

# Science and the Bible

## *A Search for Meaning & Significance*

### Introduction: Definitions, People, References and Ground Rules

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*Definitions* (words and concepts as used in this study)

**Bible:** The Holy Christian scriptures, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments

From a Christian perspective, the **Bible** is referred to as the **Special Revelation** of God.

**Theology:** The systematic organization of man's attempt to study and interpret the Bible

**Nature:** The entirety of the physical (animate and inanimate) universe, from the cell to the entire cosmos

From a Christian perspective, **Nature** (the **Creation**) is referred to as the **General Revelation** of God.

**Science:** The systematic organization of man's attempt to study and interpret nature

**Universe:** The sum total of all space, time, matter and energy (the totality of everything that exists)

**Big Bang:** The event marking the beginning of the universe (space, time, matter, energy) at a singularity

**Causal Agent:** Entity (e.g., laws of nature/physics) outside of space & time that/who created the universe

**God:** The being outside of space/time who created everything in the universe, as described in the Bible

**Astronomy:** Science dedicated to the study of everything in the universe above the Earth's atmosphere

**Cosmology:** The science of the origin, development and structure of the universe

**Methodological Naturalism:** Philosophy that natural laws and forces are all that operate in the universe

**Creationism** (cosmos): Philosophy that the God of the Bible created & continues to operate in the universe

**Copernican Principle:** The view that the Earth is an ordinary planet and one of many like it in the universe

**Anthropic Principle:** Belief that the universe is expressly designed for the benefit of earthly human life

**Galaxy:** Gravitationally-bound collection of stars (average ~200 billion) (types: spiral, elliptical, irregular)

**Milky Way Galaxy:** The name of the spiral galaxy in which the Sun is a star and the Earth is a planet

**Galaxy Cluster:** A collection of galaxies held together by mutual gravitational attraction (Local Group)

**Solar System:** Sun, planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune), moons, etc

**Terrestrial (rocky) Planet:** Small, high density (solid) planet (e.g., Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars)

**Gas Giant (Jovian) Planet:** Large, low density (gaseous) planet (e.g., Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune)

**Habitable Zone:** Volume of space within a planetary system or galaxy where advanced life could exist

**Fine Tuning:** The parameters of a physical model having to be very precise to agree with observation

**Biochemistry:** The science of the chemical processes and compounds that occur within living organisms

**Evolution:** Biological changes that occur in populations of organisms through time (types: micro-, macro-)

**Creationism** (life): The divinely-directed supernatural appearance of certain types of life at certain times

**DNA:** The cell's genetic material consisting of a double helix of two polynucleotide chains, containing four nucleotide molecules: adenine (A), cytosine (C), guanine (G), thymine (T). (can only bond: A-T, C-G)

**Protein:** Chainlike molecule of amino acids linked together that perform many complex cellular functions

**Amino Acid:** An organic compound that has both an amino ( $-NH_2$ ) and a carboxyl ( $-COOH$ ) group

### *People/References*

Aristotle (384-322 BC) Greek philosopher/scientist – student of Plato and a teacher of Alexander the Great

Nicolaus Copernicus, Doctorate (1473-1543) (Roman Catholic) Polish mathematician, astronomer, jurist

