

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

By Max B. Frederick, AnOldScientist

I just tried to read last month's E-Zine. Not only did it address multiple difficult subjects, it was difficult reading—even for me—and I wrote it.

I will try to do better this month.

2) When Was the Bible Written?

When Was the Bible Written?

By Max B. Frederick, AnOldScientist

“Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds. But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of

Israel.” Acts 7:22,23 (NASB)

The question is not when did the information recorded in the bible originate, the question is, When was it written down?

There are several theories. (Pardon the erroneous, yet popular use of the term theory.)

Theory 1: Some scholars say it was actually written by the claimed or assumed writers or their scribe at the time the information originated.

Theory 2: Others say the information was passed from generation to generation as oral tradition for a long time before it was written down.

Theory 3: Others go so far as to say the bible was not actually written until at least the Babylonian captivity era, long after the history of their religion had undergone significant revisionism. They say the bible is the product of brilliant human minds, a fraud perpetrated upon gullible humans.

Theory 4: Other theories claim that the recording of some of the biblical scripture in written form occurred earlier by other more ancient religions such as the ancient Egyptians, and was copied and adopted by the Hebrews. The implication of this theory is that the religion of the Hebrews is a fraud—the natural sequence of events of the evolution of a religion from earlier religions.

Theory 5: Still others, recognize a pattern indicating not only was it written down by the assumed writer or his scribe, but portions, such as parts of the book of Genesis, were either copied or edited by that assumed writer from earlier written records.

Theory 6: And so it goes.

New light is shed on the question by the study of the myriad of science related details recorded in the ancient scriptures and the smattering of similar details found in some ancient myths of other cultures. There just might be something to the idea of a supernatural origin of the ancient Hebrew Scriptures.

The Traditional Theological Point of View:

Many religious scholars accept the theory that the written biblical record of the Hebrew people and their religion began when Moses wrote most of the first five books of the bible during his lifetime, starting when he was about eighty years of age, about 1445 years BC and continuing until shortly before his death about 1405 BC. There is some ambiguity in the dates, but it is assumed they are somewhere in the ballpark.

Recently I attended a class on biblical doctrines where it was stated that the bible was written over a span of about fifteen hundred years. That time span begins with the writing of the book of Genesis by Moses and ends with the writing of the book of Revelation by John. That was a span of about fifteen hundred years.

However, the bible is not arranged either chronologically as the history occurred, or in the order the books were written.

The book of Job was in existence long before the book of Genesis.

Moses wrote the lesser recognized biblical creation account found in Psalm 90 before

finalizing the popular creation account up front in the book of Genesis.

The Point of View of the Anti-Bible Scholars:

Sometime in the last two hundred years, there arose speculation that at least some of the books of the Old Testament were not written as long ago as had been previously assumed.

This theory is accepted by many liberal secular scholars.

According to this theory, some concepts found in the early books of the bible did not exist when it was claimed to have been written. One such concept is that God is universal rather than a local phenomena. Therefore, passages that indicate that there is one universal God could not have been written before the concept developed, and that concept did not develop until the Babylonian captivity and the Israelites discovered that their God followed them to Babylon. According to this theory, the information was passed down orally and only put into writing after the Babylonian captivity.

Critics of the bible who became known as the “Higher Criticism” questioned the authenticity of the claim that Moses actually wrote the first five books of the bible known as the Pentateuch. Those books are familiar to us as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. As time progressed, this criticism grew into a conspiracy theory that assumed these books were written at a much later date by theologians bent upon controlling the religious masses by inventing a history of “God’s People.” The theory is quick to point out some similarities to more ancient writings of the Egyptian people and their “more ancient” religion are indications that some of the bible was plagiarized from those “more ancient” religions.

It seems that in the 1800’s scholars of the “Higher Criticism” determined that internal textual evidence indicated multiple authors for the book of Genesis. There is some validity to their observations. That evidence is based on the observation that there are different textual styles and different vocabulary used in different parts of the book of Genesis.

Based on that evidence, and other assumptions, an alternate explanation of the origin of the bible was devised. The new theory proposed that the book of Genesis is a fraud. It states that Moses did not write the book of Genesis. It claims that the book of Genesis was written by multiple theologians much later in time than was assumed to be the time of Moses.

From that basic alternative theory, it has grown into a conspiracy theory.

Since that time, critics antagonistic to the authenticity of the bible have grown to accept that alternate theory to be the true history of the bible. During that time, those same critics have accused pro-bible archaeologists of being guilty of trying to fit the facts into their own preconceived theoretical framework.

