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“No Experiment Can Ever Disprove It”

Evolutionary models are often presented as being accepted by all scientists. A 2017 *Scientific American* article pulls back the curtain, letting us see that evolutionists debate whether the standard inflationary Big Bang model should be discarded, and some “new idea” found as a replacement.

Prestigious evolutionists wrote the following, which echoes the creationist claim that some evolutionary models cannot be falsified.

Inflationary cosmology, as we currently understand it, cannot be evaluated using the scientific method. ...These features make inflation so flexible, that no experiment can ever disprove it. Some scientists accept that inflation is untestable yet refuse to abandon it. They have proposed that, instead, science must change by discarding one of its defining properties: empirical testability. This notion has triggered a roller coaster of discussions about the nature of science and its possible redefinition, promoting the idea of some nonempirical science. ...Declaring an empty theory as the unquestioned standard view requires some sort of assurance outside of science. Short of a professed oracle, the only alternative is to invoke authorities.²¹

-MSB

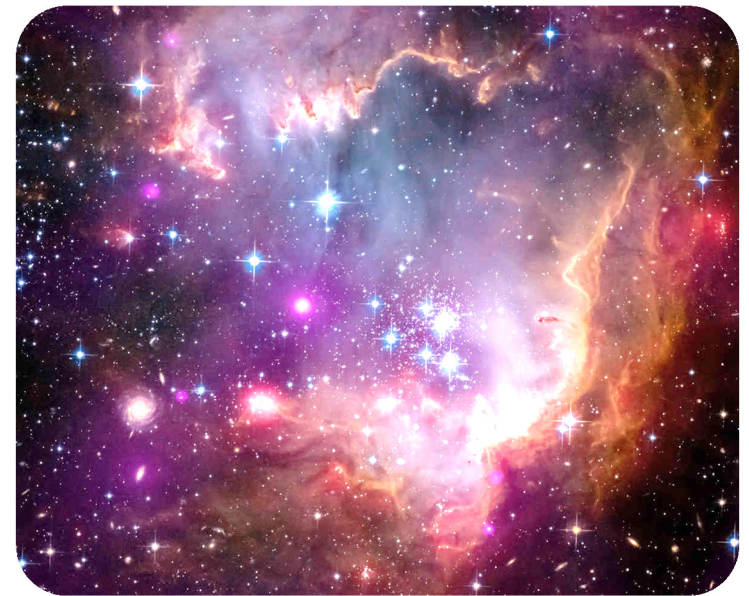
²¹ Anna Ijjas, Paul Steinhardt, Abraham Loeb, “Pop Goes the Universe,” *Scientific American*, February 2017, 39.

LSI Journal

a forum for diverse views consistent with Scripture

Creation / Evolution

a Confessional Lutheran view



Did God Create Stars
Out of Nothing?

WELS Convention Edition

- *Scientific American*: “No Experiment Can Disprove It”
- *Devotion*: A God Who Reveals Mysteries
- *Book Review*: Biology Confirms Design
- Best Evidence for Evolution

Lutheran Science Institute

Creation / Evolution: a Confessional Lutheran view

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% of visits	LSI Topical Webpage	Minutes Visited (ave.)
26%	Ape to Man?	2.2
18%	Dinosaurs	2.9
12%	Creation Apologetics	2.3
12%	Theistic Evolution	2.5
10%	Bill Nye Explains Evolution	2.3
7%	Dating Methods	3.0
5%	Fossils and Rocks	2.2
4%	Noah's Flood	3.1
2%	Origin of Life	1.5
2%	For Classroom	1.7
1%	Natural Selection	1.0

LSI

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75 Million Years

Dating Methods

Creation Apologetics

Did God Use Evolution?

Theistic Evolution

Natural Selection

Noah's Flood

Fossils and Rocks

Select Confessional Lutheran Resources on Fossils and Rock Layers.

Dinosaurs: Feathers or Scales?

Mark Bergemann, [Pages 27-31, LSI Journal Spring 2016](#)
Excerpt: Did some dinosaurs have feathers like birds, or did all dinosaurs have scales like lizards? New evidence is constantly found in the quest to answer this question. The Milwaukee Public Museum hosted the traveling "Ultimate Dinosaurs" exhibit in March 2016, so I paid \$24 admission to see how the above question was answered.

[Essays on Origins](#)
Dr. David Menton, 1996

Disclaimer

Views expressed on this website, especially those from sources other than LSI, are not necessarily the views of LSI. In addition, LSI is a [WELS](#) group. There is theological variance between the WELS and some of the Confessional Lutheran church bodies represented in essays and books found on this website.