- On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies* (Nicholas Copernicus, 1543)
- Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) (Roman Catholic) Italian astronomer, physicist, philosopher, mathematician  
*Sidereus Nuncius* (*Starry Messenger*) (Galileo Galilei, 1610)  
*Letter to Castelli* (Galileo Galilei, December 21, 1613)
- Charles Darwin, Bachelor Degree in Theology (1809-1882) (agnostic) British naturalist, geologist  
*On the Origin of Species* (Charles Darwin, 1859)  
*The Descent of Man* (Charles Darwin, 1871)
- Albert Einstein, Ph.D. (1879-1955) (deist/agnostic) German-born theoretical physicist, Nobel Prize (1921)  
*The Foundation of the Generalised Theory of Relativity* (Albert Einstein, 1916)  
*Relativity, the Special and the General Theory: A Popular Exposition* (Albert Einstein, 1920)
- Edwin Hubble, Ph.D. (1889-1953) (raised Christian, but silent on views later in life) American astronomer  
*The Observational Approach to Cosmology* (Edwin Hubble, 1937)
- Georges Lemaître, Ph.D. (1894-1966) (Catholic) Belgian priest and astronomer (findings preceded Hubble's)
- Fred Hoyle (1915-2001) (agnostic) British astronomer (derisively coined term "Big Bang" on BBC radio in 1949)  
*A Different Approach to Cosmology: From a Static Universe through the Big Bang Towards Reality* (Hoyle et al., 2000)
- Francis Crick (1916-2004) (agnostic/atheist) British molecular biologist, biophysicist, Nobel Prize (1962)  
*Life Itself: Its Origin and Nature* (Francis Crick, 1981)
- Robert Jastrow, Ph.D. (1925-2008) (agnostic) American astronomer, physicist, leading NASA scientist  
*God and the Astronomers* (Robert Jastrow, 1978)  
*Journey to the Stars: Space Exploration – Tomorrow and Beyond* (Robert Jastrow, 1990)
- James D. Watson, Ph.D. (1928) (atheist) American molecular biologist, geneticist, Nobel Prize (1962)  
*The Double Helix: A Personal Account of the Discovery of the Structure of DNA* (James D. Watson, 1968)
- Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Ph.D. (1933) (Christian) American Old Testament scholar, educator, Bible translator  
*Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Walter C. Kaiser Jr. & Moisés Silva, 1994)  
*The Promise-Plan of God: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Walter C. Kaiser Jr., 2008)
- Carl Sagan, Ph.D. (1934-1996) (agnostic) American astronomer, astrophysicist (*Cosmos: A Personal Voyage*)  
*Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space* (Carl Sagan, 1994)  
*Billions and Billions: Thoughts on Life and Death at the Brink of the Millennium* (Carl Sagan, 1997)
- Victor J. Stenger, Ph.D. (1935-2014) (atheist/humanist) American particle physicist, philosopher  
*God: The Failed Hypothesis – How Science Shows that God Does Not Exist* (Victor J. Stenger, 2007)  
*The New Atheism: Taking a Stand for Science and Reason* (Victor J. Stenger, 2009)  
*The Fallacy of Fine-Tuning: Why the Universe is Not Designed for Us* (Victor J. Stenger, 2011)
- Stephen Jay Gould, Ph.D. (1941-2002) (agnostic) American paleontologist, evolutionary biologist  
*Ever Since Darwin: Reflections in Natural History* (Stephen Jay Gould, 1977)  
*The Structure of Evolutionary Theory* (Stephen Jay Gould, 2002)
- Richard Dawkins, D. Phil. (1941) ("fairly militant atheist") British evolutionary biologist  
*The Blind Watchmaker: Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe without Design* (Richard Dawkins, 1986)  
*A Devil's Chaplain: Reflections on Hope, Lies, Science, and Love* (Richard Dawkins, 2003)  
*The God Delusion* (Richard Dawkins, 2006)
- Stephen Hawking, Ph.D. (1942) (views: deist; recent claim: atheist) British theoretical physicist, cosmologist  
*A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (Stephen Hawking, 1988)

Biblical passages are taken from the NIV1984.

*The Grand Design* (Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, 2010)

Hugh Ross, Ph.D. (1945) (Christian) Canadian-American astrophysicist, Christian apologist

*The Fingerprint of God* (Hugh Ross, 1991)

*The Creator and the Cosmos* (Hugh Ross, 1995)

*A Matter of Days* (Hugh Ross, 2004)

*Creation as Science: A Testable Model Approach to End the Creation/Evolution Wars* (Hugh Ross, 2006)

*Why the Universe Is the Way It Is* (Hugh Ross, 2008)

Paul Davies, Ph.D. (1946) (agnostic) British-born physicist, professor, broadcaster

*The Mind of God: The Scientific Basis for a Rational World* (Paul Davies, 1992)

*Cosmic Jackpot: Why Our Universe is Just Right for Life* (Paul Davies, 2007)

Lawrence M. Krauss, Ph.D. (1954) (atheist, self-proclaimed “antitheist”) American theoretical physicist

*The Physics of Star Trek* (Lawrence M. Krauss, 1995)

*A Universe from Nothing: Why There is Something Rather than Nothing* (Lawrence M. Krauss, 2012)

Fazale Rana, Ph.D. (1963) (Christian) American biochemist

*Origins of Life: Biblical and Evolutionary Models Face Off* (Fazale Rana and Hugh Ross, 2004)

*Who was Adam?: A Creation Model Approach to the Origin of Man* (Fazale Rana with Hugh Ross, 2005)

*The Cell’s Design: How Chemistry Reveals the Creator’s Artistry* (Fazale Rana, 2008)

*Creating Life in the Lab: How New Discoveries in Synthetic Biology Make a Case for the Creator* (Fazale Rana, 2011)

## Introduction: The Premise of this Study: The Facts of both Nature & the Bible are the Same

### **Scientific Method:**

1. Question
2. Research conditions
3. Hypothesis (originate or revise)
4. Testing
5. Analysis
6. Back to 3

### **Biblical Interpretive Method**

1. Note frame of reference & initial conditions
2. Note what occurs, when, where & final
3. Originate/revise hypothesis
4. Test hypothesis
5. Analyze test results
6. Back to 3

### **Dual Revelation**

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF REVELATION: God’s unveiling of Truth and His Self-Disclosure

There is a DUAL REVELATION: General and Special Revelations

**GENERAL REVELATION** – God’s existence, power, wisdom, majesty, righteousness and glory are manifested to all people at all times in all places through nature, history and the human conscience.

