

The Attackers: The Copernican Principle & Mediocrity Inspire Belief There Is Life on Other Planets; Debate on Age of Earth: Science v. the Bible: The Indefinite Hiatus in Genesis 1:2; Scripture Is the Standard: Truth Is Revealed by Exegesis

40. NASA's Kepler telescope has just discovered two "habitable" planets and the cosmologists who examine their images have waxed prophetic. Application of the mediocrity principle is evident in this article:

The ultimate goal, virtually all planet hunters agree, is to find a mirror Earth -- a world about the same size as our home planet, with a relatively balmy temperature making it friendly to life. And a discovery just published in *Nature* takes scientists one major step closer to that crucial milestone. Using the powerful Kepler space telescope, a team that includes some of the world's most prominent exoplaneteers has found one world almost exactly the size of Earth, and a second, a bit smaller than Venus, orbiting a star known as Kepler-20, some 950 light-years away. "I'm really excited," says David Charbonneau, a Harvard astronomer who was part of the discovery team. "This is the goal line."

It's one foot across the goal line, anyway. The Earth-size planet, Kepler-20f, is clearly too hot to sustain life, with a surface temperature hovering around 800°F (427°C); the Venus-size world, Kepler-20e, is a scorching 1,400°F (760°C). "It's clearly not habitable," acknowledges Charbonneau, "but we've now shown definitively that Kepler can find planets this small."

"Two weeks ago," says Charbonneau, "we announced a planet in its star's habitable zone but which was much bigger than Earth. Today, we're announcing a planet that's the same size as Earth. What we want is the best of both -- a true twin of Earth. Hopefully," he says, "we'll find it within the next year."¹

41. Those that possess a naturalist worldview reject out of hand the idea of supernatural creation and a divine strategy associated with it. But when the statements of Scripture are properly exegeted and then logically analyzed from a supernaturalist worldview, then truth emerges from that effort.
42. The naturalist worldview proposes that the earth is billions of years old. They arrive at this by measuring

¹ Michael D. Lemonick, "Two Earth-Size Planets Found Orbiting a Distant Star," *Time*, December 21, 2011. <http://news.yahoo.com/two-earth-size-planets-found-orbiting-distant-star-101000189.html> (accessed Dec. 21, 2011).

... the decay of long-lived radioactive isotopes of elements that occur naturally in rocks and minerals. The best age for the Earth comes not from dating individual rocks but by considering the Earth and meteorites as part of the same evolving system in which the isotopic composition of lead changes over time owing to the decay of radioactive uranium-235 and uranium-238, respectively. These calculations result in an age for the Earth and meteorites, and hence the Solar System, of 4.54 billion years.²

43. Theologians that do not recognize the expanse of time we have established between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 are forced to conclude that the earth is around 8- to 10-thousand years old. The scientific measurement of 4.54 billion years puts the two camps at significant odds.
44. How do we resolve the question? First of all, neither of the conclusions is of any significance to the theologian. The answer is found in Scripture, and both camps must adjust their conclusions against its revelation.
45. There are currently four approaches to resolving the truth about the age of the universe but only one will reveal the truth:
 - (1) Reevaluate the early chapters of Genesis to line up with present-day scientific principles.
 - (2) Reevaluate present-day scientific principles so that they line up with the early chapters of Genesis.
 - (3) Ignore the early chapters of Genesis as an historical record, evaluate them as allegorical, and subscribe to what the scientific principles proclaim.
 - (4) Determine through grammatical, exegetical, and historical hermeneutics what the early chapters of Genesis reveal and ignore all opinions to the contrary.

² G. Brent Dalrymple, *Age of the Earth* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).
<http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/geotime/age.html> (accessed Dec. 21, 2011)

46. Following approach #4 is the path to truth while other efforts are designed to compromise either the Bible or science.
47. PRINCIPLE: The Bible is the standard. Although it is not a scientific textbook, its limited references to things scientific are accurate.
48. Since the Bible is the immutable Word of God, then it may be assumed the Creator of “all things” communicates an accurate account of their workings.

No conflict exists between what the Bible says in the original languages and the *correct* interpretation of natural phenomena by such sciences as cosmology, biology, geology, astronomy, chemistry, anatomy, and anthropology.

Whenever scientific speculation contradicts the Bible, such speculation is inaccurate. Whenever a conflict exists between *scientific* explanations or interpretations and what the Bible says, the Bible is always right! When a conflict arises between an *historical* interpretation and what the Bible says, the Bible is always right. In other words, where the Bible comments on science, science must agree with the Bible. The Bible is not required to agree with science.³

49. Science to be science must prove through empirical methods its assumptions before it may be accepted as law. On this subject, Nicolaus Copernicus made this observation:

So far as hypotheses are concerned, let no one expect anything certain from astronomy, which cannot furnish it, lest he accept as the truth ideas conceived for another purpose, and depart from this study a greater fool than when he entered it.

50. By swapping the word “theology” for “astronomy” Copernicus’s quote could very well apply to men of the cloth.

³ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Creation, Chaos, and Restoration*, 3d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1995), 39.

51. Option 2 above proposes that an effort be made to reevaluate scientific principles so that they line up with what the Bible reveals. It is not the job of the theologian to instruct science as it is also not the job of the scientist to instruct the theologian.
52. The job of the theologian is to properly examine the text of Scripture, uncover its truths, communicate them to his assigned sheep, and thus construct a biblical worldview in their souls.
53. It is through this procedure that truth can be verified through faith alone and confidence can be developed regarding reality, a word Leonard Susskind insists we should “get rid of” in our discussions.
54. The pursuit of truth will in fact uncover reality, and the objective of the next section of our study will endeavor to do exactly that.