Evolution's Tree of Life

Mark Bergemann, [pages 28-29 LSI Journal winter 2016](#)
excerpt: The evolution story puts forth a tree of life with an imagined first life form turning into every animal that has ever existed. Darwin's 1837 tree of life is shown above. Evolutionists propose that all creatures, including humans, descended from a single common ancestor. A different tree of life can be drawn based on the truth God reveals in Scripture, and on what we observe about the world around us. This would actually be a forest of trees such as the image shown on the next page.

[The Cambrian Explosion Paradox](#)
Warren Krug, *LSI Journal*, 2012, 6 pages
Excerpt: "The "explosion" refers to the sudden appearance of all sorts of creatures in the Cambrian rocks, as if the evolution of animals suddenly exploded onto the scene following a long period of very little action. As we shall see, this event is a mystery that evolutionary paleontologists and other scientists have difficulty explaining."

The many recently published LSI articles listed above demonstrate that LSI has been working to better address these four categories, yet there is much more to do. LSI has for some time understood that these topics are important in our creation apologetic. LSI had no knowledge of this survey until it was published in January 2017.

Five of the other six survey categories have also been addressed in 2016-17 LSI Journal articles: DNA, Big Bang and Creation of Earth, Dinosaurs, Deep Time, and Homologous Structures. No LSI articles have recently mentioned the Progression of Civilization.

LSI Topical Webpages

It is interesting to note that the most popular topic page on our LSI website, “Ape To Man?” is the same as the top survey answer above, “Human Evolution.” Also of note is that “Natural Selection” is at the bottom of popularity on our LSI website, yet was second place in the survey. There are many possible reasons for this: The survey was of people age 14-24 while our LSI website has a large portion of pastors and teachers as visitors. Our LSI website also advertises some topics over others.

The chart on the next page lists visits to our topical webpages between March 4, 2016 and March 3, 2017. Percentages are of the 2,792 total visits to these pages. Note that people spent over two minutes average on the top eight pages. This is a long time for pages which are simply lists of links to articles. It is rather rare for web pages to have such high view times, as many visitors will spend only a few seconds, bringing down the average view time. A total of 8,112 visits were made to our website over this period by 6,211 individuals.

Website: www.LutheranScience.org

Next page: Chart listing LSI topical webpages and relative visits.

Next page: LSI topical webpage “Fossils and Rocks.”

graphic credits: Darwin’s finches and photo of Da Vinci painting are public domain; others are photos and graphics by Mark Bergemann.

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“No Experiment Can Ever Disprove It.”

Cover photo from NASA: This photo shows a portion of a nearby dwarf galaxy, the “Small Magellanic Cloud” (SMC), which is visible without a telescope. Explorers such as Ferdinand Magellan used the light of this galaxy, and many other heavenly lights, to navigate the seas. Magellan’s ship was the first to circumnavigate the globe (1519-22).

Delegates and Guests

*What do I say to a someone who is tempted by evolution?
Are Confessional Lutheran apologetic materials available?
What creation apologetics are regularly used in the WELS?*

The WELS affiliated Lutheran Science Institute (LSI) exists to meet these needs and more. LSI is PhD scientists, engineers, teachers, pastors, and laity using scientific and theological knowledge to provide helpful resources.

500 color copies of this LSI Journal issue will be inserted into delegate bags for the WELS 64th biennial convention in Watertown WI, July 31 – August 3, 2017.

Look to LSI for Answers

LSI is ready to help with your specific needs and concerns.
Ask for personalized help, or submit a question to our website Q&A.

Answered on LSI Q&A

Is the idea of an expanding universe something
a WELS Pastor can subscribe to in any way?

What studies have been conducted into
genetically-altered [engineered] humans?
How up-to-date are our theologians?

Does Hebrews 11:3 tells us that coal
isn't from plants seen before the Flood?

LSI Journal, Vol. 31, no. 2 (Spring 2017)

Natural Selection, Mutations, Adaption to Environment

One recent LSI Journal article centered on natural selection, mutations, and adaption:

-- *Natural Selection* (fall 2016)

The LSI topical webpage, “*Natural Selection*,” references the above article and two others. Many other LSI articles briefly mention natural selection, mutations, and adaption.

Fossils and Transitional Forms

Two recent LSI Journal articles centered on Fossils and Transitional Forms:

-- *Dinosaurs –Feathers or Scales?* (spring 2016)

-- *Evolution’s Tree of Life* (winter 2016)

Our LSI website has a 2015 video presentation on fossils. The LSI topical webpage, “*Fossils and Rocks*,” references the above articles and four others. Many other LSI articles briefly mention fossils and transitional Forms.

