

January 2005

JESUS AND GENESIS

By Fred L. Johnson, PhD

All around me, wherever I look, whether it be into the unfathomable expanse of the galaxies or into the tiny machinery of a liver cell that produces a myriad of lipids and proteins, I find the handiwork of a brilliant and powerful craftsman. TASC is comprised of lots of folks like me who are in awe of these natural marvels. Accordingly, this space in the newsletter is usually dedicated to an article on some fascinating phenomenon in one of the natural sciences. But today I want to speak to another important aspect of TASC. I will not be summarizing the regulation of gene transcription in human placental cells and how the marvelous mechanism speaks of a creator. I will not be describing the decades of careful observations made by a famous astrophysicist and how his findings bring us to the conclusion that the universe must be the product of a designer. I will not be presenting the discoveries of a paleontologist who has come across fossilized skeleton of an extinct animal and how his findings argue of a recent world-wide flood. I love those subjects, and I hope to learn about these from other TASC authors, but today I want to deal with another aspect of TASC's mission—with the matter of what Jesus, himself, has said about the origin of this universe and everything in it.

Because most of those associated with TASC would call themselves Christians, I suspect that most of you reading this article would readily affirm that Jesus is God in the flesh, God incarnate, the so-called "Son of God," equal with God the Father. Yet I know that many Christians struggle with the what the secular world has said about the creation account in the Bible. Today, I would like to provide you with reason to believe.

Among the first words in the Bible we see evidence that the Son of God was present with the Father before the world began and is co-creator of the universe with the Father. As

recorded in Genesis, after God had created light, the earth, plant-life, the stars, the sun, the moon, the birds, the fish, the animals, with only his Word, God speaks to someone (or to more than one) and says,

"Let *Us* make man in *Our* image, according to *Our* likeness..." NASB

Genesis 1:26

And from the gospel of John (and elsewhere) it is clear that at least one of the persons to whom God was speaking was the person of his son—the son who would later be sent into this world in the same physical form as the creature to whom he was being sent. The gospel of John begins with these words,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. NASB

John 1:1-3

Or from the Authorized King James Version,

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

I like the way Paul has expressed this same concept in his letter to the Colossians:

And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, ...all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. NASB

Colossians 1:16, 17

It is quite apparent that Jesus is this "image" of the otherwise invisible God referred to by

Note from Chairman, Mark Stephens

It is that time of year again for your year-end charitable giving. TASC depends on you for your financial support to carry on our mission of providing fellow Christians and citizens the scientific evidences that support God as our Creator. Please take this time to send your contribution to help us reach a secular world to believe in God and to fortify fellow Christians' faith to stand for God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, in these trying times.

Paul and that Jesus is that “Word” which was “from the beginning” referred to in the gospel of John.

I am grieved that there are many within Jesus’ church who, although they will affirm that Jesus existed from the beginning, that Jesus is God, and that he made all that we see out of nothing, they question the veracity of the historical events recorded in the Bible. I suspect they have been intimidated into this position by those who claim that science has proven that the accounts in the Bible are “only stories” and who contend that anything that is beyond the ability of science to demonstrate is merely a myth.

For you, brother or sister in Christ, who know in your spirit that God can be trusted, and for you who have never trusted God, I want to share with you what Jesus has said about these ancient writings. For you who know Jesus, listen carefully to how Jesus handled these texts. And for you who have difficulty with any notion that there is anything beyond that which can be explained in a naturalistic way, I pray that you might hear the profound truth of what has been written.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John have recorded the words of Jesus. These men were with Jesus and heard him say the things they have recorded. Jesus spoke of many people and events that had been recorded in the books of Moses, in the books of the prophets, and in the Psalms, often quoting the actual text of those scriptures—scriptures that were written thousands of years earlier. Jesus’ references to these ancient events provide credibility to the actual occurrence of the events, to the existence of the people involved in the events, and to the things these people said.

(In the references below, I have kept with the tradition of placing Old Testament quotations in SMALL CAPS. All scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.)

Jesus generally affirms the ancient books of Moses (the “Law”) and the Prophets.

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter (*literally, one jot*) or stroke (*literally, one tittle*) shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.”

Matthew 5:17-19

More specifically Jesus refers to the prophecy of Daniel quoting Daniel 11:31 and 12:11:

“Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place...”

Matthew 24:15

And just a little later, quoting Isaiah 13:11, Ezekiel 32:7, Joel 2:10, and Daniel 7:13:

“But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.”

Matthew 24: 29, 30

Jesus also affirms Jonah spending three days in the belly of a sea creature among the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees:

But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

Matthew 12: 39-40

Jesus instructs the twelve on their mission of preaching the “kingdom of heaven” and ministering to the sick, to those with demons, to the lepers, even to the dead, referring to the familiar supernatural events that occurred in ancient Sodom and Gomorrah.

“And whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake off the dust of your feet. Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.”

Matthew 10:14-15

And again Jesus rebukes the cities in which He was performing miracles, referring to ancient Sodom:

“And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.”

Matthew 11:23-24

And in a similar account in the book of Luke (Luke 17:28-35), Jesus refers to Lot's wife as the example of anyone who would desire to hold on to his life, holding on to that which was about to be destroyed, and losing his life for doing so.

Jesus affirms the annihilation of everyone in the flood of Noah, referring to Genesis 6-9:

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of man be."

Matthew 24:36-39

And Jesus takes us even farther back in time with his reference to Abel, the son of Adam, from Genesis 4:

"For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and some they will persecute, in order that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the house of God; yes I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation.'"

