

Adam & Eve & Evolution
2017 - Class 3 Manuscript
The Rev John Roberts



Video link: <https://youtu.be/aQhEE4F3NR8>
 (this video includes a few minute revision at 70min mark, which makes the teaching on Hubble's redshift more accurate)

Handout Link:
https://b199a966-cb92-436a-9de2-9a2ffb07539.filesusr.com/ugd/8c239b_a49e3e7e3dd14a81aaf56ba9a41d6668.pdf

Discussion Questions Link:
<https://saintmatthiasoakdale.com/2023aee>

Class 3

Scientific Findings on the Origin of Life [2:40] pages 1-13

Interpreting Genesis 1 [33:55] pages 13-33

Barrick (Young-Earth Creationism) [45:10] pages 17-19

Collins (Old-Earth Creationism) [53:07] pages 19-21

Lameroux (Planned Evolution) [1:00:42] pages 21-24

Walton (Directed Evolution) [1:08:21] pages 24-33

Adam & Eve & Evolution – Class 3 Manuscript

5 minutes before start: @slide: scripture quote@

Opening Quote

¹⁵ He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
 – Colossians 1:15-17 (ESV)

Intro

Welcome back, again. I want to just begin by saying how much I've been enjoying going through this course with you all: the community of intellectually stretching on this journey together. And I hope it's been a blessing to you, too. We have more great information to talk about here in class three. As usual, we'll have a 90-minute teaching that I'm *confident* will finish in under two hours... and broken up by two breaks. Now, the past few weeks we've talked a great deal about history and how we got to where we are today. And in the second and third sessions today we're going to finally begin examining scripture, as we consider four approaches to

interpreting Genesis 1.

@slide: rainbow chart@

But, last week we specifically looked at 6 models of how folks make sense of faith and science- (Naturalistic Evolution, Nonteleological Evolution, Planned Evolution, Directed Evolution, Old-Earth Creationism, & Young Earth Creationism). In the last class I talked about the

scientific findings on the Origins of the Universe, with Hubble's discovery of an expanding universe and the Big Bang Theory, and how those 6 models *interpret* those findings.

@slide@

Well, this morning we're going to take those 6 models again, but this time we're going to look at how they respond to the scientific findings on the Origin of Life. So we're moving from the creation of matter – the universe, planets, stars, etc. – to the creation of living organisms – from the microbe to the finches, and you & me. How did it all start?? How could the earth have transitioned from NON-living matter to living organisms? And, what do we think about it?

@slide: privileged@

Privileged

It has been said that we inhabit a privileged planet. To our current knowledge, the earth is the only planet where life exists. And, over the past 50 years or so, scientists *across* the board – all the way from the Naturalistic Evolutionist model to the Young Earth Creationist model – have increasingly come to acknowledge that the earth is special, unique, *privileged* in its ability to support living organisms.

And, when I say this I don't just mean that a few things have just happened to go right on earth for life to exist. Remember, there's a lot going on in the cosmos. There's the earth, our solar system, our galaxy, and our universe. Well, scientists have

Naturalistic Evolution (NE)	Nonteleological Evolution (NTE)	Planned Evolution (PE)	Directed Evolution (DE)	Old-Earth Creation (OEC)	Young-Earth Creation (YEC)
materialistic evolution	theistic evolution	theistic evolution	theistic evolution	progressive creation	recent creation
modern synthesis, punctuated equilibrium, Darwin	Darwin, deistic evolution	evolutionary creation		day-age creation, gap creation	scientific creation
random spontaneous natural processes	universal, then directed natural processes	universal, perfect, subsequent, subsequent intervention	intervention by direction of natural process	major life forms created separately	each kind created separately
ancient, no God	ancient myth, God exists	nonconservat, Adam and Eve not individuals	nonconservat, Adam and Eve are individuals	concord, days extended	concord, days lit

Class Three – Part I

Scientific Findings on the Origin of Life



discovered details at every level that are crucial to set the earth up for being able to support life...

@slide: privileged universe@

Privileged Universe

For starters, as we discussed last week, our universe is expanding. But scientists believe that if this expansion occurred at just a *slightly slower* rate, the universe would've never advanced very far past the Big Bang. Gravity would have been too strong for stars or planets to have formed at all and the whole thing would have collapsed back in on itself. On the other hand, if the universe was expanding any *faster*, then galaxies, such as our own Milky Way galaxy, would have never had enough gravitational attraction to pull together (to form). So the particular speed of our universe's expansion seems to be exactly what is needed for there to even be the possibility of a planet like ours existing within it.



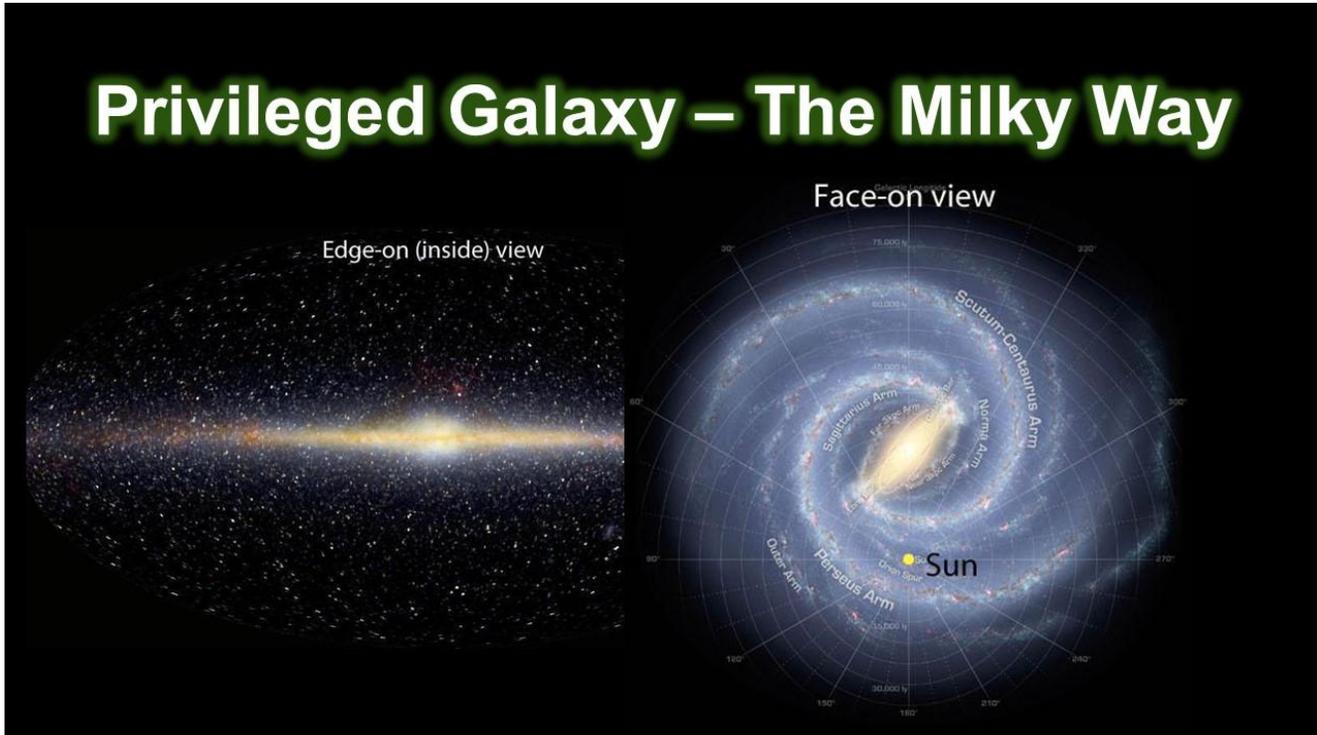
@slide: privileged galaxy@

Privileged Galaxy

Now, when it comes to galaxies, our Galaxy is the Milky Way. But it turns out that *of the at least 100 billion galaxies out there not all* of them are shaped the same. If you're like me, you never really thought about galaxies having shapes, but they do! @slide: 1st galaxies@ Well, 60% of them have an elliptical shape. For example, this galaxy, called Andromeda. @slide: 2nd galaxies@ Then, about 20% are irregular, meaning they have no particular shape (such as the Magellanic Galaxy). @slide: 3rd galaxies@ But the remaining 20% are spiral galaxies, *like our very own Milky Way galaxy*. And it's too complicated to get into today, but scientists have come to believe that life can *only* exist in spiral-shaped galaxies. But more specifically, life can't exist just anywhere in a spiral galaxy. In fact, the only position within a spiral galaxy where life can exist is halfway out on one of the arms. @slide: 4th galaxies@ And, where do you think our solar system is? You guessed it.

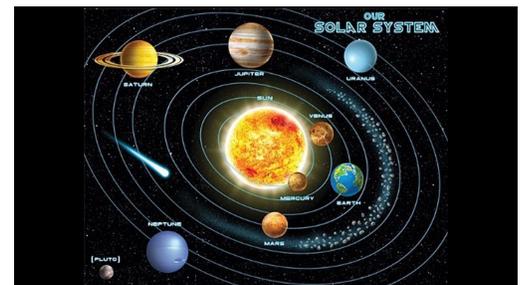


Halfway out on one of the arms, as you can see here.