Science as an Authority

Many LSI Journal articles deal with this topic. Some recent examples:

-- *Evolutionists Say Amazing Things* (continuing series)

Dawkins: “*Evolution is a leap of imagination.*” (winter 2017)

Paul Davies: “*We do not know*” how life began. (winter 2017)

Scientific Amer.: “*No Experiment Can Ever Disprove It.*” (spring 2017)

Milwaukee Public Museum: “*So Much is Unknown.*” (summer 2016)

-- *How Can a Lie Like Evolution Have Scientific Evidence?* (Jan 2015)

-- *Historical vs. Operational Science:*

Why Knowing the Difference Between the Two Matters (Jan 2015)

-- *Witnessing in a World Where Evolution Claims There Is No God*

Part 2: *Handling Evolution In You Witness* (April 2015)

Part 3: *Evolution / Creation –Two Starting Points* (July 2015)

-- *Evolution Apologetics by the National Academy:*

Recommended Reading for the Creationist (winter 2017)

LSI Journal, Vol. 31, no. 2 (Spring 2017)

Survey Question

“Regardless of whether you believe in evolution, what is the best evidence that evolution is true?”¹⁹

Answers fell into one of ten categories.²⁰ Percentages total 101% due to rounding.

25%	Human Evolution
21%	Natural Selection, Mutations, Adaption to Environment
15%	Fossils and Transitional Forms
11%	Science as an Authority
6%	Progression of Civilization
6%	DNA
5%	Big Bang / Creation of Earth
5%	Dinosaurs
4%	Deep Time
3%	Homologous Structures

The Top 4 Survey Categories Total 72% of Responses **How Does LSI Address These 4 Best Evidences?**

Human Evolution

Two recent LSI Journal articles centered on human evolution:
 -- *How Religious Were Neanderthals?* (winter 2017)
 -- *Human or Ape, No In-Between.* (winter 2017)

The LSI topical webpage, “*Ape to Man?*” references the above articles and three others. Many other LSI articles briefly mention human evolution. These materials are a good start, but much more is needed in this category.

¹⁹ Biddle, 49.

²⁰ Biddle, 51.

Could God have made the fossils during creation week?

How are we to understand Psalm 104 in general, and verses 6-9 specifically? Does verse 9 refer to the flood?

Is the star light travel time difficulty removed if Gen 1:1-2 represents long ages?

Young Earth Creationists propose 6, 10, or even 25 thousand years as the age of the universe. Are there gaps in the Biblical genealogies?

www.LutheranScience.org/QA



LSI Blog

LSI Blog writer Warren Krug has posted over 1,300 blogs since 2005, receiving over 600,000 total views.

www.LutheranScience.org/blog

Recent Posts

How Religious were Neanderthals?
 The Brains of Boys and Girls Are Different.
 Amazing Fossil: Insect Inside Lizard Inside Snake.
 A Sunken Continent Discovered Under New Zealand.
 Water Streaks on Mars May Not Be Liquid Water After All.
 “8-Million-Year-Old” Alligator Looks Just Like Modern Gators.
 A Professor Observes Variation in a Virus and Calls it Evolution.

LSI Journal

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pdf version free online

Articles in the past 5 issues

www.LutheranScience.org

Devotions

- Faith is Reality (winter 2017)
- Our Creator Became Our Redeemer (fall 2016)
- This is the Day (summer 2016)
- Claiming to be Wise, They Became Fools (spring 2016)
- Want Your Faith to Grow? (winter 2016)

Know Evolution –evolution is a mixture a reality and fabrication

- Natural Selection (fall 2016)
- Human or Ape, No In-Between (winter 2017)
- Dinosaurs –Feathers or Scales? (spring 2016)
- Evolution’s Tree of Life (winter 2016)

Evolutionists Say Amazing Things

- Dawkins: “Evolution is a leap of imagination.” (winter 2017)
- Paul Davies: “We do not know” how life began (winter 2017)
- Milwaukee Public Museum: “So Much is Unknown” (summer 2016)
- Scientific American, “Bacteria Not Primitive” (spring 2016)
- Milwaukee County Zoo: Rhino Sign (winter 2016)

Book Reviews

- David Stove: Darwinian Fairytales (summer 2016)
- Jeffrey Stueber: The Vast Wasteland of Unbelief (summer 2016)
- Bill Nye: Undeniable (spring 2016)

The Best Evidence For Evolution

Mark Bergemann

*Creation apologetics should take into account
what people view as the most compelling
arguments for millions of years*

A 2009 survey discovered,

Doubts surfaced before high school among 44% of former church goers who no longer believe the Bible. When asked to explain why they doubt the Bible, young people offered answers like, “it contradicts itself,” “science shows the earth is old,” and “evolution shows the Bible can’t be trusted.”¹⁸

It is clear that evolution has shipwrecked the faith of many. Since 1974, the Lutheran Science Institute (LSI) has worked to provide Confessional Lutheran creation apologetics materials to our pastors, teachers, and laity. Such materials can blunt the temptation of evolution for many. How well is LSI addressing the claims of evolution which young people see as the most convincing? A 2016 survey will help answer that question. It asked young people ages 14 to 24 what they saw as the best evidence for evolution. [One interesting finding is that Christians and non-Christians gave similar answers.]

