

Examining the Cosmos

Session 2

The Creation of the Universe

Reference Document 1.

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLESⁱ (Which can and should be tested.)

1. The Bible (including Genesis 1-11) is the error-free word of God.

“We believe the Bible (the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments) is the Word of God, written. As a "God-breathed" revelation, it is thus verbally inspired and completely without error (historically, scientifically, morally, and spiritually) in its original writings. . . The Bible is therefore our supreme and final authority in all matters that it addresses.” (Reasons To Believe Statement of Faith)

“We affirm that Genesis 1-11 is factual, as is the rest of the book. We deny that the teachings of Genesis 1-11 are mythical and that scientific hypotheses about earth history or the origin of humanity may be invoked to overthrow what Scripture teaches about creation.” (International Council on Biblical Inerrancy)

2. **The creation account of Genesis 1 follows a basic chronology**, although occasionally it organizes information in a topical manner (e.g., Creation Day 5 describes God’s creative activity in the seas. Day 6 describes His creation on land.).

3. The record of nature is a reliable and trustworthy revelation from God.

“We believe that the physical universe, the realm of nature, is the visible creation of God. It declares God’s existence and gives a trustworthy revelation of God’s character and purpose. In Scripture, God declares that through His creation all humanity recognizes His existence, power, glory, and wisdom. An honest study of nature (its physical, biological, and social aspects) can prove useful in a person’s search for truth.” (Reasons To Believe Statement of Faith)

4. The Bible will not contradict the record of nature.

“Properly understood, God’s Word (Scripture) and God’s world (nature), as two revelations (one verbal, one physical) from the same God, will never contradict each other.” (Reasons To Believe Statement of Faith)

“We affirm the harmony of special (Scripture) with general (nature) revelation and therefore of biblical teaching with the facts of nature. We deny that any genuine scientific facts are inconsistent with the true meaning of any passage of Scripture.” (International Council on Biblical Inerrancy)

5. The Bible is primarily organized around a central theological purpose: God communicates His plan for human redemption from a fallen nature through His Son, Jesus Christ. Likewise, the universe is designed for a central purpose, namely the benefit of humans.

6. The Bible contains only a selective summary in its description of God’s creation miracles because its content focuses on the theme of human redemption (e.g., no mention of dinosaurs, bi-pedal primates, quantum mechanics or the existence of the planet Jupiter). The record of nature is also selective in that it does not give complete data about such issues as the nature of God, how man can be reconciled to God, the meaning of life, moral guidelines, etc.

7. God gives man the privilege to carefully fill in the details through gradual exploration and increased understanding of His creation.

“We affirm that since God is the author of all truth, all truths, biblical and extra-biblical, are consistent and cohere, and that the Bible speaks truth when it touches on matters pertaining to nature, history, or anything else. We further affirm that in some cases extra-biblical data have value for clarifying what Scripture teaches, and for prompting correction of faulty interpretations. We deny that extra-biblical views ever disprove the teaching of Scripture or hold priority over it. (International Council on Biblical Inerrancy)

Note: For an in-depth look at dual revelation, please read “Revelation Times Two?” by Kenneth Samples, in FACTS for FAITH, issue 2, Quarter 2, 2000.

ⁱ As excerpted from the “OVERVIEW OF REASONS TO BELIEVE’S TESTABLE CREATION MODEL, (Using Genesis 1 as an Outline.)” Compiled by: Hugh Ross, Fazale Rana, David Rogstad, Kenneth Samples. Assembled by Krista Kay Bontrager