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Genesis 1 (Part 2)



Genesis - Steve Gregg

In this discourse, Steve Gregg discusses the controversies surrounding the meaning of "days" in the Genesis 1 creation story. While a surface reading of the text suggests that the universe is only a few thousand years old, mainstream science indicates that it is billions of years old. Therefore, some Christians reinterpret "day" to mean an epoch or age, rather than a 24-hour day, to harmonize with scientific evidence. Additionally, Gregg argues that the stars in the sky were created to carry information, with the constellations being associated with months and conveying knowledge that was meant to be known by early societies.

Transcript

You know, we've read about the first day and the activity of God on the first day was essentially to create light and to separate light from darkness, and give names to those alternatives, morning and evening, or day and night, more like. And it says, and the evening and the morning were the first day. A couple of observations I'd like to make is, A, the Jews always considered the day begins in the evening.

That's why it says evening and morning were the first day. We might be more inclined to say the morning and then later the evening made up the day because we think of the daylight hours. But they actually begin the day, the evening before at sundown.

But that's not the most important thing I want to bring out here. More important is that it seems to define for us what is meant by a day. And the reason that's important is because there is, well, like so many other things in Genesis, there's controversy over the meaning of the days of creation.

And the reason for this is because of a conflict. I was going to say a perceived conflict. I'm going to just say a conflict.

I don't know that it's merely perceived. I think it really is a conflict. Although it may be merely perceived.

Maybe I just perceive it as a conflict. But there is clearly a perceived conflict between the

way Genesis 1 reads and really the chronology of the rest of the book of Genesis and the length of people's lives and so forth, with the mainstream scientific view about the age of the universe. Now, this story we read sounds as if God created everything from nothing, from zero to complete in six creative days.

Other factors in Genesis, particularly the genealogies in chapters 5 and 11, would suggest that this happened only a few thousand years ago. According to certainly the surface reading, at least, of Genesis, we get the impression that man was created about 6,000 years ago and the earth was created about six days earlier than that. Scientists don't generally believe that to be the case.

They believe the universe is 30 billion years old, the earth about 4.5 billion years old, and man only a million or so. Maybe some would say man-like creatures back as far as 3 million years, but modern man, more like around a million years. So there's these big gaps between the creation of the universe or what they call the Big Bang, the formation of the earth planet that we are on, and also the evolution of life and man that scientists believe took millions and even billions of years.

Now, Genesis doesn't seem to allow for that. And because of that, many Christians have been embarrassed by Genesis. They felt that Genesis reflects a pre-scientific set of notions and that we perhaps need to reread it through a different lens, bringing to our reading the knowledge that we now have from modern science that these things happened millions or even billions of years ago and didn't happen in six 24 hour days, but rather, as scientists would suggest, mostly they happened over a period of millions and millions of years.

Now, the attempt to harmonize these seemingly contrary visions of origins has led Christians to do a number of things. One of them is to redefine the word day. And that's why having looked at the first day and its definition, that's a springboard for me to get into this topic.

Many say, well, a day might not in the Genesis might not really be a 24 hour day. After all, doesn't it say in 2 Peter 3 8 that a day to the Lord is like a thousand years? Well, it does say that in 2 Peter 3 8, it says a day to the Lord is like a thousand years, a thousand years as a day. That doesn't mean that when the Bible uses the word day, it means a thousand years, and it also doesn't mean that when the Bible uses the word thousands of years, it means a day.

All it means there in that context is this. Peter is saying that there will be scoffers who will arise in the last days, claiming that the delay of Christ's coming is an indicator that we should no longer hope for it. They will say, where's the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation, they will say.

And Peter says this, their ignorance of willingly, namely, that God created things out of with his word and so forth. But then he says, but a day to the Lord is as a thousand years, a thousand years as a day. And what he's saying is this.