¹⁸ Daniel Biddle, “Targeted Apologetics,” *Answers –Building a Biblical Worldview*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Jan-Feb 2017), 51.

Dr. Axe says, “Tasks that we would need knowledge to accomplish can be accomplished only by someone with knowledge.” This should be obvious, but those who support a materialistic theory of evolution deny that it applies to the development of life.

Axe specializes in protein chemistry, specifically looking at enzymes. He shows that changing from a useful enzyme to a different but related enzyme is statistically impossible. There is not enough time even in the longest available evolutionary time table to account for the life as we know it. His experiments with enzymes confirm this. Even the simplest changes require too many steps to be possible. On page 57 he calculates that to get an amino acid sequence that will function as an enzyme, there will be 10 to the 74th power bad sequences that will not function. Pages 81 and following look at two enzymes that are very similar and how long it would take for one to evolve into the other. This is a relatively simple change compared to the origin of life as we see it today. Yet through mutation Axe and his coworker could find no evidence that one enzyme could evolve to another.

I have this against the book: It is not until the second to last chapter that it identifies God as the designer. Even then the author describes God as guiding evolution over a really long time. This denies the Genesis account that our Savior affirmed and it eliminates the first Adam which Paul told us about.

I found the book interesting and useful, even though I was disappointed that it did not follow God’s clear revelation. It is probably not necessary for your creation library, but does provide food for thought.

James A. Sehloff

Feature Articles

- Evolution Apologetics by the National Academy (winter 2017)
- God or No God? Creation or Evolution? (fall 2016)
- Why Do Some Believe in Millions of Years? (summer 2016)
- The Narrow Lutheran Middle Road for Creation (spring 2016)
- Code Systems Evidence a Creator (winter 2016)
- Survey of Creation Apologetics Used in the WELS (winter 2016)

Blog, Q&A, Other

- How Religious Were Neanderthals (winter 2017)
- No Gardeners –attempting to write God into the evolution story (fall 2016)
- Scientists Struggle to Explain the Origin of Life (summer 2016)
- Never Say, “Evolution is a Random Process” (summer 2016)
- Star Light Travel Time (spring 2016)
- Are There Gaps in the Biblical Genealogies? (winter 2016)

Feedback

Send your comments to Lutheran Science Institute, 13390 W. Edgewood Ave., New Berlin WI 53151 (or office@LutheranScience.org). Comments should be under 250 words. Longer submissions may be used as a guest editorial. Not all comments received can be used.

LSI Journal

I really appreciate the clarity of LSI Journal articles. The paragraph showing it is improper to claim evolution is “only a theory” is a good example. [*Evolution Apologetics By The National Academy*, Winter 2017.]

Prof. Forrest L. Bivens WI

LSI Ministry

Thank you for the wonderful work you are doing to provide a Confessional Lutheran view of creation/evolution and science. I pray the Lord continues to bless your labor.

Rev. Nathan Wagenknecht TX

“Many” Evolutionists in the Elect?

I am concerned about the statement, “Certainly many who believe in evolution while in this world will spend eternity with God in heaven.” [Witnessing In A World Where Evolution Claims “There Is No God,” April-June 2015 LSI Journal.] My main concern is the words “certainly many.” Also, the causal use of the word “evolution” does not seem to throw up a red flag as I think it should. Other than that, it was an excellent article. May God continue to bless your efforts to glorify Him.

Marlin Goebel MI

I am uncomfortable with saying that many people who believe in evolution will be saved, even if by the grace of God that may turn out to be true. Such a statement, it seems to me, detracts from the serious threat of Darwinism to the spiritual health of weak Christians.

Warren Krug WI

Author response

Thank you both for expressing concern over my article. I support open brotherly discussion of creation apologetics in our Confessional Lutheran circles. Hopefully, this will encourage others to join the discussion. Page 2 of the LSI Journal states, “Views expressed are those of the author or editor and not necessarily those of the Lutheran Science Institute.” This article is no exception.

My statement, “Certainly many who believe in evolution while in this world will spend eternity with God in heaven,” must be taken in context. The article repeatedly declares that evolution is a serious threat to the Christian faith. The very next paragraphs explain how evolution leads many to see no need for a savior. Part 4 of the article is titled, “Evolution is Incompatible with the Christian Faith.” That part begins, “Christians who accept evolution place their Christian faith in jeopardy. All false doctrine, including denying creation, leads away from Jesus and is damaging to faith. Evolution is especially dangerous, since it attacks the gospel message.”

power was in the word by which he caused the sterile earth to bring forth the living creatures.¹⁷

In Scripture God reveals everything we need to know about our salvation, and fewer details about other matters. Did God create stars directly from nothing? God does not answer this question, so we do not know. Praise God for what He reveals and for what He keeps hidden.