The reality of such widespread acceptance of that conspiracy theory hit me when I visited a local preacher and was discussing the history of geology and ecology as recorded in the ancient books of the Old Testament and how it was recorded with extreme precision and accuracy that could not have been known by ancient scholars of the time it was assumed to be written. That preacher informed me that my work was without basis or merit because the book of Genesis was

not written by Moses nor was it written way back around fourteen-fifty BC as had been assumed. Genesis and many other of the books of the Old Testament could not have been written that long ago, because the Hebrews did not even conceive of the concept of one universal God until they were surprised that their God traveling with them to Babylon when they were taken captive after 600 BC. Anything written that indicated there was one true God had to have been written after that much later time. Besides that—he said—at the time the bible was originally assumed to be written, writing had not yet evolved to such an advanced stage that narrative accounts were recorded in writing. At that time writing was too primitive so narrative accounts were passed down by oral tradition, along with all the inaccuracies that accompany such a mechanism as gossip. The bible could not have been written that long ago, so all my work was based upon a false assumption and any interpretation I would make concerning the recording of the history of the development of geology and ecology was pure imaginative interpretation of something that could not have existed due to the fact that the bible was just simply made up by a few very smart men when none of this stuff could have been included. He would not even look at the evidence that my work is a true interpretation of what is actually written in the original language—It could not be true so there was no reason to even look at it. The reality of such widespread acceptance of that conspiracy theory hit me when I visited a local preacher and was discussing the history of geology and ecology as recorded in the ancient books of the Old Testament and how it was recorded with extreme precision and accuracy that could not have been known by ancient scholars of the time it was assumed to be written. That preacher informed me that my work was without basis or merit because the book of Genesis was not written by Moses nor was it written way back around fourteen-fifty BC as had been assumed. Genesis and many other of the books of the Old Testament could not have been written that long ago, because the Hebrews did not even conceive of the concept of one universal God until they were surprised that their God traveling with them to Babylon when they were taken captive after 600 BC. Anything written that indicated there was one true God had to have been written after that much later time. Besides that—he said—at the time the bible was originally assumed to be written, writing had not yet evolved to such an advanced stage that narrative accounts were recorded in writing. At that time writing was too primitive so narrative accounts were passed down by oral tradition, along with all the inaccuracies that accompany such a mechanism as gossip. The bible could not have been written that long ago, so all my work was based upon a false assumption and any interpretation I would make concerning the recording of the history of the development of geology and ecology was pure imaginative interpretation of something that could not have existed due to the fact that the bible was just simply made up by a few very smart men when none of this stuff could have been included. He would not even look at the evidence that my work is a true interpretation of what is actually written in the original language—It could not be true so there was no reason to even look at it.

But the evidence indicates those speculations upon which this conspiracy theory is based are wrong on several points. There is a more reasonable explanation for the various writing styles and the observed similarities between the ancient scriptures of the Old Testament and some of the ancient Egyptian religious writings.

In the meantime, the best evidence for the secular theorists alternate explanation is the lack of evidence to the contrary. As one writing put it, “Moreover, by the 1970s and 1980s a good deal of countervailing evidence—or, rather, lack of evidence—was beginning to accumulate.” Lets see now, zero plus zero, plus zero, = a lot ...? How does the accumulation of a greater mass of lack of evidence for any explanation increase the support for the validity of an alternate explanation? ...Especially when those assembling the evidence are guilty of what they accuse their opponents, of trying to fit the facts into their own preconceived theoretical framework?

Yet it continued to grow into the ultimate religious conspiracy theory. It has all the characteristic features of the present day myriad of conspiracy theories. It is based on

a fervent desire for an explanation contrary to the politically correct line we are being fed, mistrust of authorities in charge, perceived evil motivation of political or religious leaders, creative re-interpretation of meager evidence, lack of evidence to the contrary, and exploitation of imaginative evidence that does not exist.

According to this conspiracy theory, the writing of the bible was supposed to be simply for the purpose of, to either gain or retain control of the masses.

Miraculously, they would have you believe, this conspiracy resulted in ancient religious leaders inventing the one holy book that is most effective in the world at pre-recording the future discoveries of modern science.

Another anti-religion view:

Another anti-religion view is advocated by proponents of the theory that claims that the recording of some of the biblical scripture in written form occurred earlier by other more ancient religions such as the ancient Egyptians, and was copied and adopted by the Hebrews.