Privileged Solar System

But our solar system @slide: privileged solar system@ also has particular characteristics that make it suitable for life. First, it has a single central star, the sun, which is only true of about 2/3 of the solar systems in the Milky Way. But, in particular, the size of the sun is perfect to allow for living organisms to survive on earth – it's not too large and not too small. @slide: our solar system rings@ But a third factor that is significant about our solar system is it contains two *large* gas planets- Jupiter and Saturn. The size and position of these gas planets actually stabilize the orbit of smaller planets like our own and the presence of these large gas planets greatly reduces the number of comets and asteroids that hit the earth (though apparently not the one that killed all the dinosaurs ☺ – more on that next week).



Privileged Planet

And then, of course, there is our earth. @slide: privileged planet@ And there are so many things that



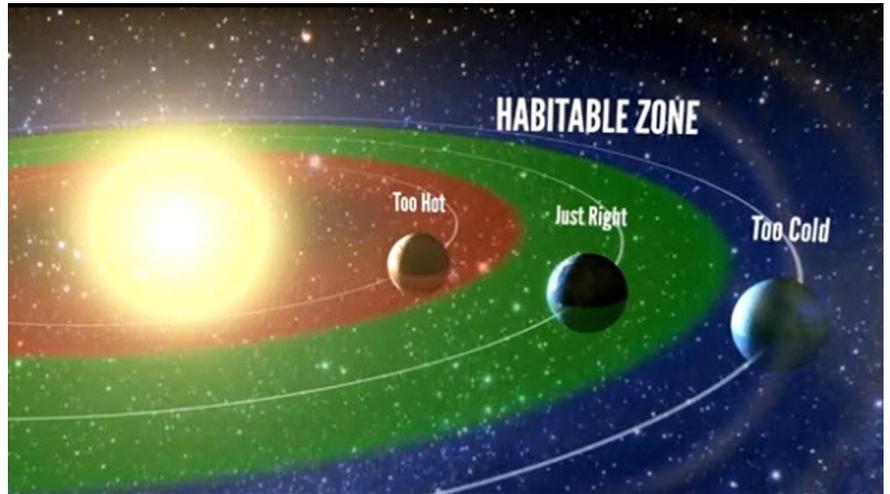
make the earth particularly suitable for living organisms...

- the composition of the earth's core, crust, and atmosphere;
- the amount of surface area covered by ocean;
- the (limited) level of seismic activity (earthquakes);
- and even the tidal effects caused by our large moon...

All of these are thought to be important for supporting life.

@slide: habitable zone@

But perhaps the most significant "life-supporting" feature of the earth is its abundance of liquid water. Liquid water is crucial for life to exist on earth. And, as you can see from this diagram, if the earth was closer to the sun, it would cause the water would vaporize, where if the earth was further away from the sun it would cause all the water to freeze. Our position in relation to the sun, keeps the earth's temperature just right for liquid water.



The earth is also an ideal size for supporting life. If the earth was slightly smaller, its atmosphere would not be able to retain water and it would become a dry planet like Mars. But if the earth was slightly bigger, then its atmosphere would retain toxic gasses like ammonia and methane. So, no matter which of the six models you fall into, the point here is to appreciate that there is so much at all the different levels of the cosmos that had to go right to make earth a place where living organisms could exist.

All evidence of abiogenesis is indirect @slide: origin of life@

So science, and the church, and all these perspectives agree that the earth is unique- it is privileged. But now let's turn our attention to consider how *life* might've *begun* on our planet. Now, let me clarify here that when we're talking about the origin of life- the origin of living organisms. Except for the Young Earth Creationists who believe God just specially created it all 6,000 years ago, everyone else believe the first signs of life would've been on the mirco-level – the level of molecules and cells.

Origin of Life

(Abiogenesis)

Well, the tricky thing is that *whenever* life began on earth, none of *us* were there! And there's just not much evidence, or concrete data, about exactly how non-living matter transitions to living organisms.

Molecules don't fossilize and the single cells that *do* fossilize don't reveal much about their origin. So, compared to the origins of the universe, the origin of the species, or the origin of humans... the origin of life is the subject scientists know the *least* about.

And, let's just think about this for a second. This is a huge leap we're talking about: the idea that at some point in the earth's history it went from being a plant of dirt and rocks and minerals - from matter & mere elements - to a habitation of living organisms! It's hard to grasp the magnitude of this change and it's hard to study.

@slide: origin of life timeline@

But, while we lack a lot of specific information about the how, science *does* have a general idea of WHEN it all took place. Scientific findings suggest that between the time when the earth's crust cooled enough to become solid, 4.2 billion years ago, and the first fossils appearing, 3.6 billion years ago... somewhere during that 600 million year window of time, *life* happened!

Origin of Life Timeline

Earth is 4.5 Billion Years old

- Earth's crust cooled > 4.2 Billion years ago
- First Fossils > 3.6 billion years old

• 600 million year window for life to emerge

However, the lack of any direct evidence about the origin of life also means that, out of the four subjects of origins we will discuss in this class, the Origin of Life is the category that is most "open to interpretation". @slide: Naturalistic camp & Designer Camp@

And this interpretation usually falls into 2 major camps of thought, what I'm gonna call the Naturalistic Camp and the Designer Camp today.

Because Naturalistic Evolution believes nothing exists outside of the observable natural order and Nonteological Evolution & Planned Evolution believe there is a God, but

Naturalistic Evolution (NE)	Nonteological Evolution (NTE)	Planned Evolution (PE)	Directed Evolution (DE)	Old-Earth Creation (OEC)	Young-Earth Creation (YEC)
Naturalistic Camp			Directed Evolution	Designer Camp	
Naturalistic Evolution, Nonteological Evolution, Planned Evolution				Old-Earth Creationism, New-Earth Creationism	
random, spontaneous natural processes	universe created, then undirected natural processes	universe created perfectly, no subsequent intervention		intervenor by direction of natural processes	major body plans created
ancient myth, no God	ancient myth, God exists	nonconcordist, Adam and Eve not individuals	nonconcordist, Adam and Eve are individuals	concordist, days extended	concordist, days literal

a God who chooses not to intervene in ongoing creation, all three of these models are tasked with coming up with a totally naturalistic explanation for the origin of life.

Therefore, these three, or the Naturalistic camp, are motivated to prove how various components of life could have been generated from inorganic matter.

So, notice, even though Planned Evolution can be an orthodox Christian position, on the origin of life (and on many issues in science) its approach to science and interpretation of science is similar to the two non-Christian models, because it holds that God does not intervene in ongoing creation.

Then, on the other side, what I'm calling the Designer Camp, includes the Old Earth Creationists and Young Earth Creationists. These models are opposed to evolution and therefore motivated to prove that "the probability of life arising by chance – (that is, apart from an Intelligent Designer) – is so low that it is effectively impossible."

Now, for reasons I'll explain at the end, the tensions that exist for the other models when it comes to the study of the Origin of Life are not as significant for the Directed Evolutionists, so they're in their own unique position, which I'll explain before the end of this session.

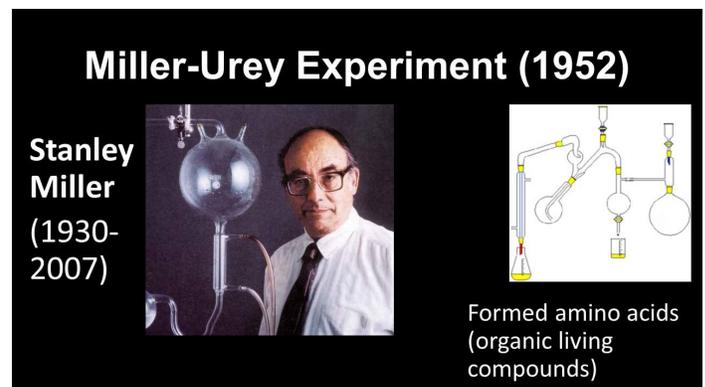
Now let me give a disclaimer here that the science we're about to get into before the break is probably the most challenging I'm going to throw at you in this course. So, try your best to stick with me. But if you get a little lost on one topic, don't check out on me: pick back up on the next one. And be encouraged, after the break we will be done with science for the day. ##

So we have these 2 general camps of thought when talking about the origin of life. And we will see that the biases of these models - evolutionism or creationism - determine how they interpret the evidence that is already out there. But, even more than that, these biases also determine which (or what types of) research they choose to invest time and money in.

@slide: Miller-Urey@

Miller-Urey experiment

And the first example of this is evident in the Miller-Urey experiment of 1952. In this experiment, Stanley Miller sealed water, methane, ammonia and hydrogen in a glass apparatus, he then heated the mixture and passed a spark through the resulting vapors. Well, when the results were analyzed, Miller was able to detect that several different amino acids had been formed. And amino acids are – guess what – organic living compounds!! So in Miller-Urey we have an experiment



that arose out of the motivations shared by the Naturalistic Camp to prove life can be generated from non-living matter. And those within this Naturalistic Camp interpret this experiment to be a great success! But, detractors from the other side have a different view. They say the experiment proves *nothing* about the Origin of Life, because they argue that producing living compounds in a laboratory is very different from proving it could have happened spontaneously out in the elements of the natural world. And critics are quick to point out that the moment these new organic molecules were exposed to oxygen, they degraded *back* into inorganic compounds.

Meanwhile, the evolutionists counter this point with the standard scientific view that the early atmosphere of the earth was 0.1% oxygen at most. And around and around we go!

