that Rhea or Cybele, the "tower-crowned" goddess, was just the female counterpart of the "deity presiding over bulwarks or fortresses;" † and that this deity was Ninus, or Nimrod, we still have further evidence from what the scattered notices of antiquity say of the first deified king of Babylon, under a name that identifies him as the husband of Rhea, the "tower building" goddess. That name is Kronos or Saturn. ‡ It is well known that Kronos, or Saturn, was Rhea's husband; but it is not so well known who was Kronos himself.

* CORY'S *Fragments*, pp. 45, 46.

† LAYARD'S *Ninevah and its Remains*, vol ii. pp, 456, 457.

‡ In the Greek mythology, Kronos and Rhea are commonly brother and sister. Ninus and Semiramis, according to history, are not represented as standing in any such relation to one another; but this is no objection to the real identity of Ninus and Kronos; for, 1st, the relationships between the divinities, in most countries are peculiarly confounding - Osiris, in Egypt, is represented at different times, not only as the son and husband of Isis, but also her father and brother (Bunsen, vol. i, pp. 438); then, secondly, whatever the deified mortals might be before deification, on being deified they came into new relationships. On the *apotheosis* of husband and wife, it was necessary for the dignity of both that both alike should be represented as of the same celestial origin - as both supernaturally the children of God. **Before the flood, the great sin that brought ruin on the human race was, that the "Sons of God" married others than the daughters of God, - in other words, those who were not spiritually their sisters.** - (Gen. vi. 2, 3.) **In the new world, while the influence of Noah prevailed, the opposite practice must have been strongly inculcated; for a "son of God" to marry any one but a daughter of God, or his own "sister" in the faith, must have been a mesalliance and a disgrace. Hence, from a perversion of a spiritual idea, came, doubtless, the notion of the dignity and purity of the royal line being preserved the more intact through the marriage of royal brothers and sisters.** This was the case in Peru (PRESCOTT, vol. i. p. 18) , in India (HARDY, p. 133), and in Egypt (Wilkinson, vol. iv. p. 385). Hence the relation of Jupiter to Juno, who glorified that she was "*soror et conjux*" - "sister and wife" - of her husband. Hence the same relation between Isis and her husband Osiris, the former of whom is represented as "lamenting her *brother* Osiris." - (BUNSEN, vol. i. p. 419.) For the same reason, no doubt, was Rhea, made the sister of her husband Kronos, to show her divine dignity and equality."

Two Babylons, pg 31 (bold and italics emphasis my own)


It seems a simple discussion at this point. The "sons of God" and "daughters of men" in Gen 6 must have all been human, just not of the same spiritual family/relationship to God. And this is in total alignment with Paul's exhortation in 2 Corinthians 6:14 "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"

Did Jacob wrestle with God almighty and win?

I wasn't even going to mention this at all, but, again, a friend brought it up; this is not even a classical dichotomy that people argue over much but it was presented to me by a friend who wondered why an omnipotent God couldn't beat up one of His own creation.

Gen 32: ²⁴ So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. ²⁶ Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." ²⁷ The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. ²⁸ Then the man said, "Your name will no

longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”²⁹ Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.” But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there.³⁰ So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”

There is no dichotomy here. Moses plainly wrote that Jacob wrestled with a “man”; angels have been referred to as men (*Gen 18 with Abraham, Luke 24 at the tomb, etc*). The Hebrew term used for man, in this instance, is *iysh*  Strong's H376 – defined it as

- 1) man
- a) man, male (in contrast to woman, female)
- b) husband
- c) human being, person (in contrast to God)
- d) servant
- e) mankind
- f) champion
- g) great man

Clearly, Jacob did not wrestle with God almighty; even though Jacob said he saw God (Elohiym) face to face - and lived - he obviously had not actually fought with God in person. He had, more than likely, seen an angel face to face and was obviously impressed; he had wrestled with an angel and fared well. Even though the bible account says that the angel could not overpower Jacob, it also says that he touched Jacob's hip socket (Strong's defines it as the outside of the thigh where the sword is worn) and waylaid him with a limp for life. The account does not detail whether the angel was acting under limited rules of engagement; Satan was limited in his actions upon Job so it is reasonable to believe that the angel with whom Jacob wrestled was not allowed to make every effort to hogtie Jacob. With a single touch Jacob was limping for the rest of his life, so the angel must have been able to deliver more of a blow than he had exerted while wrestling.

God is spirit, not material, we don't see His face; we can see His glory. Jesus said, in John 4:24 that God is spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and truth. God told Moses, in Exodus 33:¹⁹ And the LORD said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.”²⁰ But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.” Jacob obviously did not wrestle with God almighty, face to face, and fight to a draw; nor did he actually see God face to face. There is no paradox in this story. It just needs to be read in light of the whole of the bible.

In another story of a bible character thinking/saying he encountered God when it was actually an angel the story of Samson's mom and dad being told of his birth before Samson was born details a likewise occurrence. Judges 13:2-23 (² *A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was childless, unable to give birth.* ³ *The angel of the LORD appeared to her and said, “You are barren and childless, but you are going to become pregnant and give birth to a son.* ⁴ *Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean.* ⁵ *You will become pregnant and have a son whose head is never to be touched by a razor because the boy is to be a Nazirite, dedicated to God from the womb. He will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines.”* ⁶ *Then the woman went to her husband and told him, “A man of God came to me. He looked like an angel of God, very awesome. I didn't ask him where he came from, and he didn't tell me his name.* ⁷ *But he said to me, “You will become pregnant and have a son. Now then, drink no wine or other fermented drink and do not eat anything unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite of God from the womb until the day of his death.”* ⁸ *Then Manoah prayed to the LORD: “Pardon your servant, Lord. I beg you to let the man of God you sent to us come again to teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born.”* ⁹ *God heard Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman while she was out in the field; but her husband Manoah was not with her.* ¹⁰ *The woman hurried to tell her husband, “He's here! The man who appeared to me the other day!”* ¹¹ *Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, “Are you the man who talked to my wife?” “I am,” he said.* ¹² *So Manoah asked him, “When your words are fulfilled, what is to be the rule that governs the boy's life and work?”* ¹³ *The angel of the LORD answered, “Your wife must do all that I have*

told her. ¹⁴ She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, nor drink any wine or other fermented drink nor eat anything unclean. She must do everything I have commanded her.” ¹⁵ Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “We would like you to stay until we prepare a young goat for you.” ¹⁶ The angel of the LORD replied, “Even though you detain me, I will not eat any of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to the LORD.” (Manoah did not realize that it was the angel of the LORD.) ¹⁷ Then Manoah inquired of the angel of the LORD, “What is your name, so that we may honor you when your word comes true?” ¹⁸ He replied, “Why do you ask my name? It is beyond understanding.” ¹⁹ Then Manoah took a young goat, together with the grain offering, and sacrificed it on a rock to the LORD. And the LORD did an amazing thing while Manoah and his wife watched: ²⁰ As the flame blazed up from the altar toward heaven, the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame. Seeing this, Manoah and his wife fell with their faces to the ground. ²¹ When the angel of the LORD did not show himself again to Manoah and his wife, Manoah realized that it was the angel of the LORD. ²² “We are doomed to die!” he said to his wife. “We have seen God!” ²³ But his wife answered, “If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain offering from our hands, nor shown us all these things or now told us this.”) The writer clearly states that the encounter was with an angel; Manoah said he had seen God and was obviously mistaken - as pointed out by his wife moments later.

Eternal hell of fire and torment or not

There are people who believe that hell is a place of eternal torment and suffering in fire, others believe that's not the case. I will address this in the section regarding hell and eternal punishment.

There are other dichotomies as well.

Some people believe that God is love and therefore not unkind (1 John 4:8 “Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love”), others believe that God is wrathful as well as loving (³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God). ⁽²⁾ There are myriad ideas about many topics in the bible; you can't find a topic on which there is not disagreement. People disagree as to whether Jesus actually died and rose from the dead; Muslims believe it was someone who looked like Jesus who was crucified. (*I tend to think that, outside of biblical information, if Jesus had not been crucified but it was someone who resembled Him, His followers would not have had any reason to become a church – if He didn't die and rise from the dead, that whole idea of salvation would have been worthless and no one would have had ANY reason to support it – it would have been disproven from the beginning. For a new religion to come along some 500 years later and say that someone who looked like Jesus was crucified instead of Jesus is completely illogical, errant and without merit; the people who witnessed Jesus' death, burial and resurrection died for the claims of what they saw and knew as truth – by experience*) People argue over whether Jesus is God or God's offspring. People argue whether God is trinity or a single creative entity.

There are many topics in the bible and people have differing views on each of them. God did not hide information in the bible, He allows us to search and understand; He wrote the bible for us not against us. If you truly *desire* and *search* for truth, He will allow you to find it; while speaking of supplying the needs of His creation, Jesus said “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” ⁽³⁾ However, He also plays a role in people NOT understanding things as well. Speaking of people ignoring God's role as supreme, sovereign ruler of the universe and all that is in it, Paul wrote “For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie” ⁽⁴⁾

There is nothing more important than God and eternal life; if you have \$50 billion and die tomorrow, will it help you? If you are flat broke and don't have a penny to your name and die tomorrow, will it count against you? If you ignore the God who created you and you die tomorrow, where will you be? If you live for Him and die tomorrow, where will you be? Surely the God who created us and all that we can experience is capable of communicating His wishes and the knowledge He wants us to have; if we don't understand what the bible says then the fault must lie with us. There are no dichotomies in the bible; there is only misunderstanding on our parts. “God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?” ⁽⁵⁾ God said what He meant and meant what He said; He doesn't take two positions on topics or change His mind. If you disagree with


something I write in this book, please feel comfortable with your idea; just be sure you know *WHY* you take your position.

There is no fault in God; He is the boss and ruler of the universe; He set the rules and if we don't live by them we must pay His penalty – to possibly include delusions for not acknowledging Him. Nowhere in the bible does God say that He has a playful sense of humor; He doesn't mention playing games with people. *Jesus seemingly used sarcasm in conversation with the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28 when He said that "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." And she, aligning her position with the comparison to a dog, retorted "Yes it is, Lord, even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."* That conversation can be perceived as possible sarcasm, maybe no humor in it at all. She was asking for His help with her demon possessed daughter; He said He was here to help "the lost sheep of Israel" and she continued asking by placing herself, in 3rd person, in the position of a begging dog – so any possible sarcasm was from her; He granted her request. As for God's sense of humor, there are no knock-knock or elephant jokes in the bible.

As a matter of fact God is so serious that He says that if we use His name for no valid reason it is a sin. "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."⁽⁶⁾ Merriam-Webster defines "vain" as "having no real value: idle, worthless." Strong's

Concordance (H-773) defines  *shav'* (vain) as

- 1) emptiness, vanity, falsehood
- a) emptiness, nothingness, vanity
- b) emptiness of speech, lying
- c) worthlessness (of conduct)

In 2 Timothy, Paul charged Timothy with the following "1In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage —with great patience and careful instruction. 3For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 5But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry." "... be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage..." Learn, know, and tell. You cannot tell people what the bible says if you do not know it, and you are not allowed to make up what you think the bible says. God does not tolerate people misrepresenting Him and His words. At some point people who train others incorrectly will pay. "If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea."⁽¹⁾ If someone teaches incorrect doctrine that is a cause for others to stumble and it fits this statement; as such, it would be better to have a millstone tied around your neck and be thrown into the sea than to face God for incorrect teachings. Strong's Concordance defines "thrown"  as G906, to throw or let go of a thing without caring where it falls, a) to scatter, to throw, cast into b) to give over to one's care uncertain about the result". This paints a horrific picture of God's approach to dealing with those who teach others incorrectly; it would be better to have a millstone tied around your neck and be thrown into the sea than to face God for wrong teachings.

You NEED to know what you believe and why you believe it – if you know *WHY* you believe something it will be much harder for someone to talk you into changing your mind; even when it comes to perceived dichotomies in the bible. Did God choose each of us to be saved or not; was the creation account in Genesis the original creation or a regeneration of earth after an original creation; is Jesus God Himself or God's little boy, is hell eternal punishment from a wrathful God, or is it just a temporary setback in the journey through life? You need to know what you believe on each of these as well as why you believe it.

1. Mark 9:42
2. Hebrews 10:31
3. Matthew 6:33
4. 2 Thessalonians 2:11
5. Numbers 23:19
6. Exodus 20:7

Why are there hard to understand topics in the bible?

It is imperative that I address the fact that there are topics in the bible that are confusing. If I were to skip, or ignore, this point I would be failing anyone who is trying to understand the bible to a better degree. There are topics, statements and ideas in the bible that are there and not intended to be understood by all and I am not aware of anyone who can honestly, and sensibly, say that (s)he understands all topics in the bible. This may well be an aggravation to most people, and I understand that; however, I didn't make the rules I'm just trying to understand them and help others understand them in light of what we see and experience in this world - a world that is not our home.

Jesus spoke in parables at times, and once when asked why He spoke in such bewildering terms (Matthew 13:10 " The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"") Jesus replied

¹¹ ... "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.

¹²Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. ¹³This is why I speak to them in parables: *(then using a statement from Isaiah 6 He continued)*

"Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

¹⁵For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' There is obviously, according to Jesus, a point of confusing some people and not allowing them to understand the truth.

In 2 Thessalonians 2 Paul writes about people who refuse to acknowledge truth but indulge in wickedness. Our idea of wickedness is usually something extreme and terrible such as beheading, raping or murdering innocent people - and that is indeed wicked. However, God says anything that falls short of His dictate to be holy is wicked. Lusting after someone else is wicked, getting drunk is wicked, stealing is wicked. When we indulge those activities we are being wicked. Life is extremely serious but we don't see it that way very often. In 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 Paul puts a cap on this topic - "...They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹²and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness." In Romans 1:18-20, Paul addresses how blatantly obvious God is in nature so that men are without excuse in ignoring Him.

The parable Jesus was using to teach with, when His disciples asked Him why He chose to speak in parables, was the parable of the sower. He discussed what happens with seeds when they fall on the ground or are planted and compared that to how different people receive the word of God. With some it's just noise, with some it's great for a little while then gets smothered out by the world and still others take it to heart and live it. It is an awfully hard thing to understand why God would choose to allow some people to get it while allowing others to flounder, but that's what He said. We are not required to understand everything we believe; God says to believe not to understand. Faith is believing something when you don't really have all the answers or a tangible/physical /demonstrable proof for the belief; it is not having all the answers or tangible proof for what you believe.

I offer a bible study to teens at my house and I when it came to discussing evolution I wanted someone who would do a really superb job to present the topic to the teens. I have a very well spoken friend who is a retired attorney who believes in evolution and definitely not the bible - so I asked him to do it because I don't know anyone who would do an equal job to what Dan would present. He began by introducing himself and asking the kids about themselves. Once they all knew each other he started with "Say Nick is accused of murdering someone at a shopping center; he didn't do it but Amy has an unimpeachable friend, Roscoe, who says he witnessed the murder; how does he get out of it? How do you get out of accusation of something you didn't do?" Dan's aim with this point was to begin the conversation covering the idea that apparently God is unimpeachable, and we stand accused of things we don't think we did - what kind of

sense does that make to anyone? How can we be accused of doing things we don't think we did - by an accuser we can't see or talk to? How can I be accused of doing something wrong that I didn't know was wrong? Dan's position is that God - if He exists - is completely inaccessible; why are we supposed to believe in Him? God built a universe and lives outside of it; how can we find Him? And if this God hides his message from us then we have no chance for being successful in life, we might as well make it as best we can believing in something else because the God of Christianity is bizarre.

I understand the sentiment; the only trouble with this is that we aren't told that we have to get in touch with God; He'll get in touch with us. We are told to pray - reach out to God, speak to Him. He is everywhere and we cannot escape Him; Psalms 139 details this. The bible does not say that we'll have conversational contact with God such that we can say "Hey, Lord..." and He will audibly reply "What can I do for you?" There are many episodes of people in the bible crying out to reach God and having to wait for God's response; He does not reply to our every whim, we are told to ask that His will be done, not ours. That's a very hard pill to swallow. Can you imagine being murdered for your belief in God/Jesus and praying for help but being left there seemingly all alone. God has reasons and a will that are not sensible to us. In Isaiah 55:9 He states that His ways and thoughts are so superior to ours that it's like comparing how high heaven is to earth. If He allows a person to be killed for Him He surely has a reason for it, even if it's just to show that someone will die for his/her belief. He can easily raise up someone else for spreading His word. It stretches, and hurts, our minds to try and understand God's will. Job got a firsthand look at what God will allow a good man to go through just to make a point to someone else.

When discussing this topic (God is sovereign and will have His way) with a friend named Mark, he told me that if it turns out, when he dies, that I'm correct then God owes him a do over on life. I begged to differ and told him that he has access to all the same information everyone else has - the bible is God's rule book and we can go buy one at a book store if we show honest interest in reality. God doesn't owe any of us a 2nd chance at life, He gave us all we need to know, it is necessary for us to show interest in God. Our eternity is dependent upon it.

I think the best analogy I can come up with for this whole topic is Monopoly vs. Chess. God told us that we are not of this world; In John 14:2, 3 Jesus said He is going to prepare a place for us and will return to get us, clearing detailing that this world is not our home. We are only here temporarily.

In John 14:30 Jesus said "I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me" meaning that the Prince of this world is Satan; this world belongs to Satan. In Romans 12:2 Paul said "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." We are told to not conform to the pattern of this world - not to focus on riches and what we can get, what we have, and all sorts of material possessions and effects. Monopoly is a game with a focus on getting as much as you can get; get more than anyone else playing. The real game is Chess; reality is about the mind and what we believe. Jesse Penn-Lewis wrote a book titled "Battle for the Mind" wherein his entire focus is to describe how the battle for eternity is mental. Playing Monopoly scratches our immediate itch for return on investment and satisfaction with getting things. If I have a nicer car, if I have a bigger or nicer boat, if I could only have a new ATV, I'd love to have a new 70" flat screen TV..... Playing Chess involves strategy and sacrificing pieces for better position to win. Sometimes, in Chess, sacrificing a game piece is the best move. I'm not a Chess master, but 30 years ago I watched two friends learning to play (one was the friend named Mark above). It was impressive watching how their minds went down the same line of thought five or six moves ahead. Chess is a seriously mental engagement if done well. Monopoly is all about what you can get. No one can win in Monopoly by saving money for later. You cannot go around the board over and over collecting \$200 when you pass GO waiting for that magic roll of the dice that will land you on Park Place then roll snake eyes and hit Boardwalk. In order to play Monopoly wisely you must buy properties when you land on them. You do not have to buy every one of them every time you land on one, but you must buy when/where you land and you cannot plan for where you will land – you can only hope for the

roll of the dice to be advantageous to your position. Most people go through life hoping that it will turn out well for them – “well, if this happens that’ll be great” etc.

“In a 1999 survey by the Consumer Federation of America and financial services firm Primerica found that 40% of Americans with incomes between \$25, 000 and \$35, 000 a year, thought that the lottery would give them their retirement nest egg. What is interesting is that the same study found that number to increase to 50% when the income is \$15, 000 to \$25, 000 a year. The study shows that people become more desperate and hopeless as their income decreases.”^{1, 2}

“The Bank of Montreal survey found that 89 per cent said they would have to rely on the CPP or the Quebec Pension Plan when they stopped working... Less than half — 40 per cent — were counting on an inheritance, while 34 per cent hoped to win a lottery. Twenty-eight per cent say they expect to get financial assistance from their children or other family members.”³

That’s very similar to the way most people play life – “If I go to heaven that’ll be great; if I don’t, at least I’m not bad enough to deserve hell.” There is strategy in Monopoly, but most of the game depends on the roll of the dice, luck. You can plan to land on Park Place and Boardwalk all day, but the dice are the determining factor, not your plans.

Life is similar to Chess - we need to be focused on the mental aspect of how it will play out, not the material aspect of what we can get. You must plan and determine your strategy and then carry it out. You must think 3 or 6 moves ahead. Where can you make the opponent move to thwart your attack, how can you defend yourself against an attack while remaining in the best position for further play? There are no dice in chess, you either play it well or you don’t. Your plan works or it doesn’t. At the end of the game you cannot say that you were cheated or you never got a chance to get the other guy’s Queen, Rook, Bishop, etc. There are definite rules; players abide the rules. Queens don’t move in “L” shapes, Knights don’t move in straight lines, you don’t get a 2nd move if you capture another piece; checkmate IS the end of the game, etc.

God said that if we do not focus on truth - the mental aspect or reality - then we will fail; we will not understand, we will be caused to believe the lie; all kinds of bad things are the result of not focusing on the truth. And the truth is actually hidden from those who make no effort to find it. There are definite rules in the bible – we will believe in/into Jesus as God and our savior or we will spend eternity in hell. Jesus IS God; we have all sinned against God; Jesus IS the ONLY redeemer for us because of our sins.

The bible is absolutely scary, and I'm sorry to be the bearer of that news. This portion of reality is cold and binary. But I'm happy to be one of the folks who try and make it as understandable and appealing as possible for anyone who makes an effort to discuss it. There truly is reward for everyone who believes; that will be eternity in heaven with the creator who loves us enough to die and pay for our sins so that we don’t have to. In 1 Corinthians 2:9, Paul used a phrase from Isaiah and repeated “However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” the things God has prepared for those who love him”. No human mind has conceived of the good that God has built for us. That’s pretty phenomenal and it entails everything we can imagine starting with what John wrote in Revelation 4:² At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. ³ And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. ⁴ Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. ⁶ Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. ⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,” who was, and is, and is to

come.”⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever,¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:¹¹ “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

Revelation 21:¹ “Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.⁴ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”⁹ One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.¹¹ It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.¹² It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.¹³ There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.¹⁴ The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵ The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.¹⁶ The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia (*about 1,400 miles*) in length, and as wide and high as it is long.¹⁷ The angel measured the wall using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits (*200 feet*) thick.¹⁸ The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.¹⁹ The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,²⁰ the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.

²² I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. (*Notice that Jesus is the light of the city; we’ll see again later that Jesus IS THE light*)

And that’s just a little bit of the information we have. Chess is the game we play unwittingly while we overtly task away at Monopoly.

1. <http://www.abcarticledirectory.com/Article/Up-To-50-Percent-Of-Americans-Plan-To-Retire-From-The-Lottery---Are-You-One-/330731>
2. <http://www.msn.com/en-us/money>
3. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/lottery-win-is-retirement-plan-for-34-of-poll-respondents-1.2517046>

What I knew when I left home...

I left home as a U.S. Air Force recruit three days before my 19th birthday; I had grown up in a strong Christian household and believed I knew enough to head out on my own. I hadn't really considered how well I knew what I knew – I just knew “enough” and that was fine with me. They would train me to work on Air Traffic Control radar systems, I would be paid for working on radar, I would have a place to stay, food to eat and spending money – I was set to go out into life. Looking back, when I left home I didn't know much.

side note - My dad held multiple jobs while I grew up; he was a pastor, an Air Force crew chief and a Naval Ship Engine mechanic to name a few, but his passion was preaching and teaching the bible. He attended Bible College and seminary to better learn the bible; it was especially important to him that he taught his family the truth of the bible. As I had always gone to church and lived around Christians I never had to address what I believed nor stand up for why I believed it; I had never shared my beliefs with anyone outside of discussing them with people of similar mindset (usually in Sunday School). Sure, I knew that not everyone believed in the bible but upon entering the Air Force I actually met many people I cared for who didn't subscribe to my beliefs, and I found that I couldn't share what I believed with them because I couldn't state it and tell why I trusted in it myself. All I could say in defense of my beliefs was “it's what the bible says” or “it's what my dad taught me” – and if someone didn't believe the bible or know my dad that was a pretty weak point. So instead of arguing or trying to convince anyone of the value of my beliefs I found it simpler to just loosen my behavior and fit in; it was easy and fun, so it was no challenge.

back to the point - It was my fourth year in the Air Force, while stationed in the Azores, that I actually recognized that I didn't know as much as I needed to know to engage in a sensible discussion regarding the truth of the bible versus other ideas. Prior to this I had just put it out of focus; it was some gray area that I didn't want to mess around with because I knew I was weak and didn't know how to get stronger. It is in light of this that I recognized that I needed to learn more about what I believed as well as why I believed it.

Here is a brief side note the reader may find entertaining, or may not – my dad's dad worked in the Azores as a young man during (I believe) World War 2. While there he welded his name and my dad's name on a pipe outside a building on Lajes Air Field (the U.S. military base on Terceira Island). My dad was briefly stationed there while he was in the U.S Air Force as a young man. When I got my orders to transfer there I could hardly believe it. Terceira is not some tropical paradise where multitudes go to vacation; it's a nice quiet place, but no thriving vacation resort. While I was there I was talking to my dad via telephone one time and he told me about his dad welding their names on a pipe and told me about the building. I knew which building he was talking about so I went to see if it was still there. Sure enough, it was still there – their names welded on a pipe. This interlude has no real bearing on the book but every now and then if a speaker interjects a light hearted story it eases the moment. Now, back to the point.

While in the Air Force I was stationed in West Berlin, East Germany (1981-1984, before the wall came down) as an Air Traffic Control (ATC) radar technician and in the Azores (Portuguese islands in the mid Atlantic) as a satellite communications technician. In Berlin I pretty much behaved as everyone else – did my job, played sports, played jokes on people, dated and generally just acted like a twenty something year old kid. When I got to the Azores I met a few guys who were attending bible studies and I got involved with them; I started taking my beliefs seriously and learning for myself instead of just remembering what I had been taught.

When I had left home for the Air Force I knew, among other Bible topics,

- that God had created the heavens and the earth,

- Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden,
- Cain killed Able,
- God flooded the earth in the time of Noah,
- Abraham's descendants in the line of Isaac, and Jacob
- Abraham was willing to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God,
- The Israelites became captive as slaves in Egypt
- Moses led them out,
- David killed the giant named Goliath using a sling and a stone,
- Daniel lived through the lion's den,
- Jesus was born from a virgin,
- Jesus died for our sins and saved us from having to pay the penalty ourselves,
- Sin is defined as "transgression of the law of God" ⁽¹⁾;
- According to the Bible the penalty for sin is eternal damnation in hell ^{(2), (3)}.

I knew this because it was what I had been taught all my life; I didn't know it because it was what I had learned from my own study efforts. Some things can be learned from other people while some things need to be learned through your own efforts. Most people only learn certain lessons through their own mistakes. The rock group Styx performed a song entitled Great White Hope; a line of the lyrics says "But real life sure isn't like school, there's some lessons that just can't be taught" ⁽⁴⁾. The song is about a fighter who makes it to the top of the fighting ladder only to find that everyone is trying to knock him down and get the crown for themselves. The singer, James Young, states "When I was a young man I had to kick and scratch and claw, now it's like top gun in the Old West, everybody wants me to draw. If I had known it would be like this I'd have given it a second thought, but if someone had told me to give it up, it's a line that I wouldn't have bought" ⁽⁴⁾ indicating that now, at every turn, someone is challenging him. He couldn't have learned that lesson just by being told it from someone else; it's an experience he had to undergo. The more important lessons seem to be best learned through personal experience and effort. As with the earlier discussion of teaching – you understand a topic better when you are explaining it. Listening gets the point into your head; discussing, and defending it helps you to understand it.

To convince someone, who doesn't believe what you are saying, that you are correct you may want to begin a discussion from a point upon which they can understand or agree. To have a meaningful conversation you must talk on a level that everyone involved can understand.

After I completed six years in the Air Force I took a 2-year job maintaining ATC radar in Saudi Arabia and teaching Saudi technicians to work on their ATC radar units. My time spent in each of these countries (*Germany, the Azores and Saudi Arabia*) was fundamental to me learning what I've come to know. In Berlin I realized that I didn't really know much of anything and just shut up about it, in the Azores I realized that I could learn what I need to know and in Saudi Arabia I realized that there are myriad people without the knowledge of the forgiving, atoning, redeeming, reconciling and saving death and resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah and it's necessary that I learn to share.

Everyone seems to have their favorite verse, or verses, in the bible. I'm not convinced that any verse is more important than others, but I do have some favorite verses; one section is Colossians 1:¹⁵ "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." I see this as a bold statement that Jesus IS God – the physical image of invisible God, and a dictate that everything that exists only exists for Jesus and because of Jesus. In John 4:24 Jesus said "God is spirit,"..., hence invisible God. When I researched the phrases "son of God" and "son of man" I found the definition of the Greek words

translated as “son” actually meant something different – which I address in the section titled *Teknon vs. Huios – Jesus IS God.*

Needless to say, I didn’t know much of anything when I left home; I knew more about the NFL than the bible, and Roger Staubach won’t gonna get me to heaven. I realized I had some learning to complete so I returned to the states to start college at the age of 28, ten years later in life than most people begin their college careers.

- (1) Merriam-Webster
- (2) Romans 6:23
- (3) Mark 9:43 If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out.
- (4) Styx, Pieces Of Eight (1978)

Not learning isn't an option

With information being so readily available these days there is no good reason for someone, especially in America, not learning about a subject of interest, unless otherwise hampered by unusual circumstances. You don't need to take four, six or eight years of college to be able to speak intelligently about a subject, but we all need to know what we're talking about. Francis Bacon, an English philosopher, statesman, scientist, lawyer and author, is credited with saying "knowledge is power". Some say he isn't the first to have said it, but he gets the most credit for it. It means that when you know something of value it is a powerful thing to have at your disposal. Jesus said in Matthew 13: ⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. ⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶ When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it." Biblical knowledge is that treasure; it is the word of God; make every effort to get it.

Knowledge is the tool with which we earn income to support our families and ourselves. Truck drivers need to know how to handle large trucks in differing traffic and weather conditions with different loads of goods, firemen need to know how to put out different kinds of fires in different situations, doctors need to know anatomy and physiology as well as pharmaceuticals, plumbers need to know drain systems. If someone doesn't know how to do their job, they won't be employed in a position very long and will not be considered as a reliable source for information regarding the subject matter. We build on knowledge to make our lives better and to have a greater understanding of our environment and what we can do in it. The value of the knowledge of what happens after life and how to prepare for it cannot be overstated.

My dad invested his life in learning and one important thing he learned is that learning about Jesus is the most important thing to learn. The more you know about a topic the more sensibly you can speak and make intelligent decisions; the less you know the more likely you are to be a fool. Likewise with life after death, the more you know *now* the better prepared you will be when death comes; and death comes to ALL of us.


When studying the bible keep in mind that it was NOT written in English; the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the language of the writers, while the New Testament was written in Greek – the main language of the region during the time that portion was written. When studying the bible it is necessary to understand what was written by the authors; to understand what they said and intended it is necessary to use their words and definitions. To this end, Dr. James Strong has developed the Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the bible; this book defines every Hebrew and Greek word used in the bible. "Dr James Strong, formerly professor of exegetical theology at Drew Theological Seminary, spent more than thirty-five years preparing this landmark concordance. First published in 1890 with the help of more than one hundred colleagues, *Strong's* remains the definitive concordance compiled on the King James version of the Bible." ⁽¹⁾

If you need to research a word in the bible (whichever version you are using), one of the simplest ways is to check that word against the King James version and then use Strong's Concordance to find the original meaning; there are other concordance's and other methods of researching original intent of authors, but this is probably the simplest. Spiros Zhodiates is another good reference for studying the Greek terms in the New Testament and Gesenius' Hebrew lexicon is another good resource for the Hebrew Old Testament terminology. There are several different versions of the Holy Bible and they often use slightly different phrasing and terms to convey the same idea. For example – the New International version states in Romans 12:1 "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship" while the King James version reads "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Both verses convey the same basic meaning but to ensure that you

understand the correct intention of the writer (God) you may want to research terminology. Strong's gives the definition of "beseech" (*reference # G3870 {"G" for Greek}*) as

- 1) to call to one's side, call for, summon
- 2) to address, speak to, (call to, call upon), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc.
 - a) to admonish, exhort
 - b) to beg, entreat, beseech
- 1) to strive to appease by entreaty
- c) to console, to encourage and strengthen by consolation, to comfort
- 1) to receive consolation, be comforted
- d) to encourage, strengthen
- e) exhorting and comforting and encouraging
- f) to instruct, teach"

The New International version uses the word "urge" instead of "beseech". You have to keep in mind that vernacular of the day was different between the 1611 King James translation and the NIV of the 1970s. I didn't live in the 1600s but it seems sensible that they used the term "beseech" a lot more often than people did in the 1970s; I don't recall my parents ever beseeching me to do anything when I was a kid, but I was strongly urged to behave.

Both words convey the same idea that Dr. Strong and his colleagues defined, but *not every single time* in the bible does a single English term convey the entirely correct idea as what was written by the author. I.e., in Genesis 1:2 when Moses wrote "And the earth **was** without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." he used the Hebrew word  "hayah" which was translated into English as "was". Strong's gives the definition of "hayah" or "was" (*reference # H1961 {"H" for Hebrew}*) as: to be, become, come to pass, exist, happen, fall out.

Do we accept the term to mean that the earth "was" created formless and void or did it "become" formless and void? An example of the difference between "was" and "became" used above may be found in the following illustration: Emmitt Smith "was" the MVP (*Most Valuable Player*) of Super Bowl XXVIII. The statement "Emmitt Smith "was" the MVP of Super Bowl XXVIII" is grammatically correct but it doesn't convey the true meaning of what happened. No MVP for any Super Bowl just "was" a Super Bowl MVP; they *became* an MVP due to actions. The same seems true, to me, with the term Moses used that has been translated into English as "*was*". Did something happen and the earth *became* formless and empty.

The earth, indeed, was formless and empty as Moses wrote, but it probably had become that way; I don't think that God created an empty shapeless rock and then designed it, decorated it and fixed it up. Job 38:1-7 says "1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm. He said: 2 "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? 3 Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. 4 "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. 5 Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? 6 On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone- 7 while the morning stars sang together and all the angels ^[a] shouted for joy?"
(^[a] Hebrew: the sons of God)

Surely if the angels sang together and shouted for joy when God created the earth they weren't hootin' and hollerin' over an empty, shapeless rock. It seems to me, and others, that it must have been a wonderful masterpiece of creation and then it *became* a desolate rock due to some action. When reading and studying the bible take some time to wonder what the writer (God) was saying. Everything isn't always as simple as what may be inferred at a first reading.

Have you ever heard "Spare the rod and spoil the child"? The statement is usually intended to indicate that if you don't spank your kids then you are sparing them the rod of beatings and discipline, and

therefore spoiling their development and maturation. There is probably some truth to that idea, but look at the definition of the word מִשְׁכָּה “rod” as defined by Dr. James Strong (H7626). rod, staff, branch, offshoot, club, scepter, tribe

- a) rod, staff
- b) shaft (of spear, dart)
- c) club (of shepherd's implement)
- d) truncheon, scepter (mark of authority)
- e) clan, tribe

Its usage includes “tribe” 140 times, “rod” 34 times, “scepter” 10 times, “staff” 2 times, “misc” 4 times. It’s not always a stick used to beat someone. In Psalm 23 the writer says “...thy מִשְׁכָּה (rod) and thy staff they comfort me...” The staff referenced here is a shepherd’s staff, used to guide and lead or as a mark of authority; not a beating stick. Certainly we would rather administer a shepherd’s rod of guidance and authority to our children than to beat them into submission. Ephesians 6:4 conveys the same idea that we should guide children and not beat them; “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” My point here is not a treatise against spankings; it is an example of words having different meanings and the need to find the correct meaning. In context with the rest of biblical teaching Paul directs us to train kids, not to beat them into submissive behavior. The intention here is that every word you read doesn’t necessarily connote the first thought that comes to mind.

Presently, we have much more information available to us than at any previous time in the history of man; surely God will not excuse our ignorance based on lack of effort to study. When I say that not learning isn’t an option it isn’t me saying it; Paul said it in 2 Timothy 2:15 long before any thoughts of me were conceived in any ancestor’s mind. As a directive to Timothy (and Christians) he penned “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”. King James version

If you are playing a sport and don’t know the rules; will the referee or umpire give you a break because you are unfamiliar with the regulations? Imagine a soccer coach appealing a high kick call to the ref and saying he didn’t know that a player can’t kick at a ball near an opponents head; would that negate the penalty? If you are drinking and driving 30 mph over the posted speed limit and get pulled over, can you argue with the officer that you didn’t know that driving while under the influence of alcohol and speeding were against the law? No; rules are rules and if you’re going to play the game you need to know the rules. God wrote His rules in the bible for us to know, and He told us to study them as well. There is no re-test for life; not learning isn’t an option, it’s a horrific mistake.

I have a great non-believing friend who told me, regarding this section, that if the bible IS the word of God – that when he dies God will owe him a 2nd chance at life because God didn’t go tell him that God is real and make him believe the bible. I told him that the problem with that is this – he got as much warning as just about everyone else who exists; he was told about the bible and has access to bibles to read and study. God didn’t appear to everyone and tell them He’s real; very few people have had that experience. I told my friend that if he gets a 2nd shot at life, please let me know, I’d like to do it a 2nd time and get it more right than I did this time as well. I also told him that we get a single shot at life, no do-overs; we live, then die, then face judgment (Hebrews 9:27) and I severely doubt his claim of God owing him a 2nd shot at life. We’re playing in God’s universe according to His rules – we NEED to learn them and study the rule book.