Mark Bergemann, a retired electrical engineer, holds a B.S. from UW-Milwaukee. He serves as president of the Lutheran Science Institute.

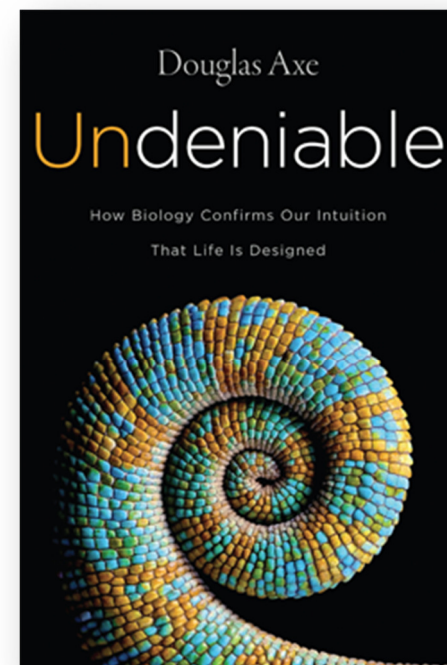
Book Review

Undeniable –How Biology Confirms Our Intuition That Life Is Designed,

by Douglas Axe.

New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2016. 304 pages, hardcover, \$25.99.

This book’s subtitle reads “How biology confirms our intuition”. The premise is that intuitively we know the origin of life cannot be the result of random processes over a really long period of time. So one of the basic premises of evolutionary biology goes against our intuition.



¹⁷ Franzmann, 23.

case by merely speaking the words that these things should be.¹³

Werner H. Franzmann served as the first full-time editor at Northwestern Publishing House from 1956-1968 where he began and edited *Meditations*, and edited the *Northwestern Lutheran* (later renamed *Forward In Christ*). He writes in his *Bible History Commentary*,

[Gen 1:1, Day 1] What came from the omnipotent hand of God at the very beginning were “the heavens and earth.” Today we would say “the universe.”¹⁴

[Gen 1:11-12, Day 3] God caused the vegetation to appear, not from seed, but from the ground devoid of seed, because none at yet existed.¹⁵

[Gen 1:14-16, Day 4] The sun, moon, and stars were already there. But they were not doing the work the Creator had in mind –for the benefit of man, the future resident of the earth.¹⁶

[Gen 1:24-25, Day 6] As we study the words God spoke to accomplish the first part of his work on the sixth day. As God there commanded, “Let the land produce vegetation, etc.,” so here he ordered, “let the land produce living creatures, etc.” But again we must point out that God’s method here was just as miraculous as when he created without an agent. Just as much of his omnipotent

¹³ George Oliver Lillegard, *From Eden To Egypt -Genesis: The Book Of Beginnings* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Pub. House, 1956), 11, 15, 16.

¹⁴ Werner H. Franzmann, *Bible History Commentary –Old Testament* (Milwaukee: WELS Board for Parish Education, 1980), 13.

¹⁵ Franzmann, 21.

¹⁶ Franzmann, 21.

I believe it important for us to realize how deeply evolution has infiltrated Christianity. Very few Christian church bodies still advocate a six day creation. Even some otherwise fairly conservative church bodies accept millions of years. Many well-known Christian ministries teach that God used millions of years to create, including Lee Strobel (*The Case For A Creator*), The John Ankerberg Show, and Hugh Ross (*Reasons to Believe*). It seems to me that many of the elect have drunk the poison of evolution. I have heard some fairly solid gospel presentations by John Ankerberg, yet he believes God used millions of years to create.

Mark Bergemann

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A God Who Reveals Mysteries

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created. ... (10) He was in the world, and the world was created through Him, yet the world did not recognize Him. ... (14) The Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:1-3, 10, 14 (HCSB)

John begins his gospel with the mystery¹ of the Trinity. One member of the Trinity, the Son, is here called the Word. At the beginning of time this Word was both “with God” and “was God.” How can the Word be “with God,” meaning being distinct from God, while also being God? That is a mystery which God reveals to us, and which we humbly accept as reality. We say God is one being in three persons, yet that really does not help us comprehend this mystery.

Genesis 1:1 reads, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Here God begins to reveal another mystery: How he created the universe and everything there is in it. Adam and Eve would not have known the world was only days old, unless God had revealed it to them. We know from many Scriptures that all three members of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) were active in creating the

builder assembles all the building materials at a site before assembling them into a house.¹¹

Cleone Weigand, who served on the LSI Board of Directors and wrote several meditations for the LSI Journal, writes in *The People's Bible Teachings* book on creation,

By means of his word, God created the “original stuff,” all matter, all energy. Then God proceeded to make the specific features and creatures. ...It certainly appears that God did not choose to create more stuff as he went along. He chose, rather, to form the new features and creatures from that huge bundle of matter/energy he created on the first day.¹²

George Lillegard comments about Genesis 1:2, 14-19, 24, Everything was in a chaotic state, without life and without light. The elements out of which the universe was made were all there, but not yet arranged and compounded into the innumerable forms in which they appeared in due course. ...We read next that “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” He brooded over it, as it were, imparting His power of motion and His living energy to the chaotic mass, making it thus capable of becoming whatever He might command, so that out of the same limited number of elements an endless variety of substances and material could come. ...On the fourth day God divided the light into the sun, moon, and stars. ...At the beginning of the sixth day God created out of the earth the animals and creeping things upon the earth, in every

¹¹ Jeske, 11.

