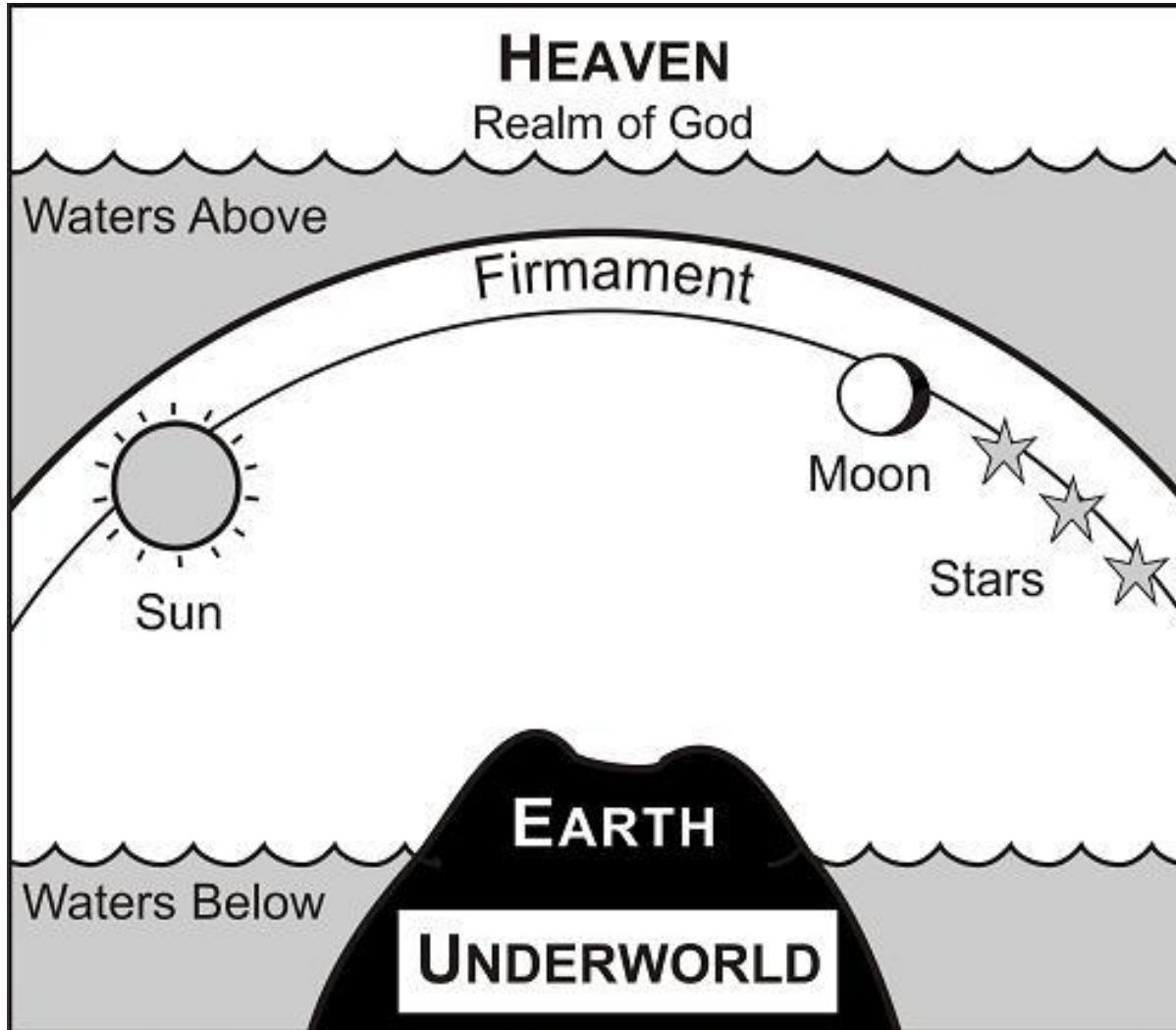


The Bible and Science

Is it possible to believe in the
Bible and also accept science?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CToxb5jxhlM>

The Bible and Science



"The 3-Tier Universe" - The regional geography led ancient Near Eastern people to the reasonable conclusion that the earth was encircled by a sea. Journeys in any direction eventually led to a body of water: the Mediterranean Sea is west, Black and Caspian Seas north, Persian Gulf east, and Arabian and Red Seas south.

