

Make Truth God's Again, Part 1

Rockey Jackson, August 1, 2024

(Note: Scriptures referenced, but not in the text, may be found in the Endnotes.)

“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” (Romans 1:19-20)

God has revealed himself to all of humanity through the creation. Before the twentieth century, Christian naturalists believed that they were studying God's other book, the creation. It revealed the infinite creativity of His nature and His love for us. Is it any wonder then that Satan wants so very badly to deny the creation and to separate science from our understanding of God? In John 14:6, **“Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'”** Jesus is the Truth. All truth is of Jesus. Let us take back what Satan has stolen. Let us Make Truth God's Again.

I believe that the Holy Scriptures are true. However, I question every person's interpretation of the Scriptures, especially my own. At the same time, I do not: “Trust the science.” I question everything to determine what is true. These early years of the 2020s have taught us very painfully that it is as easy to buy a scientist as it is to buy a politician. It is as easy to buy medical administrators and health care professionals as it is to buy a politician. It is also as easy to buy educational administrators and educators as it is to buy a politician. As Paul wrote to Timothy: **“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”** (1 Timothy 6:10)

People interpret all things according to their worldview and theology.¹ There are some obvious absolute truths. However, our knowledge of the truth is growing all of the time. It can make us rethink, from time to time, both our worldview and our theology. It can be a wild ride, but it is worth it to know the Truth better. Let us Make Truth God's Again.

Please let me share three examples to explain what I'm talking about. The first will be an example of how God has revealed himself in the creation. The second will be how we interpret Scripture by our worldview. The third will be how our knowledge of the creation (science) may also help us correctly understand what God has revealed to us in the Bible. (For some more thoughts about interpretation, please see Appendix A.)

The first example is the way God has revealed Himself through the creation by patterns. There is evening and morning, the pattern of the day. There are six days to work and the seventh day to rest and remember God, the pattern of the week. There is the orbit of the moon around the earth, the pattern of the month. There is the orbit of the Earth around the Sun, the pattern of the year. There is the blessing of the four seasons, seed time and harvest, that occur every year. There is the yearly cycle of feasts that pattern God's plan to redeem us. The central theme of the Bible is the story of what God has been willing to do to make atonement for sin and reconcile a person's relationship with Him.

Let's look at the day, the very first pattern created. At the very beginning of the Bible we are told:

¹ We are far removed from the language and the culture of the Bible. Translators also translate according to their worldview and theology. Question everything!

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.” (Genesis 1:1-5)

The pattern is evening and morning, darkness to light. This may be compared to Ephesians 5:8: **“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light,”** and 1 Peter 2:9: **“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”**

A Bible search for scriptures containing darkness and light returned fifty-five matches. They would make an interesting study. The point here is that the very first pattern of darkness to light, evening to morning, the very first day, reveals the pattern of redemption. This is the pattern of going from living under the law and then receiving God's grace. Sinners living in darkness will be judged by the law. Redeemed Saints, living in the light, will receive God's grace.

The second example shows how we interpret Scripture by our worldview. Let's consider the story of Adam and Eve. If the reader is not familiar with this story, it may be found in Genesis 2:4-3:24.¹ This story may be interpreted from the worldview that physical life is ultimate reality and people have spiritual experiences. It may also be interpreted from the worldview that spiritual life is our ultimate reality and we are having a physical experience.

It may be seen as quite natural to interpret from the first worldview. Most people are far more afraid of dying physically than they are of dying spiritually. It is also the traditional interpretation.

In the story of Adam and Eve, the Serpent (Satan) tempts Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. God has told Adam and Eve that if they eat the forbidden fruit, they will die. Satan tells Eve that the fruit is good for food and will make her like God, knowing good and evil. He then tells her that she will not die. Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit and they do not die physically. On the surface, this makes Satan the truth teller and God the liar.

I'm often impressed with the intellectual gymnastics people are capable of to justify their beliefs. In this case, it is asserted that the word die actually means dying you will die (eventually). This means that Adam and Eve were created to live physically forever. It also means that the Second Law of Thermodynamics did not take effect until after Adam and Eve sinned and fell from grace.

If we interpret this story from the second worldview that spiritual life is the ultimate reality, we get a very different result. God is spirit and He knows that we will live eternally. Those Redeemed Saints who have entered into a submitted relationship with God will spend eternity with God in Heaven. Those who are in rebellion to God will live eternally separated from God in Hell, which is spiritual death. God sees spiritual death as far more important than physical death and when God talks about death we should first think of spiritual death. This is emphasized in Matthew 10:28: **“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”**

So, if God meant Adam and Eve would die spiritually, then they would be separated from God and, like Nicodemus in John 3:1-21,ⁱⁱ they would need to be born again spiritually. In the story we see that after eating the forbidden fruit Adam and Eve covered their shame with fig leaves and hid (separated) themselves from God. When God came looking for them, they confessed and God showed them that it was not by their works (the fig leaves) but by the shedding of innocent blood (the animal skins) that their sin was forgiven and spiritual life restored. Interpreting from this second worldview makes Satan the liar and God the truth teller. Each acts according to their nature.