It may seem that God's promise has not been fulfilled as quickly as some expected. But with God, it doesn't matter whether the interval is a day or whether the interval is a thousand years. It doesn't change his faithfulness.

He will fulfill his promise regardless what the interval may be. It's no different whether it's a day or a thousand years to God. He's not saying that when we read of a thousand years or we read of a day, we should interject the meaning of the other figure so that when we read in Genesis one, one day, we should say, oh, that means a thousand years.

But then again, these people aren't really saying that the days of Genesis are a thousand years. They'd be much more inclined to say the days of Genesis are more like something approaching a billion years, perhaps each. In other words, this theory, which is called the day age theory, day comma age, where a day is considered to be an age.

It's not saying that each day represents a thousand years or any other specific number, but rather that each day simply refers to an epoch, an age, a season of maybe millions or billions of years in each case where God did introduce something new into the creation. And that these days, extended as they are like that, would then provide the necessary time for evolution to have occurred as the more common prevailing scientific notions would require. Well, there are problems with this, not the least of which is, as we saw the first day and we will see all the other days are defined by the passage of an evening and a morning.

Now, evening and morning represent the passing of a day and a night. And that being so, we have to assume that a day and a night are measured in Genesis as they are now by the rotation of the earth. The earth rotates around its axis and it takes 24 hours at its present rate.

At the equator, the earth is spinning at a thousand miles an hour. And at that present rate, it takes 24 hours for one complete rotation and therefore one cycle of day and night. Now, to suggest that day and night were longer than 24 hours would simply suggest the earth was moving slower because it was still measured by a day and a night.

And it would therefore be measured by one rotation. This does not seem very reasonable, at least not reasonable to extend out to years or thousands or millions or billions of years, because that would mean that on one side of the earth, it was light solidly for billions of years. And on the other side, it was dark, like the moon having a permanent dark side for billions of years.

It doesn't fit the picture. A person can say they don't believe in Genesis, but they can

have, it'd be very hard for them to really fit what Genesis says into a paradigm of these days being very, very long. For example, we have, you know, the plants created on the fourth day, the sun, moon, and stars on the fifth day.

And, you know, are we to believe that the plants were growing for millions of years before the sun was there? Are we to assume that the animals, well, let's put it this way. Man and woman were created within the same day as the land animals. Evolutionists would spread that whole season out for millions of years.

And yet they presumably rested on the seventh day and then must have sinned sometime after that. How many millions of years did they live to make it to, say, the third day of their life before they could fall? Yet they only lived to be, Adam lived to be 930 years. So we know that, you know, the day, the day of rest, the seventh day was not millions of years long.

It's just not, it's just not natural. It's not a natural way to take the material. And in my opinion, it's not necessary either.

But it is an attempt that people make to extend the days out to millions of years. I will just mention at this point, since I brought that up, the day age theory, that there is an alternative view that some Christians have taken to, again, explain how the earth and universe might be billions of years old. And yet Genesis and its six days be literals.

And they would actually say these are six 24 hour days, but they say there is a gap between the first two verses. This is called the gap theory, popularly known as the gap theory. You see, verse one says God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning.

Verse two says the earth was formless and void. Now, the gap theorists say the word was in verse two should be translated became. This particular word, which appears like over 4,000 times in the Old Testament, almost always means was.

There are a few times when it could mean became. And therefore, based on those few instances, they say, well, maybe it means became here. That means that God made the heavens, the earth at some point in time.

And at some later point in time, the earth became formless and void. The suggestion, then, is that between these two verses, there could have been any length of time that is not recorded. There could have been millions, billions of years, even that God made the heavens there billions of years ago.

Then there was this long gap. Billions of years long, perhaps. And then the earth at the end of that gap in more modern history became formless and void.

And then God remade things in six days and started the present human race. On this view, there may have been a whole society that lived during that gap. There may have

been a whole evolutionary history.