The Bible and Science

- A. If both the Bible and science are true, then one can't contradict the other; apparent contradictions are due to mistaken interpretations.
- B. There is no scientific concordance between Genesis 1 and modern cosmogony theories, nor should such a concordance be sought.
- The Israelites believed in God's direct involvement in natural processes.
- The Israelites (and their neighbors) did not believe that science could (or should) be understood (Job 38).
- They believed in a flat, immovable earth floating on unbounded waters, with a hard dome-shaped firmament or tent for a sky, in which holes opened occasionally to release rain. Let's look at their understanding of the earth more closely:

- (1) The earth is flat. The word “earth” appears over 2500 times in the Old Testament (Hebrew: 'eres) and 250 times in the New Testament (Greek: *ge*). Never once is this word referred to as spherical or round. Instead, the universe in the Scripture is compared to a tent with the earth as its floor (Ps 19:4, Ps 104:2, Is 40:22).
- (2) A circumferential sea borders a circular earth. Proverbs 8:22–31 and Job 26:7–14 describe the creation of the world. The former states, “God inscribed a circle on the face of the deep” (v. 27); and the latter, “God has inscribed a circle on the surface of the waters” (v. 10). The Bible also asserts that the earth is circular. Isaiah writes, “God 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” (Isa 40:22).
- (3) The earth is immovable. The Bible records three times that “the world is firmly established; it cannot move” (1 Chr 16:30, Ps 93:1, Ps 96:10). The stability of the earth is

understood to be like that of a building set on the solid foundations. The biblical writers frequently refer to this solid base as “the foundations of earth” (Job 38:4–6, Prov 8:29, Jer 31:37). For example, “God set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved” (Ps 104:5).

(4) A solid domed structure, termed the “firmament,” holds up a body of water over the earth. Created on the second day of creation, the firmament separated the “waters above” from the “waters below” (Gen 1:6–8). Notably, this heavenly dome and body of water did not collapse during Noah’s Flood. As the psalms of King David’s day reveal, “The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament proclaims the work of His hands” (Ps 19:1); and God “stretches out the heavens like a tent and lays the beams of His upper chambers [i.e., God’s celestial temple] on their waters” (Ps 104:2–3).

(5) The sun moves across the sky. Created and placed in the firmament on the fourth day of creation (Gen 1:14–18), the daily movement of sun is found in King Solomon’s observation:

"The sun rises and the sun goes down, and hurries to the place where it rises" (Ecclesiastes 1:5). It also appears in the psalmist's praise, "The sun rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other" (Psalm 19:6).

Scientific Concordance

- It is ridiculous to hold the author of Genesis 1 to the same standards of science that we have today, after millennia of research and discovery.
- Concordance interpretations of Genesis 1 actually detract from the Bible's credibility, making it seem that Revelation is subject to the standards of science, whereas God himself is the author of all science.
- So if Genesis 1 is not a scientific book, what did its inspired author want to convey?
 - 1)that God is personal
 - 2)that He is good and has made everything good
 - 3)that He can therefore love and be loved
 - 4)that all things are created by God

- 5) that He created freely and not out of necessity
- 6) that He created *ex nihilo* and *in tempore*
- 7) that He creates for a purpose which culminates in man's special status and destiny
- 8) that God alone is the sovereign Creator, not subject to any other power nor in competition with any other god; God is above nature, not part of it
- 9) that Sabbath rest is important (if God did it, so should you)

Old Testament Miracles

- “The Christian theological principle that grace was not meant to destroy nature but to elevate it governs miracles as well. This is why all major biblical miracles, especially God’s ‘great acts’ in the Old Testament, or his large-scale interventions in nature, have always been so many enhancements (subtly miraculous to be sure) of natural forces or conditions already at work.” -- Why?
 1. God’s omnipotence surpasses the power of nature, but he usually chooses to work *through* nature rather than *against* it.
 2. God gives people the freedom to accept or reject him, even if rejection means denying plain evidence.

Old Testament Miracles

- Examples:
- Great Flood – it certainly happened, but was probably limited to the Mesopotamian Basin and the number 40 was symbolic.
- The Plagues – blood-red Nile was probably caused by dinoflagellates, which killed fish and infected the frogs who invaded the land, which in turn brought about the disease of livestock and the boils on human skin.
- The Sea of Reeds (Yam Suph) – a strong, steady wind could have pushed the shallow waters aside. Or it could have happened at the Straits of Tiran.
- These events were miraculous because the timing and intensity were controlled by God (e.g. April 30, 2000).

Exodus Route: Red Sea to Sinai



www.bible.ca

Steve Rudd 2006

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The Birth of Modern Science

- The Bible led to the birth of modern science in three ways:
 1. If nature is completely dependent on God, as the Bible teaches us, then nature itself is worth studying because it reveals the goodness and beauty of God.
 2. If God created the universe from nothing, then everything in the universe is rational and ordered; if this is true, then the whole universe is governed by a single set of laws.
 3. Guided by the Bible's doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* and *in tempore*, Dr. Jean Buridan, a professor and priest at the Sorbonne in the mid-14th century, set out to refute Aristotle's doctrine of an eternal universe.

The Birth of Modern Science

- In trying to explain the beginning of motion, Buridan hypothesized that all material things act according to a certain principle, which he called an “impetus,” keeping them in motion once the motion has begun.
- This led directly to the principle of the conservation of momentum, on which Newton’s Three Laws of Motion are based.
- So the biblical doctrine of creation provided the spark for the development of modern physics, a spark ignited by the scientific investigation of a Catholic priest!
- Conclusion (handout)