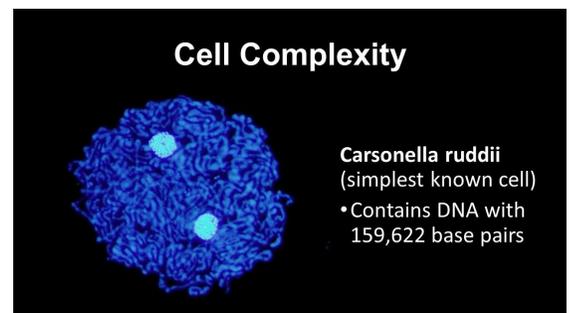
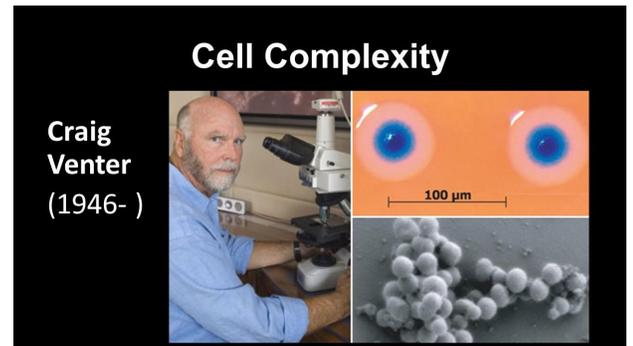
Cell Complexity @slide: cell complexity@

Well, a parallel breakthrough relevant to the origin of life occurred in 2010. Instead of creating organic compounds from inorganic matter, when a scientist named Craig Venter sought to artificially create a living cell out of a nonliving cell.

Well, it turns out that even though cells are microscopic, they are actually “a highly complex integrated system, with molecular machinery as sophisticated as any human factory.” And to give you an idea of the level of complexity we’re talking about, @slide: casonella@ take a look at *Carsonella ruddii*. This bacterium is the simplest known cell in the world. Yet its DNA is comprised of 159,622 base pairs or codes. Take my word for it, for being the simplest known cell- that's a lot of code. :)

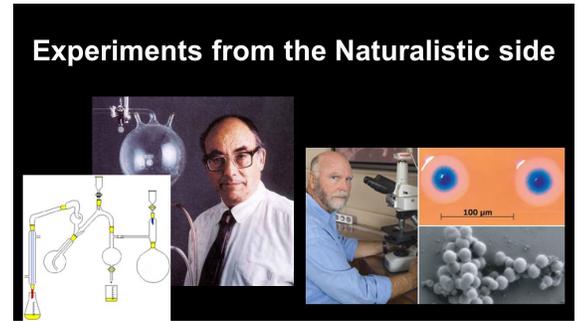
@slide: cell complexity 3@

So again, if those in the Naturalistic camp who believe life emerged through purely natural processes could create a cell like this from nonliving matter, that would be a huge victory in proving their beliefs. Well, in 2010 Venter claimed he was successful in doing it – in creating a living cell. And it received a lot of press. However, critics argue that all Venter *really* did was insert the DNA of a living cell into a non-living cell, which enabled it to then live and reproduce. This is not nearly the same thing as a non-living cell mutating into a living cell through purely natural causes.



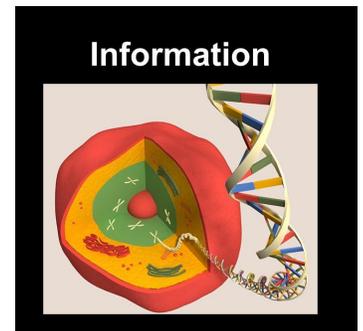
@slide: naturalistic experiments@

The Miller-Urey and Venter experiments are examples of scientific achievements that are traditionally used to justify and support the Naturalistic camp: to support the idea that life can naturally arise from inorganic matter.



Information @slide: information@

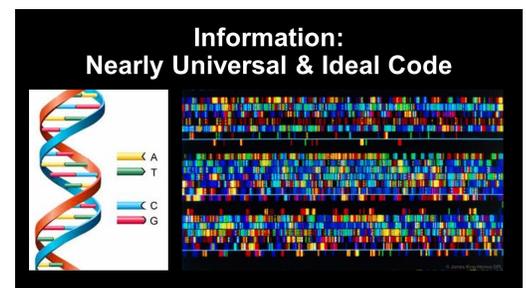
Well, on the other end, creationists the Designer Camp have their own scientific approaches in the Origin of Life arena that aim to prove that the creation of life *requires* the supernatural. Now, in our history, we often saw the Creationist movement playing defense. That is, as new scientific discoveries came up, they were left trying to explain why the science must be faulty. Well, the origin of life is one area where the Designer Camp has actually gone on the offense to challenge the naturalist camp.



The Creationist movement has also had a reputation for approaching science in a way that is, shall we say, *less than credible*. But, in this field of the Origin of Life, they are getting some attention, and maybe even get in a few solid punches in on the naturalistic guys. And, to do this, they've focused their efforts on one issue: and that is the difficulty of generating the information contained in a cell.

Information - Nearly universal and ideal code @slide: information nearly@

Now, the first factor is something that pretty much everyone from every model agrees on is that genetic code for living organisms is nearly universal - meaning the DNA of essentially all living organisms uses the same genetic coding system - and remember this DNA is *physical matter* - and scientists also agree the genetic code system is about as ideal as it can get, given the physical limitations.



Well, the two creationist models would cite this consistent, ideal, universal character of the genetic code as evidence...*evidence of God's design*. But, again, the bias of each perspective determines how they interpret the evidence, as the Naturalistic camp (NE, NTE & PE) see the universality of this genetic code instead as

evidence that the Origin of all Life can be traced back to a common source. And they view the fact that the genetic code is nearly ideal as evidence of natural selection. Y'all know how it is: everybody sees what they want to see.

Information - Independent of carrier @slide: **information: independent@**

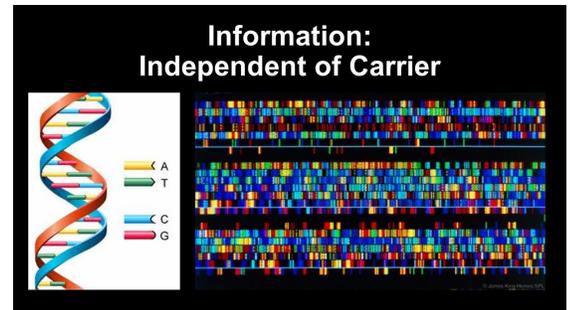
A second focus for the Designer camp is the idea that the DNA in a cell *has to come from somewhere*. A helpful analogy Rau presents to explain what this means is the example of a book: a book contains and communicates information, but that information did not originate in the book. Well, similarly, every cell contains DNA – information – but that DNA could not have originated in the cell itself, and most all scientists agree with this no matter what model they adhere to. So if the DNA could not have originated in the cell itself, the question this raises is: how did that DNA get there?

Well, the Designer Camp of course argues it comes from a Creator - that God is the one who put it there - an intelligent designer being the source of the DNA information. However, the explanation of the Naturalistic Camp (NE, NTE & PE), who believe in natural selection all the way down to the level of molecules, is simply that the *most effective* messages (or DNA) are what "survived" or emerged through the natural selection process.

Information – Specified complexity @slide: **information: specified@**

So the recognition of an ideal genetic code and the reality that DNA originates somewhere other than the cell it inhabits are standard science accepted by all camps, which the Designer Camp uses to point to a creator. But the Naturalists have not been as quick to accept that this next issue is a valid one, because it's really based in mathematics, which science has historically been pretty suspicious of. It has a lot of weight with the Designer Camp though.

It's called specified complexity. Simply put, specified complexity is the idea that you can have two objects that are both complex, where the complexity of one is random while the complexity of the other is specified. So, if we look at our two

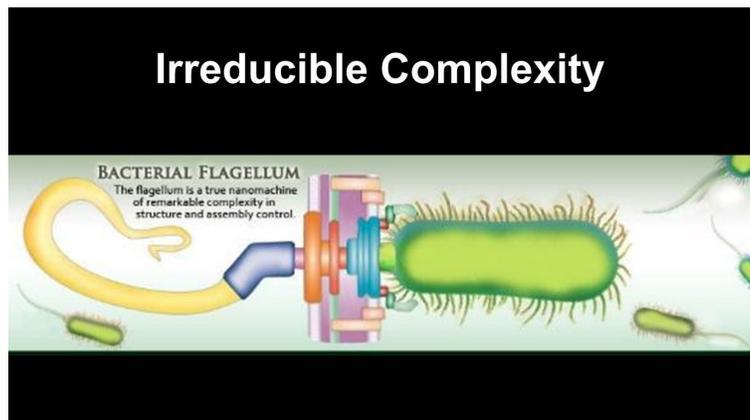


example here we have two complex objects: a crystal and Mt Rushmore. So both are complex, but the complexity of the crystal is random; its complexity is not communicating any message, its complexity just occurred as a result of natural processes. But Mount Rushmore's complexity is *specified* because its complexity *is* communicating information: it's showing us the likenesses of four American Presidents. So its complexity is specified, it communicates information, but only because someone – a sculptor – created it.

Well, in human experience, all systems that demonstrate specified complexity and communicate information *reflect intelligence* (an intelligent designer). So, the Designer Camp would say that just as Mt. Rushmore had a sculptor with a vision and a process, so do we. However, not only would the Naturalistic Camp downplay the validity of this argument because it is based upon mathematics (which doesn't have the same "evidence quality" of science), but they would also argue that what the Designer Camp says is evidence of God's intervention, is really just evidence of natural selection.