1. The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible; 1990

Beginning from a perspective upon which you can agree

In my first year of college, like many students, I took a class in Biology. It was during the lessons on evolution that I realized everything in the world isn't cut and dried; black and white, if you will. I had always heard of evolution from a typical Christian perspective – *that can't be right; the Bible says that God created the world and the universe in six days not millions or billions of years*. It was at this time that I began to notice some similarities in sequencing that puzzled me. Could there be *some* truth to the *idea* of evolution that matched with the truth of the Bible? I had to give this some thought. This evolution story had some sense to it that I couldn't argue, but I believed in the Bible so I was at a stage where I had to actually reason my way through an issue instead of having someone direct me with what they knew. Later, I'll get back to the *ideas* of evolution that made enough sense that I had to think it through – but when two opposing issues make sense you need to think about them and consider lots of information to decide whereupon you'll take a stand or if you'll take a stand at all. Some issues are as serious as life and death; some are not.

Culture aside, all people have somewhat similar characteristics (*we all like to be happy, we all like to eat food that tastes good, we all like to be healthy, we all wish our friends and loved ones well, we all want to be considered intelligent, etc...*). We can strike up a conversation on many topics from a point of agreement or disagreement. If someone has an opinion regarding a subject (s)he may or may not discuss it; if their opinions are strong they will usually discuss, and even defend, their position. Agree with someone's beliefs and the discussion will usually be pleasant; disagree with their beliefs and the discussion could range from pleasant to angry and/or violent.

Once a discussion has begun people usually want to be thought of as intelligent; I can't recall a single time that I've spoken with someone who wanted to be thought of as ignorant of the topic which they were discussing, or just outright dumb; it is a human trait to want to be right. When someone is a student (s)he usually doesn't mind being thought of as less knowledgeable of the topic than the teacher, but still doesn't want to be thought of as stupid. While some people put more effort into learning than others, even the weak minded like to be thought of as smart.

Because people like to be thought of as intelligent it aids dialogue when both parties begin from a common point of agreement; when you agree with someone they don't feel as though their intellect is being challenged or denigrated; you do not need to agree with *everything* someone else says to find a shared point of agreement. If arguing whether people get their personality from genetics or from their environment a beginning point for agreement could easily be that, at some point, everyone's personalities are as different as fingerprints – none are the same, so from where does the difference originate? Do we all have the same personality at birth and as we develop do we experience different events and learn differing responses due to what we experience or do we start from day one with different personalities? If arguing sports, politics, music or any other topic you can start from a common agreement point.

The same idea can apply to discussing the Bible. It is easy to begin a discussion from the point of "we are alive and we will be dead" – everyone pretty much agrees with that. It's what happens while we live, after we die, how the earth got here, what Jesus was all about etc, which starts the disagreement. Does the other person agree that there is a heaven and hell, do they think there's no after life and we cease to exist, do they think we'll come back to earth as a different form of life, do they think we'll become gods? There are many different ideas that people believe, but they all have some point of agreement from which to begin a discussion.

When Jesus was speaking with the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter 4 this is how the conversation went - “⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. ⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” “The conversation started from a point of agreement - Jesus was thirsty and the Samaritan woman certainly must have agreed that He looked thirsty, she didn’t say “*I don’t think so, you look fine to me; what are you after?*” He asked for some water and she didn’t argue; she did ask Him why He would ask her for some water; He was a Jew and was supposed to treat her as a pariah. So the conversation began. As the conversation progressed, He introduced the idea of eternal life - living water from which man will never again need partake. Then the conversation proceeded to the point that she understood that He was a wise teacher and she brought others to learn from Him. Surely, He could have just drawn the water Himself, or made it come to Him, judging from His other miracles, but He obviously had a specific reason for His discussion with that woman, much as we should have determined reasons for our discussion with others.

Another example of this in the bible is when Paul was visiting Athens; during his visit he reasoned with “Jews and God-fearing Greeks”, among others. One of his talks began like this – Acts 17: ²² “Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, [Ye] men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.” Paul spoke to them of their interest in worship and addressed one particular altar; he began by speaking of a common interest – worshipping God, then, quickly moved to differences.

The next step is to expect disagreement on some issue, after all no two people agree on everything. When a disagreement arises, the best way to deal with it is to *know what you believe* and ***know why you believe it***. I will repeat this idea.

Do not confuse the idea of finding common ground from which to begin a conversation with agreeing with what someone else says. There is a big difference between agreeing on a particular issue, or part of an issue, and yielding to someone else’s viewpoint. Arguing strongly is a useful tool and comes in handy at times – the idea of finding a common ground to begin a discussion creates less friction at the beginning of a discussion. There will be plenty of opportunity for vehement arguing, if you so choose. You can always call someone stupid and aggravate them into a boisterous exchange; it takes a bit more thought to engage someone in a conversation in which you and they exchange ideas and learn. It requires imagination and knowledge to engage a conversation; it only requires a foolish comment to start a fight. Paul was about to speak to these people about their base belief and clarify who the unknown God was. They obviously had an inclination that there is an almighty deity that deserved worship. Paul seized upon that commonality and used that opportunity to speak about Jesus.

If you were to tell someone, at the beginning of a conversation, “You’re wrong and you’re going to hell” that would probably be a complete turn off for them and the conversation would tend to be quite short. The saying “you can catch more flies with honey” lends wisdom to conversation; offering something appealing and of value to the other person keeps them engaged in the discussion; shutting them down shuts them off. Jesus was only argumentative with the people who thought they knew everything. If Jesus was/is God, then by God’s defining attributes, He knows everything; He used a method of appealing to His listeners, speaking to the issues that were important to them. He told the Samaritan woman at the well, while she was drawing water for Him to drink, that He is the living water. ⁽¹⁾

We can mostly agree that the earth had a beginning and will probably have an end. We can agree that Jesus actually lived a little more than 2,000 years ago. We can pretty much all agree that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt for some 400 years. Most of us can agree that man has landed on the moon and that calculus is a mathematical system for detailing rates of change. It's how you go from the initial agreement past the disagreement that makes your point sensible or not.

I am not the world's best at witnessing or bringing salvation into most discussions, but I like to try and find a way to let the other person know that I am a Christian and get conversations around to Jesus and salvation. Recalling that we have a directive to witness (Matt 28:¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.) it is our responsibility to tell others what we know. We also have some direction, from Paul, on how to do it in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 "¹⁹ Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings." Paul's position here is that he got along with people as best he could so that he could witness to them and not turn them off to a conversation with him regarding salvation. He never gave in to someone else's position, He was a warrior for Jesus and never allowed someone else to handle him in conversation; but he did try to get along well enough with others to preach and teach Jesus to them. To his point regarding getting along with people and not causing trouble Paul wrote in Romans 12:¹⁴ "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." When we don't live in harmony with others we usually are thought of as troublesome and people don't want to talk with others who are considered difficult.

Find a place upon which you can agree or begin a conversation and work at saying what you know: keep in mind that you're not out to say "*you're going to hell!*" but should be saying "*if you don't know Jesus and salvation before you die you are heading to hell; allow me to tell you about Jesus.*"

(1) John 4:9-11

[The bible was written as an historical and prophetic account not a scientific account/explanation](#)

I don't know of anyone who would argue with the statement that the Bible was written as an historical account of Israel's history. Some may say it's not an accurate history, but it is viewed as an historical document nonetheless; it also serves as both an historical and prophetic accounting of future events. Some of the prophecies have been fulfilled; some have yet to be fulfilled. I have never heard anyone say that the Bible gives a scientific cause and effect account of the beginning of the universe, our planet or life. Science, on the other hand, **requires** observation, testable hypotheses and prediction of experimental testing outcomes detailing cause and effect relationships.

The Bible doesn't afford opportunity for testing cause and effect of "God" issues. We can't test, nor replicate, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." ⁽¹⁾ We can't test "And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light." ⁽²⁾ God is listed as the cause for the effects of the earth, heavens, stars, plants, animals, humans, etc. Any sensible scientist will admit that we can neither prove nor disprove God, much less what He said He did and will do. If God exists, and He created the universe, then by what stretch of logic can we constrain Him to reside in the universe He created? If He built this universe, He must have resided elsewhere while building this stretch of space and time because the universe didn't already exist. Why would we assume that He now **MUST** live and act within our space and that we can find Him in it? The bible doesn't explain many issues with provable cause and effect analyses. We can't prove how or why the blood of a perfect sacrifice, in the Old Testament, washed away the sin of the person offering the sacrifice. We can't prove how or why Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego walked around inside the fire in Daniel 3, though it is recorded in Israel's history. We can't prove how or why the angel of death passed over Egypt killing the firstborn in every home if the blood of a lamb hadn't been wiped across the doorframe, as detailed in Exodus 12, though it is recorded in Israel's history. These are listed as historical accounts, not testable hypotheses. We can't prove that these events occurred, but we need to know that we are each betting our existence on whether we believe the book that tells of them, or not. If the events in the bible never occurred, then we have nothing to lose in not believing; but if they did occur, we certainly need to give them our attention and learn what they mean for us.

We can't prove, nor disprove, the existence of God. If He lives outside the universe then how can we reach Him and test to see if He's there, wherever "there" is? He has the ability to reach us at His discretion but we cannot reciprocate. He said He is everywhere; and by implication He is not a physical being – otherwise the entity that makes up a physically omnipresent God would take up ALL of space and we couldn't fit in.

Some people believe that if a god made everything, then everything is a part of that god, so everything must be god, therefore god is everything and we are all part of god – woo hoo! That sounds ethereal and comforting, but it's not the way it works. God must be spirit; we know He's not physical or we would see Him all over the place; in fact, Jesus said in John 4:24 "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." How can we prove God exists or not? I've never read, or heard, of anyone who has ever successfully measured or constrained a spirit. (*Though, in 1907, Dr. Duncan McDougall, believing that a soul must have some mass, attempted to measure any weight difference of a person's body between life and a moment after death. His scales were accurate to within 0.2 ounce. There was some disagreement as to his results and therefore no conclusion that souls have mass. However, the asserted results were that the human soul weighs in at about 21 grams*) Only God can prove His existence if, when and how He chooses. He must contact us; the only call we can make to God is prayer, and it's up to Him to answer. If I call my son and he doesn't answer, that doesn't mean he's not there; it just means he didn't answer me when I called. We cannot test anything outside our space, nor can we prove/disprove anything beyond those limits. We must rely on

what we can learn by the evidence available, or hope the Maker will contact us to let us know what He wants/expects from us if we are responsible to Him.

Luckily, for us, God left us signs of His existence in the form of nature; He created us with a sense that He is present, and our surroundings should convince us that everything was made by a creating God, not by chance. "...what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." ⁽³⁾ Nobody has to like whether God exists; nobody has to like the fact that we are responsible to Him for the things we see in nature; everybody will admit that He exists and answer to Him for not believing, if we don't believe. It seems a simple thing to ignore God and not feel like we have to answer to a higher being; it's completely wrong, and whether we admit it or not there is a basic human trait that understands that God is here, there and everywhere.

The biblical account of creation was written as an exposition of historical events so it should not be used to compete with a scientific account; however, because it is correct, science should match with this historical account. Most people would admit that arguing a Language Arts topic against topics in Mathematics doesn't make any sense, but many of these same people argue the *science* of evolution against the *history* of creation.

Remember this when you are discussing the Bible, and other topics for that matter; don't get caught up in an argument just because someone says something with which you disagree. If someone makes a statement, the mere fact that they said something doesn't lend cause to accept it as valid or reasonable. Consider what was said before you assign it any value; ask yourself if what they said is valid or just a sarcastic retort. If the comment is sincere, address it; if it is foolhardy don't waste your time arguing. There is an old riddle in the south that goes -
Question - "When you are arguing with a fool, what's the fool doing?"
Answer - "Arguing with a fool."

In other words, it takes at least two fools to continue a pointless argument; both participants are foolish, the fool and the one arguing with him. Try to recognize the futility of an ineffective argument and go on your way. This is addressed in the bible as well.

"A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions." ⁽⁴⁾

"Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces." ⁽⁵⁾

In Matthew 10:12-14 Jesus said ¹² "As you enter the home, give it your greeting. ¹³ If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet."

The Bible was written as an historical account of events that have already transpired and prophecy of events to come; there is little detail of cause and effect. The account of Noah mentions that God was angry with humankind due to their complete misbehavior and evil doings; He decided to wipe out living humans, plants and animals, with a flood, excepting Noah, his sons and their wives. There is little detail of how and why the water came to flood the earth. When writing the story, Moses didn't discuss dew points, hurricanes or typhoons; he merely said "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights." ⁽⁶⁾

There is, however, a story of a worldwide flood in almost, if not, every civilization on the planet. There are many accounts of what may have caused a worldwide flood; that it was a great local flood or that it never happened. You can research some by typing “Noah’s flood”, “worldwide flood”, flood of Noah”, etc into an Internet search engine and read what you find there, There are also countless books you can buy (or check out at a library) instead of just reading what somebody wrote on the Internet. Books aren’t necessarily better than information on the Internet, but let’s face it, to post something on the Internet requires little effort compared to writing a book. Many times, a book author has put more research into his/her topic than someone may have put into a “blog”. Conversely, you can find information on the Internet faster and easier than going to a bookstore and buying, then reading books. There is a trade-off, but you still need to do your own research. And not every book is correct just because it’s a book.

[The following is a side note regarding the flood.](#)

If you do some research regarding names from Adam through Noah you will find that the name of Noah's grandfather was Methuselah. That name means "when he dies it will be sent". The name Methuselah consists of two elements. The first part is equivalent to Methusael, מִתְשֵׁלַח (*mat* 1263), which is one of a few words to denote man or mankind, and used most often to indicate a male capable of combat. There is an obvious and grim connection with the word מוֹת (*mut* 1169), to die; corpse. The second part comes from the verb שָׁלַח (*shalah* 2394) meaning send, send out, let go. The charge of the verb becomes clear in the meaning of the derivatives: שֶׁלַח (*shelah* 2394a), a sort of weapon that was thrown, like a javelin". ⁽⁷⁾ (*These numbers are Strong's reference numbers for these terms*)

Putting the two terms of Methuselah's name together into a single name derives the idea of a man who - when he dies "it" will be sent – something of dread sent in a fashion such that the delivery is strong and weapon-like. Enoch, Methuselah's dad, must have warned that when Methuselah died something would be sent to destroy humans, otherwise he might have named his son Larry.

The interesting part of this is that Methuselah is recorded to have died when he was 969 years old - in the 600th year of Noah, the year the flood came. Methuselah's dad was Enoch. ²¹ When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. ²² After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. ²³ Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. ²⁴ Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away. ⁽⁸⁾ When Methuselah died the flood was brought forcefully as judgment upon humankind. Notice that Enoch *lived* for 65 years before Methuselah was born. THEN, after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch *walked* faithfully with God. Something changed with Enoch when Methuselah was born.

We may probably assume that Enoch received direction from God to assign this specific name to Methuselah and upon that encounter with God Enoch changed his behavior and became a righteous man walking faithfully WITH God. It would seem that he knew that destruction could come on any day if Methuselah was to die. Arthur Pink serves this topic a much better explanation than I could ever hope to deliver in his book "Gleanings in Genesis". In fact, he wrote an entire series of Gleanings books. You would do well to read them beginning with the Genesis text. It is also presently posted online at http://www.pbministries.org/books/pink/Gleanings_Genesis/genesis.htm.

The creation story of Genesis doesn't describe the how or the why of what occurred beyond God called for something to happen and it occurred. Science, on the other hand, requires (among other things) a detailed description of:

- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- How was it set up?
 - Who/what was present?
 - What were the constituent components/ingredients involved?
 - How did the course of events run?
- Were there any other events that may have interfered with what happened?
- Repeatability (if you do the *same thing* again will you get the *same results* 95% of the time?)

Scientific experiments require reporting everything that was done and everything involved in an experiment to allow for replication. If someone wants to repeat what you did they must have a recipe to duplicate everything you did. The Bible does not give a detailed enough description of the process of creation for anyone to try to repeat the events; "God said" to make things happen does not lend a lot of

direction for duplication. Most of us cannot get our kids to do what we say the first time, every time, much less command things that don't exist to just appear out of nothing.

To compare an historical document to a science-based theory discussed in a peer reviewed publication is about as sensible as comparing eating waffles for breakfast to a medical description of digestion in the gastrointestinal system. Both statements may well declare similar information but they are in completely different contexts (what happened vs. why it happened).

If a friend told you that he ate waffles for breakfast would you argue that he is wrong because he didn't discuss biting, chewing, salivating, peristalsis in the esophagus, Hydrochloric acid (HCl), Sodium Chloride (NaCl) and Potassium Chloride (KCl) in the stomach, diffusion of nutrients through the wall of the small intestine, reabsorption of liquids through the wall of the colon and elimination? No; that would be nonsensical. He just told you what he did; he *didn't intend* to describe exactly how and why each step occurred. He ate a waffle and told you he ate a waffle; he might not intend for you to eat a waffle and need directions. Apparently, God has shared with us what He did and has no intention of us repeating what He did.

Over the millennia of mankind, scientists have studied the world and as much of the universe as they could study. Building on the knowledge garnered by previous scientists and themselves we are now at a point wherein science understands that the world began as an empty rock (as far as they can tell), there was no life on this void and formless entity, all land was in one mass, plant life was the first life form, then underwater life followed by land animals and mankind. This is quite a match to Moses' story in Genesis chapter 1. Scientists give reason for why the account occurred in that order, but they don't allow that God can be the cause.

The cause is still a mystery to scientists because they cannot prove/disprove God. Taking God out of the equation leaves science with no delineated reason for this universe to happen, except by chance. Chance is not an appealing cause, it does not answer any why questions, so they are still searching for a provable cause for the universe. Because God doesn't fit their model of something that is tangible, people argue that creation did not occur.

Scientific explanations can be *compared* to bible events, but only in a reasonable fashion. Remember, the bible is not compared to science; science is compared to the bible. God does not explain how he dried the Red Sea; He just tells us that He did it; He doesn't tell us how He caused a virgin to be pregnant, He just said that He did it. God does not allow for us to replicate His actions; they are the actions of the king and creator of the universe. He has allowed that we can accomplish much with our knowledge, maybe even to include figuring out part of how creation occurred. Attributing creation to God is a completely different event than trying to understand it; attributing the historical and prophetic accounts to the creator requires His grace and mercy to allow us to understand that He exists in the first place. Understanding the order of events requires curiosity and intellect; mankind has that by default of Genesis 11:6. While the two may co-exist, they often don't. We tend to think more of ourselves than the facts warrant; the fact is that we were created, not that we evolved; if an argument is based on a false assumption from the outset, any conclusion will be wrong.

- (1) Genesis 1:1
- (2) Genesis 1:3
- (3) Romans 1:19, 20
- (4) Proverbs 18:2
- (5) Matthew 7:6
- (6) Genesis 7:11, 12
- (7) <http://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Methuselah.html>
- (8) Genesis 5:21-24

Evolution follows the same basic order as Creation –

Science poses some very interesting ideas to which any sensible person must admit there seems some truth to the order of events it proposes. Science gives a reason for each major step in evolution; the acceptance of plants and animals of differing kinds coming from the same source is beyond my ability to consent, but the explanation of why plants came before animals is a reasonable position.

The creation account was written before modern scientific discoveries; without the benefits of modern scientific experimentation or mathematical calculations Moses wrote the following approximately 3,500 years ago:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—**the first day.** ⁽¹⁾

⁶ And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." ⁷ So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸ God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the **second day.** ⁽²⁾

⁹ And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. ¹¹ Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the **third day.** ⁽³⁾

¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the **fourth day.** ⁽⁴⁾

²⁰ And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." ²³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the **fifth day.** ⁽⁵⁾

²⁴ And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of

life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the **sixth day**. ⁽⁶⁾

Following is a **very cursory overview** comparison of Creation vs. Evolution to get to a point that is often unrecognized, or at least not often addressed.

At the outset of this section, allow me to note that God disavowed evolution at least nine times in Genesis 1. Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, **according to their various kinds**." And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed **according to their kinds** and trees bearing fruit with seed in it **according to their kinds**. ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, **according to their kinds**, and every winged bird **according to its kind**. ²⁴ "Let the land produce living creatures **according to their kinds**: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, **each according to its kind**." ²⁵ God made the wild animals **according to their kinds**, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground **according to their kinds**. Evolution posits that plant life came first in the form of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) and other plant life came from that, then animal life branched from plant life. God clearly stated in Genesis 1 that every life form came from its own kind; He dismissed evolution before evolution ever evolved. God did not even allow that evolution within plant or animal life forms was allowed, "each according to its own" does not allow for oak trees to come from blue green algae.

Do not read this section expecting a greatly detailed comparison of everything you can think in relation to creation and evolution. There will be no significant mention of dinosaurs or cyanobacteria; my purpose here is a comparison of the **basic order of events** in creation compared to the **basic order of events** of evolution. I will NOT tell you what to believe; it is the readers' responsibility to learn and believe for themselves. In addition, there will probably be statements made without supporting references. Many of the things I write about can be found in myriad biology or science books; things such as:

- the big bang occurred first (everything began with a huge explosion from whence all matter and energy in existence was generated),
- all land on earth was in a single continent (Pangaea),
- plants came before animals, cyanobacteria was the first form of life
- the early atmosphere on earth couldn't support animal life, it had to be converted by plant life to a more oxygenated atmosphere, etc...

These can easily be referenced in innumerable books and all over the Internet.

Please pay close attention to the following statements.

I am NOT writing this to correlate creation with evolution.

I am NOT writing this to argue creation vs. evolution.

I AM writing this to show that as God said in Genesis 11:6 "The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.""; we (humans) have figured out a lot of what happened at the beginning – almost in the exact order it occurred.

Do not dismiss what science has found; scientists study issues to learn and be correct, not just to argue or lord it over others. The basic general quality of scientists is curiosity regarding specific topics and devotion to resolving said curiosities. They have studied much and the reach of scientific study stretches beyond a single person's ability to comprehend it all; that said, scientists are fairly accurate in the order of events they've discovered. It should come as no surprise that many scientists, if they read this, may well think of me as an idiot. That's not an issue that bothers me; I know what I believe and why I believe it. I must trust what the bible says, not science, as the foundation for everything I know. Science has changed

to be more correct over the millennia, not the bible; and science has lined up more with the bible as it has emerged.

We are not privy to whatever energy, laws of physics, matter, space or time comprised the beginning of this universe, so what scientists have learned over the millennia of their study is based on what we have garnered according to the laws we now know. As gravity, strong and weak interaction and electromagnetic forces are the forces we know of, and they separated after a big bang, we have no idea of what actually occurred when/if they comprised a single force. Science is still learning and may yet again change as time passes.

Consider what science and the bible say; how close is modern science to what Moses wrote several thousand years ago? How could he have been so close to what modern science has found? Why did Isaiah write that the world is round and the skies are being stretched if people thought the earth was flat and the universe was static? Did he make lucky guesses? This was written as declaration thousands of years before science figured out that the sky/universe is spreading (a few hundred years before Aristotle decided the earth was spherical). Pay attention to what the bible says before science said it and see if you have a different outlook.


Creation



1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth **was** ⁽⁷⁾ formless and empty, darkness [was] over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.
2. God made an expanse to separate the waters above from the waters below
3. And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "**Let the land produce vegetation:** seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, **according to their various kinds.**"
4. And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth. And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky..."
5. And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind.
6. And God said, "**Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds:** livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." ...Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness

Evolution

1. Big Bang! *Basically*, the universe began and spread from a small amount of energy and converted into matter to make solid objects and gaseous stars. Earth's early atmosphere was comprised mostly of H₂, and He (*Helium, not a reference to some guy*) then later comprised of water vapor, CO₂, SO₂, Cl₂ and H₂, then nitrogen and methane became major parts of the atmosphere.
2. Earth's atmosphere settled into a gaseous volume reaching from the planet's surface to space
3. Pangaea - Look at how the continents would mate together along the Atlantic Ocean's coastlines. Surely, it makes sense to believe that the land on earth was at one time a single supercontinent. This supercontinent has been called Pangaea ⁽⁸⁾ by scientists. Plants, cyanobacteria (blue green algae), were the first life form
4. Evolution says all in the universe appeared in sequence starting with the big bang; the earth was formed along with the rest of the stars and rocks in space *after* the big bang, not separately, before the stars and other planets.
5. Underwater animal life was the next life form to exist, then birds.
6. Animal life on land came next followed by humans

1. Genesis 1:1-5

2. Genesis 1:6-8
3. Genesis 1:9-13
4. Genesis 1:14-19
5. Genesis 1:20-23
6. Genesis 1:24-31
7.  hayah, Strong's H1961: a prim. Root [comp. 1933];
 - 1) to be, become, come to pass, exist, happen, fall out
 - a) (Qal)
 - 1) -----
 - a) to happen, fall out, occur, take place, come about, come to pass
 - b) to come about, come to pass
 - 2) to come into being, become
 - a) to arise, appear, come
 - b) to become
 - 1) to become
 - 2) to become like
 - 3) to be instituted, be established
 - 3) to be
 - a) to exist, be in existence
 - b) to abide, remain, continue (with word of place or time)
 - c) to stand, lie, be in, be at, be situated (with word of locality)
 - d) to accompany, be with

Hayah is a verb; it is an action word. Something happened when this word was used; the world *became* void; when thinking of the difference between “was” and “became” here, it might help to think of George Washington. He “was” the first President of the United States; grammatically, that is a correct statement; however, he was not always the first President of the United States. He *became* the first President of the United States. In the same manner, after studying the term “hayah”, it may be realized that the earth “became” formless and empty instead of began as, and always was, formless and empty. This implies that in the beginning the world was NOT formless and void; this implies that the beginning earth was different than formless and empty.
8. Pangaea (from the Greek pan gaia,   “pan” meaning “all” and “gaia” meaning “earth”. See Appendix B

Creation – everything in the universe started from listed acts of God;

1. God created heaven and earth; He told nothing to become something, this was a whiz bang event in itself,
2. The earth *became* formless and empty.
3. All land was in one location, water was everywhere else
4. Then God told the earth to bring forth plants. And it did.
5. Then God made the rest of the universe. – *The extra step.*
6. Then God said for there to be creatures in the water and flying birds. And there were.
7. Then God told the earth to produce animals. And it did.
8. Then God said He was going to make man. And He did.

Evolution - everything in the universe started from a single act of incredible explosive power and it all fell into a logical sequencing of events. (It may be thought of as two explosions to include Inflation Theory)

1. A big bang occurred from which all constituent matter in the universe is composed (all energy in the universe was at the beginning and none has since been created/added, nor any energy removed, the total quantity of energy is unchangeable)
2. This earth was an empty rock in the empty space of the universe
3. Pangaea was the single plot of land on earth
4. Plants were the first life form
5. Underwater animals were the next life forms
6. Land animals were next

7. Humans were the last new form of life

Creation is built on the fact that God made everything happen because He told it to occur. He is the cause; everything else is the effect. Adam is recorded as having spoken with God in person. Adam is recorded as having passed information to his kids, there is no reason to not expect that they passed information to their kids and down the line until Moses wrote the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy). Word of mouth is a manner of teaching. Let's not forget that Moses, who wrote the first five books of the Old Testament (Torah for the Jews, Pentateuch for the Christians) spoke with God on numerous occasions as God chose Moses to be His spokesman (Ex 3:7-10 The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, ...¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."). Moses wrote what God told him to write (II Timothy 3:15 "All scripture is God breathed"...) and surely the stories had been passed down through the years so Moses was already familiar with the creation account.

Evolution is built upon scientists supposing that some of the energy from a big bang explosion converted into matter, much remained as energy of different types (electromagnetic, kinetic, potential, light, etc.). Some of that matter is/was gaseous (stars) some became solid (planets), etc. Our planet is just another of the countless rocks in the universe; it just so happens that the atmosphere and matter that comprise earth was just right for life to begin of its own volition. Life did not previously exist; life just began on its own. Plants were the first life form (cyanobacteria) and as plant life grew and expanded it changed the atmosphere enough so that animal life could begin. Underwater animals came about before land animals. Animal life underwater was more easily sustainable. Land animals require skin to maintain a proper hydration level and to protect their internal organs; warm blooded animals perspire to maintain a proper temperature and skin is vital in that effort. Animal life is a completely different type of life than plants; plants feed off sunlight and nutrients in the earth, animals feed by eating other things, sometimes plants, sometimes other animals. Plants require CO₂, animals require O₂. Luckily the two are symbiotic and aid the environments of each other; plants exude O₂ which animals require while animals exhale CO₂ which plants require. Finally, science posits, human life came from the preceding animal life forms that eventually led to our form of life being the most intelligent.

The *order* is quite similar; the attribution of cause is quite different. There are two main ideas I would like readers to take away from this section:

1. Science, as a base of knowledge, has advanced to the point that mankind basically understands the order of creation. Mankind calls it evolution because they can only imagine that one thing came first and all the rest of similar things had to come from that first thing. Scientists, for the most part, can't imagine that all the different things in the world each came from its original own class of things. It makes sense that if the atmosphere was initially Hydrogen and Helium that they both blew out into space because they were too light for gravity to hold them near to the earth, but the next atmosphere (N₂, CO₂ and other gasses generated by erupting volcanoes) was heavy enough to be pulled to the earth and not allowed to escape; that this atmosphere was suitable for the first life form – plant life. If plant life came first, how did animal life get here except by the same set of events – it *just* happened? Because we have animal life now, somewhere, one day, did some plant cell develop and survive without a cell wall - able to thrive in a more oxygenated atmosphere - and that started the animal kingdom? It makes sense if you have no God to whom attribution belongs. As there appears to them that there is no God, they have tried to understand why it all occurred without the creator. Surely, if there was an atmosphere made of Hydrogen and Helium and it blew away, then was replaced by N₂, CO₂ and other gasses generated by erupting volcanoes that made a good habitat for plants. As plants grew and multiplied they caused the atmosphere to change to a

more oxygenated environment. Certainly a single plant cell without a cell wall could not survive in that atmosphere, it would have dried up, so it had to be under water; because it was under water it survived without an integumentary system (skin) long enough to multiply and its descendants developed a skin later to protect themselves. Then underwater animals began to flourish. While that makes sense, someone had to wonder how animals got out of the water and onto land; but that didn't take long to wonder about because frogs have tadpoles and they have tails that go away and then they grow legs, so things coming out of the water and growing legs is a sensible answer. By then the atmosphere was undoubtedly suitable for animals breathing O₂ so that makes sense as well. With the idea that things were evolving from one life form into others it made sense to just follow that through to all the differing types of animals. All plants came from one plant type, one animal cell came from a misguided plant cell and started animal life and all animal life followed suit. It makes sense – if you have no God to whom attribution belongs. The major component of science is curiosity and studying to find answers. Scientists are puzzle solvers by their very nature; they've found answers they believe are quite suitable to their questions; with myriad questions still abounding. They believe that all things had to come from a single event and that clouds their puzzle solving ability. Christianity says that all things come from God (Exodus 20:11 "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy"), but they did not all come from the same EVENT. God made different things after their own kind in Genesis 1 (Gen 1:11, 12 "Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good." Gen 1:21 "So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind.")

2. Science, as a base of knowledge, does not allow that God created everything in the manner He described, the same manner in which they've delineated the occurrences with little difference (sun, moon and stars as the 4th event) – yet they refuse to acknowledge His work because they can't prove, or disprove, Him. He is therefore, in their minds, relegated to myth.
 - The bible says that God created the heavens and the earth. STOP!
 - God said "Let there be light" and there was. STOP!
 - That was the first event/day. STOP!
 - Then God made the sky (atmosphere). STOP!
 - That was the second event/day. STOP!
 - Then God put all the dry (land) in one place and told the earth to produce vegetation each according to its kind. STOP!
 - That was the third event/day. STOP!

All these events were separated from each other, but flowed in a process that followed the order God dictated. He is an orderly God so why wouldn't we think creation was to be an orderly, sensible set of events? It's remarkable that man has reasoned out the order so sensibly, but it's at least as remarkable that we haven't noticed that God already detailed the events and order – *not the specific reasons for the order* - but He detailed the order that man has found; yet we give Him no attribution for His work. In six sets of events God created the world and all that is in it⁽¹⁾. Ever wonder how biological classification/taxonomy works so well? It is a grouping of life forms into smaller and smaller sets (going from "life" to "species") of like life forms. Taxonomy clusters species into groups with shared physical attributes. Cats and cows don't share any similar physical attributes, but if you broaden your assessment enough you can surely make a list that will

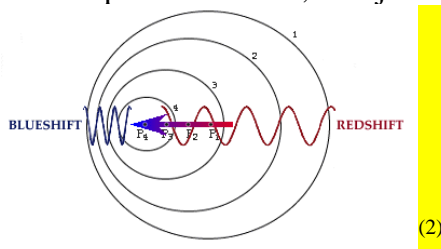
incorporate four-legged animals, and they both fit into that. Science has chosen that direction; God told us that He created life grouped into like forms; we ignore it to our peril.

Look at the order in which these events took place and notice that Moses wrote the creation account more than 3,400 years ago. Was he lucky to have supposed that the universe had a beginning instead of supposing, like scientists until the past 60-80 years, that everything had been unchanging forever? Surely, if Moses had the same mindset as scientists he'd have written that there was no real beginning of the universe because it had always existed in the same form. But he didn't write that; he wrote that everything had a beginning, and it all started with God.

Until the early 1900s, most, if not all, scientists believed the universe was static (unchanging); it wasn't until after Penzias and Wilson discovered background noise in the universe in 1964 that *most* scientists started recognizing a beginning event that started the universe. Albert Einstein's equations were the first widely known mathematical indication that the universe was dynamic and expanding, and even he didn't recognize it at first. In 1927, Georges Lemaître proposed the idea of a universe of expanding radius based on Einstein's work. Within two years of Lemaître's idea, Edwin Hubble proposed red shift when he noticed color shifts indicating that stars were moving away from each other (blue shifting indicates things moving closer together).

The reader can research "red shift" and learn about the Doppler Effect if not already aware.

Briefly, as objects move away from each other, the electromagnetic signals they give off (sound waves, light etc.) appear to be a lower frequency as the space/time between wave crests seems to stretch (they are still generating the same frequency but the frequency seems to be getting lower because of the increase in physical distances between wave crests). A car moving at a steady rate consistently generates the same frequency; but as it moves away from another object the frequency waves seem to stretch and become longer to fill the void of extra space between crests as the distance increases. As the wave crests seem to get further apart the frequency seems to get lower and therefore the sound changes from a higher pitch to a lower pitch. Likewise, if objects approach each other there is a higher frequency, or blue color, shift.



Putting Lemaître's idea with Hubble's studies enhanced the idea that if the universe is expanding, it has to be expanding from something smaller, i.e. from a smaller area – which would eventually lead back to a single point. If it was all a singular point at some time, there must have been some process of expansion which can be reasoned; reckoning this manner of expansion and change (with no God involved) has led scientists to their current beliefs.

1. Exodus 20:11
2. <http://archive.ncsa.illinois.edu/Cyberia/Bima/Images/doppler.gif>

Create

Some people believe in a “God” directed evolutionary development of life (Theistic evolution or Intelligent design), some believe God created all life as specific plants and animals while still some believe that the creation brought forth specific *life types*. These *life types* reproduced and generated new specific plants and animals but nothing outside their biological family. The original dogs bred into German Shepherds, Doberman Pinschers, and Rottweilers etc., but not squirrels. Horses bred into Quarter horses, Walkers, Thoroughbreds, Arabians, etc., but not goats. Cats didn’t generate dogs; monkeys didn’t come from fish, etc.

The Hebrew term Moses used for “create” when writing Genesis is בָּרָא (bara) which has been translated into English as “create”. Definition of bara (Reference Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, ref #H1254) to create, shape, form

- 1) (Qal) to shape, fashion, create (always with God as subject)
 - a) of heaven and earth
 - b) of individual man
 - c) of new conditions and circumstances
 - d) of transformations

There are other mentions in the bible (35 in the King James Version) of the word “bara”; these follow the ideas set forth in the definition above. For example

(a above) Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

(b above) Gen 1:27 And God created man,

(c & d above) Psalm 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

John Calvin (Jean Cauvin) wrote - “When God in the beginning created the heaven and the earth, the earth was empty and waste. He moreover teaches by the word "created," that what before did not exist was now made; for he has not used the term "yatsar", which signifies to frame or forms but "bara", which signifies to create. Therefore his meaning is, that the world was made out of nothing.” ⁽¹⁾

Calvin’s assessment of the beginning is that there was nothing until God decided to make something; God said for everything to “become”, so it became as God said. I will get into *how* something can come from nothing later in the section titled “Something from nothing – energy mass conversion”. But for now, let’s get through this section discussing creation.

