

LECTURE 2

WHAT ISSUES/APPARENT ISSUES EXISTS B/W GOD'S 2 BOOKS?

- Book of Scripture and book of Nature
 - God is the author of the Bible and Creator/Author of the cosmos
 - Any contradiction b/w the two is not from God but in the court of human interpretation
- Concordism vs. Non-Concordism
 - Concordism – the belief that Scripture assumes a modern scientific understanding
 - Non-Concordism – A rejection of the idea that the Bible is a book of science. Proponents believe that God has not put modern scientific facts in the Bible therefore we cannot make scientific predictions based on what the Bible reveals.
- The four Concordist positions we'll look at have several critical issues they must deal with.
 1. How do we deal with the Chronological differences between Gen. 1 and Gen 2?
 2. If Gen. 1 is read literally...how do we read Gen. 2
 3. Age of the Earth
 4. How do we reconcile the literal reading of Gen 1 & 2 with what the overwhelming majority of Scientist claim about the origin of the universe and life.
- The four Non-Concordist positions we will cover must also deal with several critical issues.
 1. To demonstrate a theologically accurate understanding of Scripture w/o “compromising” the integrity or inherency of the biblical text.
 2. To explain how death before the Sinful fall of A & E could exist.
 3. If Gen 1 & 2 are not literal...To Explain the historicity of A & E and how sin has spread to all humans (doctrine of Original sin).

WHAT IS THE BIBLICAL TEXT OF CREATION COMMUNICATING?

- Identity of God as the only creator (Gen 1:1; 2:4)
- Origins – 1:1 – *in the beginning* – does this refer to a specific point in time or a period of time?
 - If point in time...communicating about a measurement of time
 - If period of time...could be an introductory formula preceding v. 2 which begins describing God's work in ordering the Earth (1:1; 2:1)
 - If period of time...could also refer to prior creation of material cosmos – v. 2 then begins describing a specific tory of ordering the cosmos.
- *Created the heavens and the earth* – *bara* – Hebrew word for *create*...means to bring into existence.
 - Could be material or functional?
- Contextually we should note Gen 1:1 as referring to *who* not *how*. A cursory reading reveals the text doesn't say in the beginning God *spoke and* created the heavens and the earth *from nothing*. It simply says God created and v. 2 assumes a material existence.
- Theological truth, Historical truth, Scientific truth
 - Can it be all three? Yes
 - Does it have to be all three? No
 - Is the Authority, integrity or inherency of Scripture threatened if it's only one of the Three? That depends...
- Another ambiguous textual issue we come across is in v. 2 *the earth was without form and void*
 - Formless and empty

The following five scenarios are from *Origins* by Deborah B. Haarsma & Loren D. Haarsma (pg 231):

- Recent Ancestors... Adam and Eve were specially created about 10,000 years ago and were the first humans. All humans today have descended from them.
- Recent representatives... God created humans about 150,000 years ago, using progressive or evolutionary creation, and specially selected a pair of humans about 10,000 years ago to act as humanity's representatives. They chose to sin and their sinful status was applied to all humans.
- Pair of Ancient ancestors... God used natural mechanisms to create pre-human hominids; then about 150,000 years ago God miraculously modified a pair of them into the first humans, Adam and Eve. All humans today have descended from this pair
- Group of ancient representatives... God created humans about 150,000 years ago, using evolutionary creation, and specially selected a particular group and revealed himself to them. They chose to sin and their sinful status was applied to all humans.
- Symbolic... God created humans about 150,000 years ago using evolutionary creation. No particular single event occurred in which all humans fell into sin at the same time, but many events happened in which various individuals and groups rebelled against God.

// DIAGRAMS //

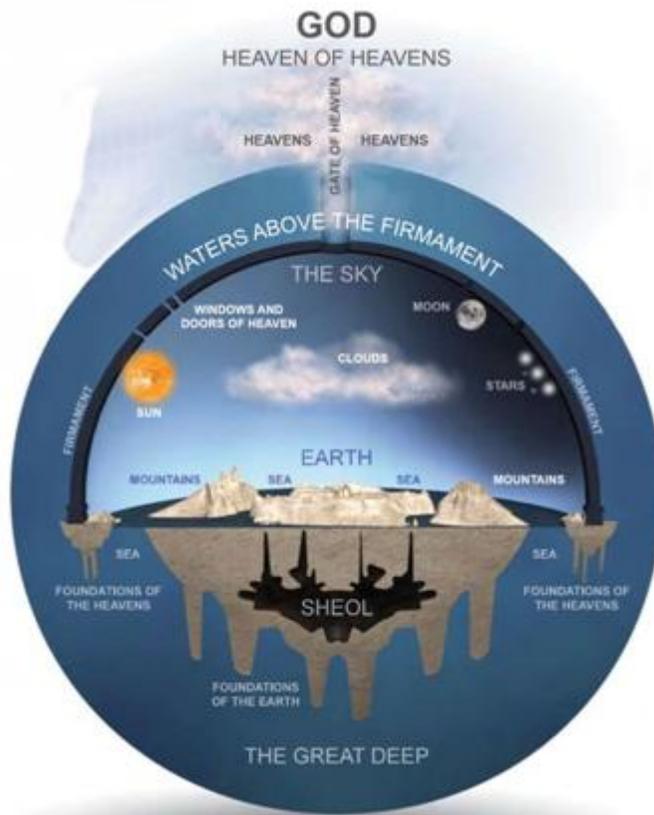


Illustration of Ancient Cosmic Geography, © Dr. John Walton

ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY

	PHYSICAL REALITY
Earth is immovable	No
Earth is flat & circular	No
Earth has ends & is set on foundations	No
Underworld exists below surface of earth	No
Circumferential sea is flat & surrounds earth	No
Circumferential sea is bordered by ends of heaven	No

