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I NTRODUCTION



the person did not really vanish. Notice that we do not draw this conclusion because of what we actually saw, but rather because it is the only explanation that is compatible with our worldview. Our beliefs have affected our interpretation of the evidence.

A very young child might draw an entirely different conclusion. Perhaps she does not yet have enough experience to know that people do not possess the power to make something vanish. Or perhaps she

INTRODUCTION

Each of us has a worldview — a way of thinking about the world in which we live. We all have certain beliefs: ideas that we hold to be true. These beliefs affect how we see the world and how we interpret the things we experience.

For example, most of us believe that things cannot simply cease to exist. So when we see a magician make someone disappear, we know that it is merely a trick. Perhaps a trap door exists which we can't see. Perhaps it is a trick using light and mirrors. In any case,

understands that most people cannot do this, but she thinks that maybe magicians can. In any case, because she has a different worldview than we do, she draws a different conclusion: the magician can make people vanish! Our worldview prevents us from drawing that conclusion — even though we have witnessed exactly the same event. We both have the same evidence, but we have a different interpretation.

A worldview is really a kind of bias. It prevents us from being objective and “open-minded” about certain things.

That's not always a bad thing. In the above example, our worldview helped us to draw the correct conclusion because we were unwilling to consider the absurd possibility that the person really vanished. The less-experienced child draws an incorrect conclusion, because she has an incorrect bias. A correct worldview/bias can help us draw correct conclusions about the evidence. An incorrect worldview/bias can prevent us from drawing correct conclusions.

In a way, a worldview is like having "mental glasses." Many people wear corrective lenses to help them see the world better. Without these glasses, the world appears blurry, but with the glasses in place, the world snaps into focus and things become clear. Each of us



wears "mental glasses" — we all have a worldview. That's because we don't know everything; we are not aware of all of the evidence, all of the facts. We require a worldview to fill in the missing pieces, and to make sense of what we experience.

However, it is crucially important that we have the right worldview. Glasses of the wrong prescription can make the world appear even blurrier than it otherwise would. Glasses can either distort or make clear, and so can a worldview. So which worldview gives us the best perception of reality? On what foundation should we base our thinking, so that we can draw correct conclusions from the evidence we observe?



The Bible is the history book of the universe.

The Bible claims to be the authoritative Word of God. If an all-powerful, all-knowing God did indeed give us the Bible by inspiring men to write it, then Scripture would certainly provide a solid foundation for our way of thinking. The Bible provides answers to the most important questions people ask: What is the purpose of our existence? How did this world come about? What happens when we die? Why is there death and suffering in the world? How should we live?

Furthermore, the Bible is a history book which has demonstrated its accuracy time and time again. When it comes to matters of origins, it makes sense to consult an accurate history book, one recorded by eyewitnesses. Ultimately, we can base our beliefs about origins on the Word of God, or the speculations of other human beings. When it comes to the details of the creation of the universe, we can choose to trust God (who was there), or man (who was not).

This is the heart of the creation versus evolution debate. Many people think the debate is about evidence, and although the evidence is important, evidence is always interpreted through a person's worldview. So the debate is really about worldviews. The debate is over which interpretation of the evidence is best. Think about it this way: both creationists and evolutionists have the same evidence. They have access to the same fossils and the same rocks. They study the same principles of genetics, chemistry, and physics. They observe the same universe. Why then do they draw such different conclusions when it comes to matters of origins? Ultimately, it is because they have different worldviews, and so they interpret the same evidence differently.

The heart of the issue is whether we start from the foundation of the Bible, or





the foundation of naturalism. Naturalism is the belief that there is nothing outside of “nature” — the world we see, with its matter and energy, is all that exists, so it must have created itself by its own processes and properties. There is no supernatural realm in this worldview. Many scientists today, even though they themselves might believe in God, seem to regard this as irrelevant to the way they think about the origin and history of the world.

For all practical purposes, therefore, they are operating within a naturalistic framework, a belief system that rejects God.