I believe Calvin was a theological genius but I do not agree with his idea that God created the earth as “empty and waste”. I believe that God’s creation was initially magnificent and fell from its glory. When God began speaking to Job, He started with “⁴Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand. ⁵ Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? ⁶ On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone— ⁷ while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy? ⁽²⁾ God’s discussion commenced from the point of earth being marvelous and causing the angels to sing and shout for joy; or did He intend that the angels were singing and shouting because He had made an irregularly shaped empty rock? What was that sentiment? “*Woo Hoo!! Our creator, who created life and us out of nothing, just made an empty rock!*”? Calvin certainly intended that God created matter from nothing, but that it was originally created as a shapeless rock of nothing is surely doubtful. I have a friend whose position on this topic is that the angels sang for joy because God created something, not something phenomenal, just something – a rock. That seems a bit unthoughtful to me as I consider God’s discussion with Job to be God saying to Job – “*look buddy, I created the earth and caused the angels to sing – what have you done?*” I believe God was telling Job that what He created was more than an empty rock, it was something of such substance that it made the angels, who lived in the beauty of

heaven, stand up and cheer. *How did the earth get from formless to a spherical egg shape – an oblate spheroid to be more precise? Physics states that objects of certain size (800 – 1,000 km diameter, depending on what you read) reduce to a spherical shape due to gravity pulling inward on all parts; nothing with mass is unaffected by gravity and any corners would be pulled back into a spherical shape just by gravitational forces alone. Allowing that this law of physics is applicable to the earth, then how long would it take the earth to conform from a formless rock into a spherical planet? “Formless” surely disallows spherical, so the earth in Gen 1:2 could NOT have been spherical/egg shaped. Genesis does not denote how the earth conformed from a shapeless rock into the definite orb on which we presently live, nor does it detail how long it took to change, but we should incorporate that into our thinking of how the world was formed. Moses clearly wrote that the earth was formless; physics details how and why bizarre shapes conform to spherical shapes and when we read the creation account we assume that somewhere between formless and void and the creation of plants and animals the earth just became a sphere without giving it a second thought – why is that?*

An extra thought on this point is why did God mention the shape of the earth twice, in Genesis 1:2 and Isaiah 40:22? I tend to think that He did it, in part, to allow us to discover that the earth is older than 6,000 years. He tells us that the earth was formless and then He tells us that it is now round. There is no mention of any miracle wherein God said “Let the earth be round” so we must assume that it occurred naturally. For gravity to affect a formless rock and reshape it into a sphere, that becomes 8,000 miles in diameter, requires some time – probably tens or hundreds of millions of years. I know that if you believe in the 6,000-year-old earth idea this is a completely bad rub for you. But why did God mention that the earth was formless and is now round? Later, when I discuss how creation is the story of salvation we see at least one other reason why God would tell us that the earth became formless; but to bring up formless and then round intends a reason. I think it is partially to let us know that the earth is a much older event than we believe and that it wasn’t a straight forward “God said it and it immediately occurred”. He is a God of order and a God of miracles. He allows things to occur according to His plan and He forces things to happen according to His wishes.

When we speak of creating things, we need to be mindful of what is intended; when we read the creation account in Genesis we need to understand that God said He made everything from no things. There were no piles of stuff from which He picked a few things to make the universe. There was no universe/space into which He placed the stuff He made. The universe is presently, as near as we can tell, expanding; that means it is spreading out into areas that don’t yet exist. It isn’t spreading into space that already exists; it is causing the space into which it is expanding.

How can anyone create something from nothing? It doesn’t make any sense to us. There’s an old joke that goes as follows...

Scientists studied and learned for millennia and finally got to a point of understanding wherein they could actually cause life to begin. After several successful tries at starting new life they decided it was time for someone to go and tell God that He was no longer needed because man was now self-sufficient; we could feed ourselves and we were at a point where we could cause life to form at our own desires. They drew straws from amongst the more notable personnel and the winner was to approach the Almighty to pass the news. After informing God that humans no longer needed Him, nor His input, God allowed that He would leave us alone providing He was shown a sample of how scientists could create life. The group of scientists got together and started the process of constructing a body they could bring to life. When a couple of them began scooping dirt to put into a mold God said, “wait a minute, what are you doing now?” They replied, “we’re getting some dirt to fill the mold” to which God responded “why don’t you use your own dirt?”

The point is that we can’t make the things God can make, nor can we do the things God can do. God said in Isaiah 55:9 “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts”. Again, in 1 Corinthians: ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength. We can’t imagine what He can do; He is an entity who can tell things to become and they do, just because He said to. This requires faith to believe it because we don’t understand exactly how it was done; but *we can understand*, on a perfunctory level, the idea of how

the events could have occurred given what we know, and keeping inside the physics of what we understand.

The writer of the book of Job said “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” ⁽⁴⁾ The Hebrew word translated as “the empty place” is תהו (tohuw) Strong’s H8414 and it means:

- 1) formlessness, confusion, *unreality, emptiness*
- a) formlessness (of primeval earth)
- 1) nothingness, empty space
- b) that which is empty or unreal (of idols) (fig)
- c) wasteland, wilderness (of solitary places)
- d) place of chaos
- e) vanity

I especially like the term “unreality” because it lends a great image to where God placed the earth– into somewhere that didn’t exist (it never was).

If I were to say that it makes good sense that everything came from nothing, I would have to qualify “everything” and “nothing” because by definition no things can come from nothing. If there is nothing, there are no things, not even one thing, from which anything can be developed. God said for things to become so they just did. God said, in Gen 11:6, that we are smart enough to reason and accomplish anything we set our collective minds to; we need to pay attention to what we’ve learned and see if we can learn more from it.

We live in a universe that constrains us and operates on physical laws; we can’t just wish we were on Venus and then appear on Venus, we have to abide by the rules under which we live. Some of those rules, as far as we understand them, include nothing of mass can accelerate past the speed of light, the pull of gravity on earth is about 9.8 m/s², energy can neither be created nor eliminated, $E=mc^2$, etc... We have the strong, weak, electromagnetic and gravity forces; but as we understand them and the expanding universe, they were all constricted as one entity at the very beginning, the moment of the big bang. As time passed ($\sim 1.0 \times 10^{-43}$ sec) these forces began to separate into their own identities and developed into what we know of the universe now.

If we lend credence to the big bang and the physics of our universe, we can possibly see a bit of *how* God made the universe from a sensible, orderly process of events that followed rules. He is surely the cause of all, but He probably did it from a set of rules; He is orderly. It has been said that math is the language with which God wrote and designed the universe; let’s see if we can make some sense out of that later in the section titled “*Something from Nothing*”. $E=mc^2$ is a truly monumental statement and I hope I can make some sense of it for the reader if this is a new way to look at it.

Keep in mind that God created the universe at His command; He constructed the laws of physics under which the universe operates; He wasn’t constricted by these rules. He may well have opted for another creation manner: I’m just trying to help make sense of what we know within the scope of our finite minds, He created a universe from the position of His infinite wisdom and power – surely we won’t understand the way He did it outside the set of physical laws under which we understand everything.

1. John Calvin’s Bible Commentary, Genesis, Chapter 1
2. Job 38:4-7
3. Job 26:7

24 hour day?

I am fully aware of the differing ideas about how long the days of creation lasted. Don't be confused, I am not proposing how long they were, my point here is to question how we can be certain they were 24 hours, not 23 or 25, but 24. Were they longer? Were they shorter? I have read many accounts of why creation days were exactly 24 hours and several denoting that they were not. The 24 hour crowd says "a day is a day in Hebrew or English" the crowd that believes in longer periods tend to believe that it took longer than 24 hours for each sequence of activities to occur.

I completely understand that God wrote in the 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:11) "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." It is logical to say all those days were the same; but maybe some logic can be made for them to not be the same.

If God said, on the fourth day, for the sun, moon and stars to mark time (Gen 1:14 "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days {yowm}, and years") then what was measured for the first three days? Was it time, or periods of activity? In Genesis 1:1 Moses wrote "In the beginning God created..."; he didn't write "During the first minute..." (which is a measure of time), he wrote "In the beginning..." which is a statement of order.

Not all Christians accept the creation story as the same set of events. There are Old Earth Creationists and Young Earth Creationists, Progressive Creationists, Gap Theory Creationists, Theistic Evolutionists and Day-Age Creationists, to name a few.

Inarguably, Moses used the Hebrew term יוֹם (yowm) for what has been translated into English as "day". The proper meaning of the translated term has been argued, but not the original Hebrew word. Some people believe in a literal 24-hour time period for each of the six days of creation while some believe that assigning 24 hours for the Hebrew term "yowm" is not an accurate reflection of God's intent. "Yowm" is the transliterated word that Moses used to describe the event periods God used in creation/regeneration of earth; it is first employed in Genesis 1:5 "God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first "day"." Both times the word "day" is used to translate "yowm". Isn't it a little bit curious that Moses would call the lighted period "yowm" and then in the exact same verse call the lighted and darkened period together "yowm"?

Following is the translated word יוֹם (yowm) from Hebrew.

Defining yowm (Reference Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, ref #H3117)

yôwm. yome;

from an unused root meaning to be hot;

- a day (as the warm hours),
- whether lit. (from sunrise to sunset, or from one sunset to the next),
- or fig. (a space of time defined by an associated term),
- [often used adv.]: - age + always + chronicles,
- continually (-ance),
- daily, ([birth-],
- each, to) day,
- (now a, two) days (agone),
- + elder, X end,
- +evening,
- + (for) ever (-lasting, -more),
- X full, life,
- as (so) long as (...live) ,
- (even) now + old,
- + outlived,
- +perpetually,
- presently,
- + remaineth,
- X required,
- season,
- X since,
- space,
- then,
- (process of) time,
- + as at other times,
- + in trouble,
- weather,
- (as) when,
- (a, the, within, a) while (that),

- X whole (+age),
- (full)year (ly),
- + younger.

There are two versions of the Hebrew word “yowm” used in the bible, Strong’s H3117 and Strong’s H3118. Strong’s H3117 was defined above; Strong’s H3118 is defined as follows: yowm, יוֹם

1) day

2) day always refers to a twenty-four hour period when the word is modified by a definite or cardinal number.

Just as the English word “son” has two or more meanings even with the word spelled the same, Hebrew has the same instance with this term. In Exodus 20:11 (“For in six days יוֹם yowm] the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day יוֹם yowm]”), “yowm” is modified first with a cardinal number – “six”, then by an ordinal number – “seventh”. Both instances of “yowm” in this verse are detailed by James Strong and Wilhelm Gesenius as H3117 which comes with a host of usable definitions; neither usage in this verse is H3118, which would constrict the meaning to 24 hour days. We have to be sure we don’t stretch or compress the bible to make it say what we want it to say.

Please keep that in mind as you read this book and see if you catch me trying to make the bible say what I want it to say. I pray that I won’t make that mistake, but I’m human and as I have my personal beliefs on some topics I probably present ideas with a tendency to support my view – forgive me when I do. Take note and read on.

Surely, there is reason to look at these definitions of “day” and believe that Moses was describing a 24-hour period when he said “the first day”, “the second day”, etc. The English bibles read “day” and when we hear “day” we regularly think of a day as 24 hours. English is our natural language and we tend to think of things translated into our language as conveying the original meaning. However, reading what was written in the context of the narrative may lead to another conclusion. The Hebrew word “yowm” occurs more than 2,250 times in the Old Testament, and it is defined by several different meanings (listed above). The odds of *every* use of this word meaning the exact same 24-hour period can’t be 100%; if every use of “yowm” means 24 hours there should only be one definition. Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament details the usage as such: “Authorized Version (KJV) Translation Count — Total: 2287 AV — day 2008, time 64, chronicles + 01697 37, daily 44, ever 18, year 14, continually 10, when 10, as 10, while 8, full 8 always 4, whole 4, alway 4, misc 44”

The two uses of the same term in Genesis 1:5 must indicate two different intentions of the same word, or did God intend to call only the well-lit, bright, portion of the time cycle “day” (yowm, 24-hour period) then call the sunny AND dark portion of the time cycle an identical 24-hour period, in the same verse? Obviously the first usage reflects the sunrise to sunset definition (daylight hours) while the second intends a different period of time (cycle). The two instances of this word in this verse must intend two different definitions.

If my mom hasn’t seen me for some time and I go to visit, she will probably say “Son, I haven’t seen you in a while” (*My dad passed away and went to be with the heavenly Father during my writing of this book; he was an outstanding influence on my life but he won’t be calling me son next time we meet*). I have a friend who, when we haven’t seen each other for some time, will say something like “Son, I haven’t seen you in a while” – the exact same words, spelling and punctuation as what my mom might say with an entirely different meaning. If an elderly person is in a store and sees a little boy grabbing an item off a shelf and dropping it on the floor, (s)he may say “son, you shouldn’t be doing that”. These are three different uses of the English word “son” and none have the same meaning, *even though the first two phrases use the exact same words*. It is important to know what the speaker/writer intends when using terms; do not just assume that whichever definition you wish to use conveys the proper idea.

I recall a cartoon I saw a long time ago while I was in the Air Force. The cartoon illustrated the difference in using the exact same terminology in the different branches on U.S. military. The phrase being examined was “secure that building”.

- If Marines were told to *secure a building* they would launch an attack on the building from all four sides and the top; everyone in the building would either be arrested or assaulted/killed to ensure that no one/nothing escaped their raid.
- If an Army group was told to *secure a building* they would surround it with troops and weapons to ensure that no one could enter or leave the building until further notice.
- If Navy troops were told to *secure a building* they would turn out the lights and lock the doors when leaving.
- If Airmen were told to *secure a building* they would research the present owners, place a bid on the building (no price too high, the government is funding it), go to finance to ensure a loan is ready to pay for the building and then purchase it for Air Force use.

What is understood of what was said depends on the context. The exact same words can have a different meaning.

If someone tells you about their “day” at work it doesn’t necessarily reflect a 24-hour period; it could be four (more or less) hours for part time work, 8 hours (more or less) for a salaried worker, 24 hours for a fireman, etc. Therefore, we NEED to read words in the context of the account in which they are used.

Case in point - We use the sun as our reference point to frame our time scale. Our 24-hour clock is based on earth’s rotation referenced to the location of the sun in our sky. All the rest of the time scale is based on the 24-hour clock; minutes, seconds, microseconds, days, weeks, months, etc, are all based on our planet’s positional relationship with the sun. One complete rotation of earth is approximately equal to 24 hours. Without the sun as reference there is no 24-hour period, the earth just spins and spins without marking *specific* time.

Hugh Ross notes “Powerful tidal forces exerted on Earth by the Sun and even more so by the Moon slowed the planet’s rotation rate from two or three hours per day (at the Moon’s formation) to the current twenty-four. This slowing of Earth’s rotation rate has taken 4.5 billion years, thus far, and continues still. In another 100 million years, Earth days will last twenty-five hours.” ⁽¹⁾ We don’t have to agree with everything someone else says to reference them as having made a valid statement. Many scientists agree with Ross that the rate of earth’s rotation is slowing. While there may be some disagreement as to what the original rotation rate was, there is much scientific evidence that the earth’s rotation IS slowing due to gravitational interactions with the moon. This, if accepted, would lead one to believe that long ago days were shorter than 24 hours because the earth rotated faster. Whether God made the earth 6,000 years ago using 24 hour days or billions of years ago is not my argument here. My point is that when we think of the word “day” in Genesis chapter 1, we need not be “married” to 24 hours. Maybe it was 24 hours to the microsecond, but the words used by Moses *allow* otherwise in context with all that occurred.

If we are using the Genesis account of creation, we must notice that God made the earth on the 1st yowm (day) (Gen 1:1-5) and the sun on the 4th yowm (Gen 1: ¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth). Moses said that God made the lights in the sky to give light on the earth; indicating, again, that the earth was already here for the stars, sun and moon to

complement. He also said that God placed the lights in the sky to mark time, which apparently hadn't been tracked until this moment.

Just as we need to understand that the term "God", in the bible, does not reflect some heavenly grandfather who is there to give us what we want, we need to understand that the term Moses used for "day" was not necessarily meant to indicate a 24-hour period in every use. The word he used may well have been based on some period(s) of activity, rather than repeated periods of equal length. With the non-existence of our sun, on the first three days, as a reference for a 24-hour period, Moses' term "yowm" must have indicated a different span; a span defined by an associated period of activity. *(By now, you can probably see an episode of my writing toward a specific position on this topic; don't let it get to you if you hold to the 24-hour day idea, just read on and see what is said and whether you agree or disagree – the point here is not to sway you, but to illustrate that we all need to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen not afraid, but rightly dividing the word of truth. Seems I've read that somewhere before {2 Timothy 2:15} God will hold us responsible for what we've studied, believed and taught others).*

If you adhere to six 24-hour days for creation just be certain of WHY you believe it; have a good reason for your belief - and don't base it on something someone told you or "that's what the bible says", especially if you are not sure of what the bible says. The first 3 periods of creation had no sun; HOW can it be held that there was a 24-hour day before there was a 24-hour reference point?

A side note here if you adhere to the 24 hour day – Genesis 1:3 says "Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light." So there was light on the first "day"; it just wasn't our sun, which God said He put in place on the 4th day - to mark time and seasons. In my mind, that light on the first day was probably Jesus; there are numerous biblical references wherein Jesus is called the "light", so surely He may well have been the light that God called upon in Genesis 1:3. God did not create Jesus; He didn't speak Jesus into existence on the 1st day when He called for light. John chapter one discusses that Jesus was here in the beginning and Colossians chapter one says that everything was made for Him and by Him. He was at the beginning; however, He was probably concealing His effulgence from the earth in its fallen state between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Relax, there is still room to believe that the early days of creation were 24 hours each (most Christians seem to call the days of creation 24 hours), I find that there is more sensible room to believe in periods of specific activity instead of every period being consistently the same time span (especially for the 1st three days). I think that Jesus' call as the light was to begin the regeneration of earth, just as His call to become God in flesh, to suffer, die and raise from the dead, was to begin the regeneration of man's relationship with God.

Also, please note that when Paul wrote his second letter to the church in Corinth he addressed this same light as being God. "For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:6 The New International Version of the bible references this statement by Paul to Genesis 1:3 where Moses wrote "And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light." So Paul, who wrote half the New Testament believed God did not create light when he said "let there be light", but that He just allowed His own light/effulgence to appear on earth. The topic in Genesis 1 is creation of earth and God did not use the Hebrew term "bara" (create) when He said let there be light - He did not create light at that moment. He addressed light that already existed, and that could only have been Him.

The apostle John wrote, in Rev 21 "22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple."23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. 24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. 25 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there." Revelation 22"4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light." We have several examples wherein the bible calls Jesus "light" and speaks that provides visual He light. In Genesis we need to understand which light God was talking about as well as what comprised a creation day. I have a good Christian friend who believes in 24-hour

creation days and no gap between the creation of heaven and earth “in the beginning” and the earth becoming formless and void. He doesn’t have any researched reasoning, the bible says it and he believes it. At least he knows what he believes and will hold to it with the tenacity of a bulldog with a ham bone. It is critical that you also have a reason for what you believe – as Peter said.

Recall the earlier definitions of the term “yowm”; from an unused root meaning to be hot; a day (as the warm hours), whether lit. (from sunrise to sunset, or from one sunset to the next), or fig. (a space of time defined by an associated term), these definitions lend a literal definition of “from sunrise to sunset (average of about 12 hours depending on the season)” or “one sunset to the next (~24 hours) and a figurative definition of “a space of time”. Without a sun to rise and set, there is no reason to assign the sunrise to sunset definition to this term, in this instance.

In Revelation 22:2 John also penned "... On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations." John had just written that there is no night in heaven, only light provided by Jesus/God, then he wrote that the tree of life provides different fruit each month. How can there be months without night to separate the days? Maybe God has more going on than we deem our understanding to be complete. I prefer to err on the side of God knowing much more than we know or understand. John just mentioned that there are twelve crops of fruit (tree of life), one for each month - apparently cycling through all the fruits in a year - but if heaven is eternal how can there be years and why would we count them?

The first three days of creation, if not all six days, were not reliably, nor necessarily, 24-hour days as most people believe the biblical claim to be. The bible doesn’t strictly claim 24 hours. The periods of activity to which Moses referred may well have been extended periods of developmental activity – though NOT evolution. Whether you accept that the “days” were 24 hours each, or some length of time for which we don’t have a precise measurement I am not concerned – but you need to know which you believe and upon what you base your belief. Salvation is not based on 24-hour day vs. periods of activity, but as you read this text and I expand on how this idea may well fit an orderly creation I hope you will see the validity of having a thought out position for belief. Everything in the bible follows after the orderly creation so it is important that you have a valid understanding of that process.

One additional question – there are many others, but I’ll just address this one right now; Gen 1:2 says the earth was formless and void, Isaiah 40:22 says “He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth...”. If the earth had no form, but later was formed as a sphere when did the conversion occur and how long did it take? There is no scripture that reads “God told the earth to become round”. Physics details that planets and rocks greater than a couple of hundred kilometers across form themselves into spherical shapes because of gravity, and that takes some time to conform. Did God create the earth without shape and then pop it into a sphere during creation without mentioning it, or did He allow His laws of physics to run their course? They are His laws and He is a God of order; I’d have to reckon that He allowed physics to run its course.

I understand that Moses wrote:

- Genesis 1:5 “God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day”
- Genesis 1:8 “God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.
- Genesis 1:13 “And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.”
- Genesis 1: 19 “And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.”
- Genesis 1: 23 “And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.”
- Genesis 1: 31 “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.”

“Evening” and “morning” present an enigma; how can there be evening and morning if there is no sun? Strong’s concordance defines these as

evening – H6153, ereb – עֶרֶב

1. evening, night, sunset

- a. evening, sunset
- b. night

morning – H1242, boqer - בֹּקֶר

1) morning, break of day

- a) morning
 - i) of end of night
 - ii) of coming of daylight
 - iii) of coming of sunrise
 - iv) of beginning of day
 - v) of bright joy after night of distress (fig.)
- b) morrow, next day, next morning

It is not an accident that God had Moses use these terms; we are at a decided disadvantage of having to figure it out. I would assume that the earth was already spinning at this time; it was probably spinning from the beginning of creation. There is no redacted section of Genesis 1:5 wherein God originally said “...then God spun the earth and evening and morning were the first day”. So, if evening is defined as “sunset” and there was no sun, and morning is defined as “end of night”, “coming of daylight”, “coming of sunrise” and there was no sun we are left to discern what is meant. I tend toward “beginning of day”, “morrow, next day” (I have an aggravation using a word to define itself – if evening means evening, and morning means morning, etc. how can we use that? We can use “sunset” and “night”, but not “evening”. We can use “end of night”, “next day” etc. but not “morning” to define these words) All this is said to allow the reader to see that there are different positions on this and other points in the bible.

We must allow that there are different positions on different topics – 24 hour days of creation is not a salvation issue, we are not saved or not saved because of our position on this and certain other topics. This is an example of why we “study to show thyself approved...” (II Timothy 2:15), we need to know why we believe what we believe.

1. WHY THE UNIVERSE IS THE WAY IT IS, Hugh Ross, 2008, pg 109

[Time began on the fourth day](#)

Genesis 1:14-19 details the first tracking time as far as I can tell. We like to imagine that time always existed because if something happened before something else then there must have been some “time” in between the activities. While it is true that when things occur in succession there must be a manner of detailing the order, we need to keep in mind that apparently God didn’t concern Himself with tracking *time*, or telling us about His method, if He waited until the fourth “day” to create the timepieces we use. He recorded “order” with “In the beginning...” Recall that God is eternal and time is but a creation to Him for us; He existed before time began and after time closes. As we will live forever, time will not matter to us at some point. There is a hymnal titled Amazing Grace whose sixth verse (stanza) goes “When we’ve been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we’ve no less days to sing God’s praise than when we first begun”. It has a slightly different version sung in many churches that goes “When we’ve been there forevermore, bright shining like the sun, we’ve no less days to sing God’s praise than when we first begun” the interchanging of “ten thousand years” and “forevermore” certainly implies that we will exist long after time ceases to exist. Time won’t be tracked, it won’t matter. Whether 10,000 years is equivalent to forever may be debated, but the point is that in eternity they will be the same – inconsequential.

However, the first mention of “time” in the bible is on the fourth day when the sun, moon and stars were created to mark time. When I say that the first mention of time is on the fourth day, please do not get “time” confused with “order” and think that the “first *day*” coming before the “second *day*” is a statement of time; it is a statement of order. Time is *implied* by chronological ordering; if I were to say my brother was the first-born child in our family and I was born fourth that details order, not time. God may well have marked time in His own manner separate from creation of heaven and earth, but He didn’t describe that manner to us. The mention of “time” on the fourth day appears to be the beginning of time for human tracking.

Keeping in mind that God knows everything, and John was taken to heaven to see the Revelation, we see that God is not restricted by time in any manner. He created events in order, not in time. Because God lives in eternity time is of no real consequence to Him. He sees what has happened, what is happening and what is going to happen from any vantage point, as He chooses. It’s subtle, the difference between time and order, but try and keep in mind that God is outside of time; He must be or He wouldn’t have been able to create it. God created time and is distinct from His creations. He is an orderly God, but not a God limited by time.

For an analogy, consider a one-dimensional line segment. This is basically a line segment comprising an x-axis with no deviation in y-axis values. (*Recall x-y planes in math; x is represented horizontally across the page, while y is represented vertically*)



Allow that the line segment above represents time; for the sake of argument, let’s agree that it begins on the left and ends on the right. If you appear as the dot on this line segment, and time continuously moves along the line, your position moves along the line with time. We cannot spend a while at any specific moment. We cannot sit at a special moment and continue to enjoy it as long as we’d like, time moves on and other events occur; we move along as time moves along. We can use some of our future moments reflecting back upon a good moment but we can’t just stay at that moment enjoying it continually. If we had access to a y-axis relating to time we could spend however long we choose at any given moment, i.e. we could wander up and down the y-axis line at any given point of time and remain there.

You are here



Let “X” mark a specific instant in time at which you would like to invest some time enjoying the moment. If we had the ability to remain at a given moment as long as we chose, this idea could be represented by the image above. The vertical line could represent how long we stay at a moment, the longer we stay the longer the vertical line; so, time, for us, would then be a two dimensional *plane* with all sorts of possible lengths allowed for any given moment in time, meaning that we could stay at any moment as long as we’d like. We still couldn’t wander around all willy nilly, say from 29B.C. to 1627 A.D and back to 350 B.C.; as long as we weren’t stationary at one point in time we’d move along with time. This may seem like rambling at the moment, but I am getting to a possible description of how God relates to time.

God describes Himself as eternal, not bound by time, existing forever. He can be anywhere on the timeline He wants to be, for as long as He wants to be there and can easily view all of time as He pleases.

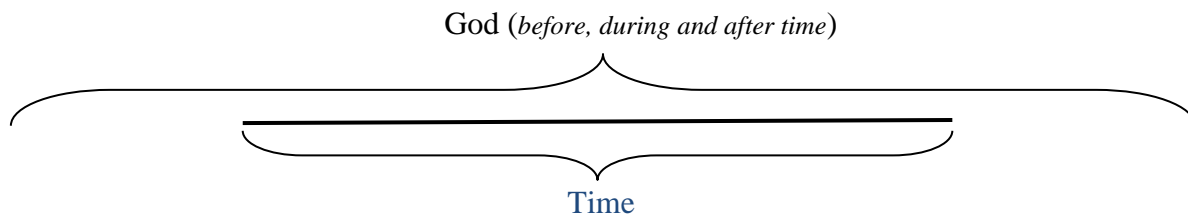
Genesis 21:33 “Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and he worshiped the LORD, the **Eternal** God, at that place. ³⁴And Abraham lived in Philistine country for a long time.”

Psalms 41:13 “Bless the LORD, the God of Israel, who lives forever from **eternal** ages past. Amen and amen!”

Daniel 4:34 ““After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever. His rule is everlasting, and his kingdom is **eternal**.”

Habakkuk 1:12 “O LORD my God, my Holy One, you who are **eternal**”

If God exists from eternity past through eternity future, we can never fix Him to a specific moment in time - even right now He’s everywhere in time. Merriam-Webster defines eternal as “having infinite duration, everlasting”. If God is infinite, everlasting, then time matters not to Him; He is outside of the time He created for us. Being outside of time releases God from our mental constraints on what He can do and how long it may take Him to accomplish His acts. To say that the first three periods of creation activity occurred in three successive 24 hour days, without the sun and stars to mark time, may well be simple. Hold to that thought if it’s what you believe, but while holding to that thought, remember this. God was working on His own schedule, not ours. God is inestimable; He said that as high as the heavens are above the earth His ways are above our ways ⁽¹⁾. We try to constrain God into what we understand and experience without reading everything that He’s told us. God’s view of time, if it were constrained to human terms, could possibly be represented below. Time would be the horizontal *line*, the horizontal *bracket* would depict where God is at any given moment or at every moment simultaneously – He’s everywhere, anywhere in time and beyond. To borrow, and manipulate, a phrase from the movie Toy Story– He’s at infinity and beyond. In the diagram below imagine that the horizontal *bracket* represents God’s presence, it extends beyond the beginning and end of time (the black line), notice that time is constrained to a specific existence – it has a beginning and end. This is not a complete description of God’s existence; it is merely an analogy, and recall that analogies *always* fall short of an exact representation.

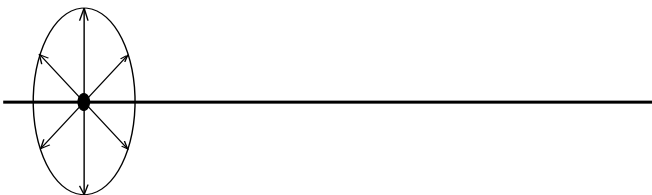


I am not telling you what to believe about creation time. I will be pointing out some issues that make *me believe* that at least the first three days were not 24 hour days. If they were, in fact, 24 hours each, then I'm wrong. Fortunately, Paul delineated two steps required for salvation (Romans 10:9, 10) confess Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead and you will be saved – Paul did not mention adhering to specific timelines for creation to be saved so we're on safe ground arguing here; salvation is not at stake over this issue. I've been wrong before and surely will be wrong again, but usually through studying I've fixed that; I can and will study more and that's all I'm suggesting for anyone. Paul wrote and directed Timothy to study in 2nd Timothy 2:15. We would be well off to follow that same exhortation.

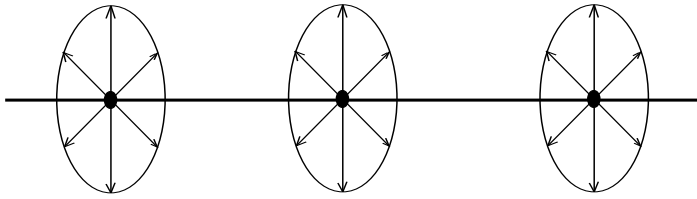
As I pointed out, Genesis 1:1 begins with "In the beginning" which is a statement of order. Please do not get "order" confused with "time". Before there were angels there was only God – that is order. "In the beginning" does not imply a specific time such as April 23rd, 6,000 B.C. - it denotes order. Hosea 6:1, 2 uses the Strong's Exhaustive Concordance H3117 version of *yowm* and implies order" "Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. ² After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us that we may live in his presence." – do these "days" mark 24 hour periods, or do they imply an ordered period of activity within which God will work through a process He delineated? Even though "two days" is "*yowm*" modified by a cardinal number it is the H3117 version of the term and therefore not restricted to 24 hours and clearly implies an ordered process; unless you want to think that Hosea wrote that God has 24 hours to revive Israel and the next 24 hours to restore them as a nation – which I have no doubt that He could do if He so chose. I just see it as nonsense to say that God restricted Himself to hours when speaking of a rebuilding *process/order*. Also, please consider that in the same verse the writer uses "two days" and "third day" one modified by a cardinal number, the other modified by an ordinal number. Does this mean that the 2nd day will be 24 hours of God reviving Israel followed by the 3rd non-specific period of activity wherein God will restore Israel?

Was it time or orderly process? I'm going with orderly process. God functioned in an orderly fashion long before He made the sun to mark time. You may wonder about the light in Gen 1:3 "And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light." Why didn't He use THAT existence of light to mark time? What was that light? Why couldn't the earth have used THAT light to mark time instead of waiting for the sun, moon and stars to be created to mark time/seasons? I believe that light was the effulgence of Jesus being allowed to shine on earth again; earth was probably in light at some time previous to Gen 1:3 because the angels sang for joy when God created it. Whatever that light was, it wasn't the sun that we see now; our sun was created on the fourth day and God said it was created to mark time – which apparently hadn't been marked as yet. Otherwise, why would He comment on it?

This time analogy has just always fallen a bit short for me; I drew it up and have implemented it for this topic but haven't been completely satisfied with it. After much thought I have developed a better indicator for how time works and how God relates to it. God is, at all times, existent in every moment and in every place. As God is omnipresent, He must exist in every place, in every dimension. Time is a dimension and He must exist at every moment of time, at all times. So, imagine a timeline with a dot that indicates a specific moment in time. God is existent at every possible approach to that moment, to infinity.



Now, imagine all the dots of time that exist on the entire timeline, from the beginning to the end of time. God is existent at every moment of time, for infinity at every possible approach to that moment.



God created time for us, not Himself. He is forever existent at every moment and every place in existence. I hope this is a better explanation. I did not remove the previous example as I don't want to remove something that may be helpful to someone.

1. Is 55:9

Light and Darkness on the first day, with no sun or moon?

According to Moses, the earth was created three “days” (event periods) before the sun, moon and stars were created. The problem with the first three days being 24-hour days is that the sun, our reference for 24 hours, had not yet been created. But didn’t Moses write that on the first day “God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness.” (Gen 1:3, 4)? How could there be light and darkness if God hadn’t yet created the sun and stars?

John 12:35 “Then Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.”

Psalms 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”

Jesus, The Word (*John 1:1*), must be the light that God called on the first day when He said “Let there be light”. I believe that when God (in Gen. 1:3, 4) spoke of separating light from darkness He was speaking of Jesus as the light and sin/Satan as the darkness. God did not say “*let there be dark*”, He *allowed* darkness to happen; darkness became because Satan became it – God allowed that darkness, He didn’t command or direct it to exist. Jesus is light and allowed His brilliance to shine on earth when God said so. If we understand the word “was” in Gen 1:2 to mean “*became*” then we should understand that the first sin of Satan became the darkness that God separated from Himself. Because sin had not yet existed, there was no reason for darkness to yet be separated from God; when sin came into existence God had to separate Satan from Himself. If God is omnipresent then everywhere that existed was lit by Him; I understand that this is a bit of an extrapolation, but we don’t have *all* the information in the universe so we have to fill in some blanks with the information that we have.

Imagine that when Satan was cast from God’s presence the earth fell from being the beautiful creation it was when the angels sang for joy; this, now formless, rock became engulfed in darkness (recall that Satan was cast to the earth in Isaiah 14:12), it was separated from the light that IS God. Upon God’s action to reinvigorate earth He called the light to shine upon the world again. How did the world change from the orb that angels cheered for into a formless rock? It seems - to me - that the darkness that was on the face of the deep was caused by Satan’s evil presence.

God is absolute righteousness and holiness; nothing polluted can be in His presence - *with the possible exception of Satan being directed to present himself to God*. Leviticus 11: 44, 45 “I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy...I am the LORD, who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy”. Romans 3:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”. God is, therefore, holy and He punishes sin instead of allowing it to remain in His presence. In Matthew 16:23 Jesus had just begun telling his disciples about His coming torture and death followed by resurrection when Peter jumped in and told Jesus there was no way he would let that happen. Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.” – not that Peter was actually “Satan” but Jesus said this to indicate that what Peter was saying was in conflict with God’s plan and therefore had no place near God/Jesus. Peter’s speech was counter to God’s purpose. Here is an episode in the bible wherein the speaker used a metaphor instead of a literal meaning of what was said. (*If Jesus was speaking directly to Peter, He wasn’t saying that Peter was actually Satan He was telling Peter to get that kind of rebellion out of His presence – if Jesus was speaking directly to Satan to get behind Him then He wasn’t calling Peter Satan either*) Nothing against God can remain in God’s presence without His permission; it will be duly chastised in His time; Romans 3:25-26 reads “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood —to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his

forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished — ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.” God will have His justice. For further discussion of God’s wrath against anything or anyone who crosses Him, read Deuteronomy chapter 32; following is a portion of that chapter. ¹⁸ “You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth. ¹⁹ The LORD saw this and rejected them because he was angered by his sons and daughters. ²⁰ “I will hide my face from them,” he said, “and see what their end will be; for they are a perverse generation, children who are unfaithful. ²¹ They made me jealous by what is no god and angered me with their worthless idols. I will make them envious by those who are not a people; I will make them angry by a nation that has no understanding. ²² For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the realm of death below... ³⁷ He will say: “Now where are their gods, the rock they took refuge in, ³⁸ the gods who ate the fat of their sacrifices and drank the wine of their drink offerings? Let them rise up to help you! Let them give you shelter! ³⁹ “See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand. ⁴⁰ I lift my hand to heaven and declare: As surely as I live forever, ⁴¹ when I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand grasps it in judgment, I will take vengeance on my adversaries and repay those who hate me.”