Luke 11:49-52

The expression "foundation of the world" refers to the inception of the earth, the laying down of its substance. Notice that Jesus affirms that the blood of men has been shed "since the foundation of the world." Jesus didn't say "from the beginning of man," which he could have said and would have been just as meaningful. But in this way, Jesus establishes that since the very beginnings of the *world*, men have rejected God and his prophets.

If the beginning of the world preceded the existence of man by billions of years, the blood of prophets could not have been shed at the time Jesus said. Furthermore, Jesus restates this in a parallel fashion by mentioning prophets from the beginning until more recently: "from the blood of Able to the blood of Zechariah." Jesus affirms a specific person, Abel, as being the one he was referring to whose blood was shed since the foundation of the world. Clearly, if Abel had not lived near the time of the "foundation of the world," Jesus statement would have made no sense.

Isaiah, too, associated the beginning of man with the beginning of the earth:

"Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been declared to you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?"

Isaiah 40:21

The apostle Paul captured this same sense that man has rejected God from the very beginning of the earth's existence:

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Romans 1:20

Man's ability to "see" and to have an intellectual understanding of God began "since the creation of the world." If man didn't come along until billions of years after the earth was formed, Paul's statement makes no sense.

At a time when he was being pressed by the Pharisees trying to trip him up, Jesus affirms that Adam and Eve existed as two individuals, quoting Genesis 1:27 and referring to Genesis 2:24.

And some Pharisees came to Him, testing Him, and saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause at all?" And He answered and said, "Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE (*or man*) AND FEMALE (*or woman*), and said, 'FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH?' Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

Matthew 19:3-6

Notice here again is the reference that God "created them from the beginning," although admittedly Jesus does not explicitly state that this is from the beginning of the world. Nevertheless, this is a quotation of the Genesis account of the creation of Adam and Eve. These were two individuals, a man and a woman, and their union is one that God has established for as long as men and women walk this earth.

Also notice that the first reference Jesus makes is to the first chapter of Genesis. The second reference is to the second chapter of Genesis. Many have asserted that Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 are contradictory accounts of

the creation of man. Space limitations prevent me from going into that issue now, but Jesus apparently has no problem with using both of these texts in making his point to the Pharisees. Here Jesus is asserting that they are both to be held as the truth!

Bert Thompson, Ph.D., Apologetics Press, Inc., Executive Director states, “Unquestionably, then, Jesus placed the first humans at the very dawn of creation. To reject this clear truth, one must either contend that: (a) Christ knew the Universe was in existence billions of years before man, but, accommodating Himself to the ignorances of that age, deliberately misrepresented the situation; or (b) The Lord Himself, living in pre-scientific times, was uninformed about the matter. Either of these allegations, of course, is blasphemous.”

So what will you do with this? I believe your answer to that question can affect your eternity. After I was well into the preparation of this article, I noticed something in the scriptures that I had selected that I had not noticed before and certainly didn't expect during my study. Look back at these scriptures yourself and notice that many of these scriptures were of Jesus bringing a very strong word of judgment on those who have rejected the God of this creation. In a large number of these scriptures, Jesus was speaking to those who were to be judged for their unbelief.

“O fools and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!”

Luke 24:25

In a way that judgment Jesus spoke of has already begun, ever since Adam and Eve first defied God. Physical death and suffering came into this world as a natural consequence of that sin, and it prevails today. We see the consequences of our sinful nature all around. We see death and suffering, killing and fear, every day. The entire earth groans, awaiting deliverance from this terrible condition.

But take heart! Out of his love for his creatures, God himself has come to us, Emmanuel, in the form of a man, born of a woman, with our same substance of flesh and blood that we might see God, to redeem us from our pitiful plight by his substitutionary death, and to raise us to life from the dead with him!

And when he returns, he will not only redeem us, he will also redeem the earth. It will be an earth that is free from the curse described in Genesis, free from sin, free from death, free from corruption. This is the land that God promised to Abraham and to his seed for an everlasting covenant.

Isaiah describes that earth. Listen to how different that earth will be from what we see around us today—an earth like the earth that existed before sin entered the world.

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And He will delight in the fear of the Lord, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; but with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist.

And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like the ox. And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11:1-9

May the truth of God's everlasting word become rooted in your heart this Christmas season. ☩

OPPORTUNITY FOR CREATION SCIENCE BULLETIN BOARD FOR YOUR CHURCH

One of our TASC members, Javier Valdivieso, offers to place a creation science bulletin board in your church to announce information and place articles about creation science evangelism for children, adults, and professionals. This bulletin board would include information, pictures, and announcements about seminars and local events from different sources such as Institute for Creation Research, Answers in Genesis, Creation Magazine, Triangle Association for the Science of Creation, and other national and international ministries. The goal is to let members in your church know of the scientific evidences that support God as our Creator to help you strengthen your faith and reach out to a secular world that dismisses God. To obtain this bulletin board for your church, you can contact Javier at 919-833-6927 or by e-mail at Creation_Science_ccg@juno.com

COMING EVENTS

Thursday, January 13, 7:30 P.M., Providence Baptist Church, 6339 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh.

Mark Stephens, Chairman of TASC, will conduct an organizational meeting and discuss why TASC matters to our community, nation, and the world. Please show your support and participation by coming out to this

meeting to provide your input on ideas and projects that TASC can perform to reach people in a secular world that would dismiss God as our Creator. See you there and bring a friend!

Thursday, February 10, 7:30 P.M., Providence Baptist Church, 6339 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh

Dan Reynolds, PhD. Topic to be announced.

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