The implication of this theory is that the religion of the Hebrews is a fraud. Their holy book is plagiarized from previous man-made religions, simply the natural sequence of events of the evolution of a religion from earlier religions.

It is commonly accepted that the first book of the bible, Genesis, was written after the ancient Hebrews departed Egypt, about 1450 BC.

It is clear that the Egyptian religions are older than those Mosaic writings.

But what is not clear is that the Hebrews copied their religion from the Egyptians.

According to findings of modern science, the recording of details in ancient Hebrew scriptures is many, many times more in accord with reality than the smattering of similar details found in any of the myths associated with any other ancient religion.

This presents a problem to the theory that the Hebrew religion evolved. Copying cannot generate significantly more accord with reality than is found in the original.

The Overlooked Point of View:

Both sides of the raging debate have overlooked an obvious alternative explanation.

A non-conspiratorial theoretical explanation of what really happened would be: Moses was educated in the palace of the Pharaoh of Egypt at the height of the center of learning at the time. Obviously Moses could read and write. Narrative writing was well established at that time, so there had to have been many accounts of former times available to Moses. Since the book of Genesis is an accumulation of history prior to the escape from Egypt—much of it having already occurred before the lifetime of Moses—the differences in writing styles and vocabulary obviously would have been more likely from an accumulation of writings of prior, not later, authors.

This alternate explanation is: Of course, Moses did not write the Book of Genesis. Rather Moses edited former writings into a comprehensive condensed history.

This obvious alternate explanation has plenty of positive evidence to support it.

But first, we must consider some objections that have caused this point of view to be

rejected before it is evaluated. These objections might lead one to the conclusion that any speculation about the existence of written records available to Moses is an unsubstantiated assumption.

First it has been assumed that writing had not progressed sufficiently for there to be any written records for Moses to copy. There is a popular belief that narrative writing was not well established at that time. It is commonly assumed that many of the written records at the time were in the form of engravings or paintings in hieroglyphics, or in cuneiform on tablets.

Second, Moses, being educated in what we would consider to be a primitive culture, would have interest only in such things as being an Egyptian, a warrior, and possibly a city planner. The things necessary to be the author of the bible would be of no interest to such a student.

Third, is the problem of logistics for Moses to have access to any written records if they really were in existence. After he fled Egypt, during the time it is assumed he should need the reference library, he would have no access to it.

But it is these objections that are unsubstantiated assumptions.

Concerning the first objection, we actually have copies of narrative writings that secular scholars have no problem dating to the time of Moses and before. And those same scholars place those documents at the same place where Moses was educated.

As I write this, I have beside me a copy—actually a photo copy—of an ancient manuscript. Modern scholars of ancient history, including scholars of the history of writing, have no problem accepting the fact that an earlier version of this manuscript was in widespread use in Egypt during the time of Moses. It is written in Egyptian hieroglyphics. But contrary to early inability to decipher what was considered to be pictographs, Egyptian hieroglyphics is mostly a system of audio recording where each symbol represents each of the sounds made by human speech. To read it is simply making the sounds represented by each symbol. A modern day scholar could read it and Moses listening to it could make sense of it once he had become used to the modern accent. The problem is, we still do not know what most of the combinations of sounds (words) meant back then. We do know, though, it is a system of audio recordings of what was previously assumed to be only recorded in the memory of humans living at the time. It is now known, the audio recordings of the past have not all been destroyed. And that audio recording contains narratives of things that the objection assumes would not have been of interest to Moses as a young Egyptian student.

It seems ironic that the same scholars who have a problem with even the existence of a written record of the earlier history of other cultures being available to Moses have no problem accepting the assumption that this book was in continuous use as long ago as approximately one hundred years before Moses presumably penned the original manuscript of the book of Genesis. They have no problem with it being an assembly of records of cultures written at least for a thousand years earlier. As such, they are unreservedly accepting evidence that Moses, being educated in the center of learning of Egypt, actually should have been not only familiar with such literature, but may have actually personally read an earlier copy of the same book I am looking at.

The book I am looking at is entitled in English, "*The Egyptian Book of the Dead.*" It is an account of many things, among others, narrative accounts of historical characters.

As the story goes, Moses was educated in the palace of the center of culture where there was access to known writings of antiquity. The bible says, "*Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words*

and deeds.” Acts 7:22 (NASB)

Concerning the second and third objections of interest in his Hebrew heritage while still in the center of learning of Egypt, and logistics of access to that source of information after leaving Egypt, it is recorded that Moses did have an interest, and had already done the research. *“But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel.” Acts 7:23 (NASB)* Remember, Pharaoh’s daughter had hired the mother of Moses to raise the child. He knew who he was.

