

What the Scientists Say (that's a challenge to your faith)

By Herbert Ruff

Scientists say that the universe started with a bang, a big explosion with light coming on in an infinite sea of darkness- while the bible reads **"And God said let there be light and there was light"**- so from my prospective, it doesn't appear that there is a disagreement between science and religion on how things got started. But the scientists also say that earth evolved over billions of years before man appeared and took on the characteristics of modern man. They even argue that man is the offspring of an ape like creature- and in fact, all species on earth had their beginning from a single cell organism. In addition, the scientists can prove that dinosaurs ruled the earth for millions of years before man. This, in my opinion, is not contradictory to what we read in the bible but a challenge of man's understanding for the time over which things occurred. The bible reads that light was created on the first day, the heavenly bodies, fish and fowl, beasts and cattle, and finally man over the next five days respectively. The question then is what was a day in God's time? And secondly, was things done on God's time during the creation or on the 24 hours day that we are familiar with? With God in control there is no doubt that things were done on His time. But what is equivalent to a day in God's time is what we must attempt to understand? If we take a literal interpretation of the scripture in Genesis for a day then the creation of man and beast was completed in 144 hours with woman coming later. But we know that there are passages in the bible that a day for the Lord was like a thousand years. In **2 Peter 3:8** the scripture reads **"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that a day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."** and in **Psalm 90:4** **"For a thousand years in thy sight are but yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."** Does this mean that God has a "day" that's different from a 24-hour day? For 24 hours in a day do not equate to 1000 years and therefore represents a contradiction in what was meant in Genesis for "day". I personally have a problem with a contradiction in the bible- it's hard to believe if any one thing is not true. So, I question my understanding and searched for an explanation.

Now, we know from reading **Genesis 1:14-19** that the sun's creation was not done until God's fourth day. In addition, we know that the 24-hour day includes the night but God clearly defined His day "Light" and the darkness he called Night". Therefore there was light in the universe but not on the earth until after God's fourth day- God defines the beginning of "24-hour day" by creation of the sun and moon and **"let them be for signs, and seasons and days, and years"** and **"to give light upon the earth"** as written in **Genesis 1:14-19**.

Therefore the 24-hour day, which is one rotation of the earth on it's axis did not exist until the fourth day of God's creation.

I make this analogy because the bible makes a clear distinction of light in the universe and light on earth. In addition, I believe that even this reference of 1000 years to a day is like Peter's question in **Matthews 18: 21-22** to the Lord about how often should a person be forgiven. Not seven times as stated by Peter but seventy times seven said Jesus- an extreme number that man most likely will not achieve in a single day unless totally evil or Satan himself. For, the bible clearly states that you forgive your brother if he comes to you with repentance and ask for forgiveness **Luke 17:3-4**.

So what is the equivalent of God's day, I don't know but I ask the question what does 24 hours mean to someone that is the beginning, the end, and is forever? Even a billion years to us may be equivalent to less than a second to God- and as far as, evolving over billions of years and a decedent of an ape like creature-not a problem for me. It reminds me of a marble sculpture that evolved through several stages before the final image was completed over several years with a chisel and hammer. In other words, God did things in His own time.

The scientists say that our sun will burn out sometime in the future, and life, as we know it, will be destroyed-while the bible tells us that the earth and all of its inhabitants will be destroyed by fire the next time. In fact scientists predict that our sun will become so hot that it will melt the core surface of the earth. Now folks that's hot! Certainly, this means every living thing will be destroyed when this occurs. But death to all living creatures, according to the scientists, will come long before this occurs- the atmosphere of the earth will burn off and it will become a desolate, lifeless planet while the sun will burn all it's fuel and become a blue dwarf. What will happen to our sun is predictable by the scientists and just as certain as what has occurred with other stars in the universe.