Now we can understand that Adam and Eve were created for the physical lifespan recorded in the Bible and that the Second Law of Thermodynamics was part of the original creation. Also, if we think about it, if man was created to live physically on the Earth forever, then salvation and Heaven (which we are told is one thousand times better than the Earth) are the second prize for screw ups who couldn't live sin free. I think NOT! I believe that God planned to redeem sinful humanity and for them to live eternally in Heaven before he ever created the heavens and the Earth.

Our third example will show how the truth we learn from God's other book, the creation (science) may also help us correctly understand what God has revealed to us in the Bible. When I was a young child in the 1950s, we were taught that each person is unique, using as an illustration finger prints. As time passed we learned more about genetics and DNA. We now know that each person has unique DNA. Where does our DNA come from? Well, it comes from our ancestors, of course! Many have had their DNA tested to learn more about their ancestry.

In church I was taught as a child that everyone descended from Adam and Eve. Let's take a critical look at what that means. Going back to the story of Adam and Eve, God created Adam in Eden to tend the Garden. Adam had one set of DNA. No suitable helper was found for Adam, so God took DNA from Adam and cloned Eve. Clones have the same DNA as their donor. If we all descended from Adam and Eve, we would all have the same DNA. Now that puts me in a quandary. How can what I was taught as a child and the science of DNA both be true? Are God's two books at odds with each other?

Does the Bible provide a way out of this conundrum? Maybe. The Bible has another telling of the creation of humanity that is recorded before the creation of the man Adam. It occurs on the sixth day of creation and is found in Genesis 1:26-31.ⁱⁱⁱ I was taught as a child, that the sixth day creation story was the general version and the Adam story was the specific telling of the same event. Maybe we should compare them to see if this is so.

In the story of Adam and Eve, Adam was created (singular) and Eve was cloned from him. On the sixth day of creation God created males (plural) and females (plural). This would provide multiple sets of DNA that would continue to mix as we see happening today. God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to tend it. When his first two sons came along, one was a farmer and the other was a herder. This shows that they had a domestic (or tame) culture. Humanity created on the sixth day was given dominion over the entire Earth and, being many, were placed throughout the world. There was no mention of domestic plants and animals. They were left then with a (wild) hunter/gatherer culture that was dependent on the wild plants and animals. The descendants of Adam had a life expectancy of 930 years, give or take about 35 years (895-965). The people created on the sixth day, like us, had a life expectancy of about 85 years, give or take about 15 years (70-100).

We see this as the Bible story continues. After the flood, Noah was left as the last of the Adam race of man. His DNA was nearly bred out of the genome over succeeding generations. This is recorded in

Genesis 11:10-26^{iv} and continues through the lives of the patriarchs until Joseph, who died at the age of 110 years. This is explained in Part 2.

Table 1: Differences in the creation of Humanity on the sixth day and Adam.

Sixth Day Humanity	Adam
Men were created (plural).	Adam was created (singular).
Women were created (plural).	Eve was cloned from Adam's genetic material.
Lifespan of 85 years, give or take 15 years.	Lifespan of 930 years, give or take 35 years.
Men and women placed throughout the Earth.	Adam is placed in a garden east of Eden.
Wild plants and animals created before humanity.	Domestic plants and animals created after Adam.
Natural/wild hunter/gatherer society.	Domestic/tame farmer/herder society.
Mission: Fill the Earth and subdue it.	Mission: Tend the garden.

To me, this doesn't seem to be two accounts of the same event. However, if they are indeed two different events, then it agrees well with what I've learned from anthropology that primitive cultures were almost universally wild, hunter/gatherer societies until they came into contact with people who had a domestic, farmer/herder culture.

These are just three examples showing how our worldview and our theology may influence our interpretation of both Holy Scripture and science learned from God's other book, the creation. I believe that we should question everyone's interpretation of both Scripture and scientific teachings, especially our own. If the possibilities I've shown in the examples are true, then many things will be seen differently that follow from them. Make Truth God's Again, Part 2 will continue to reveal some of these differences. However we choose to believe, I hope we can all agree to Make Truth God's Again.

Appendix A: Some Thoughts to Help with Interpretation

There is an old proverb that says: “Can't see the forest for the trees.” It is said of someone who gets so involved with the details that they lose sight of the big picture. A similar illustration is the story of five blind men who go to see an elephant. One feels the elephant's trunk and says: “An elephant is a snake.” The second one feels the tusk and says: “An elephant is a curved spear.” The third blind man feels one of the elephant's legs and says: “An elephant is like a tree.” The fourth feels the elephant's side and says: “An elephant is a wall.” The fifth blind man feels the elephant's tail and says: “An elephant is a rope.” Each felt only one part of the elephant and they correctly reported what they felt. From time to time, they would argue about the elephant and never came to a true understanding of the whole elephant. When interpreting the Bible, it is necessary to look at both the macro (big picture) and the micro (detail) levels. If we lose sight of the big picture, then it is easy to misinterpret the details.