Irreducible complexity @slide: information: irreducible@

Well, finally, the most potent argument for Intelligent Design proponents is the hot debate over irreducible complexity. Now, it should be said that, despite the similarity in names, *irreducible complexity and specified complexity are very different concepts*. Similar big words; different ideas. Specified complexity, as we have seen is based in mathematics and philosophy (i.e. not based on scientific evidence), whereas irreducible complexity *is* based on scientific evidence. In particular, it is based on observation of the biochemical machinery of the cell.



The basic idea of irreducible complexity is the idea that many parts of the cell function like little machines. The most commonly used example is the bacterial flagellum, made famous by Michael Behe (1996) in his book *Darwin's Black Box*. Each 'machine' (let's call them) is essential to the operation of the cell and removing any one of these would cause the machine to malfunction. The question is how such a machine could be *naturally made in a step-wise manner*, adding one part at a time, in a way that each stage would make sense and have a selective advantage (to out-survive other organisms). The contention of irreducible complexity is that they

cannot. To say it another way: “no one debates the complexity of cellular machinery... the claim of irreducible complexity is ... that there is no Darwinian mechanism (that) can account for the machine,” while maintaining a selective advantage (to out-survive other organisms) at each step.

How does each model interpret the evidence? @slide: information: two camps@

So, of our two camps – the Naturalistic camp and the Designer Camp – what they already believe about the Origin of Life determines both *the areas* where they put their energy into research and *how* they interpret any evidence that emerges in the field.

Naturalistic Evolution (NE)	Nonteological Evolution (NTE)	Planned Evolution (PE)	Directed Evolution (DE)	Old Earth Creation (OEC)	Young Earth Creation (YEC)
Naturalistic Evolution, Nonteological Evolution, Planned Evolution			Directed Evolution	Old-Earth Creationism, New-Earth Creationism	Designer Camp
random, spontaneous natural processes	universe created, then undirected natural processes	universe created perfectly, no subsequent intervention	intervene by director's future processes	major body plans created	each kind created
ancient myth, no God	ancient myth, God exists	nonconcordist, Adam and Eve not individuals		concordist, days extended	concordist, days literal

The Naturalistic Camp is motivated to come up with a totally naturalistic explanation for the origin of life. Thus, their perspective is that cells must have originated in a step-wise manner. However, hard evidence and even cogent proposals for how life originated (in that manner) have not yet emerged. So, the argument most commonly used by these models is ... “we are here, therefore life must have arisen, so conditions must have been such that life could arise.” They are also quick to argue that "the production of life cannot be too difficult, because it happened on Earth apparently as soon as conditions had become suitable for life, around 3.8 billion years ago."

On the other end, the Designer Camp is motivated to prove that “the probability of life arising by chance – (that is, apart from an Intelligent Designer) – is so *low* that it is effectively impossible.” Their perspective is that “life is too complex to have arisen in a stepwise fashion and that it is more likely that God chose to create the first cell directly, fully functional.”¹

@slide: chart w/ green highlight@

However, when it comes to many of the topics up for debate in the Origin of Life discussion, Directed Evolutionists are sort of on their own. They can be open to the idea

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¹ Now, Old Earth and Young Earth Creationists differ from one another in that “OEC believe the first living things created were single cells, long before other types of living things, in accord with the fossil record (so, billions of years ago). Young-earth creation does not specify when single-celled organisms were created... but (believe that) all living things were created within a one-week period, fully formed.”

that God might have utilized natural processes to originate life on earth, but at any of those points where natural processes seem improbable (specified complexity) or impossible (irreducible complexity), it seems to me that their belief in an interventionist God really comes in handy. ☺

@slide: technical support@

Why don't we take a break and we'll come back in a few minutes to begin surveying different interpretations of Genesis 1.

BREAK

@slide: part 2 title page@

For our final two sessions this morning we are going to look at Genesis 1 (or particularly 1:1-2:4) and survey (at least) one perspective from each of our four models for how it should be properly interpreted.

As I have said before, all four of the Christian models (and the interpreters we will review represent them) believe the Bible is the authoritative word of God. What distinguishes them is *what* they believe the writer of Genesis is intending to communicate. Is the chapter intended to be a detailed, scientific chronology of God's material creation of the cosmos? Or is it a poetic explanation only intended only to point to spiritual truths about God and humans, without any scientific explanation? Or perhaps it is somewhere in between?

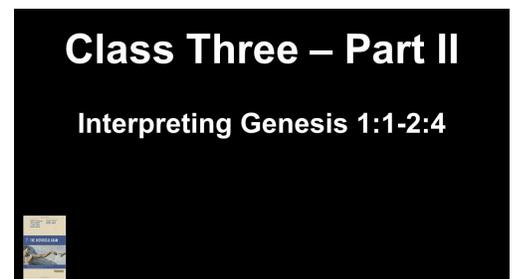
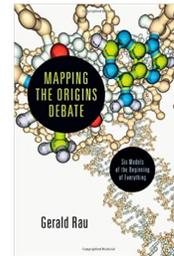
But before we get into any of the specific interpretations, I want to read the Genesis passage and then briefly walk through it and review a few textual issues that we will find more than one of the interpreters grappling with.

@slide: Genesis 1:1-2:4@ {read the passage from handout}

Genesis 1:1-2:4 (ESV)

1¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Technical Support



³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶ And God said, “Let there be an expanse^[a] in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷ And God made^[b] the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. ⁸ And God called the expanse Heaven.^[c] And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹ And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry land Earth,^[d] and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

¹¹ And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants^[e] yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. ¹² The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons,^[f] and for days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶ And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷ And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰ And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms^[g] of living creatures, and let birds^[g] fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.”²¹ So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.²² And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³ And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. ²⁵ And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man^[h] in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹ And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.” ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³ So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

⁴ These are the generations
of the heavens and the earth when they were created,
in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

- a. **Genesis 1:6** Or *a canopy*; also verses 7, 8, 14, 15, 17, 20
- a. **Genesis 1:7** Or *fashioned*; also verse 16
- b. **Genesis 1:8** Or *Sky*; also verses 9, 14, 15, 17, 20, 26, 28, 30; 2:1
- c. **Genesis 1:10** Or *Land*; also verses 11, 12, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30; 2:1
- d. **Genesis 1:11** Or *small plants*; also verses 12, 29
- e. **Genesis 1:14** Or *appointed times*
- f. **Genesis 1:20** Or *flying things*; see **Leviticus 11:19–20**
- g. **Genesis 1:26** The Hebrew word for *man (adam)* is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name *Adam*

Now, just based upon some things that have come up during our first two weeks of teaching, I can imagine there are already some questions about Genesis 1 you may desire to have addressed. For example, Genesis 1 describes seven days, but should they be understood as literal days or longer periods of time? In class 1, I mentioned

how long ago Augustine pointed out an apparent contradiction between two days in the straightforward reading of the text, noting that even light is created on day 1 (verse 3) the sun is not created until day four, even though the sun is typically thought of as having a role in the marking of a day. And then over in verse 27 it says that God made humans in His image, what does *that* mean?

Reading this may also have reminded you of some other elements that may have puzzled you over the years. Such as, why does verse two seem to indicate that the earth existed in some form *prior* to the seven days of creation. In other words, prior to God saying “Let there be light”, verse 2 describes the earth as already being present, (quote:) “*The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.*” And what should we make, if anything, of that description of the earth as “without form and void”? And what about verses 6 & 7 and these mysterious bodies of water that are described as being held up by an expanse, or according to the footnote, “a canopy”? And why does God rest on day Seven? Does God really need rest?

But some other textual questions we’ll need to address include, what could it mean when God says repeatedly that parts of creation are “good”? And over the next few weeks we’ll discuss what footnote “H” points out about verse 26: that the Hebrew word *ādām* is both a proper name, but also the/a Hebrew word for “mankind” as a whole.

A larger question many raise is what is the genre of Genesis 1-11 as a whole? These first chapters of the Bible detail this story of creation, as well as Adam & Eve, their fall into sin, Cain’s murder of Abel, Noah’s flood, a few genealogies, and the Tower of Babel. But some have pointed out that these chapters have a distinctly poetic character, particularly in comparison to chapters 12-50? Does this have any bearing on whether they should be considered as reporting history in the same way that chapters 12-50 of Genesis are?

Many will also bring up the fact that there are similar tales of creation and floods in texts from other cultures of this time period: Egypt, Sumeria, Babylon, and others. What are we to make of that?

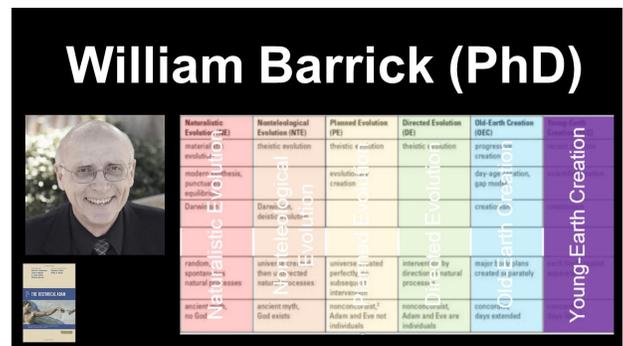
And lastly, and perhaps most importantly, if we believe Genesis 1 is indeed the word of God, how should that dictate the sort of expectations we have on this text to communicate *real history* or *accurate modern science*?

