

THE CHRISTIANS EXPECT SCIENCE TO INTERPRET THE BIBLE BY AFFIRMING IT FINDS NOTHING TO OVERTHROW IT AS THE TRUTH

Christians say that there is no conflict between the Bible and true science. They set themselves up as having the right to interpret science as fitting the Bible. That implies scientists should agree. They assert that the Bible agrees with science but is not a scientific textbook to get around the bits that sound odd such as statements about the earth having four corners. They say that is only popular speech and is not meant to be scientifically accurate. Needless to say they cannot show that the author definitely thought of it as a mere figure of popular speech! Some people have always meant four corners literally.

Science is not science if it worries about how to fit one particular book the Bible.

The Bible is not a scientific textbook. True. But it touches on matters that are relevant to science. So its not being a textbook is irrelevant. What matters is that it does report on science. That is what matters.

The believers say then that it states nothing that contradicts science. Examples they propose follow.

1 Job cries that the earth hangs upon nothing, Job 26:7. The earth floats in space. Job was right. That somebody had that view in a time when people believed all sorts of nonsense about the earth and what supported it is truly remarkable.

2 The Bible asserts that God made man from dust. Genesis 2:7 "the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground" And science shows us that the ground and the body all share the same elements.

But Job never claimed to be divinely inspired so even if he were right it would not support the notion that the Bible was the result of divine miracle revelations.

There are dust combinations that would not make great healthy human beings so which combination and kind of dust do the believers have in mind?

Adam and Eve and Evolutionary Theory

Many Christians do not take Genesis seriously when it says God made man from dust and woman from the rib of man. Yet the apostle says God made man from woman and woman from man 1 Corinthians 11:8 For man did not come from woman but woman from man.

Are those Christians influenced by the feeling against miracles that pervades science? Yes.

Is there a conflict between the Bible teaching and the doctrine of evolution that random chance is behind the existence of all things?

Science is unable to examine the whole evolution process so its largely assuming that the system produced us. It has some pieces of the puzzle and has faith that evolution is the explanation for human existence. The Christian needs to see there is a puzzle and admit that the miraculous may have been at work rather than random forces. But that is overdoing it. You don't need to suggest a miracle or divine intelligence did what natural forces could do.

They answer, "The claims of science and the claims of the Bible may seem impossible to reconcile. But there is no need to go that far. We could simply say that we do not understand how the problems are to be solved and put our trust in God who may give us the answer. A good wife trusts her husband even though he seems to be doing terrible things. She waits for understanding. The Bible commands similar faith. We read how God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac to him to test his obedience in Genesis 22. God revealed his approval for Abraham's obedience despite the fact that Abraham would have thought God was contradicting his promise to make Isaac the father of a great nation."

Science would say Abraham is insane but we are not told about that conflict with the Bible.

There are many religious interpretations of the Bible that conflict with modern science in a more obvious way than others. Many people today think that to be a Bible-believer you have to accept Archbishop Ussher's dating of creation at 4004 BC. It is important to point out that this was based on assumptions he made about the Bible genealogies rather than Bible teaching "it is precarious in the highest degree to draw chronological inferences from genealogical tables" Warfield, B B, On the Antiquity and the Unity of the Human Race (The Princeton Theological Review, 1911), p. 3

Christians warn that we must not go too far to get the Bible to fit science, "If we try to water down scripture for the sake of what we perceive to be scientific knowledge, then we are guilty of wresting the word of God. Do we really want to take sinful and often deceitful man as the authority of the truth and not God?"

The Book of Genesis speaks of six days of creation in Genesis 1. God made all things in six steps. Adam was made from the dust of the ground and a rib was taken from him and built up into his wife Eve Genesis 2:21,22, So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. How can these details be reconciled with modern science which says creation was a process that took billions of years and that the order given in the Bible is wrong?

Most believers today suggest the following approach to the story: "Take the core assertion that, somehow or other, God created the world, the events of the six-day narration being regarded as a form of poetry" Stannard, R. Science & Belief, The Big Issues (Lion, 2012) p. 54

It seems dishonest to reason that scripture is nonsense if you check it out against modern science and to postulate that it cannot be meant literally. That is reading today's scientific claims back into the scriptures which were produced in a pre-scientific age.

Significance of the Bible

Christians claim, "God's word was significant to the people of Bible times for it developed their knowledge and thus science was able to develop. God saved us from pre-scientific forms of dangerous and blasphemous religion - for example the worship of human type gods. Ex 20:4-6 You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. The Bible is the foundation of modern science."

Evaluation: If Bible religion was an improvement on paganism, that is a very weak argument in its favour. Many forms of paganism were civilised and humanistic.

Such vital truths as evolution are not even mentioned. We read about the Virgin Mary having not known man and the most important truth of all is not even considered worthy of mention. Evolution is that truth. Nobody can say that the Bible approves of evolution. That is only guessing for it never gives any hint that the fact of evolution is a fact.

The Bible fitting science means nothing unless it affirms science. Evolution does not deserve to be ignored. Ever.