¹² Cleone H. Weigand, *Creation –God Made All things* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Pub. House, 2000), 45.

¹ Here “mystery” refers to something hidden until God reveals it to us.

In the opening verse of Genesis, we heard how in the beginning God created heaven and earth. In verse 2 we were given a description of what the earth was like after this initial creative act. We are not given a similar description of the heavens. We have already noted that God's creative acts during the first three creation days consisted in modifying the earth's initial characteristics. What about God's fiat on the fourth day: "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens..."? Did this divine command merely reconstruct heavenly bodies already created in the rough at the beginning so that they might now serve the earth in various ways as lights? Or were they wholly new creations? We will need to leave these questions unanswered. God simply did not see fit to tell us anything about the relation of the light bearers made on the fourth day to the substance and form of the heavens created at the beginning.¹⁰

Other authors suggest God created from nothing only on Day 1, then used that raw material in His work of creation on Days 2-6.

John C. Jeske taught Old Testament at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary from 1970-1995. Jeske comments on Genesis 1:1 in *The People's Bible*,

The expression "the heavens and the earth" denotes the universe in its initial state. For his own reasons, God did not see fit to make his creation in its completed form. By an act of his will, God created all of the components that would later constitute the universe as we know it, including matter, energy, space, and time. On the first day, God created all of his raw materials, just as a home

¹⁰ Lawrenz and Jeske, 61. According to the preface, Lawrenz wrote on the first 4 chapters of Genesis, Jeske wrote the rest.

universe. In John 1, we see that "all things were created through" the Son, here called the "Word."

Verse 10 tells the sad truth about the Creator who made heaven and earth: He was right here with us, yet we did not recognize him as our Creator or as our Savior. In Romans chapter 1 verse 18 and following, God reveals that our sinful nature rejects the Creator God and replaces him with false gods. Thank God he has brought us to faith, where now as Christians we trust God for both our earthly and our heavenly life.

Finally, in verse 14 God reveals that this Word is the Son, who "became flesh and took up residence among us." Jesus is Immanuel² (meaning "God with us"), fully God and fully human. The dual nature of Christ (God and man) is another mystery which God reveals and we accept through faith.

Our Creator God is our Savior God. A God who is full of grace, that undeserved love for every person in the entire world. A God who is full of truth. A God who reveals mysteries to us.

We Pray

Dear Jesus: We praise you for creating us. You are God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God. You are full of grace and truth. Your love for all people of this world is beyond understanding. We praise you for being the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Amen

-MSB

² Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel."

Did God Create Stars Out of Nothing?

Mark Bergemann

Most of us learned long ago that God:

- Created the heavens and the earth out of nothing at the beginning of time (Day 1).³
- Formed these into the sky, seas, and dry land (Days 2+3).⁴
- Created Adam from the dust of the ground (Day 6).⁵
- Created Eve from one of Adam's ribs (Day 6).⁶

³ Genesis 1:1-2, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters."

Comment: Since the heavens and the earth were created at the beginning of time, they must have been created from nothing.

Hebrews 11:3, "By faith we understand that the universe was created by God's command, so that what is seen has been made from things that are not visible."

⁴ Genesis 1:6-10, "Then God said, 'Let there be an expanse between the waters, separating water from water.' So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above the expanse. And it was so. God called the expanse 'sky.' Evening came and then morning: the second day. Then God said, 'Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land 'earth,' and He called the gathering of the water 'seas.' And God saw that it was good."

2 Peter 3:3-6, "First, be aware of this: Scoffers will come in the last days to scoff, living according to their own desires, saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? Ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they have been since the beginning of creation.' They willfully ignore this: Long ago the heavens and the earth were brought about from water and through water by the word of God. Through these waters the world of that time perished when it was flooded."

⁵ Genesis 2:7, "Then the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being." Psalms 103:14, "For He knows what we are made of, remembering that we are dust." Ecclesiastes 3:20, "All are going to the same place; all come from dust, and all return to dust."

⁶ Genesis 2:21-23, "So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. Then the Lord God made the rib He had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the

Day 1: Creation Out Of Nothing

We can be certain that in six normal length days God created the universe and everything in it, including time, space, energy, and matter. We also know for certain that God created materials out of nothing on Day 1. Finally, we know for certain that God formed these Day 1 materials into the sky, sea, dry land, birds, wild animals, and people.