Some would say that science and religion do not agree in the origin and purpose of life. But who will deny strives that the scientists have made in discovery and understanding of God's creation. Just walking into a room and flipping a switch to turn on a light is a modern day miracle that was ushered in by the scientist's understanding of electricity. And who can argue the advances in medical treatment that science has made in the maintenance of life. So obviously, some of what the scientists have discovered is a proven fact- for proof is the foundation of scientific advancement. Yet the scientist cannot create life, cannot say what were the forces that initiated its birth, nor predict the exact end of its existence. It's God's creation; only God's creation and only He controls the forces that sustain it. Therefore for me every proven achievement that comes from the scientists further exposes how awesome the God I serve is - and how complex the nature of life. So, I say to you that my faith is strengthen by what

the scientists have revealed, that while there are differences in what scientists postulate and what is read in the bible that that which scientist can prove mirrors very close to what is read in the bible. Do you need to feel the holes in His side before you believe? I don't!

Because I Have The Choice

Because I have the choice, I choose to follow the teachings of Jesus because his teachings are a perfect guide for my behavior. I can't imagine what the world would be like if no moral discipline prevailed - no one would care or worry about the impact of their behavior on the other guy or themselves. It would be dog eat dog and do what you want. But following the teachings of Jesus can reduce some of my sins, even sin not addressed by man's legal laws, which does not free me from the burden of having committed sin. In addition, having Jesus in my life not only impacts my behavior but gives me an opportunity to receive the greatest reward that man can achieve- for who would not want to free his or her soul from spending an eternity in hell. No one can ever match what Jesus has achieved so it is especially heart warming to know that I can go to God and ask for forgiveness when I sin.

Because I have the choice, I choose to forgive when wrong has been done to me. Holding on to hate, mistrust, and a desire for revenge drives a wedge between me and my sisters and brothers that condemns me to a life lacking of compassion- a heartless relationship that may isolate me to myself. Not forgiving puts me on a pedestal that brands my life as free of sin and therefore never requiring forgiveness. But we all know that no one is free of committing sin but Jesus. So, no matter how grievous the sin by friend or stranger I must learn to forgive.

Because I have the choice, I choose to study God's word, go to bible study and Sunday school, and go to church on Sunday. It educates me on the behavior that God expects from me and allows me the opportunity to grow in my understanding of life. It provides me with the testimony of others who also believe in God and choose to do His will. Going to church puts me closer to God, provide me with the rules to govern my life, and gives meaning and purpose to my life.

Have you made the choice to serve God today?

BIBLE TRIVIA

Test your knowledge. Take the time to find the answers for the following biblical questions. It may take some bible reading but it's worth it. If you desire to find out how well you did check your answers in the next issue of the newsletter.

1. What empire's taxation led to Jesus being born in Bethlehem?
2. What did hungry Esau give up to Jacob in exchange for food?
3. Who bribed the guards at Jesus' tomb to say that the disciples had stolen the body?
4. What king tricked the followers of Baal by gathering them in Baal's temple and then slaughtering them?
5. What god's priests danced around the altar while they cut themselves with knives and daggers?
6. Who had a vision of the Lord standing beside the altar?
7. Who built an altar and called it "The Lord is my banner"?
8. Who advised young Christians to stop thinking like children?
9. Who gave a coat to her son when she offered the annual sacrifice?
10. What saintly king of Judah was crippled with a foot disease in his old age?
11. What king had the apostle James executed with sword and had Peter arrested?
12. What was the tent that was made according to God's specifications?
13. What Bible character's name means, "honored of God"?
14. What prophetess led the woman of Israel in a victory dance?
15. What prophet ran after another prophet to accept the appointment as his successor?

Thought For The Month – Your monetary riches are not your greatest gift to God but your praise and belief in Him.

PSALM 50:14 – 15 "Offer to God thanksgiving. And pay your vows to the Most High. Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."

Scripture References:

Genesis 1:1-5 " In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God Divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first Day."

Genesis 1:14-19 "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

Matthews 18: 21-22 "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but . Until seventy times seven"

Luke 17:3-4 "Take heed to yourselves: I thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him."