

# Science and the Bible E-Zine

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"Truth: That which is in accord with fact and reality."

This is written so that you may believe the bible because of science rather than in spite of science.

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## What's in This Issue:

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## 1) What's Been Happening at Science and the Bible?

By Max B. Frederick, AnOldScientist

The article in this issue, Does the Bible Really Contain Science?, is the result of much re-writing. Originally the article was much too long for the E-Zine, and it did not adequately communicate the main point. It got sidetracked on the definition of science. A lot has been removed, but it still tries to put too much into one article. Clyde Spencer is the one who stimulated the thinking behind the article. That draft version was sent to Clyde for further input. As Clyde rightly points out, the time honored historical definition of science, in the most prestigious dictionary of the English Language, the one that costs \$949.00 for a single copy or \$295 a year for an individual online subscription, seems a little weak to those currently in that profession. To avoid distraction, the use of different wording seems prudent.

A complete copy of the email exchange with Clyde is posted on the internet at <http://www.scienceandthebible.net/articles/ClydeEmailExchange-2009-11.doc> ; I highly recommend reading it.

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## 2) Does the Bible Really Contain Science?

By **Max B. Frederick, AnOldScientist**

*“Facts alone do not constitute science, even though they are an essential element. It is the weaving of those facts into a tapestry that can withstand heavy use that is true science.”*

Clyde Spencer

Once again, an E-Zine reader has challenged the notion that information in accord with reality as discovered by modern science, can be found within the pages of the bible.

In my writing, I try to differentiate between *science* and *modern science*, the difference being modern science includes not only information validated to be in accord with reality, but also the modern scientific method of discovering and validating that information.

This has brought a challenge to my recent statement: *“Some would like to define science to include some scientific method. But science existed long before the scientific method or mathematics became the dominate feature. To the layman, science is simply humans seeking to find the truth about reality for themselves, and with rigorous discipline.”*

### **Using the Word, *Science*, Creates a Distraction.**

Whether or not you find science in the bible depends on how you define *science*.

To different people the word *science* means different things.

To some, science is the physical world of cold hard facts as opposed to supernatural.

To others, science includes knowledge and understanding of those cold hard facts.

To still others, science is all the above, and in addition the information must have been derived or discovered exclusively by the use of the *Scientific Method of Modern Science*, and, its organization must be stated in the language of modern mathematics.

As one reader, Clyde<sup>1</sup>, puts it:

“The layman's "science" as you call it is more properly called metaphysics. I think that most scientists would say that Science, as we know it, started with Sir Francis Bacon. Prior to that, what existed was a trial-and-error approach to acquiring knowledge about the natural world, and the supporting facts that allowed interpretation of phenomena, and improvement of technological processes. Technology has existed since fire was controlled and the first stick was hardened and sharpened in a fire. Thus, technology is older than science because those primitives knew that they could cook food and make spears with fire, but they didn't know why. What differentiates Science from folk lore, anecdotes, and a belief that something is true that isn't (take Aristotle's belief in spontaneous generation of life from decaying meat, for example) IS The Scientific Method, which entails controlled experiments and validation of the results by peer review, subject to further examination if the Null Hypothesis test fails. Lastly, the validated scientific theory is codified in a short-hand called mathematics that allows quantitative predictions for different

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<sup>1</sup> Spencer, Clyde, email Sent: Mon 11/2/2009 7:38 AM: (I have known Clyde for many years and have great respect for his intellectual honesty.)

values of variables than were used in the testing. This is all vastly different from the pre-scientific trial-and-error approach that usually resulted in recipes that were not to be deviated from if one wanted to get good results in the production of brass, paint pigment, or boat hull design, to name just a few applications of science. I realize that certain sciences, such as paleontology, are handicapped by the inability to conduct tests on long-dead animals. However, one might counter by saying that paleontology, which literally means "study of ancient life" is not a complete, robust science in the same sense as physics. It is probably the recognition of that handicap that is responsible for the current trend of developing computer simulations to make up for the inability to perform experiments on actual animals. In summary, without The Scientific Method and mathematics, one only has a collection of observations, and 'facts' of dubious veracity, that are but the first step in The Scientific Method; thus, it is an aborted science that can do much mischief in the name of Science.

