

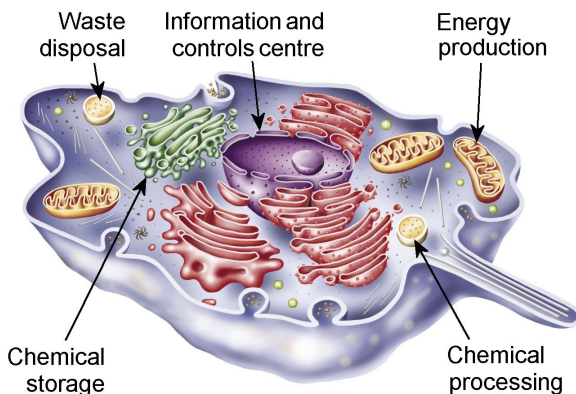
Has Science disproved the Bible? (part 2)

The cell

We want to think briefly about the cell, because it is the basic building block of life. All life consists of one or more of these building blocks. The simplest forms of life are single-celled creatures. By contrast, most forms of life consist of many cells.

For example, the human body contains more than 10 million million cells of about 200 different types.

Scientists have discovered that there are many parts to a typical cell.



Just as a house has a kitchen, living room, bedroom and bathroom, so a cell has specialised areas partitioned off for separate uses. The diagram shows just a few of the specialised areas.

A room in a house is separated from the rest of the house by its walls, and then its door is used to control what comes in and out. In the same way, each compartment of the cell is sealed off from the rest of the cell by its own membrane, which has openings to allow some chemicals in and out and to prevent others passing through.

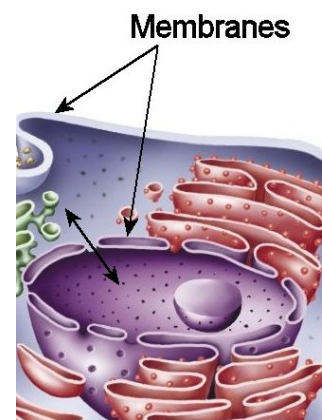
There are highly sophisticated systems to ensure that only the correct chemicals come in and out of compartments.

In total there are more than twenty different sections in a cell, and these systems must accurately regulate chemical movements between every one of these sections.

One thing that it is important to remember is that every cell that has ever been discovered has all of these systems in place to enable it to survive.

Here, then, are some of the known facts about the cell:

- the cell is the basis for all life.
- it is incredibly complicated.
- all the cells that have ever been discovered have all the essential systems in place.



We want to think about the implications of that last fact.

We have no observable facts to suggest that cells have ever been anything other than complete and fully functional. Nor do we have any observable facts to lead us to believe that the complex chemicals like DNA that we find within cells have ever been anything other than complete and fully functional.

Theories have been put forward suggesting that animal cells developed from more simple yeast cells. But again, we must remember that yeast cells are complete and fully functional. We should also bear in mind that they are far from simple. There are no observable facts that indicate that yeast cells developed into more complex cells.

By just looking at the observable facts, we would not be led into thinking that the basic building block of life has ever been anything other than complete and fully functional.

The Bible

The observable facts in the Bible

We have been looking at the observable facts in science. We now want to see what the equivalent is for the Bible. If we think about it, we'll see that it is the text of the Bible that we can think of as the observable facts. We looked carefully at the observable facts in science, so we must look equally carefully at the text of the Bible.

So let's see what the Bible text says about the start of things. Let's look at the first few words of the Bible:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Genesis 1 v 1

Leaving aside for the moment the argument about whether a Creator was involved, this sentence tells us that the universe, including our earth, came into existence at some point called "the beginning".

The Bible then goes on to say:

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep.
Genesis 1 v 2



We are told that at one stage our earth was covered with water, uninhabited and dark.

Opinions vary among Bible students over what the text is saying about the beginning of the universe and our earth, and how long it all took.

For instance, some Bible students think that there could be a time gap between "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*" and "*Now the earth was formless and empty*". So they think the Bible could be saying the universe was made some unspecified time before planet earth came to be how it is now.

Regardless of these differences of opinion about details, we can see that the Bible text tells us that planet earth came into existence and was at one stage covered with water, totally uninhabited and dark.

The first two chapters of the Bible then tell us that our world as we know it today came into being in six stages. The record seems to be of what someone on the earth would see as events happened. At each stage God gives instructions, and the record then confirms that the instructions are carried out.

The Bible tells us that at the first stage the instruction from God is:

“Let there be light.”

Genesis 1 v 3

For the first time, light reaches the water that covers the earth.

We are also told that:

*God ... separated the light from the darkness.
God called the light “day,” and the darkness he
called “night.”*

Genesis 1 v 4 and 5



The waters now experience the vital cycle of day and night.

The instructions for the second stage are:

“Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.”

Genesis 1 v 6

We can see what this means when we read:

God called the expanse “sky.”