Some of them say that's where the dinosaurs belong in that gap. They say, well, we find fossils of dinosaurs that are allegedly millions, tens of millions of years old. Perhaps they lived and died and were fossilized in this gap period.

They sometimes suggest a human race of sorts existed back then. A pre-Adam, a pre-Adamic human race existed during this gap and fell and became corrupt and had to be wiped out so that after their history, God wiped it out and the earth became formless and void and he started over with the six days of creation we read about here. Some even suggest that this was the season in which Lucifer fell.

Some have suggested that Lucifer was an angel that somehow had some authority during this early pre-Adamic world and that that angel fell, became the devil during that time. Lots of things are kind of sandwiched into this gap that don't need to be. And it's a good thing they don't need because there wasn't a gap.

And I don't base that simply on the fact that Genesis doesn't mention it. But on the fact that Exodus tells us there wasn't one. I'll show you that in a minute.

But let me give you two scriptures that the gap theory uses to try to promote their view. The first of them is in Isaiah 45, 18. Just so you know that those who hold that view actually believe that they have some scriptures in their favor.

In Isaiah 45 and verse 18, it says, For thus says Yahweh, the Lord, who created the heavens who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited. Now, the expression in vain is the same Hebrew word as the word void in Genesis 1, 2. Genesis 1, 2 says the earth was formless and void. The word void in Hebrew is the same as the word here in vain.

And they say, well, we should we should translate this. He did not create it void. God did not create it void.

And yet we find that it is void in verse 2 of Genesis. So he must have created it earlier in a different condition. And it became void in verse 2 of Genesis.

Do you understand the argument? God says he didn't create it void, they say. And yet we find by verse 2 of Genesis, it is void. It has become void.

And therefore, there was an earlier creation created, not void, created differently than that, created habitable. But it must have become void afterwards since God said he didn't create it void. Now, in answer to that argument, I would say it is true.

It is the same Hebrew word, but the Hebrew word can also be translated in vain, as it is in virtually every Bible. And the reason for translating it in vain, which means I didn't

create it for no purpose. I didn't create it for no purpose is that he tells us I didn't create it in vain.

I formed it to be inhabited. Notice he says there was a purpose I had. It wasn't in vain.

It was for a purpose. But more than that, the very next verse uses the expression, too, and says, I have spoken in secret in a dark place of the earth. I did not say to the seat of Jacob, seek me in vain.

That is, I didn't tell you to seek me for nothing. I didn't tell you to seek me for no reason. You see, that phrase is the same in both verses.

In the second of those two verses, it could never mean void. First, I can't even say I did not say to Jacob, seek me void. It just doesn't make sense.

And so obviously, the more reasonable translation of the Hebrew in Isaiah 45, 18 and 19 is exactly as it is translated here in vain rather than void. It's not saying that he didn't make the earth void. He's saying that he didn't make the earth in vain.

It's a different statement, making a different point entirely. The other verse that they use for the gap theory is in Jeremiah chapter four, verses 23 through 26. And it says, Jeremiah says, I beheld the earth, and indeed it was without form and void.

That's the same phrase you find in Genesis one to the earth was without form and void. And he says, and the heavens, they had no light. OK, that's also like Genesis one to darkness was on the face of the deep.

Then verse 24, I beheld the mountains, and indeed they trembled and all the hills moved back and forth. I beheld, and indeed there was no man and all the birds of the heavens had fled. Behold, and indeed the fruitful land was a wilderness.

And all its cities were broken down at the presence of the Lord by his fierce anger. Now, here's what they say. In this vision, Jeremiah sees the earth as it was in Genesis one to formless and void, dark, no man on the earth.

But he suggested there was previous life and previous society. There were cultivated lands that are now wilderness. There were cities that are now broken down.

There were birds, but they're now gone. That is to say, in an earlier time, before the earth was formless and void, there had been birds, urban cities, urban cultivated land. There had been apparently human society.