If Darwin had only cataloged the many rocks, plants, and animals collected while traveling around the world, he would most probably be only an obscure archivist, and not a renowned scientist. It was the inductive reasoning based on his observations that led to a grand theory that is still being tested today, which elevates him to being an insightful scientist. Facts alone do not constitute science, even though they are an essential element. It is the weaving of those facts into a tapestry that can withstand heavy use that is true science."

Whether you define science to be information, knowledge of information, or understanding of information or the process whereby you gain knowledge of information is irrelevant.

What is relevant is the fact that information about the natural world that, at the present time, could be known only by the processes of modern science, **is** found, described in detail, in the bible, and is in accord with reality as discovered by modern science.

Perhaps, the solution is to avoid the word science to describe what is found in the bible.

### **Ancient Information and Understanding:**

Instead of quibbling over vocabulary, simply say what you mean. In the bible is a wealth of information that is today considered to be in the realm of modern science. This information is recorded in ancient scripture with an organization that indicates understanding of the relationship among the facts. Many of these facts are concerning events and processes that occurred long before humans were in existence, negating any possibility that these facts are a simple accumulation of observations. These are not simple facts such as the color of the sky. The organization of these facts is not simple. The facts and organization are in accord with reality, and consistent from writer to writer separated by many centuries of time.

A typical example of the complexity and understanding is the following sequence recorded in the original<sup>2</sup> language of the ancient scripture: The early atmosphere of the planet earth developed before the oceans, and that early atmosphere functioned to capture water from outer space to fill the oceans. Later, the planet earth was completely covered with ocean and there were no continents above sea level. After that, the dry land emerged and became continents surrounded by continuous ocean. The details and chronology are impeccable.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/OTpdf/gen1.pdf> See v. 6-10

This same information has been recently discovered by modern science. Some of it is only now, since the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, being accepted by mainstream modern science.

But is it really science in the bible? Independent of what you call it, ancient understanding of true facts existed: **In the bible, there is information (about things that today would be considered to be in the realm of science.) At the time that information was originally written, it was obviously understood far beyond what modern science would expect in those ancient times. For millennium, human recognition of much of this information in the bible was hampered by the fact that the understanding once held, had, for millennium, been lost and modern science had not yet discovered the same things that were obviously understood thousands of years earlier.**

### **Does the Bible Really Exhibit Ancient Knowledge and Understanding?**

More to the point of the challenge: Is the information and understanding claimed to be found in the bible real? Or, is it just a creative interpretation to make God look good?

### **Bias Against Ancient Understanding**

Is there evidence of any such thing as ancient cognizance of information? Is there evidence of ancient understanding of the natural world? Is there evidence of ancient understanding of things that would today be considered to be in the realm of science?

The history of the dawn of knowledge and cognizance is perceived by academia, to be a long slow progression from ignorance to understanding. That progression includes such concepts as the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Agricultural Age, the Dark Ages, the Age of Enlightenment, the Industrial Age, the Age of Flight, the Space Age, the Information Age...or some such sequence. It is perceived to be a long progression from ignorance through religious ignorance, religious myth, painful enlightenment, overthrow of religious shackles, and finally the pinnacle of intelligence, the current era of modern science.

For example, do a Google search on Stonehenge. Typically you will find interpretation of the thoughts of the people who built it to be a progression from religious ignorance to happenstance observations of some order in the universe and that order became the object of some religious ritual. Rarely will you find a mention of the possibility of those ancient humans being capable of intelligent interpretation leading to understanding<sup>3</sup> comparable to the processes of modern science today. If you do find it, of course, there is a tendency for it to be dismissed, by the main stream secular world, as a creative interpretation.