It is a logical assumption that since we have some of those writings, they did in fact exist, and, it is also a logical assumption that not all of the writings available in that center of culture are known to us today.

One of the written records of the history of the origin of the earth comes from the ancient Egyptians. That is the one about the earth (continents) rising from beneath sea level, although it includes such problems as humanlike life forms being present to witness the event. This should dispel the assumption that there was no interest in the history of the past or no interest in the history of the origins.

The degradation of that supposed myth can be traced through the ancient early Greek philosophers until it again surfaced where it entered the interpretation of the Septuagint translation of the ancient scriptures in the assumption that the science of the day indicated that there was an ocean of water surrounding the planet earth being held back by some transparent crystalline “firmament.”

In any event, it is uncanny that there is such correctness in the order of events during pre-human (geologic) times found in the multiple ancient scripture accounts, and the correlation of that order with the order discovered by the processes of modern science. The correlation of biblical accounts with both reality and with bits of similar detail from corrupted versions of the origins (Egyptian myths) reveals evidence that there was some common source of information. It opens the door for speculation as to where the actual information came from be it reality (though no one was there to observe it) or some prior supernatural revelation, or some prior super civilization with the capability of modern science to interpret the evidence in the geologic column. It certainly closes the door on the bible being the invention of more recent brilliant human minds.

Anyway, the similarity of earlier existing writings to the writings attributed to Moses could be an indication of the validity of that assumption that he was in fact educated there.

Now, the positive evidence.

If any prior existing writing could be found that is actually found to be included in an edited version within the book of Genesis, that would be positive evidence of this overlooked alternate explanation.

That positive evidence just happens to exist.

The only book of the bible that is obviously written before the book of Genesis is the book of Job.

It so happens that the first two verses of the book of Genesis are in fact an edited and condensed version of a creation account found in the Book of Job. More details are found in the original version found in the book of Job than in the edited version in the book of Genesis. These additional details of that earlier history are valid according to modern science, indicating the prior knowledge in the book of Job was greater than was recorded in the edited version, indicating the Genesis account was in fact, a condensed, edited version of an earlier recorded account.

No scholar really knows when the book of Job was written. It is not even certain that the original language of the book of Job was ancient Hebrew. It is possible that the book of Job was written before the rise of the ancient Hebrew language. Many modern scholars glibly date it after the time of Noah, based on their recognition of a passage in Job that is commonly interpreted to be a reference to the flood of Noah. However, that specific mention is not of a flood of Noah. Nowhere in the book of Job is there any reference to a flood even similar to the flood of Noah. That reference commonly assumed to be a reference to the flood of Noah is actually a description of an event that occurred much earlier in history, long before there was any humans present to witness it. This is discovered by comparing the details found in all the nearly three dozen biblical creation accounts and interleaving them into a timeline according to biblical clues. Anyway, that actual event, mistakenly assumed by many scholars to be a reference to Noah's flood, is in fact a reference to the same event described in the first few verses of the book of Genesis where the emergence of the continents from below sea level is described. That same event of the rise of the continents from below sea level is also described in Egyptian mythology, but is corrupted with factual errors such as humans being present at the time it occurred. That same event is also described in detail in Psalm 104, which, incidentally, is also erroneously assumed by many scholars to be copied from more ancient Egyptian mythology.

The problem with the assumption that this information was copied by the Hebrews from a more ancient Egyptian religion is two fold. First, no one knows the age of the book of Job. Quite likely, it pre-dated the assumed source in Egyptian mythology. Second, the accord with reality of the details in the Hebrew version, the Psalm 104 version, the Genesis 1 version, and the earlier version found in the book of Job, is many, many times greater than the accord with reality of the Egyptian myth which is assumed by some scholars to be the original source. This is a problem because of the principle that a copy of an eyewitness account, transmitted through a system similar to a chain of gossip, cannot be more in accord with reality than the original. This problem with the assumed path the information has traveled to get to us dictates that the more accurate, Hebrew version is more likely the original and the Egyptian myth version is the copy.

The major problem here, for those who reject this point of view, is: How did the Hebrew version get it right? The event occurred before humans existed. And the Egyptian version got it wrong. In the Egyptian version it is out of chronological order, having humans present during the event. If the Hebrew version was copied from the Egyptian version, how did the chronology suddenly become correct in the copy when the original version had it wrong?