There may seem to be a slight conundrum presented with my stated position that nothing unholy can be in God’s presence because, after Satan’s fall, Satan was allowed in God’s presence when he and God discussed Job’s blamelessness. At present, Satan is apparently allowed access to present himself to God. However, keep in mind that there is a formality mentioned in Job 1:6 “One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them. ⁷ The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?””

The angels came to present themselves before the LORD. In the military, when someone presents themselves to their commander it is not necessarily by their choice; they don’t just choose to go see the commander and walk in for a visit; usually people are directed to present themselves, and to give answer for what they have accomplished; other military options for presenting oneself to the commander include requesting permission to see him/her. In all my time in the military I’ve never seen anyone just walk into their commander’s office and say “Hey Tom I want to talk about...”; it works similarly in corporations and other institutions; people don’t just walk into the boss’ office and start chatting away. Have you ever heard of anyone walking off the streets into 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, Washington D.C. into the Oval Office of the President of the United States and saying “Hey, George we need to talk...”? God asked Satan – the accuser – from where he had come. God apparently directed that Satan come before Him to give answer for what he had been doing. The text does not read that Satan waltzed into heaven, swaggered in front of the almighty creator and started mouthing off about Job. And according to Psalm 139, God already knew where Satan had been as He knows us everywhere we can possibly go. My guess is that Satan was there to present himself and answer to God.

I will cover Jesus being God later in the section titled “Teknon vs. Huois – Jesus IS God”; but for now, *consider* that Jesus is the light that God was talking about when He said “Let there be light”. Jesus (God) already existed; God, the Father, was just calling/stating for His brilliance to be exposed to the world again. The earth was in darkness under the shadow of a fallen Lucifer. Satan is a created angel; a now fallen angel. The casting of Satan, and sin, out of God’s presence was not the equivalent of putting a bad boy in a chair in the corner wearing a dunce cap. It was an eternal ejection and rejection. Satan sought to usurp God’s authority and make himself “like the most high” and was banished. To where he was banished must have been a darkened locale as Satan is from then forward described as darkness.

Some six hundred years before Jesus’s birth is Isaiah’s account of Satan, previously “the Morning Star”, and now befallen Lucifer – Satan, the devil. Isaiah details how Lucifer arrives in hell with fallen rulers waiting to taunt him regarding his fall. Isaiah said that Lucifer was cast down. Jesus (God in the form of a man) said that He *saw* Satan fall like lightning (Luke 10:18). Ezekiel captures Satan’s expulsion from God’s presence; notice, in vs. 17 below, that upon his exile Satan was thrown to the earth, which would

explain how the earth – a previously beautiful masterpiece - became void, engulfed in darkness. *Maybe that's how the earth became formless – Satan hit it with tremendous force; please don't consider this last statement a new doctrine, it was intended as humor.* It could be true; we just don't have enough information to say it for certain.

I would like to insert a side note here (please bear with me):

In his Treatise on The Career of Satan in his Systematic Theology, Vol II, Dr Sperry-Chafer addresses the differences of Ezekiel's, Isaiah's and John's discourses on Satan's expulsion from heaven as well as Jesus' statement in Luke 10:18 that He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Dr. Chafer states "Whether this was history or prophecy must be determined by the verdict of other Scriptures. Revelation 12:7-9 relates a casting out of Satan from heaven to the earth and, as there described, it is evidently future.

"7 Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. 8 But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. 9 The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him." "The prophet Ezekiel foresees a casting out of Satan" (Ezekiel 28:16-17 "By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.") This is the King James version, the NIV reads ("Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. 17 Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings".) Dr Chafer notes that Ezekiel made his statements from the point of standing "on the threshold of angelic history and saw in prospect on to the end of Satan's career" while Isaiah "stood at the end of this history and saw in retrospect what he records". Keeping in mind that Jesus is God, and except for living here as a dude in a skin suit for 33 years constrained by the human limitations He imposed upon Himself, He lives outside of time and has already seen everything that's going to happen before it happens(ed).

In light of this we have to decide if Satan has already been cast from heaven and been allowed reentry to God's presence or if he has not been cast out yet, but will be in the future. It's a very thin line to decide some things. We know from Job 1 and 2 that Satan has access to God's presence, as well as when Jesus told Peter that Satan had appealed to God to be allowed to sift Peter (Luke 22:31). So Satan is not completely removed from heaven at present. When Jesus saw Satan thrown from heaven, is that past or present tense to us? I believe Satan has already been cast from his position as God's most wonderful cherub and somehow that event impacted the earth. I do know that Satan will be cast into the abyss for 1,000 years (Rev 20) and then destroyed. Has he already been cast/thrown from heaven? I would like to say yes, but that he has been allowed to approach God. I do not believe the bible gives us a definite time for his expulsion as Ezekiel write from the beginning of history looking forward, while Isaiah writes from

another the end looking back and Jesus' statement can be considered to cover all of existence. Only John writes from around 70 A.D. and speaks of the future. Maybe there is another permanent expulsion, maybe there is only one in the future - however, we do know that Satan has already fallen, with whatever punishment that may comprise.

Ezekiel 28: 11 “The word of the LORD came to me: ¹² “Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: “You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. ¹⁴ You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. ¹⁶ Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. ¹⁷ Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.”

Isaiah captures the actions of Satan that preceded his banishment; Satan, previously Morning Star, son of the dawn, became infatuated with his own self, beauty, strength and wisdom and was rejected from heaven for taking a position that wasn't focused on His creator. Isaiah 14: 9 “The grave below is all astir to meet you at your coming; it rouses the spirits of the departed to greet you— all those who were leaders in the world; it makes them rise from their thrones— all those who were kings over the nations. ¹⁰ They will all respond, they will say to you, "You also have become weak, as we are; you have become like us." ¹¹ All your pomp has been brought down to the grave, along with the noise of your harps; maggots are spread out beneath you and worms cover you. ¹² How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! ¹³ You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. ¹⁴ I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." ¹⁵ But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit. ¹⁶ Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: "Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, ¹⁷ the man who made the world a desert, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?" ¹⁸ All the kings of the nations lie in state, each in his own tomb. ¹⁹ But you are cast out of your tomb like a rejected branch; you are covered with the slain, with those pierced by the sword, those who descend to the stones of the pit. Like a corpse trampled underfoot,..."

In the 10th chapter of Luke, Jesus addresses Lucifer's fall, from the position of Morning Star to Satan the devil, in a first person, eyewitness account. Luke 10:18 “He (*Jesus*) replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.”

Further discussions of Jesus and Lucifer/Satan detail that they ARE the light and darkness

John 1: 3 “Through him (*Jesus*) all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, but *the darkness has not understood it*. ⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.”

Job 38:19 "What is the way to the abode of light? And where does darkness reside?"

In John chapter 1 the writer speaks of the darkness not understanding the light; understanding implies intellect, intellect implies life. In Job 38:19 God asked Job where the darkness resides; the Hebrew word translated as “reside” (*in the NIV bible*) and “dwellleth” (*in the KJV bible*) is יָשָׁן, shakan. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance defines this term as

to reside or permanently stay (lit. or fig.):
- abide, continue (cause to, make to) dwell (-er),
have habitation,
inhabit,
lay,
place,
(cause to) remain,
rest,
set (up)

In order for something to reside, or inhabit, somewhere it must be alive. A fox lives in a forest, a crab inhabits a coral reef; a rock does not reside anywhere. To reside implies life. I believe the darkness spoken of in Genesis 1:3, 4 is the person of Satan. God was not speaking of the darkness as being a lack of luminescence; He was speaking of a life that *is* darkness; a life that is separated from The Light. I believe the light in Genesis 1:3, 4 is the person of Jesus. God separated the light from the darkness when he cast Lucifer/Satan out of heaven. The light and darkness that God dealt with in Genesis 1:3, 4 was not caused by the sun and stars; they didn't exist until the 4th yowm (day). There is not a distinct separation of the light and dark caused by the sun and lack of sunlight – that is a transition between light and dark; there is no defined separation, just differing degrees of light. Go outside at dusk or dawn and watch how the sunlight appears in the morning or disappears at night; it is gradual, not immediate, separation.

In John 1:3-9 (above) Jesus is defined as having made all things that were made; Jesus made Satan. Jesus is defined as the light of men; John the Baptist came to testify of the light. That *Jesus is the light* is stated several times in this passage. That Jesus created everything that exists is also stated in this passage, and this point is invaluable. If Jesus created everything that exists, as Paul wrote in Colossians 1:15, 16 then the universe is created for Jesus. Everything is all about Jesus. We exist because of Jesus. We exist for Jesus. (my present Pastor, Dr. Crawford Loritts recently said, in the middle of a sermon, “if you don't have Jesus in your life you have no reason to be alive.” I don't think it can be stated any more clearly). Jesus is the light of our existence.

I find it sensible to believe that the darkness and the light in Genesis 1:3, 4 were, indeed, persons, not the presence and absence of luminance. So, when God said “Let there be light” on the first day, He must have been addressing His action of shining, once again, upon the earth to begin restoration of the planet.

That Jesus was the light called upon in Genesis 1:3 may also be supported by plant life existing before the sun on the 4th day; some kind of light had to provide light for the plants to perform photosynthesis, and it wasn't our sun.

Please feel free to believe what you wish, just know that you are responsible to God for what you believe. If this all seems strange and unbelievable to you then, at worst, you've just read something that expands your knowledge of topics with which you disagree. If it gives you pause to consider the bible text more closely then take a moment and praise God for allowing you this lucid moment.

Teknon vs. Huiois – Jesus IS God

There are three basic Greek terms that were translated as “son” into English versions of the bible in discussions regarding Jesus. “Teknon” (τέκνον) and “huios” (ἡυιος) are the more important and will get the most attention here; the third “pais” (παῖς) will be briefly addressed as well. First, let’s begin by defining these terms.

Teknon (τέκνον) is defined in *“The Complete Word Study New Testament”* by Spiros Zodhiates, Th.D.: to beget, bear, Child; used both in the natural and the figurative senses, giving prominence to the fact of birth, whereas huiós (5207), son in a generic sense, stresses the dignity and character of the relationship. In the narrative of His human birth, Jesus Christ is never designated as téknon, or téknon Theou, a child of God, but always ho Huiós, the Son or the Son of God or the Son of Man (Matt 1:21, 23, 25; Luke 1:31; 2:7). Only his mother called him téknon (Luke 2:48) as she viewed Him in His humanity. Jesus never presents Himself in His God-Man consciousness as a téknon of man or of God. He was only huios (5207), denoting relationship of character with the Father God, not giving the idea that He was a mere child of the Father. He was Mary’s téknon but God’s son, huios (5207). When speaking of Elizabeth and Zechariah it was said of them that they had no child, téknon (Luke 1:7)

This word denotes a relationship by birth as in speaking of one’s offspring. Only twice is this term used in reference to Jesus; notice, below, that it is in reference to his relationship with his mother in the first and his mother speaking in the second, not Joseph. He was NOT Joseph’s son by birth; Joseph did not have any action in Jesus’ conception. (*Matthew 1: 18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. 20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). 24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.*)

Jesus was/is the offspring of God in the sense that Holy Spirit impregnated Mary. God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit are the three persons of the triune God (*tri-une; trinity from “tri” meaning three, as in tricycle; “une” from “una” meaning one, as in unicycle – giving the meaning of three in one*); as God made Mary pregnant and the physical body that Jesus inhabited was the offspring it can easily and sensibly be stated that Jesus is the physical offspring, teknon (τέκνον), of God.

In his hometown, Jesus was teaching and the people of the town became upset that He seemed to know so much and performed miracles so they questioned the situation. Mark 6:3 “Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son (teknon) and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.”

Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Festival of the Passover, in Jerusalem, when Jesus was 12 years old; they left thinking that Jesus was traveling with their group. A day later they realized he wasn’t in the group so they returned to Jerusalem to find him -. Luke 2:48 “When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, “Son (teknon), why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” Joseph was Jesus’ earthly dad, but not his birth father; Mary called him τέκνον, her offspring, not Joseph’s.

Huios (ἡυιος) is defined in *“The Complete Word Study New Testament”* by Spiros Zodhiates, Th.D.: “son, distinguished from *téknon* (5043), child In 1 John 1:3, 7; 2:22-24; 3:8, 23; 4:9, 10, 14, 15; 5:5, 9-13, 20 *huiós* is reserved for the Son of God. *Huiós* primarily signifies the relation of offspring to parent and not simply the birth as indicated by *téknon* (5043) (John 9:18-20; Gal. 4:30). Used metaphorically of prominent moral characteristics (Matt 5:9, 45; 8:12; 13:38; Mark 2:19; 3:17; Luke 6:35; 10:6; 16:8; 20:36; John 12:36; 17:12; Acts 10:36; 2Cor 6:18; Eph 2:2). In the NT used of male offspring (Gal 4:30); legitimate offspring (Heb 12:8); descendants, irrespective of their gender (Rom 9:27); generally demonstrating behavior or character (Matt 23:15, 31; Luke 6:35; 23:36; John 17:12; Acts 4:36; 13:10; Rom 8:14, 19; Gal 3:26; Eph 2:2). The difference between believers as children (*tékna*) of God and as sons (*huioi*) is brought out in Romans 8:14-21. *Tékna* refers to those who were born of God and *huioi* refers to those who show maturity acting as sons. When just the basic relationship as a born-again child of God is referred to, it is expressed as *tékna* (Rom 8:16). *Huiós* gives evidence of the dignity of one’s relationship and likeness to God’s character. In John 1:12 *tékna* is used of new believers, not *huioi*. The expression “Son of God” (*huiós* Θεοῦ), is used of Jesus as a manifestation of his relationship with the Father or the expression of His character. The Lord Jesus is never called *téknon* (5043) Θεοῦ (2316), a child of God, as believers are. Jesus used either the full title (John 5:25; 11:14) or more frequently “the Son” *ho Huiós*, which is to be understood as an abbreviation of “the Son of God”, not “the Son of Man”, which He always expressed in full (Luke 10:22; John 5:19) thus stressing the characteristic of humanity apart from sin. In Acts 13:33 (see also Ps 2:7), the birth of Christ in His humanity and His sinless conformity to the Father’s character is expressed not with *téknon*, but with *huiós*.”

Huios speaks to the character of the individual and the relationship between the one spoken of and the one referenced for comparison; the idea is similar to viewing something in a mirror – an exact reflection of the topic. Almost every time Jesus was referred to as “son” it is with this term. As the “Son of God” – He was/is the exact character/person of God; one cannot reflect the exact character of God without being exactly God. As the “Son of man” – Jesus is God, who took on a flesh and blood form to live in the exact same situations in which we live; he was hungry, thirsty, sleepy, tired, happy, sad, he had to eat, drink, walk, climb and go to the bathroom like us. He saw pretty women, without lusting; he drank wine without getting drunk; he didn’t cheat or lie to anyone; he lived in the same environment that we do, and he did it without sinning. As a matter of fact, after Jesus fasted for 40 days, Satan offered Him the kingdoms of the world and Jesus didn’t succumb to greed or lust for power either. Jesus is the huios (ἡυιος) of God, the exact character of God. Colossians 1:15 “He is the image of the invisible God”. Matthew 1: 23 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”) *This is fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy in Isaiah 7:14.* “Immanuel” does NOT mean God’s son is with us, it means God is with us, and that’s who Jesus is.

God says that humans cannot physically look upon Him and live (Exodus 33:20 “But”, he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”) and Jesus said that God is spirit (John 4:24 “God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”) – God is not a visible person. God’s (the Father’s) glory may be viewed but not his physical self – there is not a *physical* manifestation/incarnation of God the Father, almighty. Jesus is the person of the Godhead that took on physical human traits with which to interact with humans.

There is a third word for “son” mentioned in the New Testament; it is pais (παῖς) - Strong’s G3816 - which is not used as often, and means an infant, child or servant. It is used six times in reference to Jesus. When spoken of as a child (staying behind at the temple) the meaning is obvious.

1. Matt 12:18 “Here is my **servant** (παῖς) whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. – *a fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy in Isaiah 42:1-4*
2. Luke 2:43 “And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the **child** (παῖς) Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not [of it].” *This is when Jesus stayed behind the family in Jerusalem, after Passover, interacting with the priests in the temple.*

3. Acts 3:13 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his **servant** (παῖς) Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. *In this sense Jesus was referred to as that person of the triune God who had come to serve God the Father and carry out His will that Jesus become the atoning sacrifice that make it possible for man to come to God.*
4. Acts 3:26 "Unto you first God, having raised up his **Son** (παῖς) Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." *Same as previous use.*
5. Acts 4:27 "Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy **servant** (παῖς) Jesus, whom you anointed." *Same as previous use.*
6. Acts 4:30 "Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy **servant** (παῖς) Jesus." *Same as previous use.*

In context with the rest of scripture this is honest. Matthew 20:28 says "...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." And Mark 10:45 likewise says "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Jesus came to serve; He is often referred to in the spirit of serving. There is no dichotomy of meaning here. Jesus serving us isn't quite the same as someone cleaning your house and preparing your meals. Jesus' serving accomplished something we have no hope of performing on our own. He served as a flawless atoning sacrifice to bring us to God, to give us access to be with God forever, and teach us to place others before self and their needs before our own. He put our needs before His own; we need someone to pay for our sins, He could have just sat back and received worship from angels and the rare human that offered sin sacrifices, but He put our needs first. Part of His service was to teach us that by prayer and interaction with the Father, we can achieve miraculous deeds. His service was to complete things that we are not capable of doing; we need His sacrifice or we will be sent to an everlasting hell to pay for our own sins. Some people doubt that hell is everlasting, but the gospel of Mark paints a different picture – Mark 9:43 "If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out." There are other scriptures that detail hell as an actual place where the fire burns prisoners forever, to their torment and agony, but I will address that later.

We were created for Him, to serve and worship Him, not for Him to serve us; He served our need of salvation by His choice. Colossians 1:¹⁶ "For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him..." ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross."

"For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him" means that all of God's fullness lived inside Jesus' body, it pleased God to place Himself in a human body to rescue us from ourselves. If all of God's fullness dwelt in that body, then that body was God living in skin. Again, "God was pleased" - Matthew 3:17 "And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him *I am well pleased.*"

Christians believe in a triune God (*tri* = three, *una* = one), a single God of three distinct persons; many people completely disagree with this idea. *Know why you believe what you believe; the bible teaches a triune Godhead.* Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 28:19 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the **Father** and of the **Son** and of the **Holy Spirit**". In John 10:30 Jesus said, "I and the Father are one." The roles of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are different as each of their relationships with men are different; but they are the same entity, unit, being, individual.

Moses asked to see God's glory in Exodus 33:¹⁸ "Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory." ¹⁹ And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have

compassion. ²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live." ²¹ Then the LORD said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. ²² When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³ Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."

Jesus said in John 4: 24 "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." John 14:26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me." (The "Counselor" is the Spirit of Truth, *the* Holy Spirit)

Genesis chapter 18 details Abraham's meeting with the LORD before God wiped out Sodom and

Gomorrah. Verse 17 records – "Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?"

Abraham was face to face with the LORD; that would be the physical appearance of God. It couldn't have been the Father as He is spirit and not physical, nor can anyone see the Father's face and live.

This section is not a dissertation on the trinity; it is an identification discussion regarding Jesus. Is Jesus God? How do we know that Jesus is God? God is eternal, in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, Jesus is the Word, Abraham was with God – face to face - in Gen 18 and didn't die, but man cannot look at God's face and live, all of God's fullness dwells in Jesus, Jesus is the physical manifestation of God, Jesus and the Father are one.

Speaking to Himself in Gen 1:26 "Then God said, "Let us make man in **our** image, in **our** likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance defines this use of the term God (*in Gen 1:26*) a אֱלֹהִים elohiym. Plur. of H433; gods in the ordinary sense; but spec. used (in the plur. Thus, esp. with the art.) of the supreme *God*; occasionally applied by way of deference to *magistrates*; and sometimes as a superlative: - angels, x exceeding, God (gods) (-dess, -ly), x (very) great, judges, x mighty

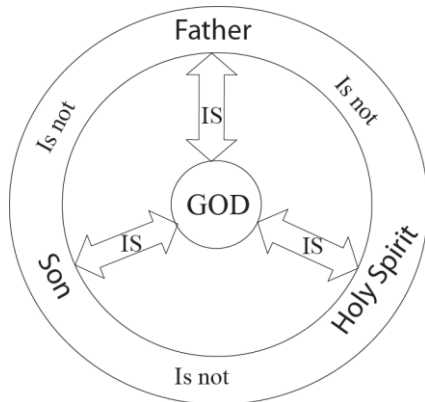
God the Father is almighty and spirit, Holy Spirit is the counseling spirit (your mental and spiritual relationship with God), at times Jesus has taken on a flesh body to personally interact with His creation (humans). The LORD Abraham was speaking to was God incarnate; some people believe Abraham was dealing with three angels at this point, but I believe it was the physical incarnation of God – Jesus. He said "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?" If God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah then it had to be God who asked "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?" ⁽¹⁾ Jesus had to be the person of the Godhead with whom Abraham dealt face to face. If the LORD said "I", He was speaking in the first person; if physically viewing God (the Father, almighty) will kill a person and Abraham wasn't killed, he must have spoken with, and seen, a different personage of God. I tend to believe that Jesus visited with Abraham.

On the other hand, if the "Lord" who said "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?", when speaking about destroying Sodom and Gomorrah, was not the physical manifestation of God almighty and it was indeed an angel, then an angel is the architect and implementer of the destruction of those cities. That not only seems implausible to me, but ridiculous as well; God takes the credit for destroying those two cities for their sexual, and other, abominations – not an angel. Maybe I'm wrong, but this is my conclusion after studying and we are all charged with studying to show ourselves approved to God. Study and pray for your own correct understanding.

Speaking to Himself, God said "Let **us** make man in **our** image". The root Hebrew term for this is the plural version of supreme God, so we must take notice that Moses wrote the account of creation about a supreme God with three persons of one mind. You can settle for it meaning magistrate, angel or judge, but that makes no sense, so I'll understand the "supreme God" alternative as intended meaning.

Hopefully this image will help to delineate the separate, but equal roles of the persons of God. God the Father is not God the Son, but IS God; likewise God the Son is not God the Holy Spirit, but IS God, etc. I got this image from my father. He said he got it from someone a long while back but could not recall the

originator of this diagram. I would love to give credit to whoever came up with it but I don't know who came up with the image first. It's not my idea, but I like it. Searching for the author, I've found the image on the Internet also but no origination was attributed.



Another way to look at multiple characters of a single person is to look at an analogy regarding yourself. *Keep in mind that analogies **always** fall short of precision because their very nature is to convey an idea using a similar idea – **not** the exact idea. The example does not completely relate the three persons of God in one person, but does give an example of how one person can legitimately have different characters.* DO NOT be tempted to play with ideas and suggest schizophrenia as synonymous for a triune God. God is not one with whom to be played.

Consider your relationships with other people. You are a son or daughter; you are a grandson or granddaughter, probably a brother or sister, probably a cousin, probably a niece or nephew, maybe a mom or dad and probably a best friend to someone, etc. You play multiple roles in your life with different people. You wouldn't have the same relationship with your grandparents as with your brother or sister, would you?

Each of our relationships is different; likewise, with God. In the manner with which He relates to each of us, He does it in specific methods. God the Father is Spirit, not flesh; He does not take on a flesh body to walk around and talk with us; He is love; His righteousness requires justice; His wrath is severe, He is Holy; Jesus has taken on a human body several times; He has lived surrounded by our sins, He is the physical, incarnate, manifestation of God that certain people have actually communed with. Jesus has spoken with people face to face; He is the demonstration of God's Love, He is love, He is grace, He is righteousness. It was this person of the Godhead who paid our debt that satisfied the justice God requires for sin. Holy Spirit is God's mental/spiritual relationship with us; His character is holy and righteous, etc. just like the other two facets of God almighty, creator of heaven and earth but our interaction with Him is mostly mental.

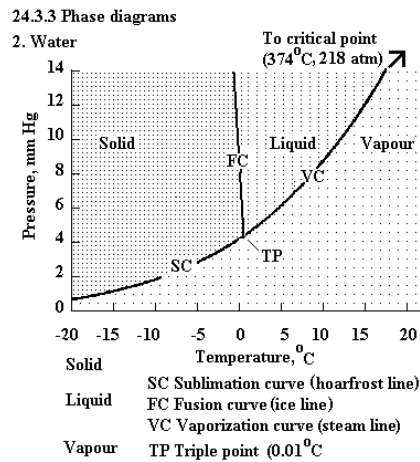
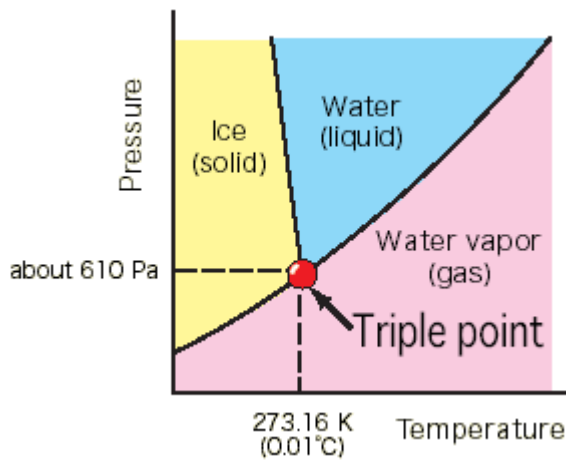
Paul wrote to the Colossians 1:15-20 "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." Thereby stating that Jesus is God; the fullness of God dwells in Jesus.

Then, in Revelation 4:10-5:14 "the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and

God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.” ¹ Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. ² And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?” ³ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. ⁴ I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.” ⁶ Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.” ¹¹ Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹² In a loud voice they were saying: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” ¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” ¹⁴ The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped.” Note that in 4:10-11 the elders lay their crowns before Him who sits on the throne and say “for you created all things, and by your will they were created” the same thing Paul said of Jesus the Son – “all things have been created through him and for him.” In Revelation 5 John says that the lamb that was slain, the lion of Judah, the root of David was able to take the scroll from Him who sits on the throne in heaven and open it; the twenty-four elders noted that this lamb was slain to purchase for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. (Jesus specifically identifies Himself as the root of David in Revelation 22:16 “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”) Not only is Jesus the lamb - the one who was slain to purchase lives - but “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” Jesus was and is God; He PRESENTLY resides in heaven.

There are *physical* examples of a trinity in nature beyond "wow, look at that canyon", or "wow, look at those trees", "wow, look at those stars" etc. Some things have what is called a “triple point”. At a specific temperature and pressure the item can coexist in thermodynamic equilibrium as a solid, liquid AND gas in the same container; most famous of these is water. At 0.01°C and 611.73 Pa water can exist – simultaneously - as solid, liquid AND gas in the same container. Neither is less H₂O than another; neither is more H₂O than another; they are all three just as much water as the others. In line with Romans 1:19, 20 nature bears witness of God in more ways than just looking at leaves and lightning and thinking “wow, this had to be made by someone incredible, I wonder who that is”. Ice is not vapor, vapor is not liquid, liquid is not ice, but they ARE all three exactly the same water at the same time.



In nature, we are keenly aware of different types of energy - *kinetic, potential, electromagnetic, thermal, sound, light, elastic, and gravitational*). Kinetic energy is different from thermal energy, but anything with kinetic energy has thermal energy; I'm not going to differentiate between each and every type and compare how an object can have one or more types of energy beyond this first and simple example - to have kinetic energy something has to be moving, if something is moving it must have thermal energy because the only way something can have no thermal energy is for it to be completely at zero Kelvin (absolute zero). Thus movement is a sign of thermal energy and by definition it exhibits kinetic energy. Now; kinetic energy is not thermal energy, thermal is not potential, potential is not light energy, etc - but all are energy - the same energy. They may be different types of energy at different moments, but they are all energy just the same. Here is an example of something being the same thing but eight different things at the same time. The trinity of God is beyond our imagination and understanding, but He gave us examples of Him and His works in His creation.

The bible details the exact same God with three different characteristic relationships with man. I can't explain it to everyone's satisfaction, but God didn't explain it to our complete understanding in the first place so I'm not too worried that I don't have a marvelous analogy or clarifying description (no one else does either); I can only relay what God said and try to figure it out as best my finite mind can handle it. Myriad theologians have tried to provide a good example and have fallen short; that's just the way some things happen to be. Sometimes we have to be willing to just say "I don't understand it".

Hopefully I've made a case for understanding that Jesus IS God. The angel told Mary that Jesus would be called Immanuel, which means God with us – Jesus was/is God, with us.

Something from nothing – energy mass conversion

If $E=mc^2$, as Einstein proposed then give this some thought and see if it makes sense; maybe it sounds over your head before getting into it, but let's take a really simple look at it. The equals symbol ($=$) simply means that the statements on each side of the symbol are equivalent, $2+2=4$, $2+2^2=6$, $4\times3=12$, etc. If $2x=6$ then x is 3; we can use symbols to represent numbers for which we don't presently know the value. In the equation $E=mc^2$ the "E" represents energy, "m" represents mass of a thing and "c" represents the speed of light; so this equation states that energy and mass are equal using the speed of light (squared) as the constant property of conversion. For example, say $2x=y$; because we know the value of 2 then the value of y depends on what value we use for x ; if we assign x to be 4 then y has to be 8, so $2\times4=8$.

Similarly, because we know the speed of light, we need to know the value of either mass or energy to complete the equation for a specific conversion. If we put in a value for mass then we can calculate how much energy is required to balance the equation. It is much more complicated than this, but on the surface this works. Intense heat, like that inside stars, is required to convert mass/energy; not to mention, as we understand it, the speed of light squared cannot be achieved by objects with mass in this universe. Nevertheless, the equation stands that mass and energy can be inter-converted and can be equal given proper circumstances. *(a quick side note here – early during the creation/big bang(?) the universe was not complete; the four forces {gravity, strong, weak and electromagnetic} had not yet separated from each other and the speed of light squared may well have been possible if inflation theory is correct and the 2nd bang caught up to the first bang – energy was expanding at some fantastical rate and some of it converted into matter)*

The beauty of this math is that it allows human explanation for how God *can* create everything from "nothing"; God is not constrained to this method, but *may* have used it. It has been said that math is the language that God used to write the universe. Many/most people have a hard time imagining how something can be created from nothing but let's consider it in the following fashion - if you believe in an omnipotent (all powerful) God, you should be able to believe in Him being able to do *whatever* He wants to do. You should also allow that He is also everywhere (omnipresent) and knows everything (omniscient). Anything short of that wouldn't be **THE God** but would be *a god*.

If He is omnipotent then ALL power/energy belongs to Him

If ALL energy belongs to Him then He should be able to do with it as He chooses.

Another side note here and then I'll get back to this point. Energy does not take up space, it is not a tangible entity with mass or volume; it does not have a face, a personality or an odor. We cannot measure it; we cannot push it or pull it. We can calculate it and work with the calculations of how much it takes to get things to work using it; but we can't put it in a jar and look at it to see how much we have. We can manipulate energy to accomplish work; an example is batteries. We can manipulate electrons to one side of a battery and then construct electrical circuits that accomplish tasks using the current provided by a battery and we can even generate electricity. It is something quite unusual in that we know it exists, we know how to use it to our advantage and we can identify at least 8 different types of energy (*kinetic, potential, electromagnetic, thermal, sound, light, elastic, and gravitational*) but we can't exactly describe what it IS, only what it can do and how much is used in a specific process. It does not take up space insofar as we can show. We have never seen a chunk of energy as a tangible item, nor grabbed a handful of it (I've been shocked while working on a radar set and although it sure felt like I had a bunch of energy I just had some electricity zip through my hands, arms and chest - not pure energy); we've only seen its effects and calculated how much of it there is available.

Richard Feynman, physics professor and Nobel Laureate, said this to one of his physics classes about the concept of energy:

"There is a fact, or if you wish, a law, a governing natural phenomena that are known to date. There is no known exception to this law; it is exact, so far as we know. The law is called conservation of energy; it states that there is a

certain quantity, which we call energy that does not change in manifold changes which nature undergoes. That is a most abstract idea, because it is a mathematical principle; it says that there is a numerical quantity, which does not change when something happens. It is not a description of a mechanism or anything concrete; it is just a strange fact that we can calculate some number, and when we finish watching nature go through her tricks and calculate the number again, it is the same". (1)

A person can argue that there is no God. However, this would be an ignorant argument because we don't yet know all the contents of the universe – much less anything about anything that may be outside this universe. A more sensible argument, and the one that almost all scientists who do not believe in God make, is this – we cannot prove the existence or non-existence of God because He is, or would be, outside our realm of provable events. As we cannot prove nor disprove God, we (science) cannot accept, or test, attributes or actions assigned Him. Science works from theories with provable cause and effect events; therefore, it cannot address God, His qualities, or His work, from an argumentative point.

God bases our belief in Him on faith, not provable fact.

Back to the point...

If God set aside a specific amount of His energy and released it to a specific purpose with some converting into mass and some remaining as energy then He certainly *could* have created this universe; couldn't He? Who can argue this?

1. **If** God is omnipotent (*ALL powerful*) then all the energy that exists belongs to Him.
2. **If** God is omnipresent then He is everywhere, within and outside the universe; we are in His space, He is not in ours.
3. **If** God is omniscient (*ALL knowing*) then He is certainly smarter than we are (by orders of magnitude, if even measurable) and He may well be able to plan a universe to work the way he wants.
4. **If** God is outside of time then He was under no rush to plan this universe, every step and action that occurs, or to set the rules to which the constituent components must adhere.
5. **If** God does not meet these criteria then He's not much of God is He? He would more likely be A god.

We are told in the Bible that God's ways and thoughts are so much higher than ours the comparison used is how far the heavens are above the earth. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (2) Where *are* the heavens for us to imagine how much higher God's thoughts and ways are than ours? Granted, I am talking about something tremendously out of our realm of understanding saying that the almighty creator probably assigned *some* of His power/energy to create our universe, and this universe is the limit of what we know; a little bit of Him made up more than everything we experience. As God describes Himself though, we are what He made; He does not fit inside our mental paradigms of what can or cannot exist and how it must conform to our ideas.

Now for how did God create everything from "nothing" – that "nothing" would be His *intangible* energy that He set aside to form this universe. Energy doesn't require any volume and it has no mass, so it is tangibly "nothing". It doesn't taste, feel or smell like anything. A book sitting on a shelf is loaded with potential energy but it doesn't smell like it's loaded with energy. Imagine that the energy God set aside was allowed to run a pre-designed course of conversion, some into matter, some not. The bizarre thing about energy is that while we don't know *what* energy is, we know *that* it is everywhere. Energy doesn't require any space to exist, that we know of, but it is in *ALL* of space, everywhere. There is Newton's law of conservation of energy that states that we can't make any new energy and we can't destroy any existing energy, the universe consists of a specific quantity of energy and that quantity doesn't change. Our universe is, as far as we know, a closed physical system. Nothing gets in, nothing gets out. The law of conservation of energy states that in a closed system there can be no change in the total amount of energy

in the system. If God put in the energy how can we add to it or subtract from it? *We don't even know what it's made of.*

Most people believe that, in the beginning, all of the constituent parts of the universe were compacted into a single point and everything in the universe burst from that single point – stretching across space (*well, there really wasn't even "space"; space was created as the big bang spread and made it*). If you believe that God created everything static, as it is, and nothing actively stretches the sky (universe) then you need to re-read Job 9:8 “He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea.” You can hold to the idea of a static universe if you wish, but be advised that God said He stretches the sky – actively – and science finds proof of that in red shifted galaxies. If the sky is being stretched, then it must have come from a smaller and smaller area, hence the idea of Georges Lemaître's Primordial Atom.

Energy didn't ooze, nor meander, from the original point; it apparently burst from the origin and that required much force; it took tremendous, immeasurable force to form this universe that is billions of light years across. If everything burst from that singular point why is it difficult to conceive that God, who is all powerful, placed a specific quantity of energy into that point and let it burst forth as He had predetermined? How can it possibly be easier to imagine/believe that everything (from whatever it originally was) burst forth from a single point, with no direction or purpose, and formed the space in which we live? Chaos rules; anything left to its own devices will fall into a state of entropy and flounder as undirected energy forces. To say that all the constituent parts of the universe “just happened” is bizarre to me. Chaos, left to itself, kills organization – without God to direct, and order, the universe would be an oozing blob of unfocused energy – nothing of application happening. Science demands a cause for every effect. So far, there is no scientifically stated cause for the birth of the universe except that some stuff, that we don't understand, burst out in an unimaginable explosion that allowed some of its energy to convert into matter yielding the components (stars, planets, moons, asteroids and gases, etc.) of which we know. The creation account states that God caused it to happen. Science supposes that if there is a critical amount of mass in the universe then the gravity between all the mass units will be strong enough to force the universe to collapse back into itself; if there is not enough mass then the universe will continue expanding ad infinitum. If there is a critical amount of mass and the universe collapses back into itself, will the extreme collapse of all that energy force it to bounce back out into another universe? What does that say about the universe – is it like a balloon that you can breathe into to fill it and then collapse it; will it continuously run the pattern of expansion – collapse – expansion - collapse... with no direction or reason? Does it just inflate and deflate repeatedly for no purpose, and if so, from where did all this energy come? In the darkness of nothing (space and light don't exist without the universe making them) does some unimaginable quantity of energy just exist and bounce into and out of repeated universes, or multiverses?