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<sup>3</sup> Rarely do you find the assumption that the ancient observers had any understanding of *what* was the cause of the observations. I prefer the word *what* in search of the ultimate reasons for anything within the realm of science, rather than *why*, as the word *why* allows philosophical or religious arguments into evidence. The word *what* is restricted to the physical reasons. Where a philosopher may be allowed to ask *why* the sky is blue, the scientist should ask *what* causes the sky to be blue, then answer it with a scientific reason as to *what* it is that causes it to be blue. It is generally assumed that ancient observers would answer the *why* question with some philosophical or religious answer.

Although there is valid scientific evidence to the contrary, it is customary to force fit even that evidence into the assumed pattern<sup>4</sup> of the progression from religion to enlightenment.

At this point it might be profitable to be cautioned by an analogy provided by Clyde:<sup>5</sup>

“A wheel and windshield are part of a car, but do not a car make. The essence of a car is that it is a mechanical means of transportation. If a collection of parts that might be assembled into a car exist, that does not mean the car exists. For any number of reasons, the car might never come into existence. That is my point about science! You might have some of the elements of science, such as an organized collection of ‘facts’ (of questionable veracity because the protocol doesn’t exist to validate them), but without the ability to form a hypothesis inductively, and predict things deductively, and validate the predictions, then you only have a wheel and a windshield.”

In spite of the skepticism, the placement of the stones of Stonehenge are accepted by some scientists to be scientific evidence of some ancient intelligent cognizance concerning cosmic cycles, both visible and invisible, and of mathematical proportion. This evidence has even been interpreted to indicate an early era of highly developed knowledge and understanding.

Even the location of the site is evidence of ancient understanding. Where that site is located is uniquely the latitude that certain mathematical features of the cosmos are at right angles, allowing the layout of the stones to be a rectangle rather than a parallelogram. It has been postulated that science of cosmic understanding was not necessarily involved because the knowledge of the locations for the placement of the stones could have been worked out over hundreds of years by religious people handing down information for many generations. But that is unlikely when you add the uniqueness of the latitude of the site. To determine this location by trial and error of observations without understanding would have required thousands, rather than hundreds of years of recordings, from many different locations to be passed from generation to generation.

And then there is similar evidence of ancient understanding in the great pyramid of Egypt.

There is a gap of thousands of years from this hypothesized era of height of understanding to the rise of modern science, that revealed the knowledge on which this engineering was supposedly based. During this gap, knowledge is not recorded in the annals of human history. This leads to the hypothesis that it once existed, then became lost to humankind.

But the evidence that it once existed still stands for us to observe.

Even the Book of Job records cosmic understanding as old as the height of Egyptian Culture.

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<sup>4</sup> One might even venture to say that assumed pattern is the religious doctrine required for anyone who wishes to become an accepted member of the enlightened secular modern science by consensus club.

<sup>5</sup> Spencer, Clyde, email sent Wed 11/25/2009 2:44 PM. All following quotes from Clyde are from this email.

I am not advocating there was once a great scientific age that has been lost to history. I am simply illustrating the bias against the existence of understanding beyond religious myth prior to the current era of scientific enlightenment.

### **Warning Against Creative Interpretation:**

Clyde rightly points out that the alleged knowledge is not always spelled out in such a way that a layman can recognize it.

“Unfortunately, those “plain statements” are rather scarce in the Bible. It seems that the, sometimes creative, interpretations of someone familiar with modern science are necessary to make the ‘facts’ known. That is a great deal like the clergy insisting that laymen cannot understand what was meant in the scriptures and therefore the priesthood must tell them what it all means. I would be a lot more comfortable with your assertions if those “plain statements” could be found, which might have been unintelligible to those of 2,000 years ago, but make obvious sense to a modern person, even without scientific training. Thus, my previous suggestion that mathematical theories could be stated like an algebra word problem and make it clear that they really understood how Nature worked, even if they hadn’t yet developed the short-hand we call modern mathematics.”

Sometimes it takes a scientist versed in the knowledge to recognize it in the writings. But does that diminish the fact that the information of interest is recorded in the bible?

