

THE BIBLE & ANCIENT SCIENCE

High School Edition

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INTRODUCTION

The Question: Is the Bible a book of science?

Scientific Concordism

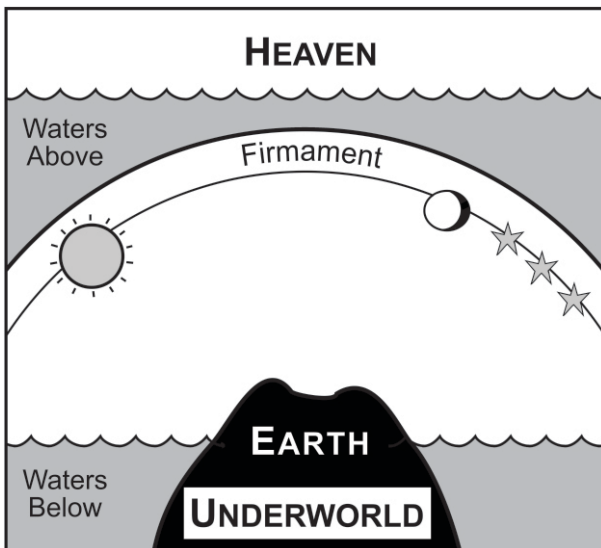
ASSUMPTION:

- that the facts of science align with the Bible.
- that God revealed scientific facts in the Bible 1000s of years before their discovery by modern science.

Example

In the heaven God has pitched a tent for the sun ...
It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other [end]. Ps 19:5-6

The 3-Tier Universe



Phenomenological Perspectives of Nature

Greek *phenomai*: to appear

ANCIENT
Unaided
Physical Senses
Literal & Actual
Sun Rising/Setting

MODERN
Aided by
Scientific Instruments
Appearance of
Sun "Rising/Setting"



PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

ANCIENT PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

What the ancients saw, they believed was ACTUAL:
sun actually moves across the sky daily
☛ everyone believed this up to the 1600s

MODERN PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

What we see, we know to be only an APPEARANCE:
"movement" of the sun across the sky is a visual effect due to rotation of the earth

Message-Incident Principle



Principle of Accommodation

The idea that God came down to the level of ancient people and used their ancient understanding of nature in the Bible.

REASONS FOR ACCOMMODATION:

- Jesus Himself
God came down to become a man.
- Jesus's Use of Parables
DEF: earthly story (ideas) with heavenly meaning
- Personal Prayer
When God talks to you does He not use YOUR language & YOUR ideas?

ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY/GEOLOGY

1. Earth is Immovable

The world is firmly established; *it cannot move*.
1 Chr 16:30; Ps 93:1, 96:10

2. Earth is set on Foundations

God set the earth on its *foundations*; it can never be moved. Ps 104:5

3. Earth is Surrounded by Circumferential Sea

God inscribed a **circle** on the surface of the waters.
Phenomena of: Job 26:10
• travellers eventually came to a body of water
• visual impact of horizon

4. Earth is Circular

God sits enthroned above the *circle of the earth*, 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
universe like a tent with domed canopy & flat floor

5. Earth has Ends

Jesus: The Queen of the South [Sheba] came from the *ends of the earth*. Matt 12:42
Sheba in the SW corner of Arabia

6. Earth has an Underworld

At the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
[1] in heaven and,
[2] on earth and, **3-Tier Universe**
[3] in the *underworld*,
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.
Phil 2:10-11
Greek *kata* = down *chthonios* = underworld

ANCIENT ASTRONOMY

1. Sun Moves across the Sky Daily

The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. Eccl 1:5

2. The Firmament (Heavenly Dome)

2ND DAY OF CREATION: God said, "Let there be a *firmament* between the waters to separate the water from the water." So God made a *firmament* and separated the water under the *firmament* from the water above the *firmament*. And it was so. God called the *firmament* 'heavens.' There was evening, and there was morning—The Second Day.

Greek Gen 1:6-8

stereōma: firmament, dome of heaven
stereos: hard, firm

Hebrew

rāqîa': firmament, dome of heaven
rāqa': to flatten, stamp down

- Context of pounding metals:
They hammered out [*rāqa*] thin sheets of gold. Ex 39:3
- Context of creating the heavens:
Can you join God in spreading out [*rāqa*] the skies, *hard* as a mirror of *cast bronze*? Job 37:18

3. The Waters Above (Heavenly Sea)

2ND DAY OF CREATION: So God made a firmament and separated the *water under* the firmament from the *water above* the firmament. Gen 1:7

Hebrew

mayim: liquid water
NOT vapour, humidity, clouds

4. The Sun, Moon & Stars Are IN the Firmament

4TH DAY OF CREATION: God said, "Let there be lights *in the firmament* of the heaven to separate the day from the night, & LET THEM SERVE as signs to mark the seasons and days and years." Gen 1:14

5. The Heavens: Lower Heavens & Upper Heavens

THE UPPER HEAVENS

God's Dwelling Place

God, look down from heaven, your holy *dwelling place*, and bless your people Israel. Deut 26:15

THE LOWER HEAVENS

The Firmament

God called the firmament 'heavens.' Gen 1:7

The Air Space

The birds of the heavens. Gen 2:19

The clouds of the heavens. Dan 7:13

ANCIENT BIOLOGY

1. Mustard Seeds Are the Smallest Seeds

Jesus: With what can we compare the Kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the *smallest of all the seeds on the earth*.

BUT orchids are much smaller Mk 4:30-31

2. Seeds Die before Germination

Jesus: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and *dies*, it remains only a single seed. But if *dies*, it produces many seeds." Jn 12:23-24
BUT if seeds die, they won't germinate

3. Only Women Are Barren

They had no children, since Elizabeth was *barren*. Lk 1:7
Sarai was *barren*; she had no child. Gen 11:30

Greek

steiros: 1. barren fields
2. barren women (only women)

Hebrew

'āqār: 1. barren fields
2. barren women (only women)

'āqar: to pluck up, to uproot

There is a time for everything ... a time to plant & a time to uproot [*'āqar*]. Eccl 3:1-2

4. Bats Are Birds

These are the *birds* you are not to eat: eagle, vulture, ... [17 other birds] ... and the *bat*. Lev 11:13-19
bats are not birds; they are mammals

5. Living Organisms Are Immutable (Unchanging)

3RD DAY OF CREATION: God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants & trees that bear fruit with seed in it, *according to their kinds*." Gen 1:11

6TH DAY OF CREATION: God said, "Let the land produce living creatures *according to their kinds*." Gen 1:24

- ancient people NEVER saw plants & animals change into different species
- ancient people only saw:
goats birth → goats birth → goats birth → etc

6. Living Organisms Created *De Novo* (Quick & Complete)

GENESIS 1 & 2 CREATION ACCOUNTS:

Plants & animals created quickly & completely formed
In order to understand the origin of living organisms ancient people REVERSED the 'goats-birth-goats' data set back in time to the beginning of creation:

De Novo Creation ← goats birth ← goats birth of 1st goats

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Bible has an ancient understanding of the structure, operation, and **origin** of the universe & life.
2. The ancient science in the Bible is based on an **ancient phenomenological perspective** of nature.
3. Scientific Concordism **FAILS**.
The Bible is **NOT** a book of science.
4. The Message-Incident Principle **FREES** Christians from Scientific Concordism.
5. God **DID NOT LIE** in the Bible!
☛ God **ACCOMMODATED**.

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Book Chapter: "Ancient Science in the Bible"
from DOL's *I Love Jesus & I Accept Evolution* (2009)
www.ualberta.ca/~dlamoure/ancient_science.pdf