**SPECIAL REVELATION** – God’s specific and particular self-disclosure through His redemptive actions and words. It is called the Special Revelation because it came at Special Times and in Special Places.

Where are the GENERAL and SPECIAL REVELATIONS defined?

In Church Tradition: for example, the BELGIC CONFESSION of 1561

**General Revelation** – Belgic Confession, Article 2: “We know [God] by two means: First, by the creation, preservation and government of the universe, since that universe is before our eyes like a beautiful book in which all creatures, great and small, are as letters to make us ponder the invisible things of God.”

Biblical passages are taken from the NIV1984.

**Special Revelation** – Article 2: “Second, [God] makes himself known to us more openly by his holy and divine Word, as much as we need in this life, for his glory and for the salvation of his own.”

In the Christian Bible: for example, Psalm 19, Romans 1.

**General Revelation** – Psalm 19:1-4a: “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

**Special Revelation** – Psalm 19:7-9: “The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous.”

**General Revelation** – Romans 1:18-20: “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

Jesus is named the originator of both the General <sup>Colossians 1:15-17</sup> & Special <sup>John 1:1, Revelation 19:13</sup> Revelations.

Therefore, Christianity holds that there is a unity in God’s Revelations and all truth is God’s truth; however, it is important to not exaggerate, but also to not diminish the importance of General Revelation. So, what happens when General and Special Revelation seem to conflict? The following is an historical example:

Aristotle taught that the Earth was at the center of the Universe and everything revolved around it.

The Jewish and later Christian leaders accepted this idea, because they believe it was supported by many Scripture passages, including: Psalm 19:6, Psalm 93:1, Psalm 96:10, Psalm 104:5, 1 Chronicles 16:30 and Ecclesiastes 1:5.

A couple thousand years later, however, Nicolaus Copernicus advanced a Heliocentric hypothesis, because his astronomical observations did not support the Geocentric model of Aristotle. Then, one hundred years later, Galileo made major improvements to the telescope and his observations confirmed the Heliocentric model. Although the science community was beginning to generally embrace the model, Galileo was attacked by the church and was himself made uneasy, because of his deep faith and the apparent disagreement between the Bible and the Heavens. In his trial by the church, Galileo defended himself with two principles he drew out of the Belgic Confession and from Scripture:

1. The Record of Nature and the Words of the Bible are both Revelations from the same God.
2. Nature and Scripture are facts, while Science and Theology are man’s interpretations, so the interpretations need to be constantly tested and revised using the facts, as they are collected.

The pure facts will never be in conflict, but the human interpretations will often disagree.

## *Ground Rules*

*Questions?**Glimpse Ahead and Conclusion*

Addendum 2015  
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**Introduction***Scientific/Biblical Method* – Examples in Scripture

**The main issues are the *frame of reference* and the *testing of conditions*.**

1 Thessalonians 5:21 Test everything. Hold on to the good.

**Romans 12**

Romans 12:2a Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

**Frame of Reference:** Not the world view, but *God's perspective*.

Romans 12:2b Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

**Testing:** Using *God's perspective* (His Word), decide what is right.

**James 2**

James 2:19a You believe that there is one God.

**Frame of Reference:** Belief in the *God of the Bible*.

James 2:18b Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

**Testing:** *Genuine faith in the Biblical God is proven by the testing of behavior (actions).*

*Two Aspects of the General Revelation*

1. **Internal:** Every human being is made in the Image of God
2. **External:** God expresses Himself in the Universe and in Human History

*Aristotle's Geocentric Theory of the Universe* – Examples of Supportive Bible Verses

**1 Chronicles 16:30b** The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved. <sup>Psalm 93:1b, 96:10b</sup>

**Psalm 104:5** He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.

*Four Cornerstones of Creationism from Scripture*

1. **Dual Revelation** The expression of God's attributes & glory are seen in the Bible and in Nature.
2. **Creation Purposes** Nature fulfills the stated and implied reasons for God's Creation.

3. **Creation Chronology** God existed before time and space, He prepares human beings for the new creation and He will create a New Heaven and a New Earth in the future.
4. **Detectability of the Divine** God is involved in His Creation through His miracles.