Our initial interpretation of a scripture passage may be wrong. We need to keep an open mind until we validate the interpretation with the big picture of the Bible and, when possible, with God's other book the creation. Creating doctrine from anecdotal evidence is always suspect, but demanding a biblical interpretation that is counter to our experience with the creation may also lead to error. Please let me share some non-biblical examples.

I've enjoyed whitewater rafting and kayaking for many years. One thing that is very helpful when floating a river is an eddy. An eddy is defined as any place where the current flows opposite the main current of the river. Eddies occur behind obstructions in both the middle of the river and along the shorelines. They are excellent places to enter and leave the river. They are also good places to stop for a rest or to let others catch up. When entering an eddy, kayakers do what is called an eddy turn. To do this, they place their paddle in the eddy current and allow the kayak to pivot around their paddle.

When I started learning to kayak, I read some books to learn from the experience of the experts. One book described the eddy turn in a kayak. When I went to the river, I put my new knowledge to good use. As I entered my first eddy, I put my paddle on the side of the boat that the book said I should. To my surprise, instead of making the expected eddy turn, I flipped upside down. I figured that it was just my error. So, the next time I entered an eddy I did the same thing, and I got the same results. I may not be a fast learner, but I do learn. When I went to enter my third eddy, I put my paddle into the eddy current on the other side of my boat and I was rewarded with a perfect eddy turn. I was perplexed as to why the book told me to put my paddle in the eddy on the wrong side of my kayak. When I got home, I reread the section describing eddy turns. To my surprise, the author described the correct placement of the paddle to make an eddy turn. I had misinterpreted what was written until I had real world experience in God's creation to guide my interpretation.

When I was just a preschooler, we had a popular toy called Lincoln Logs. They allowed us to build log cabins and forts. The basic set of Lincoln Logs came in a tall round container much like Quaker oats are still packaged in today. The first time I played with Lincoln Logs, when I was done, I went to put them away. I began to put the pieces randomly into the can, but they didn't all fit. Upset, I went to tell my mother about the problem. Her advice has served me well throughout my life. She told me to put the big pieces into the can first and then to put the little pieces into the space that was left. Mother's advice has served me well throughout my life. I've used it to pack my suitcase, I've used it when packing my car for a trip, I've used it when packing a truck when moving, and for many other tasks.

When I worked in aerospace, the government required us to have an A-level specification for the system, a B-level specification for sub-systems, a C-level specification for components, and a D-level specification for parts. A manufacturer could fabricate the parts from the D-spec without knowing anything about the component, sub-system, or system they would be used in. However, it would be very foolish to design parts without knowing their purpose, how they would fit into their component, the function of the sub-system, and the mission of the system.

It is the same with Biblical interpretation. We need to understand the global message of the Bible. It is the foundation that interpretation builds upon. The details must fit with and support the global message. If the interpretation of the details do not fit the big picture or they conflict with God's other book, the creation, then we need to keep learning and thinking about them until we do figure out what their fit and function may properly be. So, I advocate questioning everyone's interpretation, especially our own. Whether it is the Bible or science, it doesn't matter. What matters, is coming to a knowledge of the truth. Please, Make Truth God's Again!

Endnotes

i. Genesis 2:4-3:24 - 2:4 This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, **5** before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth,

and there was no man to till the ground; **6** but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground. **7** And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

9 And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. **11** The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. **12** And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. **13** The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. **14** The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." **19** Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. **20** So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. **22** Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. **23** And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." **24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **25** And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

3:1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" **2** And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; **3** but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" **4** Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. **5** For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. **7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. **8** And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" **10** So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." **11** And He said, "Who

told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" **12** Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." **13** And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. **15** And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

16 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. **18** Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. **19** In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— **23** therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. **24** So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

ii. John 3:1-21 - 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. **2** This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' **8** The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?"

11 Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. **12** If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? **13** No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. **14** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the

wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, **15** that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **17** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

18 “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. **19** And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **20** For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. **21** But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

iii. Genesis 1:26-31 - 1:26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, overall the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” **27** So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **28** Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

29 And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. **30** Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food”; and it was so. **31** Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

iv. Genesis 11:10-26 - 11:10 This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. **11** After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

12 Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Salah. **13** After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

14 Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber. **15** After he begot Eber, Salah lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

16 Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg. **17** After he begot Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters.

18 Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu. **19** After he begot Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters.

20 Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug. **21** After he begot Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters.

22 Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor. **23** After he begot Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

24 Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah. **25** After he begot Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters.

26 Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

27 This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. **28** And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. **29** Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. **30** But Sarai was barren; she had no child.

31 And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. **32** So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.