You see the argument? Now, the problem here is this is what Christians sometimes do is they take a passage like this out of context and then get it all wrong. This is not talking about Genesis chapter one. This is talking about the destruction of Jerusalem and Judea by the Babylonians.

It is borrowing imagery from Genesis one to say that the land of Judah, after its cities are broken down, after it's been denuded of life, plant life and so forth, after the invasion where the Babylonians have just destroyed everything, he sees it as almost like the world was before anything was created. And he borrows language deliberately from Genesis one, two, because that describes a formless and void world before anything was created. He's using poetically this language to describe Judah and the condition, not that it was in Genesis, the condition was in in 586 BC when the Babylonians had knocked everything down, destroyed the cities, carried off the people in captivity.

And the cultivated fields were no longer cultivated. They went to seed and became wilderness. He's describing a condition later as a result of the Babylonian exile.

And yes, he does use the language from Genesis, but that's not unusual. The Bible uses lots of figures from the Old Testament, from Genesis and so forth. So he simply is using language that's intended to remind us of Genesis one, two, and the condition the world was in then and saying, you know, it's kind of returned to that for Judah.

Judah's gone back to that place. It was like it's like nothing was ever made there. It's like it's a bare, void wilderness.

But notice the passage in Jeremiah can't really refer to Genesis one, two, because it says the mountains were slaying and the hills and so forth. There's no there's no mountains or hills in Genesis one, two. In Genesis one, two, it's all covered with water, no land yet.

So they're missing the point. And the reason I said there was no gap, and I can say so with certainty, is because God actually says there was no gap between Genesis one, one and Genesis one, two. If you look at Exodus chapter 20, Exodus chapter 20 is where the Ten Commandments are first given.

They are given again in Deuteronomy chapter five. But this is the first listing of them. And in verse 11, when he's giving the command concerning the Sabbath day, God says, For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day.

Now, notice there's a span of six days mentioned here. In those six days, what did God do? He made the heavens and the earth, the sea and everything in them. Well, doesn't that include Genesis one, one within the six days? If he made the heavens and the earth in those six days, then he didn't make the millions and billions of years before those six days.

The gap theory suggests that God made the heavens and the earth in Genesis one, one. Then there was this huge gap. And later he made the other stuff.

But God says, No, the Lord made all of it. Heavens, earth, sea, everything in six days, in that six day period. So it does not allow six days plus billions of years inserted.

Now, there are some other ways Christians handle this. They sometimes Christians believe that evolution occurred or maybe didn't occur, but the creation occurred over a long period of time. And not so much that it's like a constant evolution.

See, there are Christians who believe in theistic evolution. Theistic means including God. Some Christians believe evolution is true and that God used that as the means of creation.

Is it possible that God did? Well, from God's point of view, it'd be possible. God could do whatever he wants to, including bring about all the living things through creation. He could do that if he wanted to.

Is it possible in light of the evidence? No, no, there's not sufficient evidence at all that evolution even occurred, much less that God did it. God could have used evolution. I would not object if he did.

But if evolution had occurred, there would be record of it in the fossil record. And there is no evidence of evolution in the fossil record. What there is evidence of is special creation.

You see, every species in the fossil record appears as a fully formed species. You never find clear transitional forms between species, as you would have to have millions of them. Transitions between reptiles and birds, transitions between fish and amphibia, transitions between one kind of mammal and another, between man, apes and men and so forth.

They don't find them. Oh, you think they have because National Geographic once in a while pretends to. You look at the real facts and they've got a bone, a piece of a bone, a fragment of a bone.

They say, scientists believe that this is part of a jawbone. And here's a picture of the creature that had it. And he looks half man, half ape.

You know, well, isn't that imaginative? You know, you can't tell that from a fragment of a bone. And that's what they go on. And why do they do that? Because they're desperate, because they need transitional forms to prove evolution occurred.

And they don't have any. And the fossil record has produced millions of fossils that are now in the world's museums. But no transitional form fossils.