I CANNOT *sensibly* accept that something no one can identify burst from its holding cell and converted into something else “just because”; nor can I sensibly accept “we're not sure what exploded nor why it exploded” as a statement of cause and effect. If scientists can't identify what existed before the effect (expansion of the universe) then there can be no identified cause. Science requires faith to believe it all happened with no known cause, just as creation requires faith to believe that God created everything at His command. The intangible entity of “energy” does not require space, it does not have mass, it cannot be precisely defined as a concrete thing (definitions of energy are usually explanations of what we know can be done with it, not what it IS); it can be calculated but cannot be seen, held nor tasted (*sure, you can lick the two posts on the end of a 9 volt battery and feel a buzz but what does it taste like? Can you pour out a handful?*). Energy is usually defined as the ability to do work – what can be done with it; it is measured in joules. A joule is the amount of energy required to move an object weighing one Newton a distance of one meter. The definitions are still talking about what energy can do, not what it **IS**.

Please bear with me on this as I have a point, but I want to make a case for the point before I posit it. The case I am trying to make is that energy is intangible. Once that is well established the point should make perfect sense.

Energy is not a pressure difference like sound waves (*which are measurable, moving waves of varying pressure*) in the air similar to ripples in a pond when you toss in a rock. It is not like light, which is composed of detectable, measurable particles/waves (photons). Energy is not like electromagnetic waves that can be measured and viewed via oscilloscopes. I have yet to see a definition or description of what comprises energy.

Dr. Alan Guth, founder of Inflation Theory, explains how an energy level can remain the same yet seem to have hugely varying amounts. (*The next few paragraphs may seem a bit deep but the last sentence, bolded and italicized, should clear it up*)

“The resolution to the energy paradox lies in the subtle behavior of gravity. Although it has not been widely appreciated, Newtonian physics unambiguously implies that the energy of a gravitational field is always negative a fact which holds also in general relativity. The Newtonian argument closely parallels the derivation of the energy density of an electrostatic field, except that the answer has the opposite sign because the force law has the opposite sign: two positive masses attract, while two positive charges repel. The possibility that the *negative energy of gravity could balance the positive energy for the matter of the Universe* was suggested as early as 1932 by Richard Tolman, although a viable mechanism for the energy transfer was not known.

During inflation, while the energy of matter increases by a factor of 10^{75} or more, the energy of the gravitational field becomes more and more negative to compensate. The total energy - matter plus gravitational - remains constant and very small, and could even be exactly zero. *Conservation of energy places no limit on how much the Universe can inflate, as there is no limit to the amount of negative energy that can be stored in the gravitational field.*

This borrowing of energy from the gravitational field gives the inflationary paradigm an entirely different perspective from the classical Big Bang theory, in which all the particles in the Universe (or at least their precursors) were assumed to be in place from the start. Inflation provides a mechanism by which the entire Universe can develop from just a few ounces of primordial matter. ***Inflation is radically at odds with the old dictum of Democritus and Lucretius, "Nothing can be created from nothing" If inflation is right, everything can be created from nothing, or at least from very little.*** ⁽³⁾ (*Italics and Bold are my own*)

In March 2014, scientists apparently confirmed inflation as a cause for big bang rapid expansion; waves of the second explosion caught the first wave and caused ripples which converted big bang energy to matter.

“This has been like looking for a needle in a haystack, but instead we found a crowbar,” said co-leader Clem Pryke, an associate professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Minnesota.

Physicist Alan Guth formally proposed inflationary theory in 1980, when he was a postdoctoral scholar at SLAC, as a modification of conventional Big Bang theory. Instead of the universe beginning as a rapidly expanding fireball, Guth theorized that the universe inflated extremely rapidly from a tiny piece of space and became exponentially larger in a fraction of a second. This idea immediately attracted lots of attention because it could provide a unique solution to many difficult problems of the standard Big Bang theory. ⁽⁴⁾

George Smoot, PhD, and Nobel Prize winner for Physics in 2006, states the following when speaking of experimental results of two colleagues, Jerome Friedman and Henry Kendall; “They had found that protons and neutrons are made of simpler pointlike particles now called quarks. The interaction of these quarks gets weaker and simpler the more closely packed the quarks are and the higher the energy of the quarks... When one reaches Lemaître’s primordial nucleus, just keep pushing. The protons and neutrons dissolve into a soup of quarks. ***If the quarks are really pointlike, or at least very, very tiny, then it is no problem to push them into a region***

the size of a proton. With a great many quarks packed together, they resist less than when there are only three in the volume of a proton. This compression does, however, require an unimaginably high temperature.”⁽⁵⁾
(again, *Italics and Bold are my own*)

George Smoot seems to agree with Friedman and Kendall that everything *could have* at one time, fit into a small package of little or no volume. The idea that the temperature of such a system would be incredibly and unimaginably extreme has been noted already. “With all the contents of the universe in a single location the temperature was incredible (practically unimaginable, estimated at around 10^{32} K, or the Planck temperature)” see Appendix A.

I don’t want to misrepresent Dr. Smoot and imply that he is a creationist; he understands that all matter came from energy which could have been (probably was) in a single spot at the time everything cut loose and started forming the universe. He obviously adheres to the big bang. So another quote is in order.

After another discussion of Friedman and Kendall, Dr. Smoot penned the following, “This was stupendous. Now I felt physics was back on track. At higher energies, things get less complicated and more symmetric. The big bang looked more tractable. Physics became simpler and easier the closer one got to the beginning of the universe. It was now easy for me to imagine everything in the universe compressed into a smaller region than a proton.”⁽⁶⁾

Hopefully, by now, I’ve demonstrated that scientists can sensibly believe that everything could have actually come from (basically) nothing. Recall that the bible says that God created the heavens and the earth; most people understand that to intend that God made the world with no starting materials, from nothing. My point for this section of this book is that Moses wrote that God said He created everything from nothing; scientists have proposed a sensible manner of understanding that everything came from “nothing” (while attributing it to chance). If we can understand that everything came from “nothing” then we should find it easier to believe that creation is not just quite possibly the way in which everything came about, but it is certainly the way that God determined and made everything come into existence.

If you get into a conversation about the bible with someone who doesn’t believe the bible, keep in mind that there are issues that people understand and must admit. With science, people understand that the universe came from a single event, the earth was formless and void in the beginning, all land was in one spot in the beginning, the early atmosphere was not hospitable to animal life, plants were the first life form, then underwater animals, etc. (*the bible says all the universe – sun, moon, stars, etc – except the earth – came from the same event - creation*). The bible said this thousands of years before science addressed it. The more we learn, the more we know the bible is correct. If you want to keep the conversation simple, you can start by addressing these points. If you want to get deeper into a conversation then you can address how everything came from nothing and it makes sense to scientists; they have penned reasons for it to be so. If someone agrees that the earth was originally vacuous and empty, and the land was all in one location and plant life came first, followed by underwater life, etc. – then ask how they can dismiss the bible, with which they just agreed and which was the first document to detail this information thousands of years ago. The bible said the skies are being stretched by God, science now says the universe is expanding. The bible said the earth is spherical (Isaiah 40:22) and science finally agreed. How can we have any doubt that the bible is correct about EVERYTHING it says when science -while ignoring God - keeps aligning with it?

1) The Feynman Lectures on Physics

2) Isaiah 55:9

3) <http://nedwww.ipac.caltech.edu/level5/Guth/Guth3.html>

4) <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2014/march/physics-cosmic-inflation-031714.html>

- 5) WRINKLES IN TIME George Smoot, 1993, pg 16
- 6) WRINKLES IN TIME George Smoot, 1993, pg 16

Science, Big Bang

How did such a formless, untold sum of energy become myriad stars, planets, comets, and everything that comprises the universe? Supposedly everything in the universe came from a single event explosion of energy (*of whatever form it was prior to the explosion event*); some of that energy converted into mass, with the speed of light squared (c^2) as the constant of conversion. We've all seen Einstein's equation $E=mc^2$; if two things can, or do, equal each other (*even given a constant imposed on the relationship*) then there is reason to believe that at some point (*maybe under special circumstances like the speed of light squared*) the two are, or become, interchangeable.

There is an old math joke that claims to prove women are evil; it goes like this

Women = time \times money

Money = $\sqrt{\text{evil}}$ (*"money is the root of evil"*)

Time = money

Therefore: Women = money \times money or money²

Money² = evil

Women = money² = evil

The problem with this is that it is wrong, mathematically and in truth. The first statement implies women require time and money; the mathematical symbol for "and" is "+", not " \times " so the starting equation is wrong; humorous, but wrong. This "equation" says that women are the "square root" not just a root; there are square roots, cubed roots, fourth roots, etc. The "math" purports to show that women are evil; amusing joke but the math is wrong. More importantly, the premise is wrong. It's only a joke, but the premise is that you can prove women are evil. The premise with science is that God does not exist – or if He exists He can't be proven - so we'll just figure out everything He did without considering Him. In the math here, we have "Money = $\sqrt{\text{evil}}$ ", an old misquote from the bible; it should probably state that money is the root of all sorts of evil (1 Timothy 6:10), maybe even most evil - but not money is the root of all evil. There are some evils to which money simply doesn't apply. There are murders, rapes, tortures, lust, drinking etc that are not performed with money in mind. Paul is talking to Timothy about Godliness and contentment at this point in his letter, the secondary thought is about many people desiring money and comforts falling into a struggle for wealth and thereby wandering away from the faith.

You may see a statement that reads 4 apples=\$2.00; apples do not equal money, they cost money.

However, the cost of 4 apples is equivalent to \$2.00 in this case given the conversion factor of sales; "give me \$2.00 and I'll give you 4 apples" is the converting factor. In a statement wherein the two items are actually equivalent, given a conversion factor, something must cause the change from *being* one thing to the other thing. If everything began as energy, something had to cause the energy that converted into matter to actually change.

Many would argue that the Big Bang comprised a double event with a second, almost simultaneous, explosion inside the first. According to Dr. George Smoot, in December 1981, Dr. Alan Guth proposed this new idea that appears to have solved some cosmological conundrums.

"At a stroke, inflation theory appeared to solve a string of problems that cosmologists had long grappled with...Inflation is an extremely powerful concept, and explains three major issues in cosmology. **First, it explains the paradox of an extraordinarily uniform early universe, as revealed by the smoothness of the cosmic background radiation, that somehow evolved into the evident lumpiness of the present universe.** Second, it explains the absence of magnetic monopoles and other putative relics (such as cosmic string) of the early universe,

the flatness of space, the homogeneity of space and even why Einstein's cosmological constant wasn't completely bogus. Third, it explains why the universe is expanding."⁽³⁾ (*bold and italics are my own*).

We generally imagine that when the Big Bang occurred everything that was spreading out must have been of a homogeneous⁽⁴⁾ state; the same consistency throughout the entire substance; just a big wave of energy spreading about with some of it becoming stars and planets. Many, if not most, scientists are considering Inflation Theory as a possible way of explaining how some of the energy that comprised the Big Bang changed from energy into matter making masses of solid objects, gasses, stars and vacuum. This 2nd bang is supposed to have expanded more rapidly inside the 1st, and caught up with the spreading waves of the first explosion. When the energy of the second explosion (*for lack of a better term*) caught up to the 1st it caused ripples in the smoothness of the first bang and accelerated the rate of expansion of (*or pushed*) the 1st bang. The ripples caused the smoothness of homogeneous expansion to change and thereby gave cause for matter to start forming. This idea has been termed "Inflation Theory". Granted, this is a very superficial look at the Big Bang and Inflation Theory, but my purpose here is to diagram an important issue – how did the energy that caused the Big Bang convert into mass? I have no intention of discussing big bang at length.

If there were ripples in the homogeneous fluid of expanding energy then the ripples would have caused irritations in the smoothness of the spread. Any irritation would give cause for a change in energy and that change could be the conversion from energy to mass. At least one water molecule has to freeze first to begin the conversion from liquid water to solid ice. Something has to break the smoothness of an entity to make parts of it change.

Something had to affect the spreading energy and cause it to change into matter – there was only energy at the beginning and now we have matter, something *must* have caused the change; there had to be a cause for the effect. Inflation theory suggests that ripples caused by the 2nd bang catching the 1st bang caused the conversion. It is a perfectly good assumption at this point of human knowledge, and may very well be correct. I don't know any better and I like Inflation Theory for a few reasons; it allows for ripples in the expanding 1st bang, and it may well allow for something moving at the speed of light squared (*if the 1st bang was spreading at the speed of light and the 2nd band caught up to that, the 2nd wave had to be moving much faster, didn't it?*) and c^2 is the constant for conversion of energy to matter.

However, suppose the earth was here prior to the big bang, or creation of the universe if you will. The creation account written by Moses says that heaven and earth existed before the rest of the universe (*sun, stars, planets, etc.*). If earth was already present it could have caused ripples as energy waves washed past it; the ripples would have caused a change in the pattern of the spreading energy, ripples in the waves if you will. The same type of ripples that Inflation Theory explosion would have caused in the original expansion could have been caused by a rock in the path of the spreading universe.

I'm NOT saying this is what occurred; I'm not an eyewitness to creation. But when viewed from a creation standpoint – the earth was here before the rest of the universe, and Isaiah wrote that God stretches the sky, stating that the universe is, and was, expanding. Does it not make sense that as the energy from the creation of the universe was spreading from its origin it was spreading as a homogeneous fluid until it encountered something that caused waves/ripples to trigger conversion from energy to mass? Maybe God did cause a secondary explosion inside the first bang, or maybe He just let the expanding energy wash over the earth and that caused the ripples. I can't say for sure because I wasn't there; I just know that whatever it was, it has to match the bible. I wouldn't bet on this idea as actually happening because there were already plants on the earth by the 4th day (the day the sun, moon and stars were made) and a huge wave of energy would have probably wrecked all that had happened thus far; it's just an example of thinking outside the normal paradigm to see if I/you can understand what took place based on

my/your own studying and not taking someone else's word for it. Please do not go around telling anyone that this is my belief- there are seeming faults with the world causing the ripples; but it WAS already here at the time of the big bang.

As I have stated that we need to know why we believe what we believe this is something that I have found in my studies – earth was here first and $E=mc^2$ – something had to cause energy to convert to mass if God used a big bang to form the universe. The universe is indeed expanding as Isaiah and scientists say.

Using syllogistic reasoning, i.e. if given A, then B is true; if given A and B, then C is true...

If earth was here first and there was nothing else in existence (Gen 1:1), and $E=mc^2$, then the earth could have caused the lumpiness/ripples in energy - unless God also caused a second explosion of which Dr. Guth hypothesizes and that made the ripples.

“Even though the realms of religion and science in themselves are clearly marked off from each other, nevertheless there exist between the two strong reciprocal relationships and dependencies. Though religion may be that which determines the goal, it has, nevertheless, learned from science, in the broadest sense, what means will contribute to the attainment of the goals it has set up. But science can only be created by those who are thoroughly imbued with the aspiration towards truth and understanding. The source of feeling, however, springs from the sphere of religion. To this there also belongs the faith in the possibility that the regulations valid for the world of existence are rational, that is, comprehensible to reason. I cannot conceive of a genuine scientist without that profound faith. The situation may be expressed by an image: Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind”.

Attribution: *Albert Einstein (1879–1955), German-born U.S. physicist. Out of My Later Years, Philosophical Library (1950).*

Albert Einstein once said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge...” and I think this is true in all aspects of our intellect – science and religion both require a mindset that is willing to explore truth and weed out what is found to be invalid. In order to learn something new, or refine something already known, imagination must be used. One cannot learn something new without imagination; if I have a static view of the universe (*it never changes*) and someone tries to convince me that the universe is dynamic (*it's changing*), believing a new idea requires me to imagine a new perspective. Can you imagine the aggravation and disagreements within the science community when changing from a static to a dynamic viewpoint of the universe? They require such strenuous proof of their findings that the backbiting must have been tremendous. Likewise, if one is to learn something of our own studies this too requires imagination to open the mind enough to consider new possibilities.

Granted, there ain't nobody I know of that ever proposed the earth causing waves in the big bang, and probably ain't never gonna be nobody that preaches or teaches it – it's just a supposition generated from thinking about options.

I find that many Christians adhere to the bumper sticker mentality of “God said it, I believe it, that settles it” which leaves them in a weak position to sensibly discuss their beliefs beyond such a simple statement, much less have deeper thoughts and conversations regarding what the Bible teaches. It is truly a wonderful thing to have a flat, non-wavering faith, but it leaves discussions fairly binary – you believe or not. While believing IS binary we were directed to discuss and give answers regarding why we believe. I used to have a friend who said “if God wants someone to believe in Him it don't matter if you stand on your head while witnessing, He'll make them believe” and that's true, but many people are stuck in the milk stage of believing, just because they merely believe and won't study - We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. *Hebrews 5:11-13 (NIV)*
Everyone is betting their personal eternity that what they believe in this life is correct. It is necessary to

examine as much information as we can to determine our options and the best decision possible based on what information we have available. I know a Christian guy with whom I was discussing the point of obeying state and federal laws in the U.S. He pointed to the bible and said “I obey that book”. I told him that we are supposed to obey the national and state laws as well and asked if he knew why. He repeated that he obeys the bible. I pointed him to Romans 13:1 “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.” and told him that it is a directive from God and that obeying the state and federal laws is obeying the bible; he had no idea the bible covered that. We need to know what we’re talking about and what we believe.

Many people look to science for knowledge; there is nothing wrong with that as science is the state of knowing, or knowledge, as distinguished from ignorance or misunderstanding. However, we need to keep in mind that human science has limits; namely time, imagination and scope, and it fails us for complete knowledge. One of God’s attributes is omniscience - all knowing; science is just a part of who He is.

Time – because we haven’t yet discovered all there is to know - otherwise there would be no need to continue learning. We still believe that there is knowledge to be discovered so we obviously believe it will require more time to uncover it. Hence time is a limiting factor in what we know – we know more now than people knew 400 years ago and with more time we will know even more.

Imagination – because if we are honest with our thoughts we have to admit that there is more to existence than what we’ve experienced and thought. Surely we haven’t thought of everything; and as such we can’t believe that we’ve learned or imagined everything. So far, our imagination has been limited in that we haven’t imagined everything possible. People are imagining new things every day and following those imaginations with ideas to actuate them. Hand held communications devices were just stuff of imagination a few years ago, now they are prevalent. Inflation Theory itself is imagination presently playing out to answer questions about origins of the universe. A dynamic universe was imagination, and even Einstein thought it foolhardy at first, until other discoveries confirmed it. I did not say that Inflation Theory and a dynamic universe are imaginary, I said it required imagination to construct these types of ideas. Einstein didn’t like the idea of black holes because they seemed too violent for his idea of the universe, but they are being proven, and the only way we access this type of learning is imagination. The more we learn, the more we can imagine.

Scope - the more we learn, the more we know that there is more beyond what we know. Mathematics used to be understood up to the point of Calculus, Linear Algebra and Differential Equations but now mathematicians understand more. In the movie series Star Wars, Luke Skywalker’s home planet of Tatooine is a binary star planet; it was a pretend scenario until an actual binary star planet was found in September 2010 and named Kepler-16b (it was discovered using NASA’s Kepler space telescope). The scope of what we know is limited by what we actually know, even though we know more is to come as we continue to learn.

What we have so far is that God did it and wrote about it, science agrees with much of it, but disagrees with the fact that God actually did it. Moses wrote that the earth was an empty rock with no life sustaining atmosphere (*it was void, indicating there was no life but it probably also had no life sustaining atmosphere*) and that plants were the first life forms indigenous to earth. He didn’t delineate the reason; only that plant life was first. In accordance with Gen 11:6, scientists have reasoned why plant life came first, yet they disagree with creation. Moses wrote that all dry land was in one mass, scientists agree that all land was in one mass and they call it Pangaea, yet they disagree with creation. Moses wrote the successive process of life forms, birds and underwater life, then land animals, then people; science agrees with that order, but

still disagrees with the bible. Isaiah wrote that the earth is spherical; scientists have proven the earth to be round in accordance with Gen 11:6, yet they still disagree with the bible, affirming what the apostle Paul said in Romans 1: ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools. Isaiah wrote that the skies are expanding; in the past 100 years science has determined that the universe is expanding, yet scientists still disagree with the bible. Herein, science should heed Einstein's words and become "imbued with the aspiration towards truth and understanding."

Doesn't it seem a bit bizarre to agree with so much of something for logical reasons and yet call the thing with which you agree a myth? The only two caveats I can see for scientists to not agree with creation are:

1. The sun, moon and stars were created on the 4th "day" with the earth already existing.
2. They cannot prove/disprove God so they ignore His possible existence because they cannot answer questions regarding Him if he won't play along.

It *seems* logical to assign all entities in the universe as derivations of the same starting event – in our minds it seems sensible that all matter should have come from the same beginning. But recall that God says His ways and thoughts are so much higher than ours it is like the distance from heaven to earth – indefinable to us. God said He created the earth first, in a special event; the rest of the universe was created around the earth on the 4th day. God is the cause of the universe whether anyone wants to admit it or not – He doesn't have to play our intellectual games or prove Himself to us.

God has already discussed the problem of what *seems* right to us in Proverbs 16:25 "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

- 1) Genesis 18:17
- 2) John Calvin's Bible Commentary, Introduction to Genesis
- 3) WRINKLES IN TIME George Smoot, 1993, pg 174, 175
- 4) Homogeneous - of uniform structure or composition throughout

Creation atmosphere

This section is not your average “God said it, I believe it, that settles it” bumper sticker topic; this is almost purely speculative and I would not preach it as gospel if I were a preacher, but there is reasonable cause for the supposition. It is, in my opinion, additional information that falls under the “study to shew thyself approved” directive Paul gave to Timothy. As we study information sometimes a topic will pique a person’s interest; that’s why we have people with PhD’s in Chemical Engineering with divergent interests such as Mass Transfer, Fluid Mechanics and Thermodynamics, different topics within the same discipline are more interesting to different people. I stumbled across this once and it caught my attention so I did a little research and found some puzzling ideas. I probably would not argue strenuously for this idea, or against it, but the discussion is definitely intriguing. *(I wasn’t there so I am not an eyewitness, but there is enough information that I have cause to acknowledge it)*

The bible does not discuss much about the early atmosphere on earth; but by stating that the earth was formless and void God leaves no room for arguing that it was an oxygen rich environment, suitable for supporting animal life; maybe not even any type of life. It was not suitable for life and had to be made so. How God took an empty atmosphere and made it suitable for hosting life may not need be studied and examined by everyone but it vexed me. The point here is to share two things –

1. The value of researching a topic to learn something on your own.
2. Not everything of interest is explicitly delineated.

There is a lot of information to be reviewed in the bible; we may draw the proper, or improper, conclusion but we need to make an effort to study and pray to ask God for guidance in what we study. The first pastor at the church where we attend used to give history lessons in his sermons to build audience understanding of why things happened and the way the culture worked at “that” time in “that” locale; he still does so in the church where he works now. I love hearing from someone who can give reasons to believe as well as make a topic understandable. In Matt 6:33 Jesus said “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” – “seek” is from the Greek word ζητέω- *zēteō* – and it means

- 1) to seek in order to find
 - a) to seek a thing
 - b) to seek [in order to find out] by thinking, meditating, reasoning, to enquire into
 - c) to seek after, seek for, aim at, strive after
- 2) to seek i.e. require, demand
 - a) to crave, demand something from someone

Jesus said that we must crave knowledge and strive to gain it. God will let us understand things if we ask. No one understands everything; no one I know of has actually *understood* the triune persons of God, *why* the payment of sin is eternal damnation or why my wife squeezes the toothpaste tube from the middle when it clearly should be squeezed from the bottom up. I don’t know of anyone who ever claimed to understand the entire bible – but God has promised that if we strive to gain knowledge of Him He will provide us the basic necessities of life (Matt 6: ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own); however, Paul warned Timothy about misguided people who are “always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.”⁽¹⁾ I teach my kids to understand that just because someone knows a lot of stuff is not an indicator that they are smart. We ALL know a lot of stuff; it’s how we apply it that makes us smart or not.

Now, let's get to the atmosphere supposition...

Gen 1:2-5 “²Now the earth was (*became*) formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.”

“The earth was (*became*) formless and empty”: there was no definitive form to the earth and it was a desolate, empty, waste area: “darkness was over the surface of the deep”, the “deep” is defined, by Strong's as:

- 1) deep, depths, deep places, abyss, the deep, sea
- a) deep (of subterranean waters)
- b) deep, sea, abysses (of sea)
- c) primeval ocean, deep
- d) deep, depth (of river)
- e) abyss, the grave

The world was in darkness as there is no indication that light was shining on the earth during this period; God called for light after describing the formless empty rock; then Holy Spirit moved on the waters.

The Hebrew word translated to English as “waters” comes from the Hebrew word מַיִם “*mayim*” Definition of mayim (Reference” Strong's H4325)

- 1) water, waters
- a) water
- b) water of the feet, urine
- c) of danger, violence, transitory things, refreshment (fig.)

(The next few paragraphs may sound a bit bizarre as this thought develops, but it should clear up. Please bear with the reading until the points are made; arguments are being established in the meantime. Also keep in mind that this is not a doctrinal statement from the bible; it is merely supposition proposing something that may, or may not, be true—the bible does not, as far as I know, give us enough information to declare yes or no on this. I'm just considering some science while reading the bible and taking some time and thought effort to see if this is logical. I am NOT trying to uncover, or make up, some new doctrine.)

This definition can allow for a couple of different ideas.

- The surface of the earth was covered with water (H₂O) and the Spirit of God moved/brooded over those waters.
- “Waters” refers to liquid from the ocean out to the wet atmosphere above the earth; the Spirit brooded over the atmosphere.

If Moses was talking about the surface of the earth here, then the surface of the earth must have been covered in water. In Gen 1:9 God said “let the dry [*land*] appear”; there obviously wasn't any dry [*land*] present if it had to be called into place. If He commanded dry to appear, everything previously must have been wet. Wasn't it? If “dry” was already in place, why would “dry” need to be commanded to appear? Also, “darkness was upon the face of the deep” – the primeval ocean, deep – keep in mind that no land was mentioned as yet.

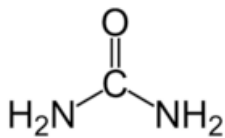
If Moses was talking about the atmosphere above the earth, as allowed by Genesis 1:6-8 (⁶And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. ⁷And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which [were] under the firmament from the waters which [were] above the firmament: and it was so. ⁸And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the

second day,) then the “waters” of the atmosphere must align with the Strong’s definition. If God *divided* the waters above from the waters below then at some point (previous to God saying this) all the waters must have been mixed and therefore continuous from the surface of earth to the atmosphere above.

Please don't get lost in the following chemistry discussion (it's only here for those who want to follow this idea on that level, and it's not that deep) just read through the next couple of paragraphs and this should all come together and make sense; you can read through it again or just refuse the idea, it's your decision; it's speculation, not doctrine.

Aside from H₂O water, Strong’s Concordance gives a usable definition of “waters” as urine. If you allow for considering urine as a reasonable definition of “waters” (*for most people this is a strange/bizarre concept, FAR from anything they’ve ever encountered, but please bear with me*) and then examine the chemical composition of urine, you will find that urine (in the bladder) is about 95% pure water (H₂O) and the rest is metabolic waste, mostly urea.

Chemically, urea is composed of CO (NH₂)₂, which means two sets of NH₂ (an amine) attached to a central carbon atom (C) with an Oxygen atom (O) also attached to the Carbon (a carbonyl group).



Urea is commercially used as fertilizer. The bible says that the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters and that God placed a firmament (*sky or expanse*) between the waters (*separated the waters above the firmament from the waters below the firmament*). Moses used the Hebrew term mayim for “waters”; it’s the Hebrew word that God chose. But, for a moment now let’s assume that urea *was* a constituent part of the early atmosphere – not a bucket of pee; I am not aware of anything that argues against the heavy presence of nitrogen in the early atmosphere of earth. The term Moses used can indicate that the early earth may well have been loaded with a water and amine atmosphere. Did that water have to be pure H₂O? Strong’s definition of water (*mayim*) does not dictate that every use of the word intends 100% pure H₂O.

God had already said “let there be light”. Animal life could not survive in an atmosphere of such conditions, but plant life would have thrived. A plant could not ask for a better environment than water, CO₂, light for photosynthesis and amines for fertilizer. That is allowed by what Moses wrote as a description of earth’s early atmosphere; water - maybe containing a heavy dose of amines (*nitrogen is presently 78% of our atmosphere; it could have been similarly nitrogen laden when Holy Spirit moved on the waters of the atmosphere*).

Q: What was the first life form on planet earth?

A: Plants. (Agreed to by scientists and the bible)

Before his account of plants coming into existence, Moses wrote that God separated the waters above and below the firmament; he followed that with placing all the water on the surface of the earth to one place and all the dry (*land*) in another place. This separation of the dry land from the waters tells, from the biblical perspective, that all land constituted a “supercontinent”. Does it not make sense that God created a planet, put water on it (*probably including fertilizer*), called for light to shine (*allowing for plant photosynthesis*), called for dry dirt in one place for plants to grow and then called for the plants to begin growing? Plants convert CO₂ into O₂ that humans breathe; what a fantastic symbiotic relationship in which we live. I cannot believe this is an accident; this was designed. We can look at the mapped images of

Pangaea and see how all the present continents must have fit together before splitting apart to form what are the present continents of earth. See Appendix B for an image of Pangaea.

As for young earthers vs. evolutionists, consider the following – plants came first to convert the early atmosphere to a more oxygenated field. That event probably required a great deal of time. God is structured and orderly; He *could have* converted the atmosphere in a microsecond or 24 hours. He didn't have to allow the atmosphere to be unsuitable for animal life in the first place; He could have made the earth completely hospitable for animals from the beginning. What we do know is that plants came first; time came later, then animals. I do NOT want to seem that I am allowing that evolution and creation may both be right; I do not allow that evolution is a correct path, everything was created or made in its own kind, *not everything came from one original life entity*. However, I would suggest that the period between the first plants coming to life on the 3rd day and time being created, or established, on the 4th day may have been extensive to allow the atmosphere to be changed. I would not argue that animal life is about 6,000 years old, in line with the beliefs of young earthers, I think animal life is older but won't argue that issue; I may argue that plant life is probably much older though. Time was created after plant life came about, and if God told the earth to bring forth plants, I know it takes me a couple of weeks to get a seed to sprout and another couple of months to get a tomato, so 24 hours probably didn't yield all of the plants and change the atmosphere.

1. 2 Timothy 3:7

[Evolution atmosphere-](#)

Depending on what you read, and how far you read into it, scientists have determined that the early earth atmosphere was filled with water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂) and nitrogen. There was a first atmosphere, a second atmosphere and the present atmosphere. The first atmosphere was probably almost all H₂ and Helium (He) but gravity didn't hold these lightest of particles and they have presumably drifted away. I don't necessarily adhere to that because then I'd be left wandering to what other galactic entity's gravitational pull did the H₂ and He wander; to our sun; or did it all just float away with nothing to pull it this way or that? And we have to keep in mind that anything with mass has gravity and is affected by gravity; helium and hydrogen have mass so they are affected by earth's gravity and that would be the strongest gravitational field affecting those atoms/molecules. But... then a first atmosphere wandering away from this planet doesn't concern me at this point because if that was the true first atmosphere on earth then this rock would have been void of any atmosphere of value; it's the "second" atmosphere that agrees with Moses - and my supposition. The second atmosphere probably mostly comprised of gasses from volcanoes (H₂O, CO₂, SO₂, CO, S₂, Cl₂, N₂, H₂), ammonia (NH₃) and methane, (CH₄). It would have been during this frame of events that the plants came about and began converting the atmosphere into what we currently experience. Our present atmosphere contains a much greater ratio of O₂ (21%) than early atmospheres (suspected to be about 0%); this O₂ was generated by breakup of water molecules, plant life, etc.; the present atmosphere can support animal life. There are myriad references in which this can be verified online and in books. For your reading pleasure, try this online:

http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfjps/1400/atmos_origin.html

<http://www.universetoday.com/26659/earths-early-atmosphere>

Looking at this from the perspective that it truly occurred in this fashion can only lead to admission that the bible is correct. The earth was (*became*) formless and empty; then as the atmosphere allowed (*or as God dictated by telling the earth to bring forth*) plants became the first life form. You can't just make this stuff up. Moses wrote it over 3,400 years ago and science is now understanding the reasons for the order of what Moses wrote. They are not attributing the actions, nor order, to God, as Paul indicated in Romans 1: ²¹ "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools." Scientists are figuring out how things occurred but missing the big point. They are looking for a grand unified theory that ties everything together but are missing the grand dictate of how it happened. God already told us that He's the grand reason.

[Back to the bible –](#)

So far we have heaven and earth created by God telling them to come into existence, and we have God providing the energy from which they became. The early earth atmosphere did not support animal life. The waters in the atmosphere may well have included amines and nitrogen that account for plant life thriving. No mention of life on earth has been made previous to Genesis 1:11 (*well, no life except God*).

Gen 1:11 "Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day."

Notice that bringing forth plants required a "day" of creation; recall that a "day" was a period of activity, not *necessarily* 24 hours as the sun had not yet been created. This definition of the word "yowm" (*translated from Hebrew to "day" in English*) easily allows time for plants to carry out a long period of photosynthesis that converted much of the CO₂ in the atmosphere to O₂, which allowed animal life to thrive later. Understandably, if you believe in 24-hour days for creation you may hold to the idea that all plants were produced in 24 hours and then the sun and stars came during the next 24-hour period – because God can do what He wants. He could have done it all in 13 microseconds if He so chose; just be sure you have a reason for believing in 24 hour days besides someone else told you.

Please keep in mind though that God uses structure in His work; He doesn't do things haphazardly, without purpose and direction. In 1 Corinthians 14:33 Paul writes that "God is not a God of disorder..." Granted, the context here is regarding services in the church, but it is an example of Paul describing God's attribute of order. Therefore, if God is a God of order there is no delineated reason for me to suppose that He, inharmoniously, loaded up this formless, void rock with plants in 24 hours - and then made the sun (*four days later*), which plants use for photosynthesis and we use to mark periods of time. There is reason for me to believe that as God directed the earth to bring forth plants He allowed the earth to run the natural course He designed and had it proceed according to His laws of physics and natural science instead of whiz-bang making everything happen suddenly.

Also, notice that God said "Let the land produce vegetation..." and "The land produced vegetation". Moses did not say that God waved a magic wand and made plants just appear, he said that God told the land to produce vegetation and the land did so. I plant a garden just about every year and I have never planted seeds and gotten grown plants the same day. It always takes a week or more just to get the sprout to pop out of the ground – and that is by letting the earth (*dirt, water and fertilizer*) produce the vegetation. It usually takes another 70 – 80 days to get a tomato, bell pepper or cucumber. Granted, I'm not God and can't miraculously grow anything by telling it to just pop up, but if God is a God of order and He told the earth He created to produce seed bearing plants, why would He, God of harmony, supersede His own directive of allowing the earth to produce the plants and just fill the earth with plants in 24 hours?

Understanding the probable early atmospheric conditions and the change that took place to make the world habitable by animal life requires that you think through the events described in the bible as well as considering what science has learned. Recall that Moses wrote in Genesis 11:6 "The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them." God understood, long ago, that we would figure out much of science, which is knowledge. If we are as smart as the LORD acknowledged, then we ought to slow down our judgments on some quick disagreements with science and consider them via sensible suppositions.

Scientists have proposed that the first life forms on earth were plants; specifically cyanobacteria, blue-green algae. They have determined this by mathematics, archeology, anthropology, physics, cosmology, etc. looking back in time to figure out how the universe began, and they propose good reasoning to assert what they believe. Their reasoning is that the early atmosphere of a void rock couldn't support animal life; plants aided in converting that atmosphere into what we now have. As it turns out, they are asserting the same order as what Moses detailed several millennia ago. You don't have to agree with all of someone else's positions to allow that they may be correct on certain portions of a topic. Science and the bible both state unequivocally that plants were the first life on earth, but they don't agree on everything.

For centuries people thought the universe was static; there were no fundamental changes in the basic structure or "stuff" (planets, stars, etc.) of which the universe is comprised. In the 20th century several discoveries were made that changed the way we look at the history of the universe; Albert Einstein, Edwin Hubble and Georges Lemaître made huge contributions to physics and cosmology. In 1913, Vesto Melvin Slipher reported that he found a blue color shift in some photo-images of Andromeda; about 10 years later Edwin Hubble was able to show that this color shift was due to the Andromeda galaxy moving closer toward the Milky Way galaxy. Most other galaxies have red color shifts, which indicate that they are moving away from us. ⁽¹⁾

Red and blue color shifts are based on the wavelengths of light (and sound) and the Doppler Effect. For anyone who isn't familiar with the Doppler Effect, it is the apparent frequency shift between an object creating energy waves and the observer of the waves; as something that generates energy waves approaches an observer the peak of the energy waves seem to be getting closer so their frequency seems to be higher.