Days 2-6: Creation Exclusively Using Day 1 Materials?

It may be that God formed EVERYTHING He created on Days 2-6 out of materials He created on Day 1. It seems to me that the words God chose to describe his creating acts imply this, but we cannot be certain. Maybe God created the stars or something else out of nothing during Days 2-6. It is not an article of faith whether God created the stars directly out of nothing, or whether He created the stars from materials created on Day 1. Keep this in mind when reading the quotes below. Many of these authors say that God created the stars from Day 1 materials. I am convinced that none of these authors intended to imply that as an article of faith. It would be nice if we would each make clear distinctions, unambiguously separating statements of faith from other claims. Statements of faith are certain, while other claims do not have that level of certainty.

WELS Authors Speak

WELS authors are not unanimous on some of what we have discussed. Let's look at several authors, starting with Professor Carl J. Lawrenz, who taught Old Testament at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary from 1944 – 1982, and who served as president of the seminary during most of that time. Did God create the sun, moon, and stars out of nothing, or from material He created out of nothing on Day 1? Lawrenz feels this question is unanswered in Scripture. He writes in his commentary on Genesis 1-11,

God may have formed the sun, moon, and stars from material created on Day 1. If one is willing to accept that God may have formed all living creatures and vegetation from previously created materials, then it is equally plausible that God also created the sun, moon, and stars from previously created materials.

Table 1.0 Summarizes Our Discussion.

<i>creation of</i>	<i>Genesis 1</i>	<i>Genesis 2</i>
Adam, Eve	“in His own image.” “He created them male and female.”	from “dust of the ground.” from one of Adam’s ribs.
Birds	“Let birds fly above the earth.” “He also created every winged bird.”	“out of the ground.”
Wild Animals	“Let the earth produce...”	“out of the ground.”
Livestock, Crawling Creatures	“Let the earth produce...”	xx
Vegetation	“Let the earth produce.” “The earth produced.”	xx
Fish	“Let the waters swarm with...” “So God created...”	xx
Sun, Moon	“Let there be light in the expanse of the sky.” “God made the two great lights.”	xx
Stars	“Let there be light in the expanse of the sky.” “God made ...the stars.”	xx

These truths are often taught in grade school Bible history books,⁷ and pastors occasionally mention them in sermons, so these details are familiar to most of us.

Less well known is that God reveals He did NOT create wild animals and birds out of nothing. God created them from existing material, the ground. Genesis 2:19 reads, “God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird.”

Genesis chapter 1 is an overview of the six creation days. Genesis chapter 2 gives additional details and focuses on people, the crown of God’s creation. Both chapters mention that God created birds, wild animals, and people. The more detailed chapter 2 clearly states that birds, wild animals, and people were created from existing material. They were not created directly from nothing. The overview in chapter 1 is less clear about this.

Let’s examine the words God uses to describe His creative acts starting with His words describing the creation of people. Note that Genesis chapter 1 often gives a more general description, while Genesis chapter 2 reveals additional details to us.

man. And the man said: This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken from man.”

⁷ Example 1: James A. Henning and Mary Schmal, *Christlight Old Testament Cycle Set One Teacher’s Guide Grades 5+6* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Pub. House, 1999), 9, 16, 17.

Example 2: Board For Parish Education WELS, *Primary Bible History* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Pub. House, 1982), 9-13.

People

Genesis 1:26-27 reads,

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.” So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female.

Genesis 2:7 reads,

Then the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.

Genesis 2:21-23 reads,

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. Then the Lord God made the rib He had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. And the man said: This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called “woman,” for she was taken from man.

So these three phrases describe the same act of creating Adam:

- “Let Us make man.”
- “He created them male and female.”
- “God formed the man out of the dust from the ground.”

And these three phrases describe the same act of creating Eve:

- “Let Us make man.”
- “He created them male and female.”
- “God made the rib He had taken from the man into a woman.”

The words, “Let the earth produce” used for land animals and vegetation more clearly implies being formed from the ground. The phrase “Let birds fly,” does not in and of itself imply creation from ground. Yet we know from Gen 2:19 that God formed birds from the ground, so by using the phrase “Let birds fly,” God does not mean to imply a creation directly from nothing. To me, the phrase “Let the waters swarm” is very similar to the phrase, “Let birds fly.” The phrase, “Let the waters swarm,” does not in and of itself imply creation from water or ground, but I think in light of all that has been said previously in this article, one may conclude that God formed fish from water, or from the mud at the bottom of the oceans, seas, lakes, and rivers.

