**"Does it matter how old the earth is, how it was made, or how long it took?"**

Written by Mitch Doss, Pastor, Bethany Baptist Church, Nov 2017.

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 The question this essay will answer is "Does it matter how old the earth is, how it was made, or how long it took?" To begin, lets get a biblical perspective beginning at Genesis 1:1-3, "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."

**In The Beginning**

This verse declares, first, that God created *TIME - "in the beginning."* The existence of *"*God" is not debatedand verse 1, and reveals the overarching statement of what God did, "created the heaven and the earth." Then Gen 1:2 explains what God was working with, an earth that was "without form and void, and a heaven that only had "darkness." Basically, God had nothing with which to work with, so He began with some "water" (basically, matter had to be created) and caused the Spirit of God to move "upon the face of the waters." At this juncture, God said, "let there be light: and there was light." (Gen 1:3)

As one pauses to consider some of what the scripture has revealed here; an "earth without form and void" by explaining that the Laws of Nature were not yet in existence, nor were any earthly features. Additionally, "darkness" lets it readers know that there was no source of energy to gleam its light. The Spirit of God in the source of energy that the universe required to begin creating life in the void of darkness.

**“Light” Explained**

An interesting development that Northwestern University scientist discovered, is that they captured the flash of light that sparks at the moment of conception within biological creatures, according to an article from Scientific Reports.[[1]](#footnote-1) The amazing parallel guides the one seeking for answers to the mysteries of the universe, and also to what God meant by this "light." It leads the searcher to conclude, according to science, that God "conceived" the universe and started the process of life. Thus the energy required for it to function according to God's preliminary plans. The scripture would complement this theory of what stabilized and designed our universe in Col 1:17, "and He (Jesus) is before all things, and by Him all things consist."

With this creation of "light," came the natural laws that govern creation. These surround the two Laws of Thermodynamics: "The first, also known as the Law of Conservation of Energy, states that energy cannot be created or destroyed in an isolated system. The second, says that energy of the universe remains constant. Energy can neither be created nor be destroyed but it can be transformed from one form to another," according to Physics.stackexchange.com. These laws take away the "void" and contribute to the natural design process issued by the "designer/creator." From this point, Genesis 1 reveals the remainder of God's creation week.

Who is this designer? According to the scriptures, it is Jesus. John 1:1-4, "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was **LIFE,** and the life was the **LIGHT** of men."

Also, note that before this creation process, God's plan of salvation was in place. Titus 1:2, explains that, "in hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie promised before the world began." Understand, that if Genesis 1 is a "lie," then hope of eternal life is a lie also, because as Titus 1:2 says, "God cannot lie." Since God is telling the truth and "His Spirit is truth," (Jn 16:13) then it is relevant to know that He also holds those accountable who deny His truth and who try to turn it into a lie, as Romans 1 examines those persons who would do such. This concept is vital to the understanding and interpretation of the remainder of Gen 1.

**“DAY” Explained**

Genesis 1:5 issues the name for the first "evening and morning" as the "first day." This declared "Day" as a 24 hour period; not a long period of time or "ages." To comprehend this, all one has to do is to accept what the human author had to say concerning this event. Moses, who has been the accepted author of the first five books of the Bible for millennia, revisits this "day" topic in Exodus 16:8, "And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full:" reference to quail and manna daily portions provided by God. This was a 24 hour "Day" meal.

Again, Moses details another "day" in Exodus 18:13, "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening." The most decisive and direct illustration regarding the "Day” is in Exodus 20:8-11, which, pulls its source meaning from the creation week: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." This passage specifically declares a "seven," literal day week paralleling the "seven" literal days, creation week. This declaration by Moses was to mark the significance of the six days of creation and a final day of rest according to Exodus Ex 31:17, "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."