ANCIENT ASTRONOMY

Sun moves across dome of heaven daily	No
Firmament is a solid domed structure overhead	No
Firmament has ends & set on foundations	No
Sun, moon & stars are placed in firmament	No
Stars dislodge from firmament & fall to earth	No
Heavenly body of water is held up by firmament	No
Divine dwelling is set in heavenly body of water	No

ANCIENT BIOLOGY

Mustard seed is smallest of all seeds	No
Seeds die before germination	No
Bats are birds & rabbits are ruminants	No
Males have reproductive seed	No
Females do not have reproductive seed	No
Womb is like a field for seed of males	No
Infertility is caused only by females	No
Land animals are sprouted from earth	No
Living organisms are created <i>de novo</i> (quick & complete)	No

From *EVOLUTION: SCRIPTURE AND SCIENCE SAY YES!* (pg 111) By Denis O. Lamoureux

Genesis: Concordist Interpretations

Order of Creation in Genesis 1, Genesis 2, and Modern Science

Genesis 1:1-2:3	Genesis 2:4-25	Modern Science*
Heavens, earth, waters (vv. 1-2)		Matter, energy, space, time (13.7 bya)
Light (v. 3)		Stars (13.5 bya)
Sky (vv. 6-8)		Sun (4.6 bya)
Dry land (vv. 9-10)	Dry land, rivers (vv. 5-6)	Moon, earth, dry land (4.6 bya)
Seed-bearing plants (vv. 11-12)		Oceans (4 to 4.4 bya)
Trees bearing fruit (vv. 11-12)	Man (v. 7)	Single-celled life (approx. 3.8 bya)
Sun, moon, stars (vv. 14-17)		Multi-celled life (1 to 2 bya)
Sea creatures (vv. 20-21)	Plants (vv. 8-9)	Various sea creatures including early fish (approx. 520 mya)
		Non-seed-bearing plants on dry land (approx. 450 mya)
	Land animals (v. 19)	Land animals (approx. 380 mya)
		Seed bearing plants (370 mya)
		Insects (approx. 350 mya)
		Dinosaurs (230 mya)
		Mammals (approx. 200 mya)
Birds (vv. 20-21)	Birds (v. 19)	Birds (approx. 150 mya)
Land animals (vv. 24-25)		Fruit-bearing plants (130 mya)
Men and women (vv. 26-27)	Woman (v. 21-22)	Men and women (see ch. 11)

*The abbreviation *bya* means billion years ago; *mya* means million years ago.

From *Origins* (pg 111) By Deborah B. Haarsma & Loren D. Haarsma

Origins

Summary of Several Interpretations of Genesis

Following is a brief description of interpretations of Genesis we'll discuss in chapters 5 and 6. The interpretations are not entirely unique but have some overlap. Some of the interpretations, particularly the non-concordist ones, can be combined without contradiction.

Concordist Interpretations

Young Earth Interpretation

Creation occurred about 6,000 years ago, during six 24-hour days, in the order described. A scientific study of the earth should confirm this.

Gap Interpretation

Earth was created long ago (Gen 1:1), became "formless and empty" (Gen 1:2), and was restored about 6,000 years ago during six 24-hour days.

Day-Age Interpretation

Creation occurred over billions of years. Each "day" of Genesis 1 corresponds to a long epoch. Events occurred in the order given in the text, but stretched out over a longer time period.

Appearance of Age Interpretation

Creation occurred about 6,000 years ago during six 24-hour days, but it was created to look like it had a long history of billions of years.

Non-concordist Interpretations

Proclamation Day Interpretation

The days of Genesis 1 took place in God's throne room, wherein God proclaimed each step of creation. The throne-room days are not related to days or time periods on earth.

Creation Poem Interpretation

The number and ordering of the "days" of Genesis 1 are chosen for poetic and thematic reasons rather than historical reasons.

Kingdom-Covenant Interpretations

As the great King, God creates the "realms" of his kingdom; humans are given dominion as in a "land grant" covenant and are delegated divine authority.

Ancient Near Eastern Cosmology Interpretation

Genesis 1 matches the physical picture of the world believed in Ancient Near East religions, but presents a dramatically different theological picture, proclaiming one God as creator of all rather than many gods.

Temple Interpretation

God inaugurates the cosmos as his temple. The six days establish the *function* of each creature and do not refer to the formation of physical material.