Again looking at scholarly interpretations of Stonehenge. Some scientists contend that Stonehenge, is laid out according to some mathematical formula that recognizes cycles in the movement of heavenly bodies, yet that information is not spelled out in a way that a layman can recognize it. It takes a scientist versed in the knowledge to recognize it. The observation that if you stand in a certain spot the sun rises near a certain rock does not tell the layman of the knowledge required to lay out the monument so that happens, nor does it tell the layman that certain other rocks that are laid out in a square actually coincide with certain invisible features of the universe. But by design or by happenstance, they do. Only a scientist versed in this knowledge recognizes it and the scientific community counts it as evidence that the monument was designed for this correlation, even evidence of ancient understanding of invisible cycles and knowledge of the fact that if the monument had been at any latitude other than within about fifty miles of where it is, It would not be a rectangle, but a parallelogram.

Likewise, it should be acceptable for a scientist versed in modern science’s version of the origins to recognize some of the more obscure evidence that the ancient understanding recorded in the bible coincides with the recent discoveries of modern science.

Yet, we should be careful to heed the warnings of Clyde:

“It is well known that humans are capable of seeing patterns where they do not exist – a horse head in the clouds in the sky, a straight line in a random pattern of dots. When one has to interpret words that have gone through three or more interpretations, to arrive at something that fits a single hypothesis, one is in violation of both Chamberlain’s Method and Occam’s Razor. Give me the “plain statement” and I’ll be a believer. However, you cannot provide something that would have been meaningless to the Middle-Ages, but convincingly perceptive to Modern Man, such as “The sun’s light and heat are produced by the fusion of two light gasses in the interior.” Given something like that, I’d even back off on my requirement of some mathematical explanation such as  $E = mc^2$ . In summary, I don’t find your arguments convincing. But you are very creative.”

Chamberlains method of multiple working hypotheses avoids the blindness of considering only the desired outcome. Occam's Razor proclaims that the simplest explanation is more likely the correct explanation. The warning against words that have gone through three or more interpretations is illustrated by the eighth verse of the 104<sup>th</sup> Psalm. Prior to the discovery of the principle of isostasy around the turn of the century about a hundred years ago, Translations into English based on the Latin, based on the Greek, implied that it was the water that went up by the mountains and down by the valleys.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, lesser accepted, yet simpler translations directly from the Ancient Hebrew had it right, that it was the mountains that went up and the valleys that went down.<sup>7</sup> It was meaningless to scholars of the Middle Ages to think that mountains and valleys could go up and down. But that is exactly what the original language said. However, so convinced were the Middle Agers that they had to fudge the translation to make their God look good. Of course, the discoveries of modern science has made the simple explanation as correctly translated from the original to be an example of five of Clyde's warnings; multiple successive interpretations, single hypothesis (Chamberlain), Occam's Razor (simplest), unperceivable to Middle-Agers, and, creative explanation.

In contrast, the complexity of the puzzle of the stones of Stonehenge is orders of magnitude greater than the complexity of the puzzle for recognizing the greater accord with reality of the more ancient version of the scriptures. The fact that only a scientist could see the more subtle details because of his specialized knowledge of the corresponding modern science derived facts does not detract from the fact that the more obvious items of information do, in fact, exist. In fact, finding more upon deeper digging is more indicative that the information did in fact exist in the blatantly obvious items that prompted the deeper digging. The hypothesis that the 104<sup>th</sup> Psalm is in fact an ordered list of origin events based on the more obvious items led to the search for the original language simple meanings of the more obscure items. The predictions that the more obscure items would also fit into that same pattern is born out. Sufficient clues survived the translation process to motivate the scientist to go back to the original language and discover more correct detail in the lesser translated version.

In comparison to the Stonehenge analysis, that complexity is analogous to scientists finding ancient remains of rotted post ends in the ground where scientists predicted they would be if the designers had the postulated understanding. Likewise, this evidence would not be obvious to the casual observer. It required someone versed in the knowledge postulated to be known by the designers of the original monument. This predictive nature of their hypothesis is taken to be valid positive evidence that the ancients understood more than was obvious.

