

(Scriptures quoted are from the English Standard Version, unless noted otherwise. First published March, 2021)

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1 - Introduction

How often have we been confronted with that grim conclusion: Earth is just a speck in the cosmos; and human beings are nothing more than accidental products of nature? Based on this apparent wisdom of modern science, we are left to conclude that the human race has no significance nor purpose in the cosmic order.

Such a worldview stands in complete contrast to the Sacred Book, the Genesis account, which states clearly that human beings are God's special creation, and Earth is the center, as far as the Almighty is concerned, of the universe. In the natural world, we are the focus of His attention.

Among religious people, scientists and secularists, the Creation account in the Book of Genesis has aroused no small amount of debate and controversy. Some say it's preposterous; some call it gospel truth; some take a middle approach, straddling both points of view.

Skepticism is alive and well in our Modern Age. So also is the pool of knowledge about our past - scientific, historical, cultural, linguistic. With so much knowledge at our fingertips - some false, some genuine - it is easy to manipulate facts and argue almost any point of view one wants to.

Hopefully, this series of posts will maintain a high standard of accuracy, the right balance between empty skepticism and naïve gullibility, sorting out truth from fiction, and will arrive at some valid conclusions about this enormous subject: the beginning of the natural world.

The Book of Genesis opens with the Creation story. But it could also be called the Creation account, meaning a kind of scientific document.

Two things about the Genesis story that we need to keep in mind: 1) God Himself is speaking here, and 2) He is speaking to generations of people in all ages of history, in every culture, and into all corners of the world. What an awesome task! To write something that can appeal to such a vast audience. Only the genius of God could manage such a thing!

So how did He do it? We could start by realizing that the opening of the Genesis Book takes a broad approach, ranging from story-literature genre to scientific-account genre.

Story and literature, yes, but a scientific account? A skeptic's view of the Genesis story might raise two seemingly "scientific" objections: 1) the assertion that everything came into being instantaneously in a fully formed state instead of by a long process of gradual evolution 2) the assertion that, by taking into account the genealogies from Genesis 5 and 10, the Creation of the natural world would have taken place, not millions or billions of years ago, but only a few thousand years ago. These objections are taken very seriously nowadays, and so they will be addressed in due course as we go along.

Now regarding the use of stories, we know that they serve the purpose of catching our interest and helping us to remember and absorb information more easily. During His earthly sojourn, Jesus often taught by using parables. These "stories" were meant to make it easier to understand various principles about God's ways and godly living; the deeper meaning of these parables, however, was often hidden from the multitudes and revealed only to Jesus' followers. (Matthew 11:25, 13:11)

The Old Testament often pictures God in human terms (anthropomorphism). We see this in phrases like "arm of the Lord", "face of the Lord", and so on. God is personal, and He stoops to our

level, helping us to understand Him and what He does or how He feels by using terms we can relate to. In the New Testament, of course, such terminology was no longer needed. God came into our world in the form of a real human being. Christ was “Immanuel”, meaning “God with us”. He revealed in person to humanity the Father’s love and compassion. (Isaiah 7:14) The Book of Revelation, along with several other passages in the Bible, predict the Return of Immanuel, this time as the conquering Saviour, to establish God’s Kingdom on Earth.

As a story, Genesis 1 states that the Creation “process” took place in six stages in six days, one day for each stage. (See [Appendix 1](#) for a detailed outline.) But because Genesis 1 sounds like a “story”, we - with our modern, science-oriented outlook - tend to brush it off. We forget that the Author was writing for all history, all generations, all groups of people. And that would include our generation, which requires a high degree of scientific authenticity.

But for those in ages past who had little scientific knowledge about the natural world, the “story” approach described the origin of their environment in a way that would be easy to remember and understand. And it set down for mankind a wise pattern for living: six days of work followed by a day of rest.

Well, that was nice of God to leave humankind with such a helpful “story”, but surely, as far as scientific reality is concerned, it doesn’t measure up. So we may think. However, the six-day Creation story is not as irrational, from a scientific point of view, as one may think. On a superficial level, the Genesis 1 account may appear to be nothing more than a nice little “story” with no great meaning in our present scientific age.

But to those who look deeper, Genesis becomes a surprisingly sensible explanation for the awesome mystery of the origin of the natural world, the environment we live in. And this deeper scientific meaning is coming to light more and more nowadays through the revelations of modern science.

Perhaps it is not terribly important whether or not this knowledge

about Creation is widely understood. Christ saved the deeper meaning of many of His sayings for those who wanted to follow Him closely. He didn't want others to be enlightened, perhaps because He knew they could not handle it, might fall into despair, react negatively, even raise persecution. But certainly, for those who wish to follow closely the Light of Truth, it is helpful for them to have a full understanding about these matters that are timely for this day and age.

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