Genesis 1 v 8

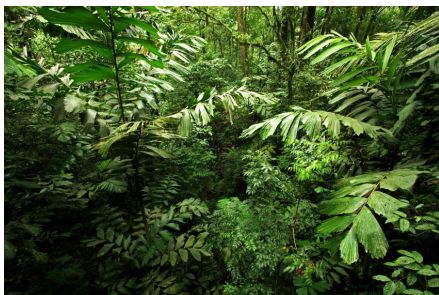


The water round the earth is separated to form clouds and sea. There is now a space for life, but with an abundant supply of water, which is vital to sustain life.

At the third stage the instructions are:

“Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.”

Genesis 1 v 9



*“Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants
and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it,
according to their various kinds”.*

Genesis 1 v 11

Land appears together with plant life. Vegetation flourishes in the environment provided at this stage.



The fourth stage instructions are:

“Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years.”

Genesis 1 v 14

Probably the clouds separate and the sun and moon appear. The cycle of the seasons is now established so that life can be supported.

For the fifth stage, the instruction is:

“Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.”

Genesis 1 v 20



Life appears in the sea and in the air.

The final instructions in this great project are:



“Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.”

Genesis 1 v 24

“Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

Genesis 1 v 26

So the land animals appear, with man last of all. The record makes no attempt to explain how it is done. So, we have seen that the Bible is telling us that everything came into existence in six stages.

At the end of the first stage we read:

And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

Genesis 1 v 5

There are similar statements at the end of the other stages. These statements are telling us that the stages are all a day in length. The second book of the Bible – Exodus – supports these statements in Genesis:

In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them.

Exodus 20 v 11

If we look at how the Bible uses the word “day”, we see that it usually refers to a 24- hour period. But if we look carefully at the text of the Bible, we see that occasionally it refers to longer time periods. One example of this occurs in the creation account itself in Genesis chapter two. The Bible talks about:

the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

Genesis 2 v 4

This “day” contains the whole six days of creation that we have just been looking at. We use the word “day” in the same way today when we talk about “our day and age” or “Queen Victoria’s day”. So we can see that the text is flexible in its use of the word “day” in the creation account.

In the rest of the Bible there are some general comments about the God of the Bible being the Creator. However, none of these comments gives us any more information about the mechanisms involved. The Bible is not a science textbook. It is more concerned about *why* we are here and the purpose behind our existence.

Summary – the Bible

This is what the Bible text tells us about *how* we got here:

- Our earth had a beginning.
- At one stage in our planet’s history, it was uninhabited and covered with water.
- Life then appeared on our planet in stages, with man appearing last of all.

We should bear in mind that there are differences of opinion about how long all this took.

It may surprise us, but that’s about all the Bible text actually tells us about the start of everything.

Bible and Science conflict?

We will now look at the observable facts in Science and see if they conflict with the Bible text.

The table below summarises what we have seen:

Observable facts from Science	The Bible text
• “Red shift” in light coming from space • Background radiation in universe • Animals in fossil record appear fully functional • The cell is always complete and fully functional	• Our earth had a beginning • At one stage in our planet’s history, it was uninhabited and covered with water • Life then appeared on our planet in stages, with man appearing last of all

The fact that the light coming from the universe is different from that which comes from our sun, and that there is a background radiation, doesn't conflict with the Biblical statement that the universe had a beginning.

If we accept the scientists' belief that the red shift means our universe is expanding, this would agree with the Bible statement that the universe had a beginning.

The observable fact that the fossils and the cell appear fully formed agrees with the Bible statement that life appeared fully formed in stages, with man last of all.

If we consider time periods for the start of things, there is no conflict if we restrict ourselves to observable facts. When we think carefully about it, we can see that all the dating methods are based on assumptions. The oldest objects of known age are only a few thousand years old. We have no object which says, "I am 40 million years old – use me as a calibration sample" by which to measure other things. So we don't have all the facts. Remembering what we saw in the examples from medical history (p. 95), if we don't have all the facts, we can reach wrong conclusions. In dating methods we don't have all the facts either, so our conclusions could be wrong. We can see that, whatever view we take of the Bible text regarding time periods, there is no conflict with science because there are no observable scientific facts to enable us to check our theories.

When we consider the observable facts that science has discovered, there is no conflict with what the Bible says.

Frequently asked questions

1. Where do dinosaurs fit in the Bible record?

There is no doubt that dinosaurs once existed on the earth. The facts of the fossil records show that. But that is the only fact we have about them. As all dating methods contain untestable assumptions, we cannot be sure when they existed. There is no mention of these animals in the Bible record.

There are places in the Bible record where they *could* fit in, but we are given no facts in the Bible. It is the opinion of some that they existed before the time referred to in Genesis 1 verse 1 when the present order of things came into being. Others are of the opinion that they lived before the flood of Noah's time and were destroyed in Noah's flood.

2. Where do the fossils fit in the Bible record?

Like the dinosaurs, the animals in the fossil record could have occurred in an era before our own or could have been wiped out in the chaos that would have occurred in the flood of Noah's time.