Sun, Moon, and Stars

Now for the sun, moon, and stars. The historical account of their creation is recorded in Genesis 1:14-18,

Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will serve as signs for festivals and for days and years. They will be lights in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth.” And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to have dominion over the day and the lesser light to have dominion over the night—as well as the stars. God placed them in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth, to dominate the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness.

My previous line of reasoning regarding the creation of fish applies to the creation of the sun, moon, and stars as well. The phrase “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky” is very similar to the phrase, “Let birds fly above the earth,” and to the phrase, “Let the water swarm with living creatures.” To me, it seems reasonable to conclude that

animals and for the creation of vegetation. When applied to the act of creating, the plain meaning of either variation of “Let the earth produce,” is that some ground is formed into that being created. It would be a forced interpretation of the words to understand them to mean creation directly “from nothing.”

Fish

Were fish created directly from nothing, or from previously created material? In three verses of Genesis chapter 1, God describes His creation of water dwelling creatures and of flying creatures. [*In the Hebrew original, “living creatures” includes fish, crustaceans, marine mammals, crocodiles, and all other creatures living in rivers, lakes, seas, and oceans. The Hebrew translated here as “birds” includes birds, flying insects, and all other flying creatures.*⁹] We read in Genesis 1:20-22,

Then God said, “Let the water swarm with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” So God created the large sea-creatures and every living creature that moves and swarms in the water, according to their kinds. He also created every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. So God blessed them, “Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”

We know from Genesis 2:19 that God formed birds “out of the ground,” but here in Genesis 1:20 that same creative act is described as, “Let birds fly.” God uses the words, “Let the waters swarm” to describe the creation of fish. Could we understand this to mean that God made fish from water or mud (and therefore not directly from nothing)? I think this is most likely the case.

⁹ Carl J. Lawrenz and John C. Jeske, *A Commentary on Genesis 1-11* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Pub. House, 2004), 67-68.

Birds

Genesis 1:20-21 reads,

Then God said, “...Let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” ...He also created every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 2:19 reads,

God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird.

So these three phrases describe the same act of creating birds:

- “Let birds fly.”
- “He also created every winged bird.”
- “God formed out of the ground.”

Wild Animals

God created land animals on Day 6. Jeske mentions how three groups of land animals are included, when he comments on Genesis 1:24-25,

The sixth day of the creation week was a busy day and a blessed one, for it brought the climax of God’s creative activity. God first created the land animals, which Moses lists under these three categories: livestock (which can be tamed and domesticated), animals that live and move close to the ground (reptiles, insects, worms), and wild animals (those with freedom of movement). This classification is not necessarily intended to be exhaustive; it simply emphasizes certain characteristics. Genesis 2:19 informs us that God used the earth as his material for creating the

animals. Once again the Creator expressed his approval of this new phase of his creation.⁸

Genesis 1:24-25 reads,

Then God said, “Let the earth produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that crawl, and the wildlife of the earth [*wildlife or wild animals: literally “animal of the earth” in Hebrew*] according to their kinds.” And it was so. So God made the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and creatures that crawl on the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 2:19 reads,

God formed out of the ground every wild animal [*wild animal: literally “animal of the field” in Hebrew*] and every bird.

So these three phrases describe the same act of creating wild animals:

- “Let the earth produce.”
- “God made.”
- “God formed out of the ground.”

Other Land Animals

In Genesis 2:19 (above) we saw that God made wild animals out of the ground, but in Genesis 1:24 that same creative act is described as, “Let the earth produce.” In Genesis 1:24 God uses that single command, “Let the earth produce,” to create wild animals and also to create “livestock and creatures that crawl.” Since the command applied to wild animals means that they were formed from the ground, it is most likely that that same command applied to other land animals meant that

⁸ J. C. Jeske, *Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Milwaukee: Northwestern Pub. House, 2001), 22.

they too were formed from ground. Jeske agrees with this conclusion, as can be seen from his *People’s Bible* quote above, and from another quote later in this article.

Vegetation, Fish, Sun, Moon, Stars

*Were they created directly from nothing,
or from previously created material?*

Vegetation

Was vegetation created directly from nothing, or from previously created material? In Genesis 1:11-12 we read,

Then God said, “Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.” And it was so. The earth produced vegetation: seed-bearing plants according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.

We know from Genesis 2:19 that God formed wild animals “out of the ground,” but in Genesis 1:24 that same creative act is described as, “Let the earth produce,” [*The Hebrew verb the HCSB translates here as “let produce” can also mean “to come forth,” or “to bring out,” or “to proceed.”*]

In Genesis 1:11 quoted above, God uses similar wording to describe the creation of vegetation, “Let the earth produce,” [*This is a different Hebrew verb, which the HCSB translates here as “let produce.” It can also mean “to cause to sprout or shoot.”*]

Could we understand this to mean that God created vegetation from the ground (and therefore not directly from nothing)? I think so. God uses similar wording (“Let the earth produce”) for the creation of land