

# The Source Workbook - Questions

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# The Source Workbook - Answers

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## CHAPTER 7 - THE LANGUAGE OF THE BIBLE

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#### q-85.1 What do we learn about the creation from both the Bible and Science?

Simply put, the Bible tells us about the Who and Why of creation, and science tell us What, How, and When. Do we need both explanations? No, not at all. Is it Scripturally wrong for us to want to know more than just "Who and Why" of creation? No, because Jesus told Doubting Thomas that all elements causing one to "believe" are good. The main objective is "what" we believe not how we came to believe it. (John 20:29-MKJV) "Jesus said to him, Thomas, because you have seen Me you have believed. Blessed are they who have not seen and have believed."

### Page 86 ORIGINAL AUDIENCE; Scientific World-View

#### p-86.1 When was Genesis written and by whom?

It is believed to have been written around 1300-1500, by Moses. Nevertheless, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, Genesis was written sometime between 500 to 900 BC. This view is called the "documentary hypothesis." A small minority of historians called "biblical minimalists" say Genesis was written about 200 BC. They site language technicalities as the basis for their opinions. It is assumed that the Pentateuch was written as a collection of books by a variety of authors or by one author who assembled a collection of books along with his own comments and views.

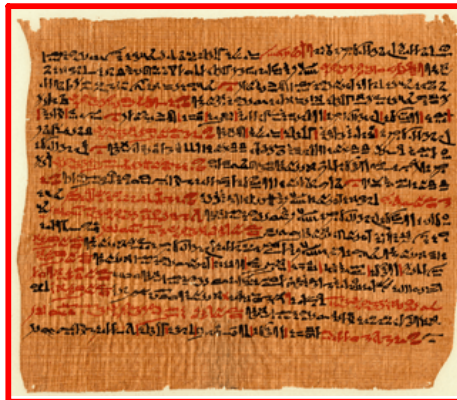
#### p-86.2 What is Wiseman's view of the Genesis account of creation?

Wiseman gives a variety of good reasons showing that the contents of the book of Genesis is very ancient. Thus the various styles noted by historians could be due to Moses using older written records. For instance, Genesis 5: 1, says, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, he made him in the likeness of God." That sounds like a reference to a historical record written, maybe, by Adam. What about Moses, did he know how to write? In Acts, in chapter 7 verses 21-22

Stephen tell us: "And he being cast

out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up and reared him for a son to her. (22) And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and in deeds." In fact at Exodus 34:27, God said to Moses, "Write these words for yourself; for on the mouth of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." So we are told that Moses had a good education which would have equipped him to read the popular languages encountered by Egyptian scholars which would likely have included historical documents written much earlier. We are also told that God commanded Moses to write down the Law that he and the nation of Israel had been given. Based upon these facts, there is no reason to believe the book of Genesis was written by anyone else other than Moses.

[http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/Exhibits/anthro/6curriculum2\\_papyrus.html](http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/Exhibits/anthro/6curriculum2_papyrus.html)



**Figure 7.1:** This is called the Hearst Medical Papyrus and is believed to date from about 2,000 BC. It was found near Der-el-bellas, Egypt and contains various medical prescriptions and remedies.

### Page 87 Language Differences

#### p-87.1 To be truly authentic, how do some believe the creation account should be worded and what problems would likely have arisen?

To some critics, the creation account in the Bible sounds too much like an ancient myth of a people trying to

explain the unknown in understandable terms. These critics would like to have the Bible says something so scientifically advanced that there would be no doubt today that God was the author. However, if this were the case, it would not have been as useful achieving God's purpose when originally written. God did not want to confuse the people with an account of creation that was so unusual that the reader would miss the important messages. These important messages were to tell us where we came from and why things appear to be so wrong. There was also a message of hope recorded at Genesis 3:15, that informs us that eventually one would come that would correct matters by eliminating the problem of evil. The actual account of creation was to only serve as an introduction. That is why the Bible starts with the words, "In the beginning."

**p-87.2 What can be said about the Bible's details with regard to the creation of Adam and Eve?**

In this context, only the most important things are said about humans, created male and female. They were both made in the "image of God." They were put in charge of all the plants and animals (Genesis 1:26). They were created a little lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:7). They were really the reason for why God created the earth in the first place. He needed to provide a home for his fleshly children to live just as he no doubt provided a dwelling place for his spiritual children (John 14:2).