Very essential. If evolution occurred, those creatures would have lived, died and been fossilized. But they don't exist.

They don't exist in the living world. And by the way, they should. If they were in the living world before, they should still be living transitional forms today.

There aren't any. And there aren't any in the fossil record, which means they don't live now. They never lived.

Evolution simply did not occur, not at least in the grand scale. Certainly, microevolution occurs. There's variation within species and so forth.

Everyone knows that. No one has disputed that ever. But the idea that all animals evolved from other species that existed before, and I'll go back to one ancestor, that's the scientific myth.

It's the creation myth of atheism. It's and it's as mythological. It's more mythological than Genesis.

As we see, when scientists find things out, it ends up kind of being more likely to confirm Genesis. The Big Bang did not confirm atheism. It tended to confirm creationism, as many of the evolutionists bemoaned when the Big Bang came to be the dominant view of cosmology.

So theistic evolution isn't really the way to go, because if theistic evolution occurred, if God used evolution, then evolution would have happened and there would have been transitional forms. It didn't happen. There's no transitional forms.

Now, others believe in a progressive creation that took place over millions of years and that, yeah, the six days really are millions of years, but that each day was a separate individual day that God did something new. But between each day and another day were maybe millions of years. So then on one day, God created the fishes, it may be, and the creatures there.

And then there were millions of years. And later on, he created the land animals on another day, another single 24-hour day, so that there were six creative days, but they didn't follow each other in immediate succession, but were divided. That's another view that's often held.

But the problem with all these views is they take for granted that the scientific, so-called scientific theory about the age of the universe is true. And it's just not something that stands undisputed by scientific evidence. There are evidences which interpreted a certain way can yield the dates that the mainstream science attaches to the age of the earth and the universe.

But there are also methods equally scientific that can be used to point to a much younger age. The evidence is ambiguous. The evidence can be seen more than one way.

And it's really not necessary to accommodate these claims of the age of the earth and the universe. Now, I want to say this, but I don't really care about the age of the earth or the universe. And I'm very much more interested in who made us.

Because if God made me, whether he did it after a process of billions of years of creation, or whether he did it after six days of creation, I'm still in the same position either way. You know, I'm still a creation of God and he had a purpose for my life. And I answered to him, it doesn't really matter how long it took him.

But if we're trying to go by Genesis, which it seems like we should since Jesus did, then it would appear that a young earth, measurable in thousands of years rather than billions, is more consistent with what Genesis says. Though Christians of many different stripes have found various ways to try to make the age of the universe and the earth much older by these various ways that I've just mentioned. Now, we've got light appearing on the first day.

And of course, darkness continues to exist, but it's separated from the light on the first day. Then verse six says, then God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters and let it divide the waters from the waters. Thus God made the firmament and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament.

And it was so. And God called the firmament heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

And I have to say, Frank, I don't remember exactly how you answered. Is this where you talk about being stretched out? Or yeah, there are references to God stretching out the heavens in the prophets. And I believe that, Frank, this is where you feel like all the undifferentiated matter was kind of organized into the becoming matter.

Yeah. And so that fits the paradigm that I would strongly recommend that you talk to Frank about if you're interested in these things, because he's thought these things up a lot in a rather original way, but that has a lot of reasons to believe he's right. And his view is self-consistent with itself.

I come from a more traditional view just because that's what I've always known and tend to see this firmament as a reference to the atmosphere, the belt of air between the earth and the edge of the atmosphere. You know, as far as we know, there is no other planet that really has an atmosphere. Do we know? Do they know of any other planet that has an atmosphere? I don't think so.

Not that you can live in. You know, the way God made things before this, it would have been impossible for life, carbon-based life as we are and know it, to exist on the planet. There had to be, you know, you can't just have space begin at ground level.

You've got to have sort of an environment that's breathable. There's no air in space, you know. And so God creates this, the idea, the traditional view is that he creates this environment called heaven, another heaven besides the first heaven.