### **Exactly What Do We Find in the Bible?**

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<sup>6</sup> "They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them." KJV 1611

<sup>7</sup> "And the mountains ascend, and the valleys descend to the place which thou hast established for them." Geneva Bible, 1599.

Rather than argue the point that scientific information is found in the bible, and verified by modern science, a simple example should suffice.

Nowhere in the bible is understanding of the pre-human sequence of origin events more aptly demonstrated than in the 104<sup>th</sup> Psalm. In that psalm, over three dozen details of the history of existence are mentioned. These details, if they were found somewhere other than in the bible, would be considered to be evidence of the author's understanding of those facts concerning the origins. The tapestry into which they are woven includes the fact that each detail is mentioned in the order that it first occurred in the development of the existence of the universe, the planet earth, the ecology, and life in it. That tapestry also includes examples of future benefit, such as a habitat for the conies (rabbits.)

A casual observation reveals obvious knowledge a few facts and chronology claimed to be the discoveries of modern science. They are obviously correct details, and obviously in the same order as modern science has discovered that they came into existence.

In verse 2, light is mentioned. Modern science says light is one of the first things that came into existence with the big bang. Later in verse 2, the expansion of the universe is mentioned. Modern science says the expansion of the universe began with the big bang and continues to happen after the big bang. In verse 4, The laying of the foundations of the earth is mentioned. "Earth," in the bible, generally means dry land, continents, not the planet earth. The "foundations of the earth" is that layer under the continents that holds them up by the equivalent of flotation. Modern science calls it the Mantle. In verse 6, that foundation becomes covered with ocean. There are no continents. There is no dry land. Modern science has discovered that after the mantle cooled sufficiently, water covered the whole planet earth and there were no continents. Later, the continents emerged from below sea level. In verse 8, the mountains go up and the valleys go down. As long as there has been continents, the principle of isostasy operates to cause mountains to go up and valleys to go down, supported by the mantle. In verse 9, the continents remain above sea level. Once the continents emerged, they remained above sea level. In verses 10 through 28, ecology is established. Once the continents remained above sea level, land based ecology developed. In verse 29, ecology dies. Modern science calls this a mass extinction. In verse 30, life is renewed. Modern science calls this punctuated equilibrium.

Does deeper digging reveal more? Yes. Upon closer scrutiny the initial observation that this is a chronology of origin events is born out in great detail, especially when resorting to the original meanings in the original language of the ancient scripture. This investigation is continued in a free fifteen page detailed commentary on the 104<sup>th</sup> Psalm found at:

<http://www.scienceandthebible.net/articles/ACommentaryOnPsalm104.pdf>

Likewise, recorded in Proverbs, chapter 8, is an account of Pre- Cambrian<sup>8</sup> events credited to someone identified only as "Wisdom," who claims to be an eye-witness.

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<sup>8</sup> Pre-Cambrian era is defined by scientists to be all time before the existence of complex life forms, including humans. All biblical accounts of the origins are in accord with this concept.



In this account by “Wisdom,” there are two passes through the chronology giving details concerning the early condition of the planet earth. These details include the planet at one time being without oceans or continents, the development of the early atmosphere, and its function in capturing water from outer space to add to the juvenile water to cover the planet with ocean, the eventual emergence of the continents and the establishment of continents to remain above sea level. All this is in the correct chronological order and all occurring before land dwelling life forms appeared on this planet. And it is all in accord with reality as discovered by modern science.

In Summary:

True, detailed, factual information concerning physical existence and the history of its origins is found recorded in the ancient scripture of the bible.<sup>9</sup> That original information is consistent from individual account to individual account recorded over a span of time of multiple millennia from a time contemporaneously with the height of the Egyptian culture to the first century AD. That original information is also in accord with reality as decoded by the current methods of modern science. This consistency, both internal and external, is overwhelming evidence of understanding over 3000 years ago.