**Page 88 Bara**

**p-88.1 What problems arise when the Bible is translated into other languages?**

Words in other languages can have multiple meanings with which the translator is not familiar. New discoveries occur from time to time that redefine words used to write the Bible. With regards the Bible, unless a translator is directly inspired by God, all Bible translations are only opinions of a person or group of persons whose knowledge of the ancient language is limited. Because the Bible is written in simple language, the important issues are easily translated into modern languages. However, details on issues such as how to translate the words used to describe the creation of "heaven and earth," cannot be resolved by translators alone. Whatever words are used, they must agree with known facts. The Bible tells us with certainty who created heaven and earth but not how. The words are simply, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth."

**p-88.2 What exclusive activity does the Hebrew word "Bara" describe?**

Bara refers to a direct miraculous work that only God can do. It is to be differentiated from work that both God and man can do that utilizes natural forces.

**Page 89 Asah and Yatsar**

**p-89.1 What Hebrew words are used to refer to things "made" by both God or man and give examples.**

The Hebrew word "Asah" is translated "made" in the Bible. It usually refers to activity or work that produces something through natural causes. It can even be a miraculous use of natural forces such as when brought the 10 plagues against Egypt. We do not know how these plagues were accomplished, but they must have been of such a nature that Pharaoh debated with his "wise men" as to their cause.

**p-89.2 How is the use of both Bara and Asah accurate with respects the creation of humans?**

Humans are comprised of both body and spirit. In this case, the soul and body are considered to be related to humanities physical properties while the spirit refers to one's spiritual nature. God created (bara) our spirits because he is the Father of spirits, (Hebrews 12:9) but he made (asah) our bodies by natural processes from earthly components (Genesis 2:7).

**Page 90 HISTORICAL NARRATIVE STYLE**

**p-90.1 From His perspective, out of what did God "make" the human spirit?**

Our spirits "made in the image of God" are made from something that is normally found only in God's dwelling place. The Bible speaks of God's power as being the source of the universe. We can only assume this same power is the source of our spirits. However, from our perspective, God creates our spirits out of something that does not exist in our universe. That is the apparent difference in the perspectives. Spirits images are made by him in his domain and created for us in our domain. It appears to be a technicality that enters into the discussion to explain the verse at Genesis 1:26.

**p-90.2 Explain how the universe itself could be both "created" and "made."**

First everything was created at the Big Bang event and then left to be formed out of existing material either by

natural or supernatural processes.

**Page 91 Genesis 1:1 Includes the Sequence of Genesis 1:3-31**

**p-91.1 What does it mean to say that Genesis Chapter 1 was written as a "historical narrative."**

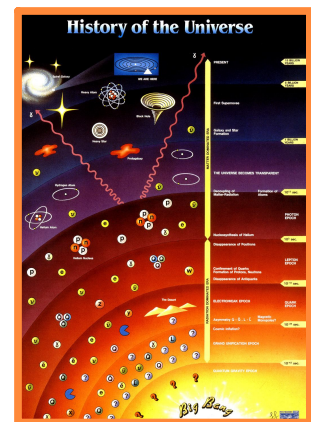
It means that the term in Genesis 1:1, "God created the heavens and earth" was a single event that describes the complete history of the universe from the Big Bang until about 4 billion years ago just after the earth was formed and cooled enough for water to completely cover its surface. Then Genesis 1:2, begins another series of events that describes the events that start taking place on earth at that time.

**p-91.2 The "creative week" of Genesis 1:3-31 specifically applies to what with regard to man?**

These verses apply specifically to man and his semi-domestic animals. They describe the process by which the Garden of Eden was created. These may be miraculous things that God did over a very short period of time, maybe even in six literal days. However, the verses may also have a double meaning as discussed in question 91.3.

**p-91.3 In general to what does the creative week also apply?**

These verses also seem to describe how the earth developed over geologic time extending from about 4 billion years ago down to relatively recent times when image-of-God humans first appeared.



**Figure 7.2: Click to Enlarge**

**Page 92 Division of Waters Vertically**

**p-92.1 Why do we surmise that the "creative week" applied specifically to the Garden of Eden?**

The language used in the Biblical account refers to plants and animals that interacted or were within the influence of Adam and Eve.

