



“Understanding the Bible”

Section 4: Why Can We Trust the Bible?

Unit 4.3: Standing on the Solid Ground of Science



I) Learning to ‘Think God’s Thoughts After Him’

- Has anyone ever told you that science *disproves* the Bible? Not only is this statement unsupported by fact, but it also neglects to acknowledge that it is the Bible itself that first made science possible. Physicist J **Robert Oppenheimer** is an example of someone who credits Scripture as the very foundation that developed the scientific world. Oppenheimer is best known for his work in splitting the atom and developing nuclear power back in the 1960’s. Although he was ironically not a Christian, Oppenheimer was quick to point out that it was the Bible that gave birth to modern science as we know it today. Oppenheimer’s argument, supported by many early twentieth century scientists of various religious backgrounds, is best summarized by writer Francis Schaeffer who states that Oppenheimer believed “...there was a reasonable God, who created a reasonable universe, and thus man, by use of his reason, could find out the universe’s form.” Astronomer **Johannes Kepler** who lived in fifteenth century Germany also captured the essence of Oppenheimer’s theory when he stated that the pursuit of science was nothing more than learning to “*think God’s thoughts after Him.*” Simply put, if there is no God, then there should be no order to our earth. But because there is an intelligent creator and designer, then we can “*think God’s thoughts after Him*” by exploring the material world to see God’s reasoning in action. This is why science and Christianity fit hand-in-glove.

II) Reclaiming the Rationality of Christian Religion

- Christian author and pastor Dr. James Kennedy did extensive research on the Christian roots of modern science, and his findings were conclusive that there is no other worldview that could have helped the scientific field grow as rapidly as it has. According to Kennedy, “*Not only is modern science a Christian blessing to the world, not only did it develop in the midst of Christianity, is also could have developed nowhere else.*” Kennedy believes this is because modern science could not have flourished with any of the following people groups: **(1) Animists** – They worshipped nature and thought rocks and trees had Gods living in them; **(2) Islam** – They hold to a view of fatalism that states mankind cannot do anything to change a pre-determined future; **(3) Buddhism** – They see the material world as evil and a roadblock to a spiritual nirvana; and **(4) Hindus** – They worship multiple Gods in a world that has no ultimate order or structure.
- Kepler was also on record centuries ago making the same argument as Kennedy, and his main theory was based on the rationality of Christian religion. According to Kepler, “*God is supremely rational, and the human being is also rational, being created in the image and likeness of God. Hence religion, which is the expression of the deep relationship between God and humankind, cannot be but rational.*”

III) Famous Scientists Who Focused on Scripture

- It seems rare today to find scientists who affirm the authority of Holy Scripture. Perhaps it is because the pride of human intelligence has blinded them to the very source of all their intellectual capacities. However, it has not always been this way in the history of modern science. Here is just a short list of influential scientists of various fields who believed in the Bible: **(1) Joseph Lister** (Antiseptic surgery); **(2) Louis Pasteur** (Bacteriology); **(3) Isaac Newton** (Calculus, Dynamics); **(4) Gregor Mendel** (Genetics), and **(5) Michael Faraday** (Electromagnetics, Field Theory). **Francis Bacon**, the ‘Father of the Scientific Method,’ also used this illustration to describe the relationship of science and Scripture: “*There are two books laid before us to study, to prevent our falling into error; first the volume of the Scriptures which reveal the will of God; then, the volume of the Creatures, which express His power.*”

IV) Speaking Where the Scriptures Have Already Spoken

- One of the scientists listed above was seventeenth century innovator Michael Faraday. Faraday's most significant contributions to the scientific community came from the study of electricity and his invention of the generator. Throughout his years of work in the field, Faraday also belonged to a Christian fellowship group of scientists whose motto was this: *"Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."* What Faraday and his colleagues were simply stating was that what they were formulating was theory; but what the Bible states is fact.

V) Calculating the Accuracy of the Creation Account

- This idea of theory vs. fact is most often debated in modern circles over the origin of the earth. Renown author Henry Morris makes an argument in his book, *The Genesis Record*, that the first ten words of the Bible should be the only foundation of scientific research because it quickly refutes all incomplete or false theories of the world's origin. Those ten words are: *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."* In that one statement, Morris says Scripture refutes (1) **Atheism** (because the universe has a divine Creator); (2) **Pantheism** (because God is transcendent and stands outside of His creation); (3) **Polytheism** (because one God created all things); (4) **Materialism** (because all matter had a specific beginning in time and space); (5) **Dualism** (because it was God alone who created it); (6) **Humanism** (because God, not man, is the ultimate authority as Creator); and (7) **Evolution** (because God created all things including human beings in their original adult form).

VI) Geological Facts Point to a Global Flood

- Geology is another science that has affirmed the authority of Scripture, including a rational explanation of why the earth is so young but looks so old: a universal flood. Dr. Gregg Davidson of the University of Mississippi and Dr. Ken Wolgemuth at the University of Tulsa are Christian geologists who have co-written several articles that give geological support for Noah's flood. According to Dr. Davidson and Dr. Wolgemuth, *"The Bible, they were told, clearly teaches the earth was created a few thousand years ago with life forms fashioned more or less as we find them today. Because the earth is very young, the incredibly complex sequence of rock, sediment, and fossils found on our planet must have been deposited in a very short period of time. Noah's Flood, as the only plausible causal agent, was obviously a global and violent event."*

VII) Affirming Biblical Accounts Through Archaeology

- Another area where scientists are "digging up" more proof for the validity of the biblical record is in the field of archaeology. There are numerous discoveries each year that support the accounts written in Scripture. Some of the most significant discoveries include the following: (1) **Recorded Ancient Flood Story** – This includes an ancient clay tablet that records a flood story similar to the Genesis account written during the time of Babylonian King Gilgamesh; (2) **Jacob's Well** – The same well that is mentioned in John 4:1-42 is still being fed an underground stream to this day; (3) **David's Jerusalem** – Archaeologists uncovered evidence of David's Jerusalem conquest including his famous palace where he committed adultery with Bathsheba; (4) **Roman Crucifixion Remains** – The remains of a young first century male were discovered, including a seven-inch long nail imbedded in his heel bone as evidence of crucifixion being a valid first century practice in Rome.

VIII) Remembering Science's Role in the Resurrection

- Finally, the most significant event in human history is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And although some scientists try to steer clear of any supernatural discussion, the resurrection is more than just supernatural. As James Kennedy states, *"Almost every branch of science is involved in the resurrection of Christ, from anatomy to biology to physics and chemistry. Obviously, it is a historical fact; it is the most important historical fact in the world. It was recorded by eyewitnesses and testified to by many others, and histories have been written about it. It is the basis and centrality of the Christian theological viewpoint that Jesus was dead and He rose again. Yet if we remove from that truth its scientific and historical aspects, what do we have left? A myth and nothing more."*