These passages have shown that Genesis 1 is not being deceptive by "encoding” some long term event, but rather speaking precisely and plainly. This explanation allows the Scriptures to be used to interpret itself; which, is the accurate way to study the scripture. Consider this understanding, "Even those who hold to the long ages of Genesis 1 acknowledge the "days" of Exodus 20:8-11 to be 24-hour days."[[2]](#footnote-2) Those that say the two references are different categories of time are inserting a faulty parallelism and disregard the contextual meaning in which the passages are written.

The Jews, additionally, understand this statement above as evidenced by their calendar. Expressly, stating that their "day" goes from nightfall to nightfall, while, a day in the secular calendar begins and ends at midnight.[[3]](#footnote-3) This fact is shown throughout the Bible and until this day.

However, many will issue what they believe to be a contrasting argument from Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 - "for a thousands years in thy sight are but as yesterday" and "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Proper understanding of these two passages begins with correct context. Neither of these are speaking about creation, but rather the "timelessness and eternality of God." If this argument were to apply to the earth and how long it took to accomplish creation, then the context would speak to it; but rather, these actually speak to judgment for mankind because of his iniquities.

Another drastic problem with "ages" being appropriated to the Genesis 1 account, is that it is unintentionally calling God a "liar." This is done by when one inserts "millions of years" into creation and advocating "death" before the sin of Adam. Think about this, suppose that "evolution" was a part of the process, that would mean death to millions of things in this process; how is that "very good" according to Genesis 1:31? Answer, "it is not!" Additionally, this thinking violates the Scriptures, as indicated by Romans 5:2, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." Romans and other passages teach that death was not a concept until after Adam sinned. This means that either God is lying or those who believe in "day-age" theories are lying!

 As discussed earlier, the evolutionary process of millions of years does not work with the context of the Scripture; so, this opens up a secondary question regarding the creation of animals and varieties of them. Genesis 1 states in verses 12, 21, & 25, that God each animal after its "kind," from which, they do not change. However, they do adapt as science has shown, but even they classify these "kinds" as species. When God created them, He placed the necessary information to have varieties within the species, but they a never evolve outside of their established "kind." An interesting detail, from the Cambrian Explosion part of the fossil record reveals that there used to be many more species and phylum than there are now. This fact contradicts what the evolutionary theory teaches.

The fossil record also is used to teach millions of years. Consider that the testing typically uses the carbon dating method, which it’s founder Libby stated that carbon’s half-life was 5730 years, after which there is very much assumption and inconsistency. However, you can use carbon dating to get the desired date, but remember that there are many ways to age things besides using such an unreliable and a manipulated method. (Batten, Don; “Age of the Earth, 101 evidences for a young age of the earth and the universe, *Creation Ministries,* 2009)

During God's creation activity, it is also apparent that God created the things in the universe with the appearance of age. This means that He created mature things, not babies that needed parents to survive. It seems relevant, that if He created the world's creations in this manner, that He would also have done so with the heavenly bodies. These bodies, God declares, are for "signs and seasons;" thus, making their lights appear at their creation moment to the inhabitants of Earth. (Gen 1:16-19)

**Conclusion**

All of these explanations should help to understand how to answer this essay question, will "Does it matter how old the earth is, how it was made, or how long it took?" Acknowledging, “Yes” is fundamental to accepting the Bible as truth and it’s authoritative attributes. Also, If you have doubts about the Genesis account, understand that Jesus did not have any doubts about it. Matthew 19:4 quotes Jesus concerning the marriage of Adam and Eve at creation, "Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female." If we are to hold the testimony of Jesus, we must believe like Him. Maybe it is difficult to understand how God did all these things, but know for certain that there is no theory that does not require some faith. However, with a world that reveals such a sophisticated design, there had to be a designer, His name is GOD!

1. [Sarah Knapton](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/authors/sarah-knapton/), *Science Editor*; "Bright flash of light marks incredible moment life begins when sperm meets egg;" 26 April 2016 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2016/04/26/bright-flash-of-light-marks-incredible-moment-life-begins-when-s/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Archer, pp. 116,117, also Henry Alford, *The Book of Genesis and Part of Exodus* (Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, 1979), pp.313, 314. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/526873/jewish/The-Jewish-Day.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)