**p-92.2 How can we say that the sun, moon and stars were originally created (bara) in Genesis 1:1-3, and then "made" (asa) later in verses 14 through 19?**



**Figure 7.3:** The early Earth's interior was heated primarily from decay of radioactive elements. While this heat-generating process is still important today, it was much more active in the early Earth, causing the planet to be more volcanically active than today.

[http://www.lpi.usra.edu/education/timeline/gallery/slide\\_14.html](http://www.lpi.usra.edu/education/timeline/gallery/slide_14.html)

It should be evident that when the Bible says that in the beginning God created the heavens and earth, this included the sun, moon, and stars. If it didn't, then our galaxy didn't exist and the earth was apparently the only material

object in existence. This would require a temporary energy source to produce the effects described on days 1, 2, and 3. So God created (bara) the sun and moon "in the beginning." Then later he made them functional as marking "signs, seasons, days and years" for the earth's living inhabitants. Since they were already in existence at the time, their functionality was facilitated by altering the earth's atmosphere. This is an example of God making (asa) using natural processes. The clearing of the atmosphere was inevitable because plants were adsorbing carbon dioxide and giving off pure oxygen. This transformed the atmosphere from being translucent to transparent with the results being that the sun and moon became clearly visible from earth.

**Page 93 Division of Waters Horizontally**

**p-93.1 What evidence is there that the very early earth was enshrouded with clouds?**

As shown in Figure 7.2, volcanic eruptions spewed gases from Earth's interior to the atmosphere, a process called outgassing that continues today. Most of the gas was carbon dioxide and water vapor. The water vapor condensed to form part of Earth's oceans as the surface cooled. Comets may also have contributed water and complex organic molecules to Earth's environments. There is evidence to show that atmospheric moisture reached a peak early in earth history. All of these were natural process and in many cases are spoken of as being "made" (asa) by God.

**p-93.2 How is this vertical division of the waters described in Genesis 1:6-7?**

Natural Source	Volume of water (10 <sup>6</sup> Miles <sup>3</sup> )	Percent of total
Oceans	328.7	97.25
Ice caps & glaciers	6.95	2.05
Groundwater	2.3	0.68
Lakes	0.0299	0.01
Soil moisture	0.016	0.005
Atmosphere	0.0031	0.001
Streams & rivers	0.00041	0.0001
Biosphere	0.0001	0.00004

**Figure 7.4:** This is an accounting of the hydrologic or water cycle. It is estimated that if all the "Ice caps & glaciers" melted, the ocean might rise about 250 feet (USGS). If all the water stored in the atmosphere were to suddenly fall as rain, the oceans might rise about 1 inch.

The Bible describes these early events as being a division between waters and waters. Many have interpreted this as being a miraculous suspension of actual liquid water above the earth. However, we now understand that these words described a natural division between liquid waters on the earth and watery clouds suspended above the earth. This was once again, not a miraculous creative (bara) process but naturally made (asa) by the laws of nature still in operation today.

**p-93.3 What happens when God separates the waters horizontally in Genesis 1:9-10?**

This describes the formation of a single or super continent. However, once again, this does not describe a creative (bara) process. Interestingly, the Biblical description is unusual. It implies that the continent was already formed under the water and appeared because the water relocated themselves to deeper areas of the earth called "seas."

**Page 94 Figure 7.1: Continents Fit Together like a Jigsaw Puzzle**

**p-94.1 Is the Bible correct when it implies that originally, there was only one continent and one ocean?**

Absolutely. It is remarkable that the Bible describes a process that was only discovered recently. It wasn't until 1912 that Alfred Wegener hypothesized that the earth's continents were once joined. However, even though there was convincing evidence that the continents fit together at their shelf line, the theory of Continental Drift was not generally accepted by the geological community until the late 1950' and early 60's.

**p-94.2 What is the process called that is said to have broken up the original continent?**

The process is called Plate Tectonics and the movements of the plates are called Continental Drift. Again, the point being made is that God made (asa) a super continent by natural processes that had the "built-in" potential to separate into all the various continents we have identified today.

### Page 95 Sequence in Plant Life

#### p-95.1 What was the name of the last super continent and how does its existence harmonize with the Biblical account?

The last super continent was called Pangea and is said to have started breaking up about 180 million years ago.