Well, I cannot necessarily promise that you will walk away with definitive and satisfying answers to *every one* of these questions today, but all of them – and more – are sure to come up as we survey (at least) four perspectives on Genesis. #

So, now I want to get into these four perspectives, but two disclaimers I want to give about my presentation of an individual from each model.

1. First, they do not in any way represent the views of *all* the thinkers in their models. So, if you don't like the line of argument one takes, that doesn't mean there isn't someone else from that same model that could have a better approach.
 2. Second, my intention here is not necessarily for you to pick one of them to completely align yourself with. Instead, my here is to give you an idea of the general direction taken by folks in our four different Christian models, as well as what others consider to be the weaknesses of their arguments.
- ##

@slide: barrick@So the perspective on Genesis 1 we will begin with comes from the model that has been around the longest, which is the Young Earth Creationist perspective. And, for many of you, it will probably be the most familiar interpretation we cover this morning, because it was traditionally thought to be the straightforward reading of the passage.



The Young Earth Creationist perspective I will present is that of William Barrick (ThD), a Baptist Professor of Old Testament at The Master's Seminary, a fundamentalist seminary in Sun Valley, California. Barrick believes Scripture strongly supports a young-earth perspective. He argues that because Scripture is inspired by God, the author of Genesis (whom the Church has traditionally thought to be Moses) should be considered both omniscient and reliable, because the ultimate author of scripture is God himself. Therefore, in Genesis 1 Barrick believes we find an accurate, historical, and step-by-step narrative of the material creation of the world by God in seven 24-hour days, or six days plus a day of rest. Barrick writes, (quote): "In the first three days of creation God provides the basics for life while he forms the earth into a habitat ready for animal and human life. During days four through six, the Creator begins to fill the earth with the life forms for which he has made preparation."

Included in this is Barrick's belief that verse 27, which says, "²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them," describes the *de novo* (or special and miraculous) creation of the first humans in his image, and that it is from these humans whom *all other* humans have descended. Based upon genealogies found elsewhere in scripture, Barrick believes this miraculous creation of humans occurred within the past 10,000 years. Barrick, at

least partly, explains that humans being created in the image of God gives them the role to act as God's vice-rulers on earth. Based upon God's repeated characterization of his creation as "good", and in verse 31 "very good", Barrick also argues that the world described in Genesis 1 did not include death. Barrick would therefore be obliged to agree with other young-earth creationists that the dinosaurs were created with the other animals before these first humans, around 4,500 B.C., but became extinct shortly thereafter as a result of Noah's flood, a flood which he believes covered the whole earth.

Therefore, where the claims and theories of modern science contradict what the Bible says, and by that I mean the Young-earth creationists' interpretation of what the Bible says, such as with the age of the earth and evolution, Barrick insists one is to side with Scripture, because it alone is inspired by God and therefore inerrant and authoritative.

Barrick makes clear that any suggestion that these humans described in verse 27 are *not* historical individuals (Adam & Eve) is akin to denying the historical resurrection of Christ. And this is the slippery slope argument that is a fear-based argument often utilized by Young Earth Creationists! Barrick and Young Earth Creationists argue that if a person interprets anything in Scripture in any way contrary to the traditional straightforward reading, then it's only a matter of time before that person will be denying Jesus was a real human being who really rose from the dead. I imagine many of us here this morning maybe share this concern or discomfort as we talk about Genesis and look at how to interpret it. Now, over the next few weeks I will present some legitimate arguments that the scripture, when properly interpreted, is *not* presenting Adam & Eve as real people. And while you may or may not find those arguments to ultimately to ultimately be persuasive, if you did you need not be concerned with the slippery slope, because we can say that multiple writers in scripture are definitively saying that Jesus *is* a real person who died and rose from the dead, and adhering to this belief *is* essential to maintaining an orthodox Christian faith. In other words, with the slippery slope argument, the Young Earth Creationists are equating apples with oranges. #

Another criticism of Barrick and YEC is that while they *claim* to be defending an inerrant view of scripture, what they are *really* defending is the inerrancy of a tradition of interpreting scripture. For example, the Genesis passage doesn't explicitly say the humans created in verse 27 were the first humans and nowhere in Genesis does it explicitly say that *all* humans descended from them. A traditional interpretation of those passage has concluded those things, but that passages themselves don't say them. Thus, critics of YEC argue that Barrick and others are actually defending the inerrancy of an age-old church tradition, which is not authoritative, rather than

for reading Genesis. Let's look at this outline here to see what we think. You'll see some striking similarities between the first eleven chapters of Genesis and three other creation myths known to exist around the same time period.

Sumerian King List	Atrahasis Epic	Eridu Genesis	Genesis 1-11
1. Creation assumed; kingship came down from heaven	1. Creation assumed; gods create humans to do their work	1. Creation; cities are instituted	1. Creation (Gen. 1-2)
2. Series of eight kings in five cities	2. Noisy humans alienate deities	2. [Alienation]	2. Alienation (Gen. 3), genealogies (Gen. 4-5)
3. The flood	3. The flood; ark	3. The flood; ark	3. The flood; ark (Gen. 6-9)
4. Kingship again; dynasties follow, leading to -	4. New start	4. New start	4. New start; then genealogies, down to -
5. "Modern times"	(5. "Modern times," implied)	(5. "Modern times," implied)	5. "Modern times"

@slide: (chart)@

As you can see, all three texts are similar to Genesis 1-11 in their inclusion of a creation narrative, a flood (heck, two of the three even have arks), and then a new start after the flood bringing "history" up to modern times.

So, Collins agrees with an idea many other biblical experts have suggested: that the writer of Genesis essentially took those creation stories from the others cultures surrounding Israel in those days, but adjusts them to depict an accurate view of the true God.

@slide: collins@

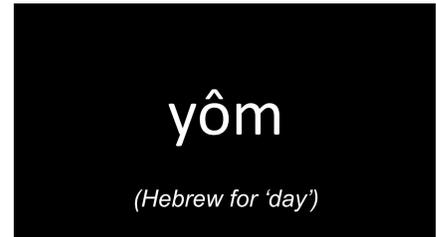
Furthermore, Collins claims that the cultures surrounding Israel were not concocting myths, but rather were mythologizing true history, that is, (quote:) "celebrating actual historical events and people in mythological terms." Thus, Collins insists that it follows from this that the writer of Genesis is doing the same thing... humankind is actually all one family that descended from one pair of ancestors, the pair described in verse 27 (Adam & Eve) and formed by the supernatural act of God.

However, Collins insists that Adam & Eve were real people primarily because he believes the Big Story of the scripture depends on it. According to Collins, "the Bible tells us who we are, where we came from, what is wrong, and what God is doing about it." He says, "The biblical faith is a narrative of God's great works of creation

and redemption. But if Adam & Eve weren't real people, he believes the whole story of scripture becomes incoherent. Therefore, as is typical of Old Earth Creationists, Collins is willing to see the seven Days of Genesis 1 metaphorically, but he is *not* willing to see Adam and Eve the same way.

CRITIQUE...

The most significant criticism for Collins' interpretation of Genesis 1 relates to the utter lack of scriptural support that the word for "day" – *yom* in the Hebrew –referring to vast periods of time, which some might argue Collins' Day Age Theory hinges.



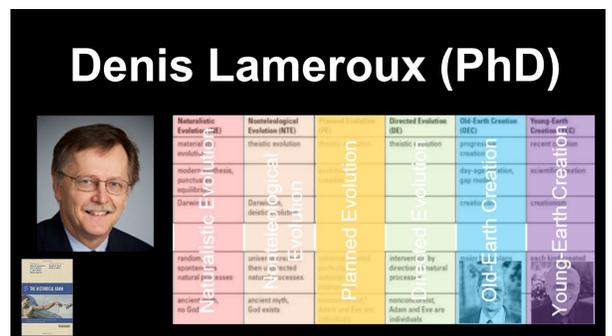
@slide: collins@

Collins is further criticized by an evolutionist opponent for arguing that because the Mesopotamians believed they were writing about real people and events, then the writer of Genesis must also have believed he was writing about real people and therefore we should conclude Adam & Eve were real people. Although this was not Collins only argument for Adam & Eve's historicity.