The discovery that galaxies are moving away from each other indicated that at some time, in the past, they must have been closer to each other. Soon after Slipher's discovery and Hubble's confirmation, Lemaître proposed his hypothesis of the primordial atom, which was basically the idea of a Big Bang wherein all contents of the universe came from a single spot event (*as small as an atom*) and spread out to everywhere that presently exists. Lemaître's work was based on his study of Einstein's work and confirmed by Hubble. There were others who were close behind Lemaître with the same idea, but he said it first so he gets the credit, in my mind. Long story made short – through the mental acuity of these men, as well as myriad others, scientists have shown that the universe began in a singular spot and has spread to everywhere that exists. No thing (*except the heavens and earth*) or nowhere existed before the Big Bang and everywhere that does exist only came to exist after the Big Bang.

As scientists have studied, hypothesized and tested theories for centuries we ought to lend an ear to what they've learned. Developing a theory in science is more involved than coming up with a new idea and suggesting that's the way things must work. Theories are based on existing knowledge and best guesses at what caused particular events. Surely, scientists have made intelligent gains in understanding how the universe works. Theories contain hypotheses that must be tested to determine if the proposed idea is feasible and more than likely correct (*usually to within a 5% chance of error*). Studies and experiments require recipes for reproduction so that results are established with reproducible conclusions.

"Reproducible conclusions" eliminates proving God's actions and presence; He's only proven by Himself, and then only when and how He chooses; He doesn't generally appear just because a group of scientists ask Him to prove Himself to them; He hasn't yet. Now, if their arguments are based on centuries of myriad scientists studying all the available physical information they can study and your only argument is "*God said it, I believe it that settles it*" your position may be quite enough for you, but such a position may be weak to others. I've had friends try to convince me of the wonders and skills of

professional baseball players. I've been told that hitting a fastball is the hardest thing to do in professional sports; I'm not buying it, nor do I care. I'm not a baseball fan and I don't care what baseball fans say about the sport – it completely bores me. I played soccer, and I believe that a goalkeeper trying to stop a penalty kick at an open goal from less than six meters is harder than hitting a fastball. I've seen a mathematical model detailing how much more area the goalie has to cover vs. the batter, how fast the balls are going, etc. and I believe the soccer goalie has a harder task; then consider an ice hockey goalie stopping a slap-shot from five feet. I also think a wide receiver in the NFL has a harder job catching a hard pass over the middle of the field while being hit by a larger linebacker has a harder task to complete. Ever watch synchronized swimming? Those ladies are phenomenal at what they do. I think, if given 30 tries at hitting a fastball I could do it, but if given 300 tries to swim upside down with half my torso out of the water, while maintaining synchronization with seven other people dancing upside down in the water I could never pull that off. Opinions don't necessarily convince people; you need something stronger, especially when they don't care about your opinion.

On the bright side, God works in the hearts of people to make them believe as He chooses. I used to know a lady, when I worked in Saudi Arabia, named Beth; she would always say that it doesn't matter what we do when God wants to convict someone's heart for salvation, you can stand on your head and it won't matter, God is working.

Peter said, in 1 Peter 3:15, "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect..." You *need* to have an intellectual discussion prepared to give your reason for believing. You do not need any science knowledge to give a reason for your hope; you need bible knowledge and a relationship with Jesus, but you can augment the discussion with extra reasoning. As I stated at the start of this book, all I knew about the bible when I left home at 18 was what my dad had taught me, and what I had read in the bible (and that was, admittedly, a simpleton approach to reading). If someone didn't know my dad or didn't believe the bible, my argument was weak at best and worthless for the most part. Without God's intervention, any conversation about Him is worthless; while with His intervention every conversation is purpose serving. "As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. ⁴⁸ They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. ⁴⁹ But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."⁽²⁾

Keep in mind that Jesus told His disciples that their mission was to go and teach others what He taught them, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19,20), He didn't tell them, or us, to save anyone. People can only be saved by Holy Spirit's conviction, and we ought to pray when we witness; we just need to have something to say when we speak. As I went to college and learned a bit of what scientists have learned, I had to reason why they made sense on many issues and why I believe what I believe. Hopefully the information I've presented so far is fairly understandable and doesn't lead to strenuous argument.

It should be simple to understand the idea that IF there is a God who created everything at His command, using energy He provided from His own self, then He should be able to direct all the actions of events mentioned to this point. If such a God exists, couldn't He do what I just suggested; assign part of His own energy and make it do what He wanted it to do? Science has agreed that there was a single event that started everything; the earth was basically empty, the atmosphere was laden with water and nitrogen, plants came first, etc...

Now comes the first really big altercation between the creation account and evolution, as scientists theorize it. Get ready to dismiss me as a nut if you've never thought about this but why does the bible say the earth was created in the beginning, on the first day, and the sun, moon and stars weren't created until the fourth day?

How could there possibly have been a big bang that started *everything* in the beginning if the earth was already here *before* the Big Bang with its galaxies, planets and stars? Wasn't the earth a byproduct of "stuff" in space? How could Moses have been so right this far and been so wrong about the earth being here first – before the rest of space and the universe? I'm not foolish enough to propose that this is exactly what happened, but I am suggesting that it is a reasonable understanding of what Moses wrote in line with what we understand of physics. I can suggest it and it's logical.

Dr Guth's Inflation Theory helps explain, for some, the conversion of energy into mass, or the formation of matter, in the universe. It is proposed that the waves of the second bang caught up to the spreading universe (the first bang) and caused ripples in the expanding energy field.

If you gently pour a liquid onto a smooth flat surface with no defects, the liquid will run fluidly in all directions unless acted on by another object or force to disturb the flow of the liquid. If there is a bump in the table, or a Cheerio in the path of spilled milk, the liquid will run around the object and start forming a different dynamic of flow - ripples. If something different acts on a flowing entity, the flow will change. If you place liquid water in an ice creating atmosphere ($\leq 32^{\circ}\text{F}$, at 1 atmosphere), after some time, the water will change to solid ice; however, there must be a first ice crystal that forms, caused by the low temperature, to start the conversion. The liquid water must be acted upon by a lower temperature to start the event of making ice; the water doesn't all change instantly; there must be a first "ice" molecule. There must be something to cause an action before liquid or energy will change the way it moves or behaves; if there is nothing present to change how it flows or sits then it will continue in the same manner. This is explained in Newton's 1st law of motion; basically Isaac Newton stated that if an object is at rest (*not moving*) it will remain at rest and an object in motion will remain in the same motion (*same direction and same velocity*) unless the object is acted upon by something else – some other force (*acceleration, friction, bumping into something...*). In line with Newton's law, the spreading universe must have maintained the same rate of dispersion in all directions, at the same velocity, unless there was something to get in its way. Dr. Guth suggests another blast overtook the first one from inside and caused ripples.

Moses said the earth was here before the sun and stars, decidedly stating that the earth and sun were formed by at least two separate activities. If the earth was here before the rest of the universe was created, and God set aside a portion of His energy to create the universe, then surely the earth could have been the item that caused the energy waves of the spreading universe to ripple and change to matter forming the stars and other objects including other planets, asteroids, comets and rocks.

The first law of thermodynamics states that there can be no change in the total amount of energy in a closed system. As we understand it, our universe is a closed system (nothing gets in, nothing gets out), as far as we know or can detect, so the amount of energy in the universe at the beginning is the same amount we have now. Some energy converted to matter, but the same *quantity* is still present; it is just in different forms. Energy may change states and types (i.e. potential energy may become kinetic in a book if it falls off a shelf, solar energy may be converted to electrical energy...) but the *quantity* of energy remains the same. I make these points to state that scientists have discovered some incredible things. My basic goal here is to show that Moses wrote the account of creation over 3,400 years ago and much of science has found it to be quite accurate without giving credence to his claims as the word of the only living God.

Moses wrote some ideas that have proven to be more than sensible. He did not have the tools or the knowledge of modern scientists. He didn't have the work of myriad scientists to review. His writings, without the benefit of telescopes or calculators, were incredibly accurate. His statement that the earth was present three "days", or periods of activity, before the sun and stars seems outlandish in the sense that most people usually think everything popped up from the Big Bang event. Moses said the earth was here before the galaxies; Newton's 1st law of motion lends the idea that *if something was* present before the Big Bang *it could have* been the thing that caused ripples in the spreading wave of energy further causing its conversion into matter. $E=mc^2$ describes an equality, not a cause; just because energy equals matter multiplied by the speed of light squared doesn't mean a conversion will occur. Something had to make the conversion take place. God said He placed the earth here first, then the rest of everything; could the earth have been the outside object that acted upon the spreading energy of the big bang – the thing that caused a ripple followed by energy converting to matter, instead of inflation theory? It's an interesting idea; an object in front of the spreading energy, causing ripples, works fine. But then we have to further consider that the earth already had plant life growing and what kind of devastation something like that would have caused on earth, unless protected by God. I don't yet hold to this idea, but it's something I came up with while researching for, and planning, this book and as the bible tells us to study I need to have well thought out positions ready for discussion. Everything you say is not for teaching, sometimes it's for discussion and further thought.

2. WRINKLES IN TIME George Smoot, 1993, pg 46- 50

3. Luke 6:47-49

[Sun, moon and stars](#)

Genesis 1: ¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

It wasn't until the fourth time period (*day*) that Moses mentioned God created the sun and stars. He specifically mentioned that they were to "serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years". God, obviously, hadn't yet made anything to mark the period of a day because he expressly mentioned it here; there were no Timex or Rolex watches, no sun dials or alarm clocks. These solar system entities and galactic markers were put in the sky for man to use to indicate time, whether long periods of seasons and years or short periods of days and minutes; they were put in place for marking time – something that apparently had not yet been tracked. The first three "days" were apparently chronological periods of activity, not necessarily measured lengths of time.

I believe the fourth day of creation was the occurrence of the Big Bang. (*You can believe whatever, and however you choose, just be sure you have good reasoning for your position if someone questions you.*) This is the event, mentioned in creation, in which the stars came to be. The earth was already in place and had already begun to show life – plants. The land was already gathered into one place as Pangaea; water was everywhere that wasn't dry. Some scientists believe there were multiple cycles of Pangaeas; I watched a video with an animated display of how Pangaea supposedly separated into multiple continents across the globe; the presenter suggested that repeating Pangaeas continue way back into the very distant past with one breaking up then everything coming back together only to split and spread apart again. It is similar to the idea of the universe collapsing back in on itself the bouncing back out into another universe only to collapse back in on itself. This idea reminds me of a story passed on that has been attributed to Carl Sagan amongst others; Stephen Hawking attributes it elsewhere. "A well-known scientist once gave a public lecture on astronomy. He described how the earth orbits around the sun and how the sun, in turn, orbits around the center of a vast collection of stars called our galaxy. At the end of the lecture, a little old lady at the back of the room got up and said: "What you have told us is rubbish. The world is really a flat plate supported on the back of a giant tortoise." The scientist gave a superior smile before replying, "What is the tortoise standing on?" "You're very clever, young man, very clever," said the old lady. "But it's turtles all the way down!" (1) It just keeps on going because we can't identify the beginning or finality with any accuracy, if we choose to ignore God.

I have never heard anyone else offer the idea of the pre-existent earth being hit by energy waves of the big bang and those ripples causing the transformation of energy to the mass of the universe, but it makes a bit of sense, to me at least. I *have* heard many say that the earth was in place before the sun, other planets and stars; in fact, the bible says it. It's impossible to agree with creation and suggest that the sun and stars appeared during the same event that caused the earth – read the order of events in Genesis 1.

From Moses' account of creation there were heaven and earth first, then plant life, then stars and planets, then underwater life and birds, then animal life above ground followed by man.

Moses said that God separated light from darkness in the first day (*period*); in the gospel according to John, the writer speaks about the light being the Word of God (*Jesus*) and being present with God, as well as *BEING* God in the beginning. (2) Jesus is that light. The light that fed the early plants before the stars had been formed had to have been Jesus; there was no sun to provide any light and plants grow via photosynthesis, so light *HAD* to come from somewhere. It is hard to think of some person as a light

source to feed plants via photosynthesis, isn't it? Jesus is NOT some person; He IS God and God can do what He wants with His universe. If God can do what He wants in His universe then He should easily be capable of forming a body and residing in it for a period of time, and using his existence in that body to demonstrate how we should live, as well as using that body to offer His sacrificial death and resurrection for us. He appeared in person to Abraham (*Gen 18*), He appeared in person to Gideon (*Judges 6*), surely it was God in person who appeared with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fire in Babylon (*Daniel 3*). God has the ability to appear to whomever, wherever and whenever He chooses. Is He restricted from His creation to remain in heaven at all times? Is an architect restricted from ever visiting a building (s)he has designed and overseen, or can (s)he revisit it at will, from outside the building to inside the building? If God, the Father, is spirit and truth and wishes to visit a person, who is to say that he can't make a physical body and visit that person using the physical presence of Jesus.

Regarding God, Isaiah wrote "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. ⁹ "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." ⁽³⁾ Certainly, we look around and see no other life form that compares to our level of knowledge and understanding. We consider ourselves to be at the top of the intellectual chain amongst known life forms, except for those folks who think dolphins are smarter than humans. Every other life form that humans have encountered has been forced to acquiesce to our lifestyles or suffer. We figure out the ways things work and have our way; we can train dogs, stomp on cockroaches, shoot bears, design and fly rocket ships, perform eye surgery, etc.; we can do just about anything we've set our collective minds to accomplishing, or have made definitive strides to accomplish such. Dolphins can't do differential Calculus (*I can't either anymore, so maybe I'm not any smarter than a dolphin*); monkeys can't design interstate highway systems; so we MUST be the smartest things going. However, we have never seen outside the realm of our universe; we do not know what's out there.

For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I [am] the LORD; and [there is] none else. ⁽⁴⁾ "formed" (H3335 – Strong's Exhaustive Concordance reference number) – Strong's Exhaustive Concordance gives the meaning of "formed" as the Hebrew word *yatsar* (yă-tsar') meaning like a potter with clay, an artist, statues...

Here Isaiah describes the formation of the earth as being a different action/procedure than the creation of the stars and moon. The earth was artfully handcrafted; God invested special effort (*yatsar*) in designing and implementing earth. God artfully designed and molded the earth for His purpose, and He made it out of nothing. In Genesis 1:2, Holy Spirit hovered over the waters. The Hebrew term that was translated as "moved" or "hovered" is רָחַף (*rachaph*), Strong's H7363, which means

- 1) (Qal) to grow soft, relax
- 2) (Piel) to hover

Further description of the word shows "to be moved, affected, specially – (a) with the feeling of tender love, hence *to cherish*". When God formed the earth it was wonderfully made and the angels shouted and sang for joy. When He regenerated it, He treated it with love and cherished what he was making. It had purpose and not just any old rock would suffice.

The sun, moon and stars were created from nothing. No mention of any special attention is given to their materializing, just that God created them for marking time and they came into existence by sovereign dictate. The stars, moon and other galactic entities were from the action of *bara* – creating something from nothing, which leads us back to $E=mc^2$. Energy takes up no space/volume (*or is point-like at most*) so converting energy into mass is basically creating something from nothing (*at least nothing tangible that requires volume*).

Why did God create the stars and moon? He did it to mark time and give us ways to study the history of the universe and well as material to marvel at His power and creativity.

1. Hawking, Stephen (1988). *A Brief History of Time*
2. John 1
3. Isaiah 55: 8
4. Isa 45:18

The order of things

Gen 1:11, 12 “Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.”

Gen 1:24 “And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so.”

In the creation account, God said for the land to produce vegetation and let the land produce living creatures, but when it came to making man, God said He did that specific work. I can understand, and believe, that the plants and animals were produced from generations of reproduction. I wasn't there so I didn't see the process, but Moses wrote that God said for the land to produce plant and animal life and Moses has been absolutely correct so far; why would I question him now if I can figure out how what he wrote makes sense? He apparently had some guidance from outside normal human knowledge. What are the odds against him guessing all this order so accurately?

God apparently allows for some progression of plants and animals – “according to their kind”. “According to their kind” limits plant and animal life to their domains, kingdoms, classes, families and species, etc. that are detailed via biological classification. Spiders didn't generate camels, horses didn't generate jellyfish, and fig trees didn't generate crabgrass. Each life form reproduced others within its own kingdom and class. When Noah built his ark God told him that “Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive.” ⁽¹⁾ God did not say “Noah, I'm putting two lions, two tigers, two cheetahs, two Chihuahuas, two German Shepherds, two Rottweilers ...” He put in two of every *KIND* of animal; after the flood event was completed and the animals were released why would we not assume that they bred and generated many different animals of the same class with each different species generating their own kind? It's not uncommon for male dogs to mate with any female in heat – it doesn't matter the specific lineage/breed from which they come; the offspring is a new dog coming from the gene pool of both parents, and the gene pool can release a different looking pooch. Isn't a Quarter Horse as much of a horse as a Tennessee Walker? Don't they come from the same species? Do you think Noah had 2 Quarter Horses, 2 Tennessee Walkers and 2 Arabians in the ark, or does it make more sense that he had 2 horses and the rest were developed from generations of reproduction within a similar gene pool? Moses used the same word to describe “kind” in the creation account as he used in the flood account. In Gen 1:24 and Gen 6:20 he used the Hebrew word ¹¹², *miyn* which was translated as “kind”. Strong's H4327 defines this word as “kind, sometimes a species (usually of animals)”; Gesenius' Lexicon offers “*from*, hence *species*, *kind*, *sort*, comp. Gr. *idea*, which also denotes both form and kind. Always in the phrase according to its kind,” Gen. 1:22, 12, 21, 25; Lev. 11:15, 16”

On a side note - Likewise, when Moses recorded the story of Noah's flood, he didn't say whether the animals were fully mature or young; nor did he say whether the animals in the ark were kept in a hibernation state for the duration of the flood. Surely, if God had placed fully mature, and awake, sheep, lions, tigers, rabbits, elephants and rhinos, etc. there would have been a ruckus that would have rocked the boat. Though the state of the animals wasn't mentioned I'm inclined to believe that the animals were probably young, small and kept in a state of lethargy to some extent. It would also seem likely that the animals were young as they were intended to represent their kind, for reproduction, after the flood. Older animals aren't as likely as younger animals to reproduce, especially at a rapid rate; and I'd be inclined to believe that not just the offspring of the animals on the ark reproduced, but the animals on the ark continued reproducing after their first mating.

Except for our finite minds limiting our scope of understanding and imagination, why would we assume all plants and animals come from the same beginning blue algae cell when God said to let the land

produce plants after their kinds and animals after their kinds? Why do we think we can stuff God and His omniscience and omnipotence into our restricted mental models? Why didn't the land produce an apple tree cell, a palm tree cell and an aloe cell as well? Maybe the blue algae came first but according to Moses' account the land produced all plant and animal types, each after their own kind. Scientists have cataloged myriad plants and animals into kingdoms, phyla, classes, families, etc.; Moses said each was developed after its own kind; he said that God divided plants and animals into their own kind, upon their development. You won't find two monkeys mating to produce a cat now, and you wouldn't have seen it long ago either; monkeys and cats are from two different *kinds* of animals and can't cross the genetic lines of separation. A monkey and a cat can't mate to make anything; how much of a stretch is it to think that two like things mated and formed an unlike thing? Much less will you ever see cross germination of cotton plants and pecan trees generate a Polar bear.

Maybe it appears that all plants came from the same first plant cell because all plants feed off of photosynthesis and have many other similar properties such as cell walls and all animals came from the same first animal cell; most underwater animals have gills and swim while most ground based animals have some sort of lungs and legs. Because they have similar body parts, it may seem wise to assume similar life forms came from the same beginning; but that doesn't mean that it DID happen that way. It seems wiser to look at what Moses wrote over 3,400 years ago. Take notice that Moses has been, and is, correct and realize that he got his information from an infallible source – God. Moses said that God told the earth to produce plants and animals each after their own kind, not all after a single kind, much less animals from a plant.

One of the biggest issues separating the **order** of Moses' creation account from scientists **order** of evolution is that the sun and stars were created, distinctly separate, three days (*events*) after heaven and earth were created/formed. In Moses' account these two events were separate while in evolution and science they are all considered a string of happenings resulting from a single event.

Another big difference is that each life form came from its own kind in creation vs. all life came from a single beginning life form in evolution.

While these are huge differences, consider how accurate Moses was in describing the flow of events as accepted by modern science and then ask yourself if there is something we haven't discovered yet. Do we know all there is to know? It does not seem logical that if the universe was created from a single Big Bang event that the earth would have been created previously, and from a separate event – does it? Common sense would lend to believing that the entire universe came from the same string of events. If we think that everything happened from one event, why would we ever even think the earth was different or special? Several thousand years ago it didn't seem logical to most people that the earth had a spherical shape; it was pretty much flat as far as the eye could see so it seemed logical that the earth must be flat. When people began studying it they found that the earth must be spherical; Isaiah had already addressed that and science moved to his position. Science keeps moving to the position of the bible, the bible hasn't changed position yet, and God said it never will; so far He's absolutely correct.

The **only** reason we would think outside of what seems to be "common sense" would be because God, who planned the order of events, who was present at all of the events, who caused all of the events to occur as He decided, causes/allows us to believe outside the normal paradigms of human "common sense". As His ways and thoughts are so high above ours it ought to be evident that how it occurred may well be outside of what we would consider "common sense". Why would we, of our own cognitive processes, assume that the earth was already here before the sun, moon and stars, etc.? God may well have placed it here as an example of what man would be encountering. Built in perfect form, fell from

perfection, hovered/brooded over by Holy Spirit, and regenerated by Jesus (*the light*). It doesn't make sense to anyone who doesn't believe in salvation afforded by Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection, but to those who know Him as savior it's a beautiful reality.

God created the earth for man to live on and the universe for man to understand how special we, His creation in His own image, are. Genesis 1: ^{26&27} “Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. As God chose to make man in His image that makes us special; He placed man in charge of everything else on earth. As earth was specially formed, we were specially formed and we were placed in charge of everything on earth; this lends value to who we were formed to be. In the end, everything was created for Jesus and by Jesus; we all live because He chose it that way.

“Create” vs. “form”

There are myriad instances in the bible wherein the reader ought to be aware of word nuances; we need to know what *was written* vs. what *we’ve heard* was written. Several instances are comparing the ideas of “formed” and “created”. When God created things, He made them from nothing; when He formed things He invested time and extra effort in their development. He created and formed earth.

1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.⁽¹⁾
2. For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I [am] the LORD; and [there is] none else.⁽²⁾ “formed” (H3335 – Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance reference number) – Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance gives the meaning of “formed” as the Hebrew word יָצַר (*yatsar*) meaning like a potter with clay, an artist, statues...

Here Isaiah describes the formation of the earth as being a different action/procedure than the creation of the stars and moon. The earth was artfully handcrafted; God invested special effort (*yatsar*) in designing and implementing earth. God artfully designed and molded the earth for His purpose, and He made it out of nothing.

Arthur Pink discusses the match of regeneration of earth with salvation of man.

“1. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” As we have already observed, the original condition of this primary creation was vastly different from the state in which we view it in the next verse... So, too, in the beginning of this world's history, God also created man, and vastly different was his original state from that into which he subsequently fell.

2. “And the earth became without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” Some fearful catastrophe must have occurred... No less tragic was that which befell the first man. Like the original earth before him, Adam remained not in his primitive state. A dreadful catastrophe occurred.

3. “And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Here is where hope begins to dawn. God did not abandon the primitive earth, which had become a ruin... The analogy holds good in the spiritual realm. Fallen man had no more claim upon God’s notice than had the desolated primitive earth. When Adam rebelled against his Maker, he merited naught but unsparing judgment at His hands, and if God was inclined to have any further regard for him, it was due alone to sovereign mercy.

4. “And God said, let there be light, and there was light.” First the activity of the Holy Spirit and now the spoken Word. It is so in the work of the new creation. These two are inseparably joined together—the activity of the Spirit and the ministry of the Word of God. It is by these the man in Christ became a new creation. And the initial step toward this was the entrance of light into the darkness.

5. “And God divided the light from the darkness.”... Man is a tripartite being, made up of “spirit and soul and body” (1 Thess. 5:23). The late Dr. Pierson distinguished between them thus: “The spirit is capable of God-consciousness; the soul is the seat of self-consciousness; the body of sense-consciousness.” In the day that Adam sinned, he died spiritually. Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the body; spiritual death is the separation of the spirit from God. When Adam died, his spirit was not annihilated, but it was “alienated”

6. “And God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters... That which corresponds to this in the new creation, is the impartation of a new nature.

7. “And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God said. Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself”... Where before there was only desolation and death, life and fertility now appeared. So it is in regeneration. The one who was dead in trespasses and sins, has been raised to walk in newness of life. The one who was by the old creation “in Adam,” is now by new creation “in Christ.”

“In the beginning (whenever that was) God created the heaven and the earth”; subsequently (after the primitive creation had become a ruin) “the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.” This Exodus scripture settles the controversy which has been raised as to what kind of “days” are meant in Genesis 1, whether days of 24 hours, or protracted periods of time. In “six days,” that is, literal days of twenty-four hours duration, the Lord completed the work of restoring and re-fashioning that which some terrible catastrophe had blasted and plunged into chaos.⁽³⁾

The point Arthur Pink makes about the “creation account” order matching the order of the plan of salvation implies that salvation regenerates man in the same way that Genesis 1 tells of the regeneration of earth. It was created, initially, as something perfect and wonderful that made “the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy”.⁽⁴⁾ As God formed the earth, He first created it from nothing as detailed by the Hebrew word bara; Isaiah said that He also formed the earth – the Hebrew word yatsar – putting these two ideas together we have an image of God creating the earth from nothing as well as forming the thing created for a special reason - to be inhabited (Isaiah 45:18). It had to be a masterpiece of creation if made especially by God and it made the angels sing. Let us keep these two ideas separate – forming and creating.

What follows in the remainder of Genesis 1 is to be regarded not as a poem, still less as an allegory, but as a literal, historical statement of Divine revelation. We have little patience with those who labor to show that the teaching of this chapter is in harmony with modern science—as well ask whether the celestial chronometer is in keeping with the timepiece at Greenwich. Rather must it be the part of scientists to bring their declarations into accord with the teaching of Genesis 1, if they are to receive the respect of the children of God. The faith of the Christian rests not in the wisdom of man, nor does it stand in any need of buttressing from scientific savants. The faith of the Christian rests upon the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture, and we need nothing more. Too often have Christian apologists deserted their proper ground. For instance: one of the ancient tablets of Assyria is deciphered, and then it is triumphantly announced that some statements found in the historical portions of the Old Testament have been confirmed. But that is only a turning of things upside down again. The Word of God needs no "confirming." ^(3 again).

Arthur Pink’s writing states that God’s work in the beginning of earth was creative and formative, that work fell and was rebuilt. Creating and forming can happen in successive events; we have scripture that states God created the earth and that He formed it. We have the first chapter in the bible telling how He regenerated the earth.

You may not accept this, and that’s fine, just know why you don’t accept it and know why you believe what you believe or someone may come along with a great dog and pony show and convince you of a lie. I have a friend who doesn’t accept that the earth was a masterpiece upon creation; I asked how he could accept that the angels sang for joy upon the earth’s creation if it weren’t absolutely marvelous. He said that just because God created something and they saw it that was enough. They were thrilled to see Him speak something into existence, even if it was a formless, lumpy void rock. I can’t accept that. We disagree on several of the points in this book, but at least we know why we disagree. We do agree on salvation; how and why it occurred and that we all need it.

1. Gen 1:1
2. Isaiah 45:18
3. Arthur Pink, Gleanings in Genesis, Chapter 1
4. Job 38:7

Flat earth, static universe?

For millennia men believed the earth was flat and the universe was static. Educated people have believed, since around 350 B.C., that the earth is indeed spherical. It was about 350 B.C. that Aristotle defended his belief that the earth was spherical and he estimated it's circumference to be about 400,000 stadia. "Its shape must necessarily be spherical. For every portion of earth has weight until it reaches the centre, and the jostling of parts greater and smaller would bring about not a waved surface, but rather compression and convergence of part and part until the centre is reached." ⁽¹⁾ As the Greeks were generally the first to believe in a spherical earth many other civilizations followed. However, there was a time when the idea of a flat earth seemed sensible to some people.

People used to believe that the universe remained the same all the time - static. Sun at day, moon and stars at night; they moved across the sky, but always in the same pattern; sailors navigated by the stars being in the same place all the time, so it appeared the same all the time. However, according to Isaiah, the Earth is round and God stretches the heavens. Isaiah 40: ²² "He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in."

Here the term "circle" comes from the Hebrew word חוּג (chuwg). Strong's Exhaustive Concordance ref #H2329 defines this with planar terms as in the geometry a circle: - circle, circuit, compass. Gesenius' Lexicon defines it a bit more clearly inasmuch as he employs a three dimensional definition instead of planar (3 dimensions vs. 2 dimensions) – "a circle, sphere, used of the arch or vault of the sky". The term "sphere" clarifies the idea much better.

The word Isaiah used for "stretches" is Strong's H5186, נָטָה (natah). Gesenius defines it as a verb

1) to stretch out, extend, spread out, pitch, turn, pervert, incline, bend, bow

a) (Qal)

1) to stretch out, extend, stretch, offer

2) to spread out, pitch (tent)

3) to bend, turn, incline

a) to turn aside, incline, decline, bend down

b) to bend, bow

c) to hold out, extend (fig.)

b) (Niphal) to be stretched out

c) (Hiphil)

1) to stretch out

2) to spread out

3) to turn, incline, influence, bend down, hold out, extend, thrust aside, thrust away

Isaiah wrote that God said He actively spreads the universe (*recall that all scripture is God-breathed, meaning it is what He said*). I mention this because it needs to be noted that what science accepts changes as we learn more; what we know changes, the bible has never changed. Jesus said in Mark 13:31 "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." It should appear relevant that what we know, or think we know, changes as we learn more - but what God said hasn't and won't change, and is always correct.

We've learned that as things approach, and exceed, a certain mass and volume they cannot maintain shapes other than spherical. All matter has gravity, the larger the object the stronger the gravitational pull on other objects of mass. In space, when an object is more than a couple of hundred miles in diameter the object usually has enough mass for its gravity to be strong enough to pull inward on all points. The inward pull forces irregularities to smooth out. The spherical shape is the result of spheres being the most efficient shape in nature to contain volume. Planetary spheres are caused by objects of great mass being

pulled into the most efficient volume storage shape. This action must take some time to accomplish. Surely irregularly formed rocks don't just pop into spheres all of a sudden.

As Georges Lemaître proposed the primordial atom based on Einstein's equations, Vesto Slipher and Edwin Hubble found and showed the meaning of color shift in galaxies and stars and Penzias and Wilson found residual background radiation/noise resulting from the big bang our knowledge and understanding of the universe and its origin have expanded tremendously.

One could argue that in Genesis 1: ¹⁴ “And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years” maybe God made the stars and moon in their present locations when He created them and that He didn't use a big bang from which they were formed as it spread. Maybe He did create galactic entities in their present locations and placed light in transit millions and billions of light years from other galaxies and suns; maybe that is the truth, but keeping in mind that He said, in Genesis 11:6, we are smart people and if speaking one language can figure out anything (*we have myriad translators so the language issue is more of a nuisance now than a barrier*), and He said in Isaiah 40:22 that He stretches the sky, it seems quite logical that a big bang of some sort occurred and everything is spreading from that origin. God is a God of order, so why would he just make a wham bam universe in 24 hours with everything already in its present location billions of light years apart, to include light having traveled those seeming billions of light years to get where it is, instead of making it from a logical sequence of events? He could have easily spoken the universe into existence as it is now, but if it is increasing presently, at what point did it begin stretching? Did He speak matter into existence halfway expanded and then allow it to expand from there? It makes sense that it's been stretching and spreading since inception. I have no qualm with young earth believers; young earth/old earth is not a point of salvation. Paul said, in Romans 10:9, 10 “For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.” Believe in Jesus as Lord and you will be saved; there is no mention of length of creation days involved in salvation.

So, the bible has always said that the earth is round and the universe is stretching/spreading. The bible said it first, science just caught up to what the bible said; my bet is still on God and His word. My bet is the bible is God's directive to us regarding salvation from eternal damnation; a damnation that we all face unless we acknowledge His word is truth and not speculation or myth.

Are we surprised that someone figured out that the larger objects are they must conform to spherical shape? Maybe that guy was surprised when he figured it out and everyone he told was amazed at his stroke of genius, but God wasn't surprised. Not only had He told us the earth is spherical but He said we are smart. If we are individually smart we should examine information at our disposal and see how it matches the bible. Look at how the bible says something and then see how man's knowledge finds it to be true; it doesn't confirm the bible when we see truth in nature, it just secures it more so in our minds because we have tangible examples of the truth God spoke. We can't test God, but we can see how correct He is. (Romans 1:20)

1. Aristotle – On the heavens, 350 B.C., book 3, chapt 14

[Flood of Noah](#)

There are vast writings regarding the global flood of Noah. There are many people who believe that it was a global flood, there are many people who completely disbelieve it. There are people who believe the epic of Gilgamesh is an account of a story much like the biblical story of Noah and many people believe the biblical account of Noah is based on the Babylonian story of Gilgamesh. So, let's take a look at what we know.

In Genesis 1: ⁹ “And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” Moses wrote that all water was in one location, implying that the land was separate, water in one place and land was separate. The land was in a single location, or a single mass. Have you ever looked at a map of the earth? The eastern side of the Americas matches up well with the western side of Europe and Africa. Images of the land mass scientists call Pangaea show how the continents probably used to fit together. Scientists suppose it took some 225million years for the land to break up and drift apart into its present arrangement. There have been many studies into the Mid Atlantic Ridge (*M.A.R.*), an underwater mountain/volcano range that runs north/south through the base of the Atlantic Ocean ⁽¹⁾. If we were to suppose that it required hundreds of millions of years for the continents to “drift” apart, then what activity did these volcanoes play? You can also research the Pacific ring of fire and other underwater volcano ranges. Did they play any action in continental drift or did they just appear as dead volcano ridges along the bottom of the ocean?

Scientists assert that Iceland and the Azores, among others, were formed by the eruption of these volcanoes. Is it more sensible that the land masses drifted apart and then these volcano ridges appeared and erupted to form a couple of islands, or does it make more sense, because Moses has been so right about everything else, to suppose that when these volcano ridges erupted that was the driving force that split Pangaea? How could Moses have possibly known that the landmass split apart and there are volcanic ridges lining the ocean floor 4.8 miles deep, that match the split line? He wrote in Genesis 7:11 that “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day ***all the springs of the great deep burst forth***, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened.” And again in Genesis 8:2 “Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky.” (*Bold and italics my own*)

Moses said that all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and then they were closed. The Hebrew word Moses used is **בָּצַע** (*baqa*) which was translated into English as “burst” has the following definitions in Gesenius’ Hebrew lexicon:

- 1) to split, cleave, break open, divide, break through, rip up, break up, tear
 - a) (Qal)
 - 1) to cleave, cleave open
 - 2) to break through, break into
 - b) (Niphal)
 - 1) to be cleft, be rent open, be split open
 - 2) to be broken into
 - c) (Piel)
 - 1) to cleave, cut to pieces, rend open
 - 2) to break through, break down
 - d) (Pual)
 - 1) to be ripped open, be torn open
 - 2) to be rent
 - 3) to be broken into
 - e) (Hiphil)
 - 1) to break into

- 2) to break through
- f) (Hophal) to be broken into
- g) (Hithpael) to burst (themselves) open, cleave asunder

Each of these definitions intends something being violently torn or ripped open or apart. There is nothing in Moses' statement that allows for anything to drift around. Now suppose that all of those ocean bottom volcanoes ripped and erupted on the same day; would there be enough force to shove continents apart and cause the tectonic plate ripples in the land masses that formed mountains? If the land was in one mass and a range of underground volcanoes ripped, surely it would force the land to separate. I find it simpler to believe that Moses' account is correct, especially considering that he was so correct with the order of creation, and scientists 3,400 years later have explained the reasons that Moses' order must have been followed. Now we read his account of the flood and find that scientists have found ranges of volcanoes that probably caused the exact events he described – the springs of the deep burst (*ripped*) open.

It occurs to me that surely someone will argue the point of volcanoes and say they couldn't have been the springs of the great deep bursting forth and caused all that rain. I didn't say they were the springs that caused all the water; I said they probably supplied the force to divide the continents not the rain. However, they may well have blown out a great deal of the water insomuch as water vapor is 60% of volcanic gas emissions (*so they do emit water*); scientists believe that much of our ocean water has outgassed (*up to 25%*) from volcanoes over tens of millions, or even billions, of years. If huge amounts of water came from volcanoes, that matches Moses' writings; it only misses scientists' ideas by time, not function.