Careful study reveals that same information, when entrusted to the minds of humans, over millennium, centuries, even decades, of time, slowly degraded from its original accord with reality. This degradation may be due to lack of understanding during the intervening years that is not currently lacking in this era of modern science. This degradation, when compared to the original information, gives us two different views of the past. The degraded view has come to be regarded as nothing but religious myth, while the original, view is still in accord with reality. While the original uncorrupted view remains ignored, it is that degraded view that gives religion, and its holy book, the bible, a bad name in today’s realm of science.

The validity of that original information is so great, that many skeptics dismiss its existence without examining the evidence. The argument used to dismiss the existence of such ancient knowledge is the fact that the processes of modern science are required to discover such knowledge, and modern science did not exist at that ancient time.

The precise definition of science is irrelevant, whether it be information, or knowledge of information, or understanding of information or the process whereby you gain knowledge of information. Knowledge, or lack of knowledge of the source of that information, does not invalidate the fact that such information exists in the ancient scriptures of the bible.

The validity of that original information poses an obvious question. What is the source of that information that brings it into such accord with reality?

Applying Chamberlains method of multiple working hypotheses gives rise to at least four obvious possible explanations:

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<sup>9</sup> The examples given are only a meager sample of the many that are described in more detail in the book, *Eyewitness to the Origins*, Third Edition, page 373+ available for purchase on the internet through <http://www.eyewitnesstotheorigins.com/>

1. It exists from some ancient era of great understanding similar to modern science.
2. It exists from a trial and error approach to acquiring knowledge about the natural world, by interpreting a collection of observations accumulated over multiple generations.
3. It exists from an ancient era without understanding, originating in the imagination of the human mind by random guesses. Multiple separate great minded, theologian having no understanding, randomly got it the same as each other, and in accord with reality.
4. It exists from the testimony of some eye witness who existed in the absence of humans before humans existed, who observed and understood, in an era when no human existed.

In any scenario, it exists.

Hypothesis 2 is nullified by the fact that the recorded information could not have been observed by humans. A great quantity of these facts are concerning events and processes that occurred long before humans were in existence. Much of the information recorded in the bible is from the Pre-Cambrian era, when no humans existed to observe. This negates any possibility that these recorded facts are a simple accumulation of human observations.

Hypothesis 3 is nullified by the obvious degradation in the same information when in the care of human minds. That information comes to us by two routes. One, it is recorded in writing in the ancient scriptures and, two, it is entrusted to the care of great minds of the ancient Greek philosophers reputed to be the fathers of science. That second route is the most corrupted. See the story behind the Legend of the Firmament. Even the written scripture route, when it passed through great minds of humans in the process of interpretation and translation, became degraded. No, it could not be generated by the same process that inevitably degrades the information when it took possession of it in pristine condition.

Applying Occum's Razor against the remaining two hypotheses, requires the simplest explanation be chosen.

Modern science, even though it might be accused of bias toward self aggrandizement, does not recognize the existence of science before the past about four hundred years. Any explanation such as hypothesis 3, based on an ancient era of modern science equivalent to the current era of modern science is nothing but a creative imaginal explanation that Clyde warns us against.

The last remaining explanation, and one that is claimed in the bible, where all that valid information is recorded, is that the information came from an eye witness who was there.

In fact, one of the accounts of the origins that contains great detail of facts and chronology of the Pre-Cambrian era actually claims to be an account by an eye witness who is identified only by the identifier, "Wisdom."

The problem with hypothesis 4 is, no human existed at the time of the events to be an eye-witness. So who could that eye-witness be? In the ancient scriptures, that eye-witness is described as having the three virtues of power, intelligence, and

engineering (engineering: the prudent application of knowledge, translated *Wisdom* in the KJV.)

So, What is the simplest explanation?

The bottom line: Science, as defined to be what makes the physical universe work and an understanding of it, can be demonstrated to be God's favorite subject. Even though mostly unrecognized, often even suppressed by traditional theologians, this favoritism is demonstrated by the fact that the subject God turns to when intellectually challenged by humans, is explanations as to what physically exists, the history of that existence, and what makes the physical universe work.

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