Not surprisingly, Barrick, the Young Earth Creationists, finds it unacceptable that Collins is gives authority to any source other than the Bible for determining the age of the earth, that he appeals to un-biblical Mesopotamian texts to support his view, and that he has no problem believing that even animal death could have occurred in a creation God repeatedly calls good. ##

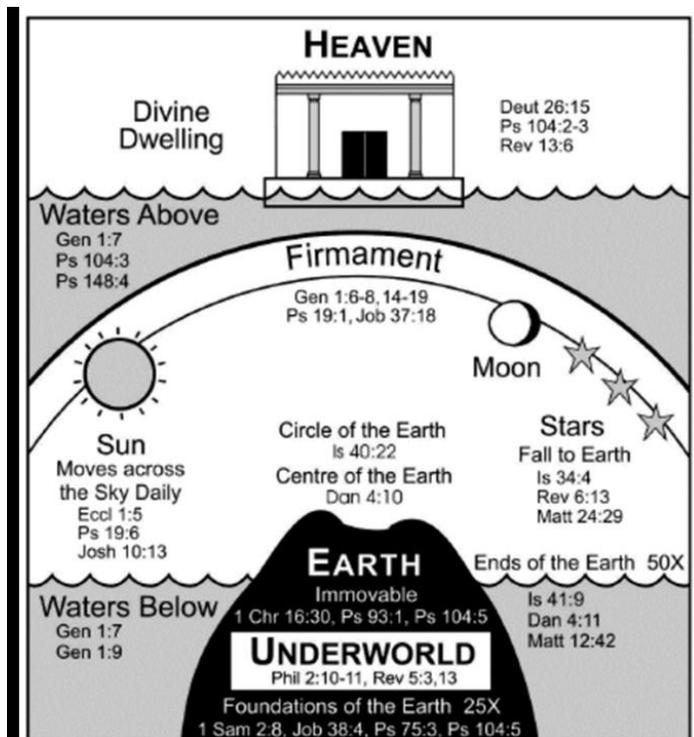
Evolutionary Creationist view @slide: Lameroux@

The third perspective I want to present is from the Planned Evolution (or "Evolutionary Creationist") view of Denis Lameroux (PhD x2). Lameroux is an evangelical who was formerly a rabid Young Earth Creationist who left Medical School and attended 13 years of graduate school to defend the bible against evolutionists. However, during that process, as a seminary student he became convinced that Young Earth Creationism is unbiblical. Then later, while seeking his PhD in science, he became convinced that the theory of evolution is true and says the Holy Spirit convicted him that speaking against evolution was bearing false witness (a sin). He has since acquire a PhD in Theology of Science and Religion followed by a PhD in Oral



Biology–Dental Development and Evolution, and is a professor of Science and Religion at St Joseph’s College at the University of Alberta in Canada. Let’s just say this guy has some credentials.

Lamoureux rejects scientific concordism, the idea that modern science, when properly understood, can be aligned with the Bible. To the contrary, he finds in Genesis 1, and elsewhere in scripture, a structure of the universe that contradicts reality as we know it through modern science. @slide: three tier @He argues that the writer of Genesis, and even New Testament writers like Paul, understood the universe to be structured in three tiers, the bottom tier being the underworld, but the top-tier being a heavenly sea held up by a solid firmament or dome with the sun, moon, and stars imbedded in it.



mayim > sea

raqa' > expanse, canopy,
firmament

He, and many other interpreters, @slide: mayim@ cite the fact that the word for ‘waters’ in verse 6-9 is *mayim* the Hebrew word for sea and the word our version translates as ‘expanse’ is the Hebrew word *raqa'*, @slide: 3 scrips@ which when used elsewhere in scripture (Exodus 39:3, Isaiah 40:19, and Numbers 16:38) refers to a solid surface.

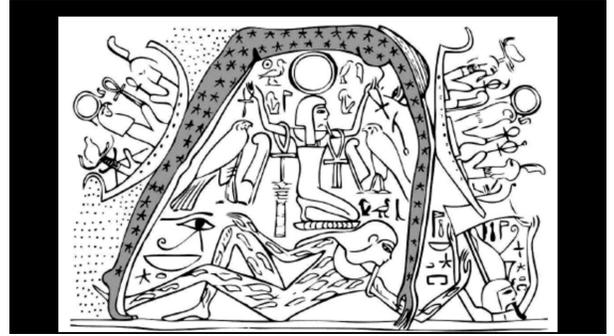
@slide: (Egyptian pic) @Lamoureux says it isn’t surprising that the Israelites would see

And they hammered out (raqa') gold leaf, and he cut it into threads to work into the blue and purple and the scarlet yarns, and into the fine twined linen, in skilled design. -Exodus 39:3

An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays (raqa') it with gold and casts for it silver chains. - Isaiah 40:19

As for the censers of these men who have sinned at the cost of their lives, let them be made into hammered (raqa') plates as a covering for the altar, for they offered them before the Lord, and they became a sign to the people of Israel." - Numbers 16:38

the universe this way, since we have evidence of other cultures at the same time viewing the world similarly. Egypt being one example, as demonstrated by this Egyptian artifact, where the shaded firmament represents the sky God Nut.



@slide: philippians@ Lameroux also points out that even Paul viewed the world in this same three-tiered way, as evidenced by Philippians 2:10, where he says, *“⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

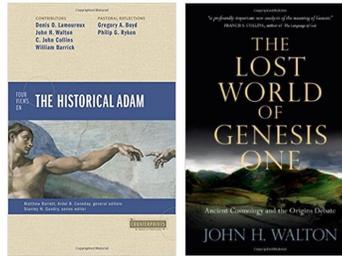
— Philippians 2

@slide: lameroux@ Like other Planned Evolutionists, Lameroux views Genesis 1 – 11 as a unique type of literature that communicates life changing, spiritual truths, but is not historical. Rather it is distinct from the rest of the Bible where the real history begins around Genesis 12 with Abraham. In regard to Genesis 1, Lameroux grants that although Christians in the past and many biblical writers believed Genesis 1 reveals how God actually created plants, animals, and ... humans, scientific advance, including the evidence for evolution, makes such belief impossible today. Rather, God created the universe through the natural process of evolution, and humanity’s existence also results from evolutionary development. This leads Lameroux to conclude that Adam is *not* a historical person, but another example of an incidental vessel through which Scripture conveys inerrant spiritual truths. However, for Lameroux this has no bearing on his belief that Jesus Christ is a historical person who died for our sins.

CRITICISMS...

Of the primary criticisms against Lameroux, first while his view that Genesis 1 describes a hard dome in the sky is not uncommon, there is certainly debate over whether the Hebrew word (*raqa*) *has* to refer to a hard surface. Second, Lameroux seems to make a pretty big logical jump from the idea that “Genesis 1 contains ancient science” to “therefore adam never existed”. Certainly, we’ll see this come under much scrutiny as his disbelief in a historical adam plays out in his interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3.

Technical Support



@slide: technical support@

So, we’re going to take one last break, before taking a little deeper dive on our fourth and final perspective, from the directed evolution model.

BREAK

Cosmic Temple / Archetypal (creation story describe functional, not material origins) – John Walton (Directed Evolution)

@slide: Walton@ The fourth view I want to present is the from the Directed Evolution perspective, and that is the view of John Walton. John H. Walton (PhD) is Professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College Graduate School and his book is available in the back. His “Cosmic Temple” view is a real

	Naturalistic Evolution (NE)	Nontheological Evolution (NTE)	Planned Evolution (PE)	Directed Evolution (DE)	Old-Earth Creation (OEC)	Young-Earth Creation (YEC)
Naturalistic Evolution	material evolution	theistic evolution	theistic evolution	theistic evolution	progress creation	recent creation
	modern synthesis, punctuated equilibrium	Darwin, deistic	evolution, creation		day-age, gap model	scientific creationism
	Darwin	Darwin, deistic			creationism	creationism
	random, spontaneous natural processes	universal, then selected natural processes	purposeful	purposeful	purposeful	purposeful
	ancient myth, no God	ancient myth, God exists				

departure from how most of us have probably ever thought about Genesis 1. So, I’m going to take a little more time with it than the other perspectives, not because it is necessarily better than the others, but because I think it could take a little more thorough explanation for us to grasp what he is saying and all of its implications.

Introduction

Walton begins with a caution about how easy it is for a modern reader to misinterpret ancient scripture because 1) we have a tendency to project our own modern ideas and worldviews onto an ancient text that would know nothing of them and 2) because bible interpreters are tasked with translating ancient Hebrew words into a modern English language that may have equivalent words. For example, the

Hebrew word *hesed* has no English equivalent, so depending on your translation of the Bible, this word may be translated as loyalty, love, kindness, lovingkindness, steadfast love, all of which fail to communicate the true (or full) meaning of this word. Thus, Walton suggests that our task to best understand scripture is to try to understand that cultural context and worldview it was written from.

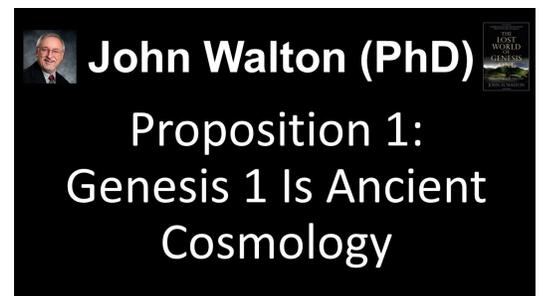
And Walton proposes this is best accomplished by looking at other ancient literature.



@slide: prop 1@

Proposition 1: Genesis 1 Is Ancient Cosmology

When it comes to Genesis 1, Walton rejects any idea that God granted the writer of Genesis any special scientific revelation. In other words, the writer didn't know what we know today: that the earth is not flat, that the moon is closer to us than the sun, and so forth. Thus, Genesis 1 is an account of the origin of creation from an ancient perspective. Thus, as Walton writes, "If we try to turn it into modern cosmology, we are making the text say something that it never said." This is very dangerous since we consider the text to be authoritative.



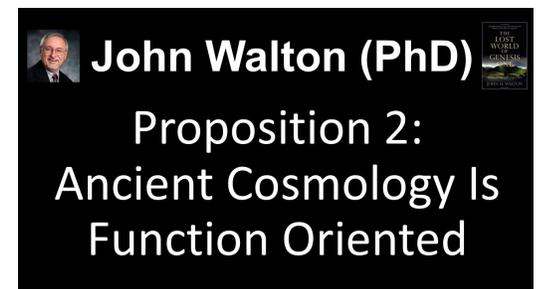
@slide: prop 2@

Proposition 2: Ancient Cosmology Is Function Oriented

So, to help us understand what the author of Genesis was intending to communicate in chapter 1, Walton asks a question: What does it mean for something to exist? Now, just stay with me here.