If you were to look at video of the damage water can do resulting from a tsunami it's quite impressive. I was discussing, with my children, the damage water can cause and they didn't really understand it. So I said that a gallon of water weighs about eight pounds, imagine if someone threw a gallon jug of water at you, would it knock you down? My tough nine-year-old figured it wouldn't have much of an impact, so I asked if someone threw four one gallon jugs of water at him, would that knock him down? He figured that would be enough, about 32 pounds. I followed that idea with comparing the size, and weight, of a gallon jug of water vs. a wall of water 15 or 20 feet high, moving more than 25 miles per hour, and asked how much momentum that would carry. It would just roll over anything in its path.

There were many videos made of the 2011 tsunami in Japan, some showed small ships being shoved under bridges and all sorts of other breathtaking damage; and each of these were just a minor portion of the damage caused by one tsunami. One video in particular showed water rushing across what appeared to be a farming field. The water was carrying cars, trucks, buses and some houses at a speed that no one could run, in excess of 25 mph. The damage was tremendous; the loss of life was equally devastating. If a single wave from a single tsunami can shove half a village across a field at more than 25 mph, maybe you can imagine the scale of destruction that would accompany an entire ridge of volcanoes erupting at once; it would have to be unimaginably tremendous and probably capable of splitting land masses.

Surely, if there was a single family who lived through an event of this nature they would have passed the story down through generations to their descendants; as the population spread and rebuilt, the story of worldwide devastation would have survived – as it has. There is no localized flooding in that story, there is no make believe in that story. As you watch the damage caused by local floods and see all the "stuff" that washes away, you should be able to imagine that with a phenomenal flood that ravaged the world, the Grand Canyon was easily an outcome of such raging water. Did it take millions of years to carve the Grand Canyon out of the earth? Maybe, if there was only a single river washing the dirt away; probably not if there was an astonishingly great flood, powerful enough to cover all the dry ground and push

continents apart to include tectonic plates being pushed around and shoving plates on top of each other hard enough to cause mountains.

You may note that Moses didn't detail the splitting of the single continent into multiple land masses, and wonder why if he originally said the land was in one mass he never mentioned Pangaea splitting. Don't worry too much about why God didn't mention every incident resulting from the flood. There was no mention of some islands not having a snake population, yet some islands have no indigenous snake species. There was no specific mention of the earth's atmosphere converting from probably hydrogen and helium to mostly nitrogen and oxygen, yet there is mention of the earth being void (*no life or suitable atmosphere?*) and then plant life appeared; this seems a logical conclusion given what was written.

We need to know enough to give a reasonable answer as to why we have the hope we have, we don't need to present God's apologetics for every argument someone else can conjure. I've been in discussions with people who have said that they can't accept a God who says no one gets to heaven without believing in Him; "what about the people in China or Africa who haven't heard about Him?"

The problems with that thinking are at least threefold.

1. Are you willing to bet YOUR salvation on a hypothetical person, whom you've never met, in China or Africa, and assume they haven't heard the gospel - so you disagree with the premise?
2. Heaven is God's residence, He sets the rules as to who gets in, and by what manner; who are we to decide that we won't believe because we don't like His rules as He's explained them? Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me."⁽²⁾
3. It doesn't matter if a person decides they can't accept a God who says no one gets to heaven without believing in Him; what matters for every person individually is whether God accepts them. Everyone will accept God if God accepts them first; no one who God doesn't accept will accept God. Predestination.

I have never read anything in the bible that says God wants people to like His rules, or that He worries if His rules may hurt someone's feelings; as a matter of fact there are many episodes wherein God exacted revenge on people for turning their backs on him. You don't have to like it; I didn't write it, but I know why I believe it and you should as well. If you subscribe to the 225 million year continental, drift I wish you luck with that. I'm betting eternity on what I know, so are you; make yours a good bet.

1. See Appendix C
2. John 14:6

Humans are smart enough to figure things out; we are dull enough to miss important things

It is a human characteristic to want to be thought of as intelligent; I don't know of anyone who likes to be thought of as stupid and you probably don't either. I've mentioned this before... Genesis 11 :¹Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. ² As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. ³ They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth." ⁵ But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. ⁶ The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.

God has already expressed that humans (*speaking one language*) could figure out anything we set our minds to; not because we are so wonderful, but because He gave us the faculties to do so. He scattered the languages and threw a monkey wrench into man's abilities, so we obviously have limits. In Romans chapter 1, Paul details the shortcomings of man's intellect; our loss of focus on what is worthy of praise and our belief that we, or things we make, are worthy.

I've already addressed some of the incredible intellectual achievements humans have made. When I say we, I speak of the people (*fellow humans*) who have exhibited the mental acuity to discover a challenge, reason through it and remain focused on it until the problem is resolved, or the goal reached.

Newton and Leibniz discovered Calculus at about the same time because that was the mathematical problem they were working on at the time. Slipher and Hubble discovered, and explained, the color shift in stars/galaxies at about the same time, similarly because that was a problem of the day for their discipline. While Bohr, Schroedinger, and Heisenberg were working with chemistry problems (*and physics; Bohr helped to understand the fundamental structure of atoms, Schroedinger helped to understand the probability of finding electrons in particular space orbiting atoms and Heisenberg explained how we cannot know the velocity and location of a particle as small as an electron because any measurement will impact the location and/or velocity of such small particles*), Einstein, Feynman, et al, were working on physics. Each group solved problems of their generation. Through diligence, thought, testing and reviews with peers these people added greatly to human knowledge.

With that said, we acknowledge that God knows humans are smart and He gave us remarkable ability to reason. However, we sometimes, and perhaps usually, think more highly of ourselves and abilities than we ought. God has said that our intellect, in comparison to His, is miniscule. His ways and thoughts are as high as the heavens above ours, by comparison. Obviously His intellect is so far beyond ours that any comparison is immeasurable.

When this thought occurs to me my thoughts usually go to things like interviews with NFL football players talking about being in the trenches with buddies in war with other teams. These guys get paid hundreds of thousands up to tens of millions of dollars per year to play a game. Granted they are highly skilled at what they do, but what they do is shove each other around, throw a ball, catch a ball, run with the ball and knock the guy with the ball down. There is no war; there is, at most, intense dislike for the guys on the other team; I can be impressed by their strength, speed and skills, but they are not at war. I was in Operation Desert Shield, as a Med Tech, and transferred some Marines who had been in battle. These guys had bullet holes in their bodies and broken bones; they had been in war. I have a nephew whose best friend got shot in the neck and fell to the ground, dead, right beside him in Iraq; that was war. The difference between what these football players call war and real war is huge— obviously not as

prominent as the difference between what we know and what God knows, but the analogy is to show a huge discrepancy in claims; some football players claim to be in war, guys who have been in war know they haven't. God makes a stated distinction between His intellect and ours and He is in THE position to make the qualified statement. There is no measurable comparison.

Paul makes a definite statement regarding our lack of acknowledgement of what deserves honor and glory. Paul details that God has made abundantly clear that He is in charge and that He makes things work. Man tries to figure out how things work but we try to figure it out by removing the cause for the effects. We try to figure out the beginning and assume that it occurred by chance; if we can assign it to chance then we don't have to recognize that someone is in charge and that removes eternal reparations and punishment from consideration - in our minds. It doesn't have any impact on reality, but it makes us feel good if we can keep it out of our minds.

If we can figure out how things work without God being a part of it, then life seems easier because we don't have to deal with God. If, however, God is real and He is the creator of all things then we have to deal with that knowledge, and that's fearful, because He set the rules that we don't like. Paul wrote ¹⁸ "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles." ⁽¹⁾ This is the same Paul, who as Saul, was intercepted by Jesus in the desert between Jerusalem and Damascus. According to Luke, Jesus appeared to (*then*) Saul and asked why he was persecuting Jesus (Acts 9:4). Jesus caused Saul to go blind for three days (Acts 9:9) and then had Ananias restore his sight. Paul had great intellectual via training under the tutelage of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3) and was so impacted by his encounter with Jesus that he turned all of his efforts for the rest of his life toward teaching people about Jesus – to the point of this testimony: "I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. ²⁴ Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, ²⁶ I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. ²⁷ I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked." ⁽²⁾ To receive all of this punishment for a cause that wasn't real would require a completely stupid person.

Paul was mentally acute, as detailed by his writings detailing his level of study as a Pharisee and devotion to the Old Testament law ⁽³⁾, and he was completely sold on his knowledge of salvation. His understanding stemmed from his personal encounter with Jesus, to include being taught by "revelation from Jesus". (¹¹ "I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. ¹² I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.") ⁽⁴⁾ Paul wrote his letter to the Romans based on knowledge gained in his revelation from God, and that letter includes God's assessment of the character of man's knowledge – we see the evidence of creation and God's invisible qualities and ignore them while trying to assign them to other entities which do not exist.

God said that we are smart; He created intelligent beings. God also said that while we can reason things we have a propensity to ignore the correct answer – that He is the cause – and we make up other ideas for answers. This is a sad commentary on who we are and our intellect; that we would try and figure out how things came to be while ignoring the book that tells us how things came to be. We don't even consult it to

see how close it is to what we find, or how close what we find is to what it has said for thousands of years.

We have great information detailing the order of how things came to be, but humans generally fail to put this together with the biblical accounts of cause.

- We are told, in the bible, that the heavens and earth were created first.
- We are told, in the bible, that Jesus is light and we are told that God said for light to be (*exposed to earth*).
- We are told, in the bible, that the earth became void.
- We are told, in the bible, that the atmosphere was water (*or the Hebrew term allows for urea as an alternate acceptable translation for the term*).
- We are told, in the bible, that the land used to be all one mass.
- We are told, in the bible, that plant life came first.
- We are told, in the bible, that the sun, moon and stars all came from the same event (on the same day/period).
- We are told, in the bible, that underwater animals, fowl, land animals and man followed plant life, in order.
- We are told, in the bible, that God stretches the sky and until the past 70 years scientists believed the universe was static.

Does science disagree with the heavens (sky and universe) coming first, or that plant life was the first life form on earth, or that the early atmosphere was empty and could not sustain life, or that all land was one contiguous mass, or that the sun moon and stars came about from the same event? No. Does science disagree with a stretching universe? No.

Certainly there is disagreement that the earth came before the sun, moon and stars, but the big disagreement is whether it was all caused by God. If our mental model of the universe is only what we can surmise from what we can see and replicate then surely we'd think that the earth is a byproduct of the big bang, just some stuff that collected into another of the billions of rocks in space. As science can neither prove nor disprove God, it opts for ignoring Him. To place belief in something that can't be tested or proved requires faith; faith is God's requirement and the downfall of science.

Man has a long history of making up gods to honor as explanations for what we don't understand. I am unaware of any writings attributed to Zeus, Poseidon, Vishnu or others of mythology wherein the writers said they were writing what that god told them to write. Some of the authors of the bible books were killed for their beliefs and said that God told them to write what was written. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has delivered to us His rule book and we ignore it at our own peril. He has not only given us His book, and told us that it is from Him (2 Timothy 3:16 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness"), but has given us enough evidence supporting His word (*Romans 1:19, 20*) that we are without excuse when we face Him upon our deaths. A basketball player cannot go onto the court and start shoving others around to get the ball from them without being called for a foul. Fouls are defined in the rule book; they receive a just punishment when called, that punishment is detailed in the rule book as well. Likewise, when we foul God by disobeying His directives we are subject to the just punishment that has been detailed in His rule book.

1. Romans 1:18-23
2. 2 Corinthians 11:23-27
3. Philippians 3:4, 5
4. Galatians 1:11, 12

Effect without cause?

I've mentioned this before – science requires a cause for an effect. There is really no concept, of which I am aware, for the *cause* of the big bang except that energy, of some sort, blew out from a single point and expanded into what we presently have as a universe. It has been suspected and proposed, that once that first expansion began, a second inflation began inside the first and that forced the initial expansion to continue with no chance of collapsing back into the singularity of all the energy that comprises the present universe. A singularity would be a single point of all existing energy– points have no volume, area, length, height nor width, they're just points. Such a point would have infinite density and unpredictable behavior; before the big bang moment we don't know what the energy was like so we cannot understand its behavior or laws, but we know it must have all been in one point so we know its density was practically infinite. The big bang explosion apparently outran the effects of gravity and the speed of light as it spread out. There was no space before it created space, so it seems logical that the speed of light squared may well have been achievable to convert energy into mass, among other things.

We don't understand what occurred at *the moment* of the blast, what caused it or how it progressed until after 10^{-43} seconds after it began. Our math system can only devise understanding back to 10^{-43} seconds; prior to that moment we have no solid idea of what happened AT the moment of the big bang. We can guess at what occurred but the things we experience and understand did not exist in the same form at the moment of explosion. Gravitational force, weak force, electromagnetic force and strong nuclear force come from the same constituent moment and the closer we trace back to that moment the more they become one. We don't yet understand how that worked. As such, we can't describe what that stuff was, or why it burst out from a single point. According to science, we only have an effect with a best guess at a cause.

According to the bible, there IS a cause – God the creator.

- If Jesus is God (*He claimed to be God; that's the recorded basis for his crucifixion*), then we very well need to study His teachings, actions and claims. Was He a nut, or was He correct? He must be important for some reason if the Gregorian calendar is based on His lifetime here on earth (*Before Christ BC and Anno Domini AD*). There will be no test questions to see if we go to heaven or go to hell after we die; we are presently living our test; upon our deaths, we will be judged for what we believed.
- If God will judge us after we die ⁽¹⁾ isn't it absolutely important that we understand as much as we can now; we will have no second chance to repair any mistakes we made.
- If there is God (*not a god*), and He provided a book detailing how everything came to be, wouldn't it behoove us to try and understand what He said instead of trying to figure it out without His guidance? It took Newton and Leibniz a lot longer to learn calculus than it took me; I learned it from books and professors instead of figuring it out on my own. Use the books provided by the experts. God is THE expert on creation and salvation; read his book. He details the causes and effects, not to mention the myriad scholars who have written commentaries to help us better understand.
- Paul said - ¹³If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. ¹⁵More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. ⁽²⁾

Answering these “if” statements tends to steer a thoughtful person to consideration of “God”. If there is God, what does He want from us? Do we owe Him anything? Can He affect us? Will He affect us? Is that bible really His book or did some guys just write a contiguous novel over a few centuries and it turned out well?

If there is no God, then why do we entertain the idea of a supreme being? If we’re merely animals with no sensible cause why do we consider God; sharks and termites don’t seem to care about a supreme being? As far as I know Grizzly Bears are pretty confident they are at the top of the food chain and nothing is above them; I haven’t wrestled any Grizzly Bears but I’ve heard enough warnings about them to understand they are not frightened by me even if I have a high powered rifle.

Is God the cause of all the effects we see in nature or is there no root “cause” and it all happened by sequential events occurring that just happened to transpire and become laws of nature? Why is there no destruction or construction of energy? If the energy of the universe is from God, could it be that God supplied all the energy the universe is going to get and we can’t destroy, or create, part of Him? If there is no God, then there is, as yet, no identifiable cause for the effect we call the universe. Just some stuff we don’t yet understand blew out of a single point and spread into the immense vastness of what we know as our universe – with no identifiable purpose. We live; we die; that’s that. That would imply that it is fine to murder and rape people and mate with quadruped animals – there should be no rules except the physical laws of nature – speed of light, gravity, motion, thermodynamics, etc. But we have rules and they must have come from somewhere – maybe the rule-maker.

We have brains that operate on a much higher level than the brains of other animals, insects, fish or anything else on this planet, and as such we each need to use our brains as the valuable resources they are. The purpose of a human brain is different than an animal’s brain – animals live on reaction to stimuli and reinforcement; however, humans live on reason and thought. By “animal” I am speaking of quadrupeds, primates, insects, arachnids, etc., non-human animal life. Granted humans learn reason and logic by trial and error as well as reinforcement of behavior, but we learn to a higher degree than other animals and we can/do respond to stimuli via reasoning and logic. I’ve never heard of an animal performing 2nd order differential equations – but humans can reason on mathematical levels. Humans can write music with intention; humans can perform surgical operations on other humans (*and animals*) to improve their health; no other biological animal can even come close to what we can do. With our level of understanding we ought to consider the possibility/truth of God. Hopefully I will give plenty of reason to understand that God does exist and that He did give us direction via the bible. I am not going to introduce anything new into Christianity; my goal is to simply put some ideas together to show that given what humans know, we need to consider our creator. I will not venture from true doctrine supported by the bible; I will venture to give cause to see the bible as truth. God gave reason to believe – He told us to. I am just trying to provide a way to see the trees through the forest.

Moses wrote, regarding the event when humans started building the tower of Babel “The LORD said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.”⁽³⁾, indicating that God *knew* He had created an intelligent being capable of learning great ideas. If we will be judged on what we’ve learned and believe, as well as how we’ve applied that knowledge, it would serve us well to read the rule book (*the bible*) as well as commentaries written by scholars regarding what they believed to be the intention of what the bible says. Some may be wrong, some correct, but it is vital that we read and discern which is which.

(1) Hebrews 9:27

(2) 1 Corinthians 15:13-19

(3) Genesis 11:6

Some “ifs”

1. **If** there is no god, why should we behave according to some set of rules?
2. **If** there is A god, what does it/He want?
3. **If** there is THE God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, what did He say and how do we know it? What does He want from us?
4. **If** Jesus is the light, as John said, what does that mean?
5. **If** the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), what does that mean? I’m not looking for payment for cheating, lying or stealing.
6. **If**, as the Apostle Paul said to Christians “...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling...”⁽¹⁾, is the matter truly that serious? Fear and trembling? Isn’t that a bit dire?
7. **If** he is correct that we should do it “with fear and trembling” then shouldn’t we consider the consequences of ignoring this stalwart exhortation and study⁽²⁾ to know *why* we believe *what* we believe.
8. **If** Jesus said He is The way, THE truth and THE life, should we believe Him, or was He as nuts as David Koresh of the Branch Davidians in Waco Texas who were all killed in 1993 and Jim Jones of the Peoples Temple who all committed suicide in Guayana in 1978?
9. **If** Jesus said He and the Father are one, are they? Who is the Father? How can they be one?
10. What **if** there is no resurrection after we die?

1. Philippians 2:12
2. 2 Timothy 2:15

There are myriad other ifs, but time and space constrain the discussion.

1. *If there is no god, why should we behave according to some set of rules?* - We shouldn’t. If there is no god where would we have gotten morals? Termites and sharks, among the myriad other animals, exhibit no signs of moral behavior. They exhibit no reasoning skills. As humans exhibit reasoning skills to a much greater extent than any other life form there must be something different about us. Granted some folks believe that we have our codes and mores because we evolved into a form with higher reasoning capacities, but is that really the by-product of millions of years of life forms coming and going and this is where we ended up compared to earthworms who have ended up content tilling the soil? If there is no god, we shouldn’t have to worry about any behavior; who came up with our morals, some guy named Larry who was tired of people cheating him? How did he know that they were cheating if there were no rules? I tend that we got them from God, as no other life form has a set of morals. Dogs can easily be trained to behave, but don’t exhibit morals. Bears don’t have any commandments that they obey; we were given Ten Commandments, followed by many others, and were told to obey them; we were not asked if we liked them. Moses wrote that the almighty God and creator told him to obey those rules; a pretend god didn’t say “Hey Mo, here’s a list of things I’d like to see you guys doing down there,” Don’t forget, after Moses met with God on Mount Sinai, and brought the tablets down he was glowing so brightly that he had to wear a cover over his face. If that didn’t really happen, surely someone, somewhere, would have called him a liar for what he wrote about the Exodus. (Exodus 34: ²⁹ When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD. ³⁰ When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him. ³¹ But Moses called to them; so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and he spoke to them. ³² Afterward all the Israelites came near him, and he gave them all the commands the LORD had given him on Mount Sinai. ³³ When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴ But whenever he entered the LORD’s presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, ³⁵ they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would

put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the LORD.) Instead, Moses is considered with the greatest respect among three of the top religions in the world, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. If there is no god, there is no reason to have rules; there would be nothing to hold us to any standard as the universe is just an event that happened to occur with no reasoning.

2. *If there is A god, what does it/He want?* - Every religion, of which I'm aware, that has a god, requires that adherents acknowledge, and please, said deity. No acknowledged god wishes to remain anonymous. The bible is the accepted document of Christianity that tells us what God wants. He wants us to:
 - a. acknowledge Him and His creation; (Genesis chapter 1, Colossians 1:16, John 1:3)
 - b. acknowledge that we are His creation, (Genesis 1:26, 27)
 - c. acknowledge that He is completely sovereign in the existence of all things; (all things in Ezekiel, Romans 9, there are myriad references in the bible to God being sovereign)
 - d. acknowledge that we have each broken his dictates for behavior and fall short of His expected righteousness and holiness for us, (Romans 3:23)
 - e. acknowledge that we can't repair any damage we have done to ourselves through our misbehaviors, (Ephesian 2:8, 9)
 - f. acknowledge that only He can save us, (John 14:6)
 - g. acknowledge that He offered Himself as the sacrifice to pay for our debt to Him (Romans 8:32) .
3. *If there is THE God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, what did He say and how do we know it? What does He want from us?* –
 - a. Exodus 3:6 Then he said, "I am the God of your father, *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.*" At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.
 - b. Exodus 3:15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—*the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob*—has sent me to you.'"
 - c. Exodus 3:16 "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—*the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*—appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt.
 - d. Exodus 4:5 "This," said the LORD, "is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers—*the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob*—has appeared to you."
 - e. Matthew 22: ³¹ But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, ³² *'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'*^{1b}? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."
 - f. Mark 12:26 Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the Book of Moses, in the account of the burning bush, how God said to him, *'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'* ?
 - g. Acts 3:13 *The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus.
 - h. Acts 7:32 *'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.'* Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look.

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dictates that we acknowledge Him above everything else.

Exodus 20: ¹ "And God spoke all these words: ² "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ³ "You shall have no other gods before me. ⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. ⁷ "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name." Matthew 22: ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment". He also requires that we mimic Him above anything else. Leviticus 11:44, 45 I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature that moves about on the ground. I am the LORD who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.

Leviticus 19:1 The LORD said to Moses, ² “Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: ‘Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

For us to be holy is truly difficult, if not impossible. As such we fall short of completing His directive. God didn’t say to try and act holy, or holier than someone else; He said to be holy because He is holy. There is no option; this is just a commandment – be holy. Holy is from the Hebrew word

קדוש *qadowsh* – meaning “sacred, holy, Holy One, saint, set apart, pure, clean, free from defilement of crimes, idolatry and other unclean and profane things, containing various laws against fornication, adultery, incest, idolatry, and other grievous crimes.”

4. *If Jesus is the light, as John said, what does that mean?* That Jesus is the light was covered in the section entitled “Light and Darkness on the First Day”. What it means is that He is the author and supporter of life. The earth was void of life until after God called for the Light to be – to be present on the earth. Then the process of life began, plants first, then animals. Life was existent after the Light was present. Likewise, spiritual life is generated by the process of being exposed to the Light. Arthur Pink has written, in Gleanings in Genesis, a great comparison of creation with salvation; this comparison goes a long way to describing what an encounter with Jesus, the Light accomplishes. "And God said, let there be light, and there was light." First the activity of the Holy Spirit and now the spoken Word. No less than ten times in this chapter do we read "and God said." God might have refashioned and refurnished the earth without speaking at all, but He did not. Instead, He plainly intimated from the beginning, that His purpose was to be worked out and His counsels accomplished by the Word. The first thing God said was, "Let there be light," and we read, "There was light." Light, then, came in, was produced by, the Word. And then we are told, "God saw the light, that it was good." It is so in the work of the new creation. These two are inseparably joined together—the activity of the Spirit and the ministry of the Word of God. It is by these the man in Christ became a new creation. And the initial step toward this was the entrance of light into the darkness. The entrance of sin has blinded the eyes of man's heart and has darkened his understanding. So much so that, left to himself, man is unable to perceive the awfulness of his condition, the condemnation which rests upon him, or the peril in which he stands. Unable to see his urgent need of a Savior, he is, spiritually, in total darkness. And neither the affections of his heart, the reasonings of his mind, nor the power of his will, can dissipate this awful darkness. Light comes to the sinner through the Word applied by the Spirit. As it is written, "the entrance of Thy words giveth light" (Ps. 119:130). This marks the initial step of God's work in the soul. Just as the shining of the light in Genesis I made manifest the desolation upon which it shone, so the entrance of God's Word into the human heart reveals the awful ruin which sin has wrought." The entire first chapter is filled with an in depth comparison of creation and salvation. The url of this book is http://www.pbministries.org/books/pink/Gleanings_Genesis/genesis.htm. Writing in the gospel of John, it is said of Jesus, “In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.” (John 1:4) Jesus, the light, serves to generate and regenerate life.

5. *If the wages of sin is death, what does that mean? I’m not looking to get paid for cheating, lying or stealing.*
- The Greek term translated as “wages” is ὀψώνιον (opsonion) and means 1) a soldier's pay, allowance a) that part of the soldier's support given in place of pay [i.e. rations] and the money in which he is paid.
 - The payment does not have to be money; it can be room and board support or some other fashion of compensation. In the case of sin, God has said that His compensation (not reward) for behaving against His will is eternal separation from Him – eternal death.
 - I’ve taught my kids that what you get in return for what you do are to be regarded as the wages for what you do. If they do their schoolwork, their grades are the wages for their work. As are better than Cs, or better wages/payment. You receive payment for everything you do, or should I say there are consequences for everything you do. If you mow the lawn, either you are glad it’s completed or you get paid for doing it; but there is a consequence/payment of some sort.
 - Whether one believes the bible or not doesn’t affect the fact that there is a consequence for behavior. God, whom we can neither see nor prove, has dictated His rules for us being alive in His

universe and the consequences for breaking those rules. He has written that the penalty/payment/compensation for breaking even one of His rules is eternal damnation.

6. *If, as the Apostle Paul said to Christians “...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling...” (1), is the matter truly that serious? Fear and trembling? Isn’t that a bit dire?* Keeping in mind that Paul was accosted by Jesus in the desert while on his way to hassle Christians, and this is the same Paul who suffered immensely for spreading the word of God. (2 Corinthians 11:23 I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. 24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, 26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. 27 I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.) Paul said he received his information via revelation straight from Jesus. (Galatians 1: 11 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. 12 I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ) As Jesus is the author of life (Acts 3:15 “You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.”) – death did not exist until it was allowed to exist (allowed by Jesus) – one would think that Jesus would be the supreme author of the intensity with which we should consider life and death. Paul said that salvation is an event of so great importance that it ought to be considered with fear and trembling; one would have to conclude that Paul got that impression through his revelation from Jesus. Death and salvation seem, to me, to be much more important than making a house payment, or a car payment; houses and cars only last so long, death and salvation are eternal, so you had better make the correct decision.
7. *If he is correct that we should do it “with fear and trembling” then shouldn’t we consider the consequences of ignoring this stalwart exhortation and study (2) to know why we believe what we believe.* This would seem a simple question to answer, but the difficulty comes with the assertion that this is such an important question. If you accept the premise that the importance regards eternal life and salvation, then the answer is simple – study, study, study; make sure you have a firm grasp on the truth. If, however, you view the topic of God and salvation as a dimwitted mythological idea composed by entertainers then you will probably not give it a second thought and at best, be entertained by these words. In short, if you believe in eternal life and salvation from eternal suffering (or consider it worth your time to investigate) then studying is vital – not just reading a chapter or two and calling it quits because now you’re closer to God. I was working in Saudi Arabia in 1986-1988 and called my dad often. In one of our conversations he asked me what I was doing in my bible studies, so I said “reading John”. Again he asked what I was studying, so I asked what he meant by “studying”. He said not just reading the text, but researching what the authors wrote, what they intended and what scholars have written over the years. I told him that was far beyond what I was doing, and he asked “why?” (My dad was fairly blunt and to the point) That was the point at which I changed my study habits. The best retirement plan available is free and it plans for much longer than the 15-25 years most people seem to think they’ll be retired in the U.S. The best retirement plan is a plan that takes care of you (and your family if they adhere to it) forever; Jesus provided that retirement plan – eternity in heaven – we just need to understand that it is more valuable than any 401K or Roth plan devised by the present economic plans of man. God’s retirement plans are twofold – either retire in heaven or retire into eternal punishment with weeping and gnashing of teeth. “Weeping and gnashing of teeth”, in view of how correct the rest of the bible is, is enough to cause me to consider it with fear and trembling; hopefully it will cause the same for you. My fear is not whether the bible is correct, I have every bit of my faith in it being right: my fear is whether I may fall short in my faith.

8. *If Jesus said He is THE way, THE truth and THE life, should we believe Him, or was He as nuts as David Koresh of the Branch Davidians in Waco Texas who were all killed in 1993 and Jim Jones of the Peoples Temple who all committed suicide in Guayana in 1978?*

If you are not familiar with David Koresh or Jim Jones, they are easy to research. They were leaders of their “churches” and led the people under their influence into some bizarre behaviors. The people of Jones’ church practiced group “translation” and fearing reprisals after killing a congressman and some reporters by gunfire the group leaders decided it was time to end it all. The followers “drank the Kool-Aid” provided by the leaders and killed themselves in a “mass suicide” event; in all, some 914 people died. Apparently some of the people drank the poison to commit suicide, some didn’t know the drink was poisoned and some were killed outright.

David Koresh ran a compound of followers called Branch Davidians. He believed himself to be the final prophet of the group; he changed his name from Vernon Wayne Howell to David Koresh. “David” is an identity he used to identify himself with king David of Israel; “Koresh” is a transliteration of the Persian name “Cyrus” from Cyrus the great – the Persian king who allowed the captive Israelites to return to Israel after they had been in Babylon and Persia. David Koresh showed signs of delusions of grandeur. The U.S. government raided the compound and a fire broke out and killed over 70 people. The blame for the fire is two-sided; some say the government some say the Branch Davidians started it.

Jim Jones didn’t claim to be God or a prophet, but through his delusions led to the deaths of many people. David Koresh believed himself to be a prophet and through his actions led many people to their deaths.

It cannot be sensibly argued that Jesus didn’t die because of His claim to be God; He said He and the Father (almighty God, Jehovah, creator, I AM...) are one – the same. Jesus said He is the way the truth and the life and it was repeated by biblical authors. Each of these statements is in reference to Jesus.

The Way – Yes, I realize that the reader may look at these and say these scriptures speak of “the way” not Jesus being the way – but keep in mind they are speaking of Jesus when mentioning “the way”. He is the way to God and heaven; He is the way of God and heaven. These scriptures do speak of Jesus being the way. The early church was called the way, because it taught about Jesus and what He taught.

- a. Matthew 22:¹⁶ They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach **the way** of God in accordance with the truth.
- b. Luke 3:⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare **the way** for the Lord, make straight paths for him.
- c. John 14:⁶ Jesus answered, “I am **the way** and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
- d. Acts 9:¹⁻² Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to **the Way**, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.
- e. Acts 19:⁹ But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned **the Way**. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.
- f. Acts 19:²³ About that time there arose a great disturbance about **the Way**.
- g. Acts 24:¹⁴ However, I admit that I worship the God of our ancestors as a follower of **the Way**, which they call a sect. I believe everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets,
- h. Acts 28:²⁵ They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: “The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your ancestors when he said through Isaiah the prophet: ²⁶ “Go to this people and say, “You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.” ²⁷ For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.” [Isaiah 6:9, 10] ²⁸ “Therefore I want you to know that God’s salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!”
- i. Ephesians 4:²⁰ That, however, is not **the way** of life you learned ²¹ when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.

The Truth –

- a. 1 Timothy 3:15 If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of **the truth**.
- b. Luke 20:21 "So the spies questioned him: "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with **the truth**."
- c. John 5:33 "You have sent to John and he has testified to **the truth**."
- d. John 8: 31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know **the truth**, and **the truth** will set you free." (*What truth is Jesus talking about? 2+2=4? That can't be correct, it doesn't make sense. From what can that set you free; a math test? **The truth** of which He is speaking is something that lives and can accomplish something. He attributed **the truth** with having the power to accomplish something determined. **The truth** can set you free from sin and sin's penalty. Jesus clears this up immediately -* 33 They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" 34 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. 35 Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

The Life

- a. John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and **the life**. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;
- b. John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was **life**, and that **life** was the light of all mankind.
- c. 1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched —this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 2 **The life** appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you **the eternal life**, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

Not only did Jesus die over His claim to be God, but when it was addressed as the reason for His execution He did not argue the point; He allowed it to be stated as the uncontested reason for His execution. "4 Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." 5 When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" 6 As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him." 7 The Jewish leaders insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." 8 When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, 9 and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. 10 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." 12 From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar." 13 When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement. 14 It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. 15 But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. 16 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified." (3)

The Jews were trying to have Jesus executed by the Romans by asserting sedition on His part. By naming Him a self-proclaimed king they suggested that He was a challenge to Caesar, even though they wanted Him killed for claiming equality with Jehovah almighty God. Pilate repeatedly offered Jesus chances to renounce His claim to be God/King of the Jews, yet Jesus opted for allowing the populace to kill Him over just that issue. Was He nuts like Jim Jones and David Koresh?

No; neither of them fed 5,000 men with five loaves of bread and two fish like Jesus, neither of them resurrected themselves from the dead, neither of them raised others from the dead, neither of them cast out demons, healed the sick and on and on. Jesus was not only recorded as having done so, but there is no documentation to the contrary. I am unaware of any historical documents countering the claims of Jesus' followers, and no one I know of is aware of any such documentation. Nothing countering His miracles, nothing countering his resurrection (*and that would be a big one that surely would have been addressed by opposition*) and nothing countering the claim of Luke and others that He ascended into the clouds while

they looked on (*surely that one would have been argued as well*). People are still pretty much the same as 2,000 years ago – we call each other liars, and other names, when we disagree.

There are myriad subjects with documents pro and con either side, back and forth on both sides of the topic. Anything political or religious has proponents and detractors on both sides and it should be expected that someone who disagreed with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus would have penned that disagreement, especially the government that was in charge of His death. I haven't encountered any historical documentation wherein the Jews or Romans said Jesus did not raise from the dead. The closest I'm aware of historical documents proposing that Jesus didn't raise from the dead is the biblical record of the preparation to prevent His followers from lying about it found in Matthew 27: ⁶² The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³ "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard. They prepared the site to keep His body inside the tomb, but after He raised and walked around for 40 days it seems that no one documented opposition to the fact that He raised from death and walked around.

(The only old writings against Jesus death AND resurrection that I'm aware of – that are taken seriously - is the Muslim position that He didn't die on the cross; it was someone who looked like Jesus. The silliness of that is twofold:

1. *Jesus was witnessed, by friends, to have died on the cross. He wasn't killed, He gave up His own life at the moment when all prophesy was fulfilled – In John 19:30 He said "it is finished" noting that all prophesy about His life as a human was complete. He had fulfilled all prophesy, and that includes His dying on the cross, not finding some other unfortunate soul to be a false example.*
 - a. *Matthew wrote in Matt 27:50 "And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit."*
 - b. *Luke wrote in Luke 23:46 "Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last."*
 - c. *John wrote in John 19:30 "When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."*

People who knew Him very well identified Him as being THE ONE crucified on the cross between two criminals; some of those people died for their witness. Who does that? Make up a lie and die for it? This is of paramount importance – over the two millennia since Jesus' death, people have died for what they believed. Martyrs come and go; they die for what they believe. We've all had conversations with people who will guarantee all sorts of things – "believe me, I know" is a common statement. Muslims flew passenger jets into the World Trade Center buildings for something they believed, people do lots of things for what they believe in. The witnesses in the bible died for WHAT THEY ACTUALLY WITNESSED. Peter died telling what he KNEW not what he believed. He SAW his buddy, Jesus, crucified with two other guys. He was the one who wept bitterly after denying that he knew Jesus. I'd bet that if we could speak to him, Peter would say that the incident of him denying Jesus at Jesus' trial played heavy in his mind when he was executed for preaching about Jesus. He probably figured "I'm NOT going to mess it up this time!" They were eyewitnesses, not just believers. Thomas put his hand inside the wounds on Jesus, he witnessed Jesus having holes punched into his body, and then Thomas put his hands inside the holes. THAT would be pretty convincing, don't you think? It was convincing to Thomas, for he called Jesus "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28)

2. *Islam came along some 500 years after Jesus' life, death and resurrection. How could Mohammed have known it wasn't Jesus on the cross? Jesus' friends not only identified Him, but gave their lives proclaiming that it WAS Jesus who died and arose from death – a fact to which they were eye witnesses, not distant authors separated by more than five centuries of time and a country away. It was prophesied in the Old Testament then witnessed and testified in the New Testament.*

It is easy speculation to say that someone who looked like Jesus was the one who died. It has been said of Satan that his greatest trick has been making people believe he's not real. Satan's greatest trick has been accomplished every time he's convinced anyone of anything short of Jesus being God in human form and Jesus being the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Anything false about Jesus is Satan's greatest trick. He doesn't have to concern himself with what we think of HIM – there's no salvation or eternal damnation based on what we think of Satan – it's ALL about Jesus)

9. *If Jesus said He and the Father are one, are they? Who is the Father? How can they be one?*
John 8:⁵⁸ “Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” God almighty told Moses that he should tell people that “I am” sent him to the Egyptians; the same phrase Jesus used to describe Himself. (Exodus 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.) In the following verses, the authors used the Greek term “huios” for “son” of God; recall that huios refers to someone of the same character as the one referenced and no one can possibly have the same character as God except God Himself.
- a. Matt 14:³³ Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”
 - b. Matt 26:⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”
 - c. Matt 27:⁴³ He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”
 - d. Matt 27:⁵⁴ When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”
- Also, note that other scriptures say John 1:¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Isaiah 7:14 “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Immanuel means God with us, not God's little boy is amongst us. (Matthew 1:23 “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”) (Yes; I recognize that once it is spelled with an “E” and the other time it is spelled with an “I”)
- Jesus said the Father is spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and truth. In speaking of God, the bible denotes three separate persons of the same entity.

