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4 – Starlight, Star Distances, and Speed of Light

So then, what about the endless number of stars and galaxies? Modern science has discovered some knowledge about the speed of light, and this has raised questions about the arrival of starlight to Earth within the time frame of Genesis 1. Knowing the enormous distances involved and the speed of light, what about their calculated ages of millions and billions of years? This would seem to contradict totally what the Book of Genesis says about the age of the earth and the universe.

By faith, we know that, if God wanted to, He could have created the stars and galaxies and so on only a few thousand years ago. It would not be beyond His power to do so, and we don't want to underestimate that power. But the big question to ask, is there any scientific evidence for that "faith"? We've already looked at supernovas, blue stars. and various phenomena – startling clues or indicators that maybe we actually do dwell in a recently created cosmos.

In days gone by when scientific knowledge about the universe was very limited, people did not have any trouble believing that Earth was the center of a universe created by God. Now that we know so much about the size of it and planetary motions and shape of the earth, that idea is not taken very seriously anymore.

Of course, to our human eyes Earth has always appeared enormous, stable, flat, central in the cosmos, and so on. And that's how God meant for it to appear. He created it in a ready-made condition, as a suitable environment for us, His crowning creation, for whom He is passionately concerned. The fact that Earth, in its structural make-up, is tiny compared to the rest of the cosmos, that billions of stars and galaxies exist at mind-boggling distances, that Earth is a sphere and not flat, is really of no consequence as far as our being able to dwell here and enjoy it as our home.

There are two things to keep in mind here: 1) The time of Creation involved supernatural processes; we cannot assume that the natural processes that we see operating today were operating during those extraordinary days of Creation. 2) Earth really is the spiritual center of God's Creation, even if it doesn't appear that way physically.

According to the Genesis account, stars and galaxies were made during those extraordinary days of Creation when *supernatural* processes were in operation. And if that is the case, then there is no need to think that distant starlight had to arrive here by *natural* means as it does now.

As mentioned before, modern research into God's ultimate creation, the human being, has demonstrated, scientifically, that we could not have come into being except by the supernatural working of God. Our makeup is far too complex to be the end product of random, natural processes.

The point here is that if we know for certain that this one important aspect of the natural world – the most important and complex, in fact – could only have originated by Divine activation, then it should not be difficult to understand that supernatural processes were at work in other aspects – in particular, in this mysterious matter of how did starlight get here on the fourth day of Creation.

Genesis 1 makes it clear that the different aspects of the natural realm were created in a ready-made condition. Adam was created in the form of a fully grown human being. Plant life appeared ready-made. Based on the same principle, it seems reasonable that God created the stars so that they too would be ready-made. The first human beings would be able to see them.

We need to recognize that God used many processes during Creation Week that are different from processes today. He didn't make Adam instantaneously out of nothing, but instead formed him from the dust of the ground (*Genesis 2:7*). God used a similar process to make the land and flying animals (*Genesis 2:19*). And he caused the plants to grow rapidly out of the ground on Day Three (*Genesis 1:11–12*). In other words, God rapidly and miraculously matured many things during Creation Week. It seems both logical and theologically consistent that, in a similar manner, God could have rapidly "matured" the universe, bringing the light from distant objects to the earth in a way similar to trees instantly sprouting and rising to full height.

In addition to creating the physical universe during Creation Week, God also created the laws that govern it. What if these laws were not in full effect until the end of that week, as we see when God created mature plants, land animals, and the first two humans?

Instead of bringing starlight to earth according to physical laws, God could have miraculously solved the light travel time problem on Day Four, before putting the laws that govern light travel into effect. After all, nearly everything about creation was miraculous.

"Seeing Stars in a Young Universe" by Dr. Danny R. Faulkner, 1 November 2017

Some other articles worth checking out:

"Does Distant Starlight Prove the Universe is Old?" by Dr. Jason Lisle, 13 December 2007

"Speed of Light Slowing Down After All?" by Carl Wieland, 10 December 2002

"The Decay in the Speed of Light and the Truth about Red Shift" by Grady McMurtry, 4 April 2020

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