You see, before we jump to answer this question, we should consider that there might be a difference in our minds between what it means for a chair to "exist" versus what it means for say a company to exist. We would probably all agree that when it comes to a chair, it exists when it is materially, physically there. But if I wanted to open say a restaurant, when would we consider *it* to exist? Once I had a building? Or a name?

Or a website? No, that's probably not enough. Perhaps once I had my permit from the health department to sell food? Or maybe when I finally made my first sale? @slide: dollar@ In the restaurant



business, there's a tradition of framing that first dollar. Why? Because it verifies: "We're in business; we're a restaurant now!"

Well, the point of this exercise is to illustrate that, even in our modern world, whether something "exists" is not always determined by whether it exists physically or materially, but by when it has function. However, because of our emphasis on science, when we consider how the universe came to exist, we think of how that happened materially, how it physically came to be. But Walton argues that, "in the ancient world, what was most crucial and significant to their understanding of existence was the way that the parts of the cosmos functioned, not their material status."

@slide: prop 2@

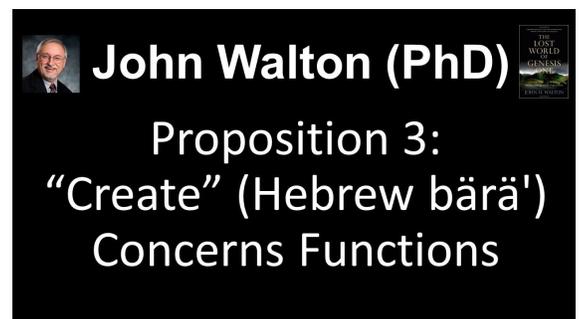
He notes that in nearly all of the ancient creation stories from various ancient cultures, very little is actually materially created. Instead, the stories often begin with no operational system in place, but then creation occurs when the God begins to name and separate things. Naming is associated with giving something an identity, a role, a function. And it's not that the ancients would have denied that their god materially created everything as well, it's just that they weren't concerned with material creation like we are in our modern scientific age. Isn't that interesting?

@slide: prop 3@

Proposition 3: "Create" (Hebrew *bārā'*) Concerns Functions

Well, this leads us directly to our Genesis 1, and the question: what does the writer mean when in verse 1 he says "*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*" @slide: **bara@** The Hebrew verb for 'created' is *bārā'*. Now because as a modern people we tend to think of existence in material terms, we immediately *assume* that the writer of Genesis is talking about the material. When, in truth, that is not what the Hebrew word *bārā'* means. Now, understand, we don't have a Hebrew dictionary from 2,000 B.C. to tell us what *bārā'* meant back then. The way we figure this out is by looking at other places in the Bible where we find *bārā'* and see how it is used (in context). Well, the verb *bārā'* – create – occurs about 50 times in the Old Testament and each time God is the one doing the "bara", the creating. Therefore, we can deduce that *bārā'* refers to an activity only God can perform.

@slide: **bara chart@**



bārā'

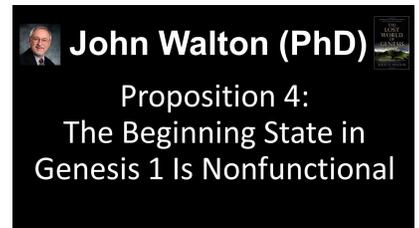
Reference	Object	Comments			
Gen 1:1	heavens and earth		Is 43:7	everyone called by my name	for my glory
Gen 1:21	creatures of the sea		Is 43:15	Israel	
Gen 1:27	people	male and female	Is 45:7	darkness	parallel to forming light
Gen 1:27 (2)	people	in his image	Is 45:7	disaster	parallel to bringing prosperity
Gen 2:3	(none)		Is 45:8	heavens and earth	to produce salvation and righteousness
Gen 2:4	heavens and earth		Is 45:12	people	
Gen 5:1	people	likeness of God	Is 45:18	earth	did not create it to be (<i>tōhû</i>)
Gen 5:2	people	male and female	Is 45:18	heavens	to be inhabited
Gen 5:2	people		Is 48:7	new things, hidden things	
Gen 6:7	people		Is 54:16	blacksmith	to forge a weapon
Ex 34:10	wonders	parallel to <i>āsā</i> (made/did)	Is 54:16	destroyer	to work havoc
Num 16:30	something new (debatable)	earth swallowing rebels	Is 57:19	praise	
Deut 4:32	people		Is 65:17	new heavens and new earth	
Ps 51:10	pure heart		Is 65:18	new heavens and new earth	
Ps 89:12	north and south		Is 65:18	Jerusalem	to be a delight
Ps 89:47	people	for futility	Jer 31:22	new thing	woman to surround man
Ps 102:18	people not yet created	to praise the Lord	Ezek 21:30	Ammonites	
Ps 104:30	creatures	renewing the face of the earth	Ezek 28:13	King of tyre	
Ps 148:5	celestial inhabitants	to praise the Lord	Ezek 28:15	King of tyre	
Eccles 12:1	you		Amos 4:13	wind	
Is 4:5	cloud of smoke		Mal 2:10	covenant people	
Is 40:26	starry host	called by name, kept track of			
Is 40:28	ends of the earth				
Is 41:20	rivers flowing in desert	to meet needs of his people			
Is 42:5	heavens	stretched out			
Is 43:1	Jacob	= Israel			

Walton has analyzed all of these instances of the Hebrew word *bara* and found that in a large percentage of them the context *requires* a functional (not material) understanding of *bārā'*. And in each of those instances that *could* be referring to material creation, it is ambiguous. @slide: prop 3@ Thus, the evidence is not *proof*, but supports that the Israelites understood the word *bārā'* to convey creation in functional terms. Let me say that again: the Israelites would've understood the word *bārā'* to convey creation in functional terms.

@slide: prop 4@

Proposition 4: The Beginning State in Genesis 1 Is Nonfunctional

And this actually brings some clarity to the puzzling description of the earth in verse 2 being (quote:) “without form and void”? @slide: *tohu bohu*@ Well, the Hebrew words that the ESV translates “without form and void” are *tōhû* and *bōhû*. And just as when we look more closely at the word *Bara/Create* and we see that it is primarily used to communicate or bestow function onto something rather than material existence. @slide: *tohu chart*@ Studying this list, one can see nothing in these contexts that would lead us to believe that *tōhû* has anything to do with material form. Rather, the word seems to indicate



tōhû and *bōhû*

purposeless or a lack of functionality.

tōhû

Deut 32:10	parallel to the wilderness; described by "howling"
1 Sam 12:21	descriptive of idols who can accomplish nothing
Job 6:18	wasteland away from wadis where caravans perish for lack of water
Job 12:24	wandering in a trackless waste
Job 26:7	what the north is stretched over
Psalms 107:40	wandering in a trackless waste
Is 24:10	a <i>tōhû</i> settlement is described as desolate
Is 29:21	with <i>tōhû</i> they turn aside righteousness (similar to Is 59:4)
Is 34:11	measuring line of <i>tōhû</i> and plumb stone of <i>bōhû</i>
Is 40:17	worthlessness of the nations; parallel to "nothingness" and the "end" (?)
Is 40:23	rulers of the world made as <i>tōhû</i> ; parallel to "nothingness"
Is 41:29	images are wind and <i>tōhû</i> ; parallel to "end" (?) of their deeds
Is 44:9	all who make images are <i>tōhû</i> ; parallel to without profit
Is 45:18	God did not bring it into existence <i>tōhû</i> ; but in contrast formed it for habitation (intended function)
Is 45:19	Israelites not instructed to seek God in waste places; parallel to land of darkness
Is 49:4	expending one's strength to no purpose (<i>tōhû</i>)
Is 59:4	describes relying on empty arguments or worthless words (i.e., dissembling); parallel to that which is false or worthless
Jer 4:23	description of <i>tōhû</i> and <i>bōhû</i> : light gone, mountains quaking, no people, no birds, fruitful lands waste, towns in ruins

@slide: [tohu bohu translation chart](#) @

So why then has the word so often been translated to have a material sense? The material bias of the modern worldview is the best explanation.

KJV, NASV: Formless and void
 ESV, NKJV: Without form and void
 NIV, NLT: Formless and empty
 NRSV: A formless void
 NJPS: Unformed and void
 Net Bible: Without shape and empty
 NCV: Empty and had no form

@slide: [prop 4](#)@

So returning to the concept of creation as a whole in Genesis 1, Walton is not proposing the days in Genesis are a metaphor like the OEC. He believes they were 7 literal 24 hours days. But he disagrees that God is creating materially in those seven days. Instead the material creation was already there, doing its thing. But during

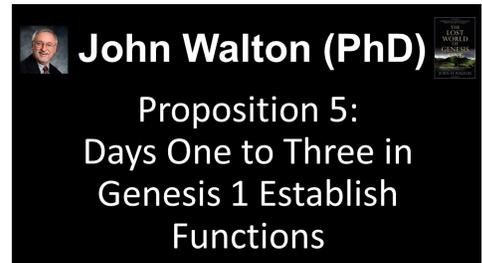
these seven days God is giving purpose to these elements of material creation, namely the functional purpose of creating a context where man and God can be in relationship.

@slide: prop 5@

Proposition 5: Days One to Three in Genesis 1 Establish Functions

So, let's walk through the days of creation and see if Walton's argument rings true.

