

God Created, Made, Formed, and Established the Worlds (Part II)

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(Continued from Part I)

God's Action Described in Genesis 1 and 2

The Beginning (v.1)

Having clarified the above-mentioned points, we may now try to better understand the creation process described Chapter 1 of Genesis (which was written about 3,400 years ago!). In Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." the verb "created" (out of nothing) is used. This is probably a statement about the very beginning of the universe, which is not inconsistent with the "Big Bang" theory in astronomy. The Bible does not preclude the possibility that the big bang occurred many billion years ago, since no time frame is mentioned here. It also stated the expansion (stretching out) of the universe elsewhere (Isaiah 42:5 and 45:12), as observed astronomically. The Bible can, however, explain such occurrence better than the big-bang theory, because it tells us who did this (God) and how (by speaking; see also John 1:1 and 3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made."). Thus this great, orderly, and expanding universe did not come by chance, but by God's design and creation, manifesting God's great power and intelligence. Note also that the word "heavens" used here is appropriately plural, while the word "earth" is singular. This usage antedates the scientific discovery that the heavens include not only the firmament (the earth's atmosphere; see verse 8), but also the moon, the sun, and numerous stars in the galaxies, which are much farther away.

End of the Previous World (v.2a)

The statement "The earth was without form, and void;

and darkness was on the face of the deep." is not likely to be a description of the original environmental condition on the freshly created earth (Isaiah 45:18; 1 Timothy 4:4), but may be that of the earth at the end of a previous world, perhaps billions of years after the initial creation and just prior to God's creating/making/shaping/establishing the present world. At that time, water (including vapor, fog, and cloud) covered not only the surface of the earth, but also the atmosphere up to a great height, such that the sunlight could not penetrate through the atmosphere and the earth's surface (including the highest mountains at that time) was thus in darkness. (This interpretation of the Bible is consistent with following verses, as shown below.)

Why did the earth so "deteriorated"? One possibility is judgment/destruction (Jeremiah 4:23) brought about by the fall of some spiritual creatures (angels), the chief among them being Satan, who had been put in charge of that world but later sinned against God (as hinted in Isaiah 14:12-17 and Ezekiel 28:11-19, where the kings of Babylon and Tyre are commonly considered to represent Satan). The Bible does not explicitly mention when the angels were created, excepted that it must be prior to the creation of the present world (Job 38:4-7). Other Scriptures also mentioned the ruling ability of angels (Luke 4:6; Hebrews 2:5).

A similar judgment/destruction occurred at the time of Noah, and is predicted to be occurring in the future (Jeremiah 4:23). The destruction mentioned in verse 2 may have affected other creatures of that world, such as trees and animals, and caused their extinction, leaving many of their remains as fossils. Since no time frame is mentioned in Genesis 1:2, the Bible does not preclude the possibility that such fossils were many millions of years old, as determined by scientific dating techniques.

How did God execute the above-mentioned judgment? One possibility is by using the well-known but rarely occurring natural phenomena of massive meteoroid/asteroid impacts. More and more scientists are convinced that such impacts on earth were responsible for repeated extinctions of

plant and animal lives on earth, including dinosaurs some 65 million years ago. The scenario described in Genesis 1:2 could be the result of some such impacts, primarily on water, that had splashed huge amounts of water and other debris into the atmosphere, blocking sunlight from reaching the earth's surface and shutting down photosynthesis for an extensive period, thus destroying the environmental condition suitable for living. Some impacts may have triggered gigantic earthquake, tsunamis, and/or volcanic eruptions with even more serious consequences.

Preparatory Work of the Holy Spirit (v.2b)

The creation, making, and shaping of the present world by the triune God during a six-day period (Exodus 20:11) is then described in more detail in the following verses. As a preparation, "And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." (v.1:2b). Note that the word "waters" is plural. Thus this sentence may possibly define the sphere of God's work on the present world, namely, the earth and its atmosphere where massive amount of waters existed.

First Day of the Present World, Light (v.3-5)

On the first day of the present world God let light be seen on the earth's surface (Again, Genesis 1:3 describes the condition from the to-be-created human's point of view). Note that the Bible does not use the word "create" here. Thus, the light is not from a new source, but from the same sun created at the beginning (verse 1). What God did was probably reducing the amount of water/debris in the atmosphere so that the atmosphere became translucent, like a cloudy day of the present time. Note also that God saw the light, not the darkness, to be good (1:4). This may be because darkness has the connotation of sin and evil in the Bible. With the re-appearance of sunlight after a long period of total darkness, it became possible on earth then to distinguish nighttime from daytime in a 24-hour cycle (or one earth rotation). Therefore, this day is counted as the "first" day. There is no need to interpret this day/night cycle as thousands of years, as many people do in order to match scientifically estimated antiquity of stars, the earth, and fossils, for the above-mentioned previous world (or worlds) is capable of taking care of that. It is important to realize that the "first day" is that of the present world, not of the whole universe, which had been created in the beginning (verse 1). Many things had existed in previous world(s) prior to this first day.

Second Day, Atmosphere (v.6-8)

The Bible then describes how God on the second day

made (not created) the air (firmament) by speaking. He did so by separating the waters above the air from the waters below. Here we see that the atmosphere had been full of waters, as interpreted above. The statement "And God called the firmament Heaven" antedates the scientific discovery that the blue sky and white/dark clouds are just the atmosphere. Note that the word "Heaven" used here is appropriately singular (unlike "heavens" used in verse 1), not including heavenly bodies above the atmosphere. Note also that, in spite of the air's importance, God did not praise the air, as he praised the things he made/created on the other five days. This omission was perhaps intended as a hint of the existence of the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the atmosphere (Ephesians 2:2; 6:12) at that time already.