God, the Father, almighty, creator –

Gen 1:1 “In the beginning, God created...”

Isaiah 40:28 “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.”

Exodus 6:² God also said to Moses, “I am the LORD. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty...”

Galatians 1:1 “Paul, an apostle —sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead”

God the Son –

I've already detailed that Jesus is God the Son as described using the Greek term huios. You can call Him the Son of God, or God the Son, but in either case note that He IS God and His title is Son (He can be considered the offspring of God inasmuch as it was God who made Mary pregnant to give birth to God's physical incarnate body to become the propitiation for our sins {1 John 4:10})

God the Spirit (Holy Spirit) –

Gen 1:2 “Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”

Psalms 51:10 “Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.”

Matt 1:20 “But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

I didn't make this up; it was in the bible long before I was ever a dream in anyone's eye (except God's). These scriptures are all speaking of God and His three distinct persons; there are many more, this is only a sample. We see that God has told us of His three characteristic persons as detailed by separate terms (*Father, Son and Holy Spirit*) and we know that God said He is one God. Malachi 2:15 “Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring...” James 2:19 “You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.” As one God with three distinct characters it must be possible for Jesus to be the same God as the Father and Holy Spirit. Remember, He's the one who said Isaiah 55:⁸“For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. ⁹“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” so just because we don't completely understand it doesn't make it false. God says there are things we won't understand. I am a son, I am a dad, I am a brother, I am an uncle, etc.; we can be a single person with multiple personalities at the same time, so this isn't too far-fetched. We were created in His image; maybe that includes being a single person with multiple relationships at the same time. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit each have a different relationship with me/you – creator, savior, conscience, etc.

10. *What if there is no resurrection after we die?*

Paul addressed that exact point in the bible. 1 Corinthians 15:¹³If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. ¹⁵More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

Paul told the Christians at Philippi to work out their salvation with fear and trembling; they were to be sure that it is critical and ought not to be ignored. If you are being robbed at gunpoint, surely that should cause fear and trembling because it is a life or death incident. According to Luke's testimony in Acts ⁽⁴⁾, Saul, whose name was later changed to Paul, was met by Jesus, in person, on the road to Damascus. Saul physically heard the voice of Jesus and was physically blinded – he feared and trembled at the event; it was a direct encounter with his creator that shook him to the base of his existence. Paul's own testimony was that he received the gospel he taught by direct revelation from Jesus ⁽⁵⁾. Paul, who wrote the preceding text regarding “what if there is no resurrection” also wrote that he received his revelation from THE ONE who resurrected, and Paul warned everyone that they ought to approach the subject of eternity with fear and trembling.

The big “if” here is “if” there is no resurrection we have nothing to worry about; “if” there is a resurrection after death what does the impose upon us, and how can we prepare for it?

1. Philippians 2:12
2. 2 Timothy 2:15
3. John 19
4. Acts chapter 9
5. Galatians 1:12

Prophecies of Jesus the Messiah/Christ/Savior

Many thanks to http://www.clarifyingchristianity.com/m_prophecies.shtml for already having this information prepared and displayed online. There is a list of Old Testament Messianic prophecies in the back of many bibles, some are laid out in tables, some in images but a compiled list can be found in many bibles. Not all lists include all the Old Testament prophecies, but there are generally enough to posit the reasoning. The folks at www.clarifyingchristianity.com have invested time in compiling a list that comprises many prophecies in a single web page. The list is easy to verify copy and paste into this book. Do NOT just take someone's word for what they print; validate their source and conclusions before you accept what they wrote. I checked these and you should check them for yourself; it is, after all, each of our eternities of which we are speaking. Because these were easy to find already posted I decided to not reinvent the wheel and go hunting and typing everything again. I've added a few notes and comments, but most of the compilation of scriptures here was already completed when I found it.

If so much of the bible IS demonstrably true then it would serve a person well to look at what else the bible says. The bible is God's rulebook for living, His communication log, His account to us of what He wants us to know and our way of learning about Him. It is *necessary* to learn:

- what God said about Jesus before Jesus came to live among men
- why Jesus came to us
- what He accomplished while here.

Prophecy – Messiah would be born of a virgin

Gen 3:14, 15 "So the LORD God said to the serpent... And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Because offspring in the bible are normally mentioned with reference to the father (patriarchal society) the fact that God spoke of the woman's offspring is indicative of someone who was born of a woman, with no human father – a virgin birth.

Isaiah 7:14 "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"

Fulfillment - Galatians 4:4 "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law" (*born of woman only, not a man AND a woman*)

Matthew 1: 22, 23 "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" which means, "God with us." Reference Isaiah 7:14 The name assigned to Jesus is "God with us", NOT "the son of God with us. This is another reference to the fact that Jesus IS God.

Prophecy – The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham and all nations would be blessed through Him

Genesis 12:3 "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Genesis 18:18 "Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him."

Fulfillment - Acts 3:25, 26 "And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' ²⁶When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Prophecy – Messiah would be from the lineage of Judah

Genesis 49:10 "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his."

Fulfillment – Matthew chapter 1, specifically verse 3, and Luke chapter 3, specifically verse 33

Prophecy –Messiah will be the only begotten of God

Psalm 2: 4-7 “The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. ⁵ Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, ⁶ “I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.” ⁷ I will proclaim the decree of the LORD : He said to me, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.”” *(The phrase “have become your Father” is more appropriately translated “have begotten thee” {King James Version}. Jesus and the Father are one; Jesus was physically begotten/birthed due to Mary’s conception from Holy Spirit. God Almighty didn’t become Jesus’ “daddy” one day; the three separate personalities, Father, Son and Holy Spirit were, are and will always be the creative, almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent being from eternity past. Son/ huios = relationship by character, not necessarily immediate descendency by physical birth)*

Fulfillment – Matthew 3:16, 17 “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.””

Mark 1:10, 11 ” As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.””

Luke 3:21, 22 “When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.””

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”

Prophecy –Messiah would die and be raised from death

Psalm 16:10, 11 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (KJV)

Fulfillment – captured in all four gospels and the book of the Acts of the Apostles

Matthew 28:5-9 “The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.” So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.”

Mark 16:6 “Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.”

Luke 24:4-7 “While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ ””

John 20:11-16 “but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?” “They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. “Woman,” he said, “why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?” Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher).“

Acts 1:3 “After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.”

Acts 2:32 “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.”

Prophecy – Messiah executed

Psalm 22:

- a) ¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? ...
- b) ⁶ scorned by men and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: "He trusts in the LORD;
- c) ⁷ let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."
- d) ¹⁵ My strength is dried up..., and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;
- e) ¹⁶ a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet.
- f) ¹⁷ I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. (Also in Psalm 34:20 "he protects all his bones" not one of them will be broken.)
- g) ¹⁸ They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

The above are just a few of the verses from Psalm 22

Fulfillment –

- a) Matthew 27:46 "About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- b) Matthew 27: 39 "Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads"
- c) Matthew 27:43 "He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'"
- d) Matthew 27:48 "Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink." Also in John 19:28
- e) John 19:34, 35 "Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe."
- f) John 19:36, 37 "These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."
- g) Matthew 27:35 "When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots." Also in John 19:23, 24

There are many other prophecies and their fulfillments detailed in the bible; this is just a sample, not the entirety of prophecies about Jesus in the scriptures.

The point of this section is just to show that 400, and more, years before Jesus' birth the Old Testament prophets wrote of His coming. Was it luck that He appeared and completed all of the prophecies listed about Him? He said "It is finished" (John 19:30) at the point when the last action of His prophesied life and death was completed.

Why did Jesus come to earth?

Very simply, John 3:¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” We are a race of people who have become unable to continue the relationship with God for which we were made; we need someone to repair that. As we fail to recognize our designed purpose without God’s direct influence, we are surely unable to put ourselves in God’s favor. Jesus came to be the thing that gets us into that relationship with God, an atonement. He did not come to condemn mankind, but to save us.

What did Jesus accomplish while here?

Romans chapter 3:21-26 details that God demands justice for sin. 1 John 2:2 “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world”. A propitiation, or atonement, is something that satisfies a requirement; Jesus satisfied God’s requirement for a perfect sacrifice to pay for our sins.

We have a list of prophecies (*more than detailed here*) that Jesus would come and fulfill specific actions, He did that. We have details of WHY He would come and what would be accomplished by His presence. It would serve one well to review and study this information, the only test on this information is life and death; there will be no second chances to relearn this. If one doesn’t learn this during this life, he/she WILL learn it upon death. “⁹Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: ¹⁰That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; ¹¹And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”⁽¹⁾ The above mentioned prophecies have concluded with demonstrable success; why would anyone believe that this one will fail? Either bow to God and confess that Jesus is LORD now during this life, or be forced to bow and confess it later; I think now is the better option.

1. Philippians 2:9-11

Hell

Most folks just don't have a true view of what Hell will be, or presently is for those already there. Keep in mind that I didn't write these scriptures; God posted them in His bible for us.

- Matthew 5:22 "But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the **fire of hell**."
- Matthew 5:29 "If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into **hell**."
- Matthew 10:28 "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in **hell**."
- Matthew 18:9 "And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the **fire of hell**."
- Matthew 23:33 "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to **hell**?"
- Mark 9:43 "If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into **hell, where the fire never goes out**."
- 2 Peter 2:4-9 "4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to **hell**, putting them into gloomy dungeons **to be held for judgment**; 5 if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; 6 if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by **burning them to ashes, and made them an example** of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men 8 (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— 9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment."
- Revelation 20: 14 "Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire."

Clearly, endless suffering in a fiery hell that never extinguishes is the biblical teaching of what comprises hell. Hell is also thrown into the lake of fire when Satan is finally defeated after Jesus' 1,000 year reign on earth⁽¹⁾. Hell is defined in the bible by the terms sheol, hades and geenna (Gehenna).

Sheol:

- 1) sheol, underworld, grave, hell, pit
 - a) the underworld
 - b) Sheol - the OT designation for the abode of the dead
 - 1) place of no return
- 2) without praise of God
- 3) wicked sent there for punishment
- 4) righteous not abandoned to it
- 5) of the place of exile (fig)
- 6) of extreme degradation in sin

Hades:

- 1) name Hades or Pluto, the god of the lower regions
- 2) Orcus, the nether world, the realm of the dead
- 3) later use of this word: the grave, death, hell

Gehenna:

- 1) Hell is the place of the future punishment call "Gehenna" or "Gehenna of fire". This was originally the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned; a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction.

Jesus unequivocally describes hell with a description of eternal fire, torment, weeping and gnashing of teeth. Sheol, Hades and Gehenna convey the idea of a nasty place, but Jesus takes away any doubt that this is just a nasty desolate place; he affirms that it is definitely pain and suffering without end or reprieve.

As hell is endless (*Mark 9:43*) and gets thrown into the lake of fire, the implication is that the lake of fire is a more hellish event than hell itself. If hell is intentionally terrible and filled with anguish, weeping and gnashing of teeth, why would anyone assume that the lake of fire, into which it is to be thrown, would alleviate any of the punishment instead of magnify it? The name “lake of fire” connotes a dreadful place. Have you ever stuck your hand in campfire or fire on a stove top? Can’t hold it there for long, can you? It’s painful, and that’s a fire that you can control. A fire that one is thrown into, with no chance for escape or control, must be a horrific entity; if I could put the word “horrific” on steroids and use a bolded size 72 font to demonstrate the idea more strongly I would.

The present pastor at the church I attend, Dr. Crawford Loritts, is a godly man whom I respect greatly. I will ever remember some of his sermons; most richly is one sermon about hell. He commented that he is convinced that the suffering in hell is not just the pain from the fire, but the realization that there is nothing anyone there can do about it. No amount of apologies can rectify the situation and no action is available to mollify God’s requirement for justice.

There is no amount of cursing God that will satisfy the anger of the inhabitants of hell; there is no retribution great enough to get even with God, there is, in fact, no retribution available. I have an acquaintance, Dan, who does not believe in God, Jesus, the bible, nor Christianity as viable truth. He told me that when he dies, if there is a god, he hopes he has the chutzpah to punch said deity in the mouth for all the tough times people must endure; I wished him good luck with that, but warned him that it won’t be an option. *Philippians 2:9* “Therefore God exalted Him (Jesus) to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,” ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

No begging will be rewarded and there is no apology sufficient to satisfy God’s requirement for justice. If God consigns people to hell eternally for disobedience, then and there they realize that it is an inarguable point, that God is completely sovereign and does as He chooses with His universe. Hell is clearly eternal and painful. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess His position, His glory and His sovereignty – either voluntarily during this life or in complete dread after the cessation of this life.

I don’t think anyone has ever, so vividly, painted a more accurate image than the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews. *Hebrews 10: 26* “If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” ⁽²⁾ and again, “The Lord will judge his people.” ⁽³⁾ ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

Granted “God is love” (*1John 4: 8* “Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.”), but keep in mind that God is not defined by a single attribute. God is eternal, God is omnipresent/ omniscient/ omnipotent; God is holy; God is righteous; God is our refuge and our salvation and God is also a God of wrath, amongst other attributes *Hebrews 10: 30* “For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “The Lord will judge his people.” ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”. He is love and He is wrath. His requirement for justice ⁽⁴⁾ will be satisfied, either by Jesus’ atoning death, or by each sinner individually. Jesus paid for our sins by going to hell during His three day tenure into death. As a prophecy of Jesus, David wrote *Psalm 16:10* saying “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell” (Sheol). In order to be left in hell, one has to go there first; you cannot be left somewhere without actually going/being there. God requires that the payment for sin’s penalty is death and hell. The bible

does not unmistakably state “Jesus went to hell for three days”; there are scriptures that can lead one to that conclusion – or other conclusions depending on what the reader understands.

1 Peter 3:18-22 ¹⁸ “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. ¹⁹ After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— ²⁰ to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, ²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.” (NIV)

Acts 2: ²⁹ “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead (or “hell”, Strong’s G86 – Hades), nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.”

Some suggest that in the 1st Peter 3 scripture the phrases “in the body” and “by the Spirit” (KJV) both intend the human side of Jesus’ life. Meaning that his body died and after his spirit paid sin’s penalty His spirit was returned to proper relationship with God the Father. The King James version of 1 Peter 3:18 reads “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickenened by the Spirit”. The NIV reads “made alive in the spirit”. The Greek text uses the terms σάρξ (sarx) Strong’s G4561 for the physical body/flesh, and πνεῦμα (pneuma) Strong’s G4151 for Spirit.

σάρξ (sarx)

- 1) flesh (the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both man and beasts
- 2) the body
 - a) the body of a man
 - b) used of natural or physical origin, generation or relationship
- 1) born of natural generation
 - c) the sensuous nature of man, "the animal nature"
- 1) without any suggestion of depravity
- 2) the animal nature with cravings which incite to sin
- 3) the physical nature of man as subject to suffering
- 3) a living creature (because possessed of a body of flesh) whether man or beast
- 4) the flesh, denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God

πνεῦμα (pneuma)

- 1) the third person of the triune God, the Holy Spirit, coequal, coeternal with the Father and the Son
 - a) sometimes referred to in a way which emphasizes his personality and character (the "Holy" Spirit)
 - b) sometimes referred to in a way which emphasizes his work and power (the Spirit of "Truth")
 - c) never referred to as a depersonalized force
- 2) the spirit, i.e. the vital principal by which the body is animated
 - a) the rational spirit, the power by which the human being feels, thinks, decides
 - b) the soul
- 3) a spirit, i.e. a simple essence, devoid of all or at least all grosser matter, and possessed of the power of knowing, desiring, deciding, and acting
 - a) a life giving spirit
 - b) a human soul that has left the body
 - c) a spirit higher than man but lower than God, i.e. an angel
 - 1) used of demons, or evil spirits, who were conceived as inhabiting the bodies of men
 - 2) the spiritual nature of Christ, higher than the highest angels and equal to God, the divine nature of Christ

- 4) the disposition or influence which fills and governs the soul of any one
 - a) the efficient source of any power, affection, emotion, desire, etc.
- 5) a movement of air (a gentle blast)
 - a) of the wind, hence the wind itself
 - b) breath of nostrils or mouth

I believe it was a reference to Holy Spirit quickening Jesus back to life, not Jesus' spirit returning to a proper relationship with the Father. You are free to read it, study it and decide which you believe. Verse 19 reads "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (KJV) or "After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits" (NIV). It was this spirit by which Jesus was quickened, or made alive. Holy Spirit is who breathed life into man during creation "Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." ⁽⁵⁾ "The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life" ⁽⁶⁾ I believe it was Holy Spirit who quickened Jesus – not to say that Jesus couldn't/didn't do it, but I think restoration of life is Holy Spirit's role. He was the one who brooded over the earth before God called for the earth to bring forth plants, He provides life.

Jesus died and went to hell – complete separation from God – for three days. There is no way around it, someone has to die to pay for sins; in the Old Testament animals were sacrificed for that purpose, in the New Testament Jesus was sacrificed to pay for sins. Outside of that, mankind must pay for his own sins individually.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." It is very clear that Jesus said He is THE ONLY way to get to heaven – no one gets to heaven without believing into Him and His atoning death. In John 3:16 Jesus said "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." The phrase "believes in him" may well be better translated as "believes into him". "In" is from the Greek word εἰς; it is a word that denotes position. Strong's G1519 - 1) into, unto, to, towards, for, among. It is a preposition and denotes entrance into something. When someone believes "in" Jesus, the person actually comes from not believing in hell for punishment of sins and salvation provided by Jesus' perfect life and atoning sacrifice to pay our sin debt, INTO the position of understanding it and believing it.

Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Atheists, whomever... it doesn't matter if we like the rules or not, God has stated his rules and we must live according to them. God is in the singular position of absolute ruler of the universe and all that exists. Don't try to insert your personal feelings into the plan of salvation and God's realm of authority regarding the everlasting residence of our souls. God created us in His image; we don't get to anthropomorphize Him into ours. Whether we like it or not we must conform to His ways or suffer the consequences. You may be reading this and think "are you telling me that you think ONLY Christianity has the right view and understanding of "God"?" Yes, that's what I'm saying.

God is absolutely sovereign; He's not too worried whether we like His plan. Jesus is what our lives and existence are all about. Col 1:16 clearly says that all things were created by Jesus, and for Jesus. We exist for Him. We exist for Jesus' desire. Nothing we like, or do, impose upon God that He should change His words or methods. God, not how we feel, is in complete control of everything; God has told us His requirements and rules and didn't ask for our input or approval while He composed them.

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away." We can rest assured that what the bible says is reality: 2 Timothy 3:16 says "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" thereby confirming that God told the writers of the bible what to say (*He breathed it into them and they penned it*) AND He promised that what He said

WILL occur. My dad used to have a routed piece of wood that stated “You are Required to Believe, to Teach, and to Preach what the bible says is true! Not what you want it to say is True.”. There is no room for our personal feelings in the message of God. There are people who say that hell can’t be forever, nor can it be a place of fire and torment – because God is love and wouldn’t hurt or punish people forever. I hate that misunderstanding, but God said He has, does and will continue to mete out His wrath. God is so righteous and holy that any sin is intolerable in His presence; indeed, God is creating a new heaven and a new earth, neither of which have ever been exposed to sin. “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” (7) “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain” (8) “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” (9)

The first heaven and the first earth have both had sin within them. Job 1: ⁶ “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. ⁷ And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” This event occurred in heaven, God’s abode. Satan was in heaven when he sinned and was thrown to earth like a lightning bolt; and he has been there after he sinned, so the present heaven has been exposed to sin. God was not surprised by it; He allowed it. God allows sin, but He will address it in His time, Romans 3:25; He has allowed sins to remain unpunished at times, but His justice requires that punishment WILL take place.

He didn’t create us to go to hell, in fact He created us to commune with Him, worship Him and love Him. We sin of our own accord and incur the punishment detailed in the bible. In light of God’s love for His creation He provided the only righteous sacrifice to appease His requirement for justice - Himself. He bled and died for us that our sins would be absolved to give us a way out from our hellish wage. It is in light of hell that we become Christians; there is no bonus in life for being a Christian.

A few statements from Jesus should clear this up:

- Matthew 5:11 “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.”
- Matthew 10:22 “You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.”
- Matthew 24:9 “Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me”.
- Luke 21:17 “Everyone will hate you because of me.”

I can’t think of a person I’ve ever heard about who became a Christian because God loves them as in the following statement... “*Oooooohh, I just felt God’s love and want to be on His team; He’s just a sweetie and I love Him too.*” It is only when a person understands that God exists, will eternally punish him/her for sin, but has taken that punishment on Himself in our stead and that the person is in danger of going to a fiery hell that (s)he accepts the salvation offered by God. Hell is the driving force for understanding salvation. Until a person believes in God (THE GOD, not a god) and that hell is breathing down their back they have no use for salvation – salvation from what? There is no promise of rewards in this life; the rewards are garnered after we die. Sure there are ministers who preach a gospel of riches in this life, but in Luke chapter 21 Jesus told His disciples “¹² “But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. ¹³ And so you will bear testimony to me. ¹⁴ But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. ¹⁵ For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ Everyone will hate you because of me. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹

Stand firm, and you will win life.” His promise was not a simple life here and now but a reward for eternity after this life. I don’t have the words to express how grateful I am that I can realize this during my life on earth and work for a reward instead of “living life to the fullest” unaware that there is a tremendous punishment awaiting me because I ignored my creator.

1. Revelation 20:4-7
2. Deut. 32:35
3. Deut. 32:36
4. Romans 3:25
5. Isaiah 65:17
6. Gen 2:7
7. Job 33:4
8. Isaiah 66:22
9. Revelation 21:1

[Reasons to believe the bible](#)

The things I have written in this book are reasons to believe the bible is absolutely true and encouragements to learn and know WHY you believe what you believe. While I cannot hope to cover all the reasons to believe the bible, I have detailed what I believe to be *some* important considerations; and certainly enough to cause reason to believe. Of course, that's my viewpoint; only under the guidance of God can one believe into salvation from eternal condemnation. If you are looking for information regarding other beliefs then I would like to suggest a book by Dr. Walter Martin entitled "[The Kingdom of the Cults](#)"; in it, he details the origins of several belief systems/religions, and the errors in their genesis and practice.

I believe that it is important to read the beginning of a book and not just jump in on some arbitrary page. Arthur Pink begins his description of Genesis in [Gleanings in Genesis](#) by describing the value of the first few chapters. They set the stage for EVERYTHING that happens in the bible. You can't read Steinbeck's [Of Mice and Men](#) skipping the first few pages and stay with the story; the first few pages of [To Kill a Mockingbird](#) by Harper Lee sets the story – if you skip the beginning, you'll certainly go back and read it to fill in the blanks you see as you read on. Likewise, the first section of the bible sets that framework for everything that occurs in existence. God created everything; everything is God's; man was created in His image; everything occurred in a logical order. Reading and understanding Genesis chapter 1 is hugely important to understanding everything else. "In the beginning God created..." does not suggest that maybe a god made some stuff; those are the words the almighty creator used to introduce Himself to humans. In Exodus 3:14 God told Moses that His title is "I AM THAT I AM". I remember as a child I used to wonder why God was repeating Himself with His name and I didn't really understand it. I wasn't "I'm Ron that I'm Ron"; but as I got older I understood it to be a statement of fact supported by the fact that it was a fact. God basically told Moses "*I just AM, I have always been, I will always be and there's nothing anyone can do about it – that's who is sending you*".

There are other scriptures that lend understanding to Gen 1 so we have to keep that in mind while reading and studying. God didn't make the bible as easy to read as Dr. Seuss books; to understand much of it requires effort. In Job 38 God asked Job where he was when God made the foundations of the earth and the angels sang for joy; in Gen 1 most people read that the earth was first created as an empty formless rock. The two ideas are not compatible; that God created an earth and it *became* (was) formless and void is compatible with Job being told that the angels sang for joy over the creation, so it is in the light of angels singing for joy that we must read Genesis 1:2.

In Isaiah we are told that God stretches the sky and that the earth is round – a long time before scientists figured it out. Science figured out what God said is true – the earth is spherical and the universe is expanding - though they gave no credit to God for causing it, saying it first, or even existing. In Genesis 1 we are told that the land was all in one place at the beginning of the regeneration of earth; scientists have figured that out. We are also told that the earth was a void rock (no atmosphere or life); science has figured that out as well. Science doesn't confirm the bible any more than I confirm that God IS; God doesn't need man's intellect to confirm His word, but for some bizarre reason we find it more comforting to believe what man has learned as if it lends credence and value to the topic. This is similar to a teenager asking his friends for advice instead of asking parents; parents have usually been there and experienced what the young adult is going through, yet teens ask people who know less. God was there and experienced creation and regeneration, not scientists – but we still default to scientists. It actually detracts from the faith that God told us to exhibit when we default to science, but when we have the scientific information handy we may as well use it properly. He said to be as wise as serpents and gentle as doves^①,

so using all the knowledge to which we have access is being wise, just don't use man as a crutch for God – God is neither limp nor lame and needs no crutch.

With this in mind, the more we understand the more reason we have to believe the bible. Scholars have written on countless different subjects for millennia and the more well-read we are the better decisions we can make. There are some subjects for which I have no real affinity to learn, but all knowledge is valuable. God is the one who declared us to be smart enough to learn (*in Gen 11:6*) so we ought not be anxious to dismiss what non-Christians study.

I took two computer programming classes in college; I was horrible at both. I was so bad that I thought the Websters people would invent a new term to define my abysmal performance as existing English terms didn't seem to describe it. I didn't understand the spacing in typing, the naming of program items, etc. In a Fortran class my professor said that we could choose whatever name we wished for any item we were addressing in our programming, so on a test I named four of the items after my brothers and sisters. My professor marked the answer wrong and I asked why; besides the fact that I didn't know what I was doing he commented that the names I chose didn't make any sense. I told him I named things after people I know; I was then informed that anyone else who read a program had to be able to figure out what the programmer was addressing so my labels were basically ignorant and confusing – he would have taken the points away even if I had written the rest of that answer correctly. The point here is not that programming is hard (*though for me it is pretty much impossible*) but that we, as humans, have acquired knowledge about everything for which we have a curiosity; some of that knowledge is about God's creation. Let's learn it and use it in light of the bible. God is the author of knowledge; logic and order are His ways. Keep in mind that just because something is a topic does not imply that it is also knowledge. Some information *is* just information with no real value; the "T" in Capt James T. Kirk, of Star Trek, stands for Tiberius but it's not important outside of a trivial pursuit game.

If Moses was correct about creation, including the order of events and the fact that everything came from "nothing", how can it be hard to have faith in the rest of the bible? Science states almost the exact same ordering of events for a universe that came from "nothing". If Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament (*Tanakh*) prophecies of the coming Messiah, why is it hard to believe that God directed these events? He declared them a long time before they happened then they happened.

If the continents appear to have fit together across the Atlantic Ocean, and there is a ridge of volcanoes right down the middle of the ocean floor that could have split the land mass apart, why disbelieve that the world was flooded and the great deep burst forth as Moses wrote?

If, as shown, God caused and directed creation and declared prophecies that Jesus fulfilled, how can it be hard to believe that the God who created everything and owns this universe stepped into our presence and offered Himself to meet His justice requirements on our behalf?

We couldn't pay our own debt for sin; that would be similar to asking a tractor mechanic to clean himself up with no soap. Surely he could wipe off a lot of grease just by smearing it away and rubbing against something else to smear the mess – but, once he's dirty, he can't get himself clean using only what's on him. It takes soap to wash away and remove dirt and grease; it takes a sinless, blood sacrifice (*a sinless life must perish to pay for sin or the one who commits the sin must die and go to hell* – Romans 6:23 "for the wages of sin is death...") to satisfy God's requirement for justice and wash away the stain of sin from someone who has sinned. There is a children's songwriter and performer named Rob Evans who calls himself the "*Donut Repairman*"; he has a song that, when speaking of Jesus cleansing us from sin, has the words "When I take a bath I think about the Lord, and how He washed away my sin...Jesus fills me up with hope

and washes me with super soap.”; a task that we can’t do on our own. (*Granted, the song is written in simplistic terms for children, but it has a solid point*)

God will not allow unforgiven sinners in heaven; forgiven sinners are Christ followers and that’s how we get to heaven. Jesus paid that price because of God’s love and mercy. God presented Jesus (*Himself in human form*) as a sacrifice to demonstrate His justice – the fact that Jesus suffered the payment for our sin is evidence that God demands justice for sin. My dad had a lesson for us when we were kids. One time when we were all in trouble he told us that we all deserved a spanking, BUT this time we didn’t have to pay for our disobedience, someone else would pay. He got the paddle and told us each to spank him as he would be taking our punishment for us. Obviously that was a lesson he’d learned from the bible, but he made his point – justice requires that someone pay for disobedience, and he paid for our disobedience that time. If you have to pay a fine in traffic court, the judge isn’t too concerned about who pays it; your mom or great Uncle Louie can pay it. Justice has to be served. Mom and Great uncle Louie cannot pay for our sins as they have their own sins to pay for; Jesus paid for our disobedience, once for all (1 Pet 3:18).

Romans 3:²⁵ “God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished. ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”

As shown in the previous statements and the section regarding hell, it *should be* a simple step to understand that when it comes to hell God does not play games. We cannot hope to understand bible doctrines without God’s help, but the logic stands to syllogistic reasoning. If, given A, and given B, then C must be true (*i.e. if all boys play soccer, and Larry is a boy, Larry plays soccer*). Similarly, if Moses wrote truths that science supports, AND the bible prophesied Jesus and His actions before He was born (and He fulfilled all those prophecies) THEN what the bible says about heaven and hell must be true.

Mark 9: 42-48 “If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where “the worms that eat them do not die, and the fire is not quenched.” God demands that we teach truth; the penalty is intolerable suffering.

God’s justice demands that sins must be punished; everlasting hell is that punishment. Jesus was in hades for three days paying our debt. Matthew 12:40 “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

Jesus’ death and blood paid for the sins of those who believe and accept the atonement. 1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.”

Paul detailed a two-step process for salvation; believe and confess. Alcoholics Anonymous requires what, 12 steps? Romans 10:9, 10 “If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.”

I have discussed some of the science of how God could make the universe out of “nothing” even according to what we know; although He is not limited to what we know so He probably performed some really miraculous activities that we can’t even imagine. I’ve discussed the order of “creation” (*or regeneration*) of earth and how science has come around to matching a lot of what the bible said over

3,400 years ago. I've discussed that God said it first and people figured it out later – God has never changed; people's knowledge did. My life is bet on the bible as truth, there is no reason to believe something that has changed over the years more than the truth to which it has changed to match.

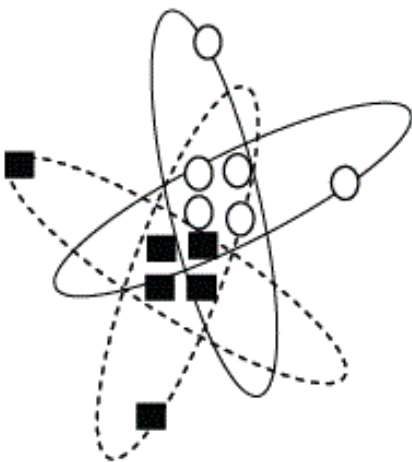
I believe, as do millions of Christians, that there are many good reasons to believe the bible. My prayer is that hopefully this helps you to see some reasons that maybe you hadn't recognized before.

1. Matthew 10:16

Appendix A

Scientists do not understand what happened at THE MOMENT the big bang occurred, or THE MOMENT that God created the universe consisting of stars and planets if you will. There is speculation regarding what happened, but our understanding breaks down at about 10^{-43} seconds after it began. We know that it must have been very hot, unimaginably hot; maybe on the order of $\sim 1.4 \times 10^{32}$ Kelvin (the Planck temperature). Above that temperature the fundamental forces of the universe (gravitational, weak force, strong force, and electromagnetic force) begin to change and we have no idea what occurs then. The temperature may have been $\sim 10^{30}$ K (the Hagedorn temperature) based on string theory. To put these in perspective, the Hagedorn temperature is only 1% of the Planck temperature. There are other assumptions about the beginning temperature, but whatever it was most believe it to be excessively hot.

All of the energy of the universe was constrained in the singularity from which the universe began. In order for energy to convert into matter recall that the speed of light squared was the order of operation. Everything was moving incredibly fast, the speed of light laws had not yet developed and heat was incredibly intense. At the beginning, all of the constituent parts of the universe were constrained inside a moment, maybe the size of an atom or smaller. Consider the “image” of two atoms below, black squares and empty circles; almost all of the space is empty; there is plenty of room for atoms to fit together.

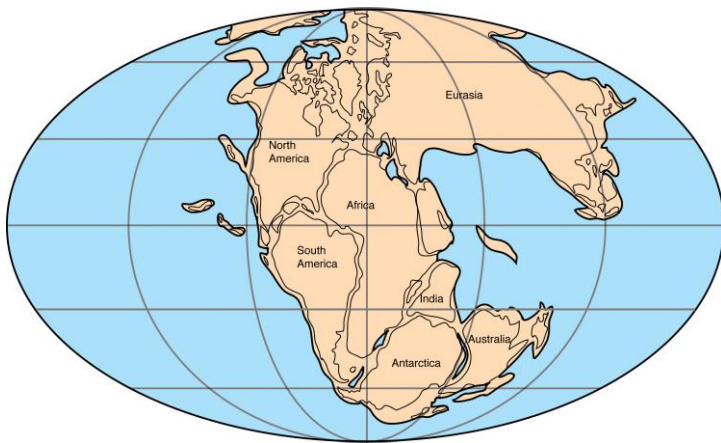


Dr. George Smoot, 2006 Nobel laureate, speaking of proposals by two colleagues, Jerome Friedman and Henry Kendall, says that protons and neutrons are comprised of smaller entities called quarks that fit together quite well. The attraction between them increases as their numbers increase. The more there are, the easier it is for them to pack in tighter and tighter. As that idea is extrapolated it is easier to understand that all the parts of the universe came from an intense energy spot that may well have fit into a single point – that requires no volume – tangibly “nothing”. Therefore, according to science, the universe may well have been created from nothing. According to the Bible, it did come from nothing.

Appendix B



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pangaea>



<http://www.glosgeotrust.org.uk/downloads/pangaea.jpg>

These are just a couple of sample images of what Pangaea looked like. Many other models place the continents in the same positions. As you can see, the continents fit together fairly well and it's not a stretch of the imagination to see that they probably were once a single land mass. Moses said it long before science proposed it. Moses described how it burst apart into separate land masses long before science posited that it took millions of year to drift apart.

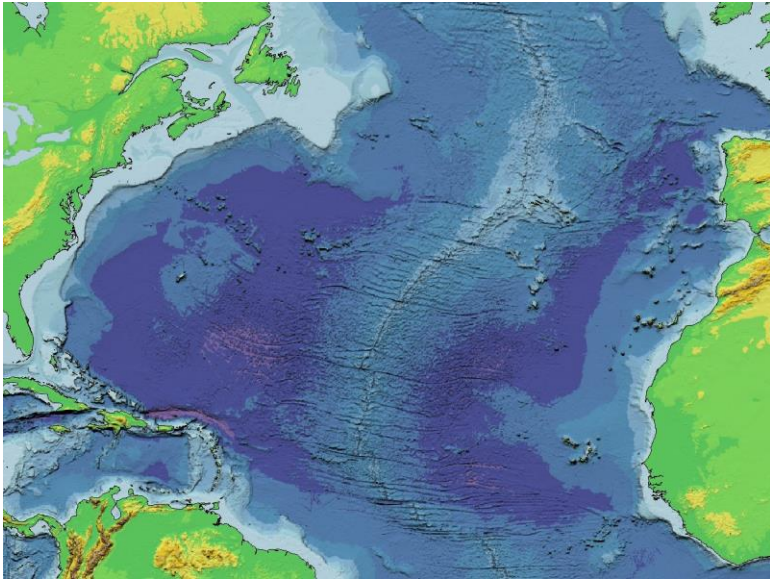
Appendix C



http://www.platetectonics.com/oceanfloors/images/Africa-South_America_4.jpg



http://www.navy.mil/navydata/cno/n87/usw/issue_25/images/map.gif



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