Many critics have suggested that we should not start from the Bible — that this is unscientific. However, if the Bible really is absolutely true, if it really is accurate history, wouldn't it be unscientific to ignore this information? Is it logical to deny recorded history, and choose to rely instead on guesswork? Since all scientific evidence must be interpreted in light of some worldview, it seems very reasonable to base our worldview on the

infallible Word of the Creator. I have found that the Bible is a sure foundation for a worldview that is logical, moral, self-consistent, and consistent with the evidence.

Many books have been written which show that the scientific evidence is consistent with what the Bible teaches. These resources have shown that biology, geology, paleontology, and anthropology make sense when interpreted through the lenses of Scripture.

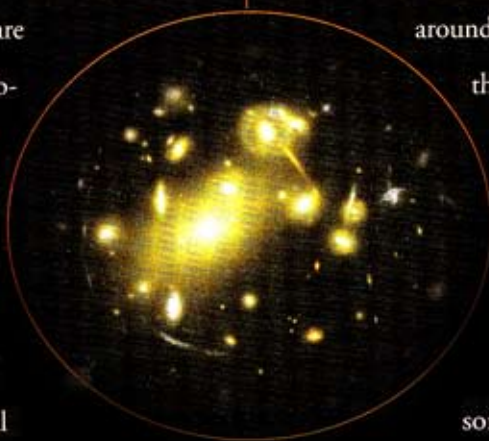
Many of these resources are available through our website at *answersingenesis.org*. However, currently, very few resources exist which interpret evidences in the field of astronomy from a biblical creation perspective.

The purpose of this book is to provide a starting point in the field of creation astronomy. When we understand the evidence, we will see that it makes sense in light of Scripture. The observations in astronomy are consistent with what the Bible teaches. We will begin by exploring how the astonishing size

and beauty of the universe testify to God's glory. We will then explore passages of the Bible which touch on astronomy. These passages are consistent with what is known about the universe.

We will also deal with passages of Scripture which conflict with the current opinion of the majority of scientists. One important area of conflict is the age of the universe; most astronomers believe that the universe is

around 14 billion years old, yet the Bible indicates a much more recent origin.



We will explore the reasons for the common belief in vast ages. Additionally, we

will address the so-called "distant starlight problem." This is the idea that light from the most distant galaxies must take many billions of years to arrive on earth, allegedly proving that the universe is indeed billions of years old. This argument is used by critics in an attempt to disprove the Bible (or

at least the biblical time scale) in favor of the big bang. However, when investigated carefully, the argument does not work.

We will see that distant starlight does not support the big bang.

The age of the universe is not the only area of conflict. The Bible indicates that the universe was supernaturally created, in sharp contrast to the naturalism of the big-bang and nebular accretion models. We will also explore the idea of extra-terrestrial

life. The prevailing evolutionary world-view accepts alien life as more or less a given, but what does the Bible teach? When the evidence is interpreted

properly, we will find that it fits with God's Word.

In the final chapter, the starting assumptions of various worldviews will be discussed. We will explore the internal inconsistencies of non-biblical worldviews, and show how the Bible leads to a logically consistent worldview in which science and technology

are possible. We will also discuss the non-material implications of starting from Scripture — the divinely inspired Word of God.

This book also contains in-depth sections which contain material of a more detailed nature. Readers with an interest in the scientific details may find these sections helpful. By design, the in-depth sections are not essential to the main points of the book; so, feel free to skim or skip these sections as desired.