Third Day, Dry Land (v.9-13)

Verses 9-13 continue to describe what God did on the third day; namely, letting the dry land rise above the surface water (a common geological process) and letting various vegetation and plants grow from the ground (either newly made or from seeds left over from the previous world that began to re-appear because of availability of light and air again). In doing so, God prepared a habitable place as well as food for human and other land animals that he was going to create/make/form during the next few days.

Fourth Day, Light sources (v.14-19)

Verses 14-19 give a description of how God made the light sources in heaven (sun, moon, and stars) on the fourth day for the purposes of time keeping and illumination. Note that the verb used here is "made", not "created". Thus the sun, moon, and stars were the same ones created at the beginning of creation (verse 1). What God did on the fourth day was perhaps modifying the pre-existing heavenly bodies or their light paths to the earth's surface. One of the possible modifications is a continued decrease the moisture/debris in the atmosphere, so that not only the light from these heavenly bodies might pass through the atmosphere but also they themselves became visible at the ground surface (i.e., cloudy days became sunny). The Bible thus does not preclude the possibility of the multi-billion-year age of the universe estimated astronomically. Also since time keeping was possible on the fourth day, any day similarly described in this chapter should be a 24-hr day, as noted above.

Fifth Day, Creatures in Water and Air (v.20-23)

Verses 20-23 describe how God on the fifth day created (a verb used only the second time in the first chapter) the animal (soul) lives in water and air according to their

kind. This creation includes the action of forming (the body) out the ground as well (see 2:19). This account of course does not preclude the possibility that similar creatures had existed in water and air in the previous world(s).

First half of Sixth Day, Land Creatures (v.24-25)

On the first half (probably night time, or part of) of the sixth day, God let the earth bring forth the land animals, each according to its kind (verses 24-25) as in the previous cases for plants and animals in water and air. The statement "each according to its kind" does not preclude the possibility of some within-the-kind physiological changes with time, as the environment changes, or so-called microevolution. However, it does preclude the possibility of one kind of animals changing to some completely different and distinct kind of animals. (Inappropriate extrapolations are common mistakes in scientific research.) An obvious example of microevolution is the origination of different human races from a common ancestor (see next paragraph and Acts 17:26). Thus, the Bible explains automatically why inter-racial, but not inter-species, breeding and blood transfusion are feasible.

Second Half of Sixth Day, Man (v.26-28; 2:7)

On the remaining half day (or longer, including the whole period of day time), the triune God held a meeting before creating the first human beings; they defined human's qualifications (in God's image and according to God's likeness) and duty (to have dominion over the earth and other creatures on earth). Then he created Adam and Eva (verses 26-31). God's creation of human beings actually involved the action of making and forming as well, as stated in Isaiah 43:7. For Adam this is also stated in slightly more detail in verse 2:7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath (the same word as "spirit") of life; and the man became a living being." Since God formed the human body from the same materials (the dust of the ground) as the other animals, it is not surprising that they bear physical, chemical, and biological similarities to the animals (and may even receive organ transplants). Such similarities should, however, not be construed as a proof of evolution of one species from another, to the exclusion of separate creation/making/forming. This verse shows, however, that man was given something unique, the spirit, which was not given to any other kind of animals. This revelation explains why only human beings can worship and communicate with God (for God is spirit, John 4:24), a phenomenon not adequately explained by the evolution theory. Adam was created/made/formed to have three parts: spirit, soul, and body (First

Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12). God's intention was probably for man to communicate with God with his spirit and to use his soul (mind, emotion, and will) to commend his physical body to carry out God's assignment in this physical world.

Concerns have been raised as to whether available time on the sixth day was long enough for Adam to have done the things described in 2: 15-23. Since it was day-time and the duration might be slightly longer than 12 hours, it should not be impossible for Adam to do so, if empowered by God.

Concerning the previously mentioned question of why only mankind wear clothes, the Bible has also given a reasonable explanation. Adam and Eve originally did not wear clothes either (Genesis 2:25). They began to wear clothes only after they sinned against God (by disobeying God's command not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil) in order to cover up their shame (Genesis 3:7).

Who Created God?

One might ask, "Who created God?" To this question the Bible actually provided the answer long time (about 3,400 years) ago: "I am who I am (or simply I am)." (Exodus 3:14; see also John 8:24, 28). "I am" means he is not a created being, but is self-existing and everlasting. He always existed and will exist throughout eternity. He is the ultimate source, the first cause, of everything.

Conclusion

The creation/making/forming/establishing process described in the Bible, if properly understood, gives a better explanation than the evolution theory regarding human origin and first cause of everything. Unlike many ancient legends, it does not contradict any scientific evidence, whether it is archeological, biological, astronomical, or geological. This consistency is amazing, because the Genesis account was written so long ago. This is one of many indications that the scripture is given by inspiration of God, the creator and ultimate maker of everything, as claimed by the Bible itself (Second Timothy 3:16).

****All quoted Scriptures are from New King James Version of the Bible.**

[The author has been a Christian and a research scientist for over 40 years. Some of the materials used here were published previously in *Challenger* (43, 1, 2004)].