This is compounded by the realization illuminated by the study of all the creation accounts found in the bible, that the many different sections of the book of Genesis that appear to be written by different authors is not an indication that there were many later writers that wrote using the pen name of Moses, but that there were pre-existing accounts, like the book of Job, that Moses actually edited into the book of Genesis. Remember, Moses was educated in the most highly educated center of civilization and had access to all the ancient knowledge that existed during that era, including knowledge contributed by the more ancient Hebrews. It is obvious from the internal evidence of the writings, that the book of Job was among the sources used by Moses in compiling the book of Genesis. It is also obvious that Moses used other accounts that are lost to us today, These lost accounts were also either copied, or edited into the book of Genesis as Moses put it together..

Therefore, the explanation that is more in accord with the evidence is, the original writing of the ancient scripture that is included in our bible today is much more ancient than the writings of Moses, and most likely were copied and edited into the book of Genesis by Moses. Also, there is the possibility that the source of the ancient Egyptian myths is from the more accurate accounts of the more ancient Hebrews during the era when there was interaction between the Hebrews and the Egyptians long before the four hundred year sojourn of the Hebrews in the land of the Egyptians. A careful study of the dating of the ancient Egyptian myths concerning the origins, the myth that includes the rising of the land from beneath sea level, did not appear in the Egyptian religious history until after the earlier era of contact with the Hebrews.

Considering the fact that the ancient Hebrew version is more accurate by many orders of magnitude, and the dates of the original written recording of each are not as well defined as bible doubting scholars would like to assume, the evidence is overwhelming that Egyptian myth is copied from ancient Hebrew Scripture pre-dating the book of Genesis rather than the other way around. In any event, the correctness of the details recorded in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures available to us today is indication that the origin of the ancient scripture is supernatural, and not the product of the imagination of the human mind.

Moreover, a thorough study of all the major accounts of creation found in the bible—and there are about two dozen of them, not just one up front— reveals an amazing comprehension of the actual chronology of events along with a myriad of accurate details that were not discovered by modern science until recent times. The second creation account in the book of Genesis, the one following the first two verses in the book of Genesis contain the same correct chronology that is common to all the creation accounts of the bible. However, this true common chronology is overshadowed by a six day fictitious chronology obviously edited by Moses into that previously existing account, making it into an illustration of the fourth commandment, similar to the principle of the parables of Jesus where literal, yet fictitious events were used to illustrate an unrelated point. In this case, the unrelated point of the six day creation and seventh day of rest was the principle of six days of labor and seventh day of rest found in the fourth of the ten commandments that had been just recently received by Moses on Mt. Sinai.

Ironically, the religious debate over the age of the earth, has centered around whether or not the word “day” is *literal* or *figurative* where it should be over whether or not it is *true* or *fictitious* as in a parable. Of course, it is literal, just as literal as the seed and the soil in the fictitious parable of the sower and the seed. It is the underlying chronology that is common to all the other biblical creation accounts that is true. But, alas, theologians have ignored the true chronology in all the other accounts.

And so it goes, a study of the many and various accounts of creation found in the bible reveals comprehension of the true chronology of beginning events occurring before there were any humans there to witness such things. And such comprehension, even though recorded in the ancient writings of the scriptures of the bible, was lost as time went on so that it had to be re-discovered by modern science to verify the authenticity of the original version of the biblical writings.

Also, that superior amount of information in the original sheds light on the proper interpretation of the edited Genesis version. (All this is recorded in the book, “*Eyewitness to the Origins*,” page 282ff, available to be ordered at bookstores or on the internet. See www.EyewitnessToTheOrigins.com.)

In Conclusion:

It is obvious that the book of Genesis was not the first written record of much of the information included in the book of Genesis. Writings that eventually became included in our bible as part of the book of Genesis were edited by Moses from prior written records. One portion in particular is recognized as edited by Moses from information that was either direct from the book of Job, or from another derivative from the book of Job. Other portions are obviously either copied or edited from earlier written records that are currently lost.

The positive evidence—not the negative lack of evidence—appears to overwhelmingly indicate the mostly ignored, but more obvious alternative explanation, not the conspiracy theory proposed by anti-bible scholars, is more likely the true explanation.

The bottom line is, there is no reason not to believe each book of the bible was recorded in writing when it claims to have been, by whom it is assumed to have been written.

There is no reason to believe some conspiracy theory that claims it was written at a much later time for some deceptive reason.

There is lots of evidence to believe the ancient scripture is valid and supernaturally correct in many details in spite of fallible human conservatorship.

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