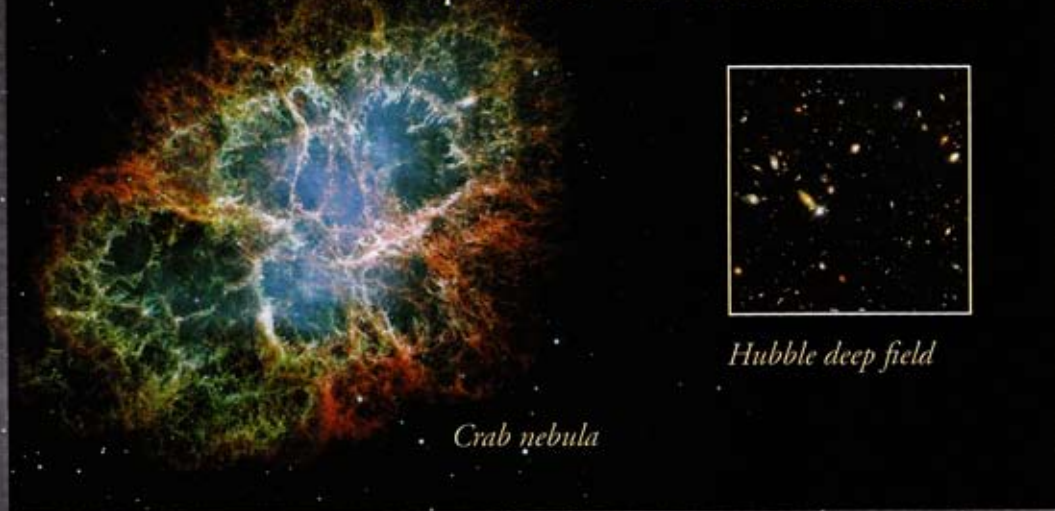
In this book, we will see that the Bible is accurate when it touches on astronomy. The Bible provides a logical foundation for the in-

terpretation of scientific evidence in the field of astrophysics, as it does for other fields of science. We will see that the evidence makes sense when we view the universe through biblical glasses. We are “taking back” the field of astronomy; we are giving the universe back to the Lord who created it.

CHAPTER ONE



The splendor of God's creation



Crab nebula

Hubble deep field

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (NIV). This beautiful statement from Psalm 19:1 indicates one of the purposes of the created universe: the universe reveals the majesty of its Creator. Of course, God's glory can be seen in many different aspects of creation — not just the heavens. Consider the magnificent intricacy of a living cell, the complexity and the amazing diversity of life on earth, and the mathematical precision of the laws of physics and chemistry. These are all indicative of the

incomprehensible creativity, intelligence, and power of the Creator.

Why then does the Bible single out the heavens as declaring His glory? Perhaps the heavens declare God's glory in a special way or to a greater extent. It may even be that the starry universe was specially designed for the purpose of declaring God's glory to us. We will see that the universe has incredible beauty. This alone would be sufficient reason to praise God for His creation, but not only did God make the universe beautiful, He made it unimaginably large. The range of

scales in the universe is truly staggering. The universe contains objects of incredible size and mass at distances which the human mind cannot fully grasp. When we consider the power of the Lord who made all this, we cannot help but feel humbled. Truly, the God who created this universe is glorious and worthy of praise. Let us now explore the size and beauty of the universe to gain an appreciation for the majesty of the Creator.

Let's start close to home, with a relatively small astronomical object. The moon is the nearest (natural) celestial body. It is approximately 2,100 miles (3,400 kilometers) in diameter — roughly the size of the

continental United States (see below). The moon orbits at an average distance of 240,000 miles (380,000 km) from the earth. On the one hand, this is a tremendous distance. On the other hand, it is not so far as to be totally incomprehensible; some cars have as many miles on them as this. The moon orbits the earth in a roughly circular path, taking about one month from start to finish. In fact, that is where we get the idea for a “month.” According to Scripture, one of the reasons God created the celestial bodies was to be for signs, seasons, days, and years (Gen. 1:14) — in other words, to mark the passage of time. The moon does just that. It continually orbits the earth every month with clockwork precision.