**Figure 7.5:** Fossil evidence for Pangea includes the presence of similar and identical species on continents that are now great distances apart. For example, fossils of the therapsid *Lystrosaurus* have been found in Argentina, South Africa, India and Australia, alongside members of the *Glossopteris* flora, whose distribution would have ranged from the polar circle to the equator if the continents would have been in their present position; similarly, the freshwater reptile *Mesosaurus* has only been found in localized regions of the coasts of Brazil and West-Africa.

#### p-95.2 A botany student would recognize the Bible's "order" or descriptive sequence of plant creation as being what?

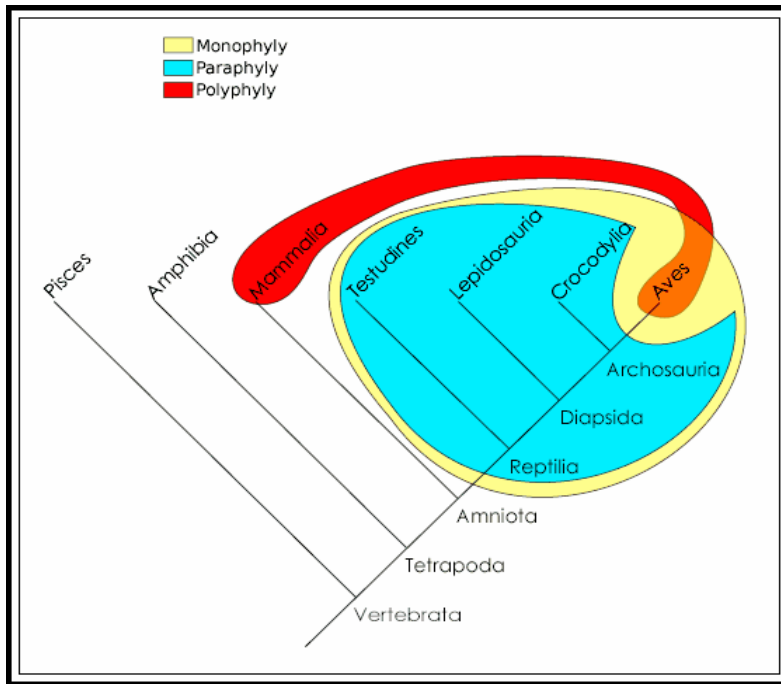
A student of botany would call the Bible's order the "process of succession" or "ecological succession." This is a well known concept that pertains to the somewhat predictable adjustments that take places within an existing ecological community due to some type of long term change or sudden disaster. These modifications will cause either the current community of living things to adapt to the changed conditions or go extinct. Such an extinction would attract other plants and animals to fill the newly created environmental niches.

### Page 96 Sequence In Animal Life

#### q-96.1 What evidence do we find in the fossil record that corresponds with the events described in Genesis 1:20-27.

The Bible's order of creation can be summarized in this way, 1) cold blooded sea creatures, 2) warm blooded birds, 3) warm blooded land animals. According to this arrangement, amphibians and dinosaurs would be classified together as cold blooded sea creatures many of which dwelt on land. This adjustment is necessary because the earliest fossil bird is found later in the fossil record than some of the early land dinosaurs and amphibians. There appears to be a conflict here because the Bible says birds were created before land animals. However, Figure 7.6 indicates there is also an issue involved with classifying birds. Even though many but not all evolutionists say birds and dinosaurs descended from a common ancestor which must have been cold-blooded, birds are warm-blooded

and seem to be a separate creation altogether. This makes sense from a Biblical perspective because birds along with sea creatures are said to have been **created** (bara) directly by God. For this reason, it is likely that we may eventually find older fossilized bird specimens.



**Figure 7.6:** Birds are difficult to classify. Evolutionists say that they and dinosaurs descended from a common ancestor. However, because they are warm-blooded, they have more in common with mammals.

**Page 97**

**q-97.1 What is good advice today to give someone who does not believe in God?**

This is a classic type statement similar to that which describes the variability of weather in certain places. You may recall the expression, "if you don't like the weather, wait an hour and you may change your mind." A corollary to that statement with respects to God is, "if you are not a believer yet, wait a week and you may become one based on newly discovered evidence."

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**End of Chapter 7**