First of all, note that on Day One (in verses 3-5) nothing material is created – since light is not material. I only point this out because it's sort of a problem for those who want to insist Genesis 1 *is* about material origins. But Walton contends that the focus of Day 1 is not light & dark, but rather day & night. @slide: day one@ In other words, Day One describes the creation of time: that is, God intends to relate to humanity within the context of time. This functional interpretation also solves the alleged conundrum of the (quote) "creation" of light before the sun. Because, remember, under the functional interpretation view the sun could've already been there. In fact, Walton would say that it was, but it just had not been assigned a function or role in regard to God and man.



Day One:
Basis for Time

On Day Two (verses 6-8), @slide: day two@ we have the expanse holding back the waters. What's its function? Well, put yourself in the Genesis writer's shoes, and think about this *visually*. To them, the sky is first of all blue (the color of water) and it is where rain comes from. So to them it looks like an expanse holding back water. So, Walton argues that this expanse in Day 2 not only delineates a space (or arena) for God to dwell with man, but it is the basis for weather and signifies God's sovereignty of precipitation - not too much and not too little.

Day Two:
Space to live /
Basis for Weather

On Day Three (verses 9-13), we have the separation of land from water. @slide: day three@ Notice this is another day when God doesn't materially make anything. But thinking again about the Genesis writer and function and purpose, Walton argues that this parallels an Egyptian text that describes the Nile River rising and then retreating to leave fertile land for agriculture. Thus, the separating of the from the water along with the spouting of plant and the bearing of fruit... Represents the cycle of vegetation, which ensure humans have something to eat. Thus Walton argues that Day 3 is about God assigning a system to produce food

Day Three:
Basis for Food

for humanity.

Y'all starting to get it a little?!

@slide: prop 6@

Proposition 6: Days Four to Six in Genesis 1 Install Functionaries

The writer has laid out some basic functions of the cosmos- light, weather, food. Now, in Days 4-6 we'll see God assign tasks to functionaries that parallel those first three days. @slide: days 4-6@ For example, on Day 1 God gave the basis for time in day and night. Now, in Day 4 (v 14-19), God assigns the function of the sun and moon to be determinative of time for humanity. But note that 'seasons' does not refer to summer and winter.

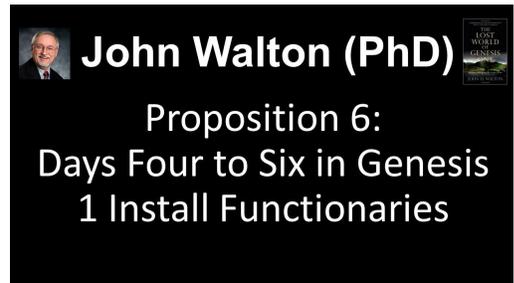
Rather, the Hebrew word when it is used elsewhere designates the festival celebrations that are associated with the sowing season, the harvesting season and so on." These were an important part of the Israelites' religious life with God.

On day 2 God one of the purposes of the expanse was to delineate a space or arena for humans to live in (under the sky). Well, on Day 5 (verses 20-23) God assigns the animals to function in that space by doing whatever they do: whether its fish swimming or birds flying, or whatever.

Then on Day 6, we see the animals given the role of reproducing, much as the vegetation was given that role in Day 3. My apologies to you vegetarians, but apparently God intends humans to be omnivores. ;) ²

@slide: also day 6 human functions@

But also on Day 6 the humans are given their function, and "The difference when we get to the creation of people is that even as they function to populate the world (like fish, birds and animals), they also have a function relative to the rest of



Day Four: Sun & Moon to Mark time + Seasons for festival

Day Five: Animals living in the space

Day Six: Animals Reproducing

**Also on Day Six:
Humans made in
God's Image**

² "The role of the land or the mountains in producing animals does not give us material information as if this were some sort of spontaneous regeneration or a subtle indication of an evolutionary process. Rather the land and mountain are locations of origin. This is where animal life *comes from*, not what it is produced from." Walton explains "It is similar to a child today asking where babies come from. Rather than needing a description of sperm and egg in fertilization and conception, the child only needs to be told that babies come from hospitals or from their mothers."

God's creatures, to subdue and rule. Not only that, but they have a function relative to God as they are in his image. They also have a function relative to each other as they are designated male and female." Notice, none of this is material, all functional.³ And the image of God is the most important, as it means that "all of the rest of creation functions in relationship to humankind, and humankind serves the rest of creation" in godlike role (function) in the world "as God's vice regent." And, in contrast to the ancient creation texts of other cultures, creation is not set up for the benefit of God but for the benefit of humanity. Our function is not just for the pleasure of God, but for the good of all! (They don't contradict.)

@slide: prop 8@

So everything is almost ready, creation almost exists in the functional sense, remember our analogy- the restaurant is almost ready to open, but as Walton says, before (it's) ready to operate, the owner needs to arrive and move into his office." #

One of the coolest things about Walton's understanding of Genesis 1 is that it gives meaning to day seven, which in the traditional view is sort of an afterthought.

"In contrast, a reader from the ancient world would know immediately what was going on and recognize the role of day seven. @slide: day 7@ **In the first six days God had made the cosmos into his cosmic temple. This makes Day seven** the most important of the seven days... the true climax, because it's when God comes to dwell in his creation, with humans, the crown of his creation. After all, this has been the aim of all that has happened in the first 6 days. ##

So let's tie up a few loose ends before we get to criticisms and close...

First, So while Walton firmly agrees that God is fully responsible for at some point creating the material universe out of nothing - If you're a Christian, he'd say

Human Functions

- function *relative* to the rest of God's creatures: to subdue and rule.
- function relative to God as they are in his image
- function relative to each other as they are designated male and female



John Walton (PhD)

Proposition 8:
The Cosmos is a Temple

(see book for proposition 7)

Day Seven: God Inhabits Cosmic Temple

¹⁵ He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

— Colossians 1:15-17 (ESV)

³ Dust in Genesis two implies mortality, not what we are made from.

that's a given, and it is stated explicitly in the @slide: colossians@ Colossians passage that opened our night. But Walton challenges us to approach Genesis with the writer's cultural context in mind. It was a culture where existence was defined by function not material. @slide: a few more things@ Genesis is a functional creation account, not a material one. Walton writes that before these 7 days, "There would be no reason to think that the sun had not been shining, plants had not been growing, or animals had not been present. These were like the rehearsals leading up to a performance of a play. The rehearsals are preparatory and necessary, but they are not the play. They find their meaning only when the audience is present. It is then that the play exists, and it is for them that the play exists."

Second, Walton proposes that the repeated phrase "it was good" (or "very good" in verse 31) is not a moral or ethical description or a comment on the quality of God's work, but rather a comment concerning function. What God has done is good because all of the material creation now has eternal purpose and function.

A few more things...

- Seven days of functional creation were a literal seven days
- "Good" = functional (not moral or perfect)
- If Genesis 1 is about functional origins, it does not conflict with current scientific findings
- Genesis 2 is a sequel to Genesis 1, not a re-telling

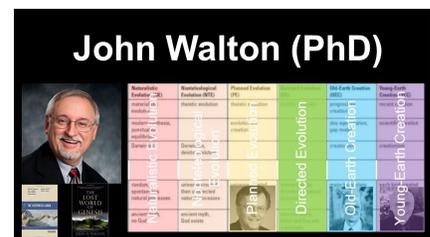
Third, I hope it is clear by now that this functional understanding of Genesis 1 would mean this passage has no beef with scientific findings about the material creation of the world- the big bang, evolution. There's room for both the Genesis account and scientific findings because they're addressing different properties of God's created world.

But fourth, and related to that, I should also mention that Walton goes against convention by suggesting that Genesis 2 is not a re-telling of the creation of humans from chapter 1, but is a sequel to it, describing different events. But we'll get into that on another night. ## #

@slide: walton @

CRITICISMS...

Well, getting to some criticisms of Walton's view before we close. First of all, Lameroux objects to Walton's contention that Genesis 1 concerns only functional origins, citing the firmament to suggest the passage concerns both functional *and* material origins. Second, Walton is criticized for departing from the traditional understanding of the passage adhered to by the church fathers, especially for suggesting that Genesis 2 is a *sequel* rather than a re-telling of Genesis 1.



@slide: chart of 4 views just reviewed @

As I said before, all four of the Christian models believe the Bible is the authoritative word of God. What distinguishes them is what they believe the writer of Genesis is intending to communicate.

Naturalistic Evolution (NE)	Nonteleological Evolution (NTE)	Planned Evolution (PE)	Directed Evolution (DE)	Old-Earth Creation (OEC)	Young-Earth Creation (YEC)
material evolution	theistic evolution	theistic evolution	theistic evolution	progressive creation	recent creation
modern synthesis, punctuated equilibrium		evolutionary creation		day-age creation, gap model	scientific creation
Darwinism	Darwinism, deistic evolution			creationism	creationism
random, spontaneous natural processes	universe created then unguided natural processes	universe created	intentional design	major life plans	each kind created
ancient myth, no God	ancient myth, God exists				

@slide: tech sources @

So, as we close today, I want to invite you to come up afterward and ask any questions you may have, or just come listen to questions other people ask. @slide: class logo @ And in the next week be thinking and praying about what you've heard, but don't feel like you have to solve it all or settle out somewhere. We still have 2 more weeks to go!

See you next week!

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