Additionally, the moon (the “lesser light” created on day 4) was designed to “rule the night,” according to Genesis 1:16. Indeed, the moon does rule the night; it outshines every other nighttime celestial object. In fact, when the moon is out, it has a tendency to “wash out” most other astronomical objects, making them more difficult to see. This effect is

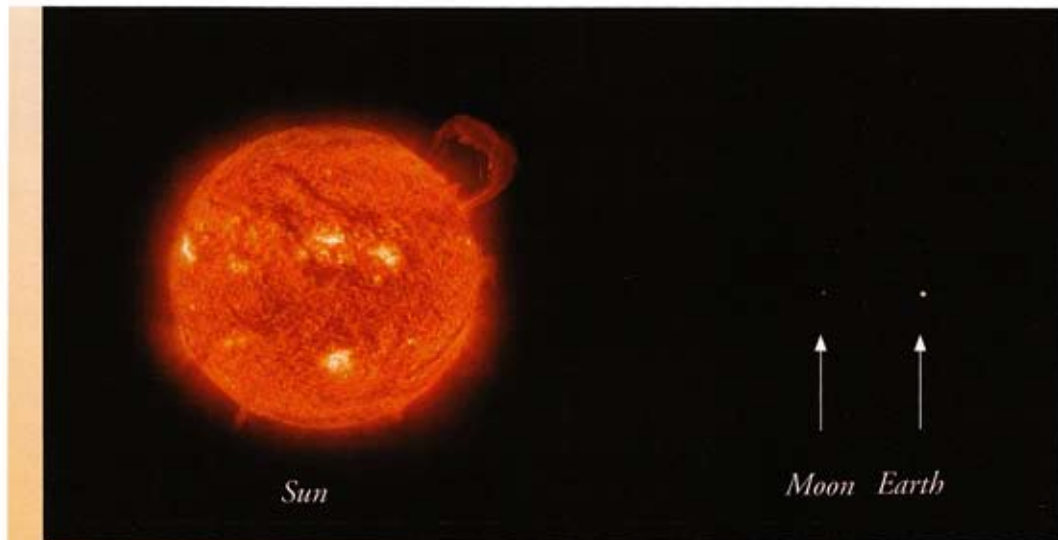


The moon is about the same size as the United States of America.

particularly evident when the moon is near its full phase. At that time, the moon is over 2,500 times brighter than the next brightest nighttime object (Venus).

Let us move farther out into space, and consider the “greater light” that God created on day 4 — the sun. The sun (like other stars) is a glowing hot ball of hydrogen gas. It derives energy from the fusion of hydrogen to helium in the core. The sun is effectively a

The sun is about 400 times more distant than the moon. Remarkably, it is also 400 times larger. So it has the same angular size as the moon¹ — meaning it appears the same size and covers the same portion of the sky. It is interesting that God made both of the “great lights” the same angular size — and far larger (in angle) than any of the other celestial objects. There is no naturalistic reason why the sun and moon would be at



The relative size of the sun, moon, and Earth.

stable hydrogen bomb. It is an extremely efficient source of energy, placed at just the right distance to provide the right amount of light and heat for the earth.

just the right distances to have the same apparent size as seen from earth. As far as we know, the earth is the only planet for which this is the case.²



TAKING BACK ASTRONOMY



People have been fascinated by the stars for centuries, looking to them for guidance and in awe. Unfortunately, modern evolutionary thinking in astronomy has caused many people to disconnect from the Bible's view of history, as they are taught that the universe is millions or even billions of years old. *Taking Back Astronomy* shows that the billions of evolutionary years taught in public schools are unnecessary and that one need only to look to the Creator of the Bible to explain the origin of the stars and the universe. *Taking Back Astronomy* is:

- Written for the layperson by a qualified writer
- Filled with fascinating photographs and illustrations for easy comprehension of subject matter
- Filled with interesting facts like: Did you know that the moon is only about the same size as the continental United States?

Dr. Jason Lisle discusses and debunks popular evolutionary concepts such as the big bang and answers biblical questions like how the speed of light affects the Bible's account of history. He provides great answers and evidence for any person struggling to reconcile science and the Bible, and overwhelmingly shows that the Bible can be trusted.

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Books

A Division of New Leaf Publishing Group
www.masterbooks.net

EDUCATION K-12/SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ASTRONOMY

\$15.99 US

ISBN13: 978-0-8905-1471-9

ISBN10: 0-89051-471-2



EAN

9 780890 514719