Remember, there's more than one use of these words. I also should point out that the word day is used more than one way, sometimes as the light period as opposed to the dark, other times as the whole 24-hour cycle of morning and evening and so forth. These words often have more than one meaning.

But he calls this firmament heaven. And on the classical view, this is actually the creation of a livable environment around the planet. And there are perhaps other ways to see it.

And it says, that was the second day. And verse 9 says, then God said, let the waters under the heavens or under the firmament, the terrestrial waters on the earth, be gathered together into one place and let the dry appear. And it was so.

And God called the dry Eretz, earth or land. And the gathering together of the waters he called seas. And God saw that it was good.

Now, this is only the first part of what he did on this day. He caused there to be a terrestrial environment for life. He wanted to make plants and eventually animals that would live on dry ground.

Of course, he had plants and animals that lived in the ocean as well. But the dry ground was to be divided from the ocean. And so it was to be elevated above the ocean, as I understand it.

Now, see, it does say that he caused the dry land or the dry to appear. And they gathered into one place. Actually, it was the waters to be gathered into one place.

Some say there was only one ocean and one continent in those days, although the place could be referring to elevation rather than horizontal geography, that all the waters would be below a certain level. There'd be one place and then the land would be in another place above the waters. Hard to say.

And I'm frankly not too excited about trying to settle that. All I know is that what we see is he creates an environment for plants and eventually animals can live in the air, not in the water. That is, they breathe air, which would be the belt of firmament that had been created around the earth before that.

Then God said, verse 11, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself on the earth. And it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind.

And God saw that it was good. So the evening and morning were the third day. So in one day he creates dry environment, earth, land, and then he plants and causes to grow all these plants in it.

These eventually we find are intended for food, for man and for animals. We're told that later on in the chapter. And among the things that we're told about these plants is that they were to be self-replicating.

They were to reproduce after their kind. They were supposed to, the plants would produce seed so that God wouldn't have to create new plants all the time. He created the original plants and then he made them capable of keeping going.

They would produce seed and then their seed would produce seed and so forth. So God was interested in starting a world which would not require continuous creative acts on his part. He wanted to create it, get it running and let it go.

Now that doesn't mean God would not intervene ever again. He did intervene and does intervene. Jesus said he feeds the sparrows, you know, and he clothes the lilies.

This is somewhat poetic, of course, but the idea is that even in the natural growth of flowers and the things that birds eat and so forth, these things are produced by processes we could describe in terms of natural law, but Jesus said God is behind it. But he's not creating it from scratch anymore. You could say that God made you.

But of course what we mean is that he made you come about through something like what we call a natural process of reproduction from your parents. But Adam and Eve were made in a very different sense than that. God made living things, plants and animals and humans in such a way that he wouldn't have to keep replacing them by successive similar creative acts, but that they would just keep going.

Then God said, verse 14, let there be light in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night. Now, hang on here. In the firmament of the heaven, earlier firmament was used to speak of heaven and on at least the classical view, that was a reference to the atmosphere.

Now, not necessarily on every view, but the word firmament, certainly which means expanse, could refer to any expanse. The expanse between the earthly waters and the waters above the firmament would be an expanse, a firmament, but also the expanse of outer space would be a firmament. And that is, of course, where God put the sun and the moon and the stars.

And that's what we're reading about here. He says, and they will divide the day and the night. Now, there's already a division between light and darkness, but that division would be now maintained through the heavenly spheres.

And they would now become that which divides between day and night and not just divide them, but ruling over them, as we shall see. It does say at the end of verse 14, let them be for signs and seasons and for days and years. Now, days and years and months too are measurements of time that are actually dictated by astronomical phenomena.

Obviously, a day is measured by one full rotation of the earth on its axis. A month is usually measured by the waxing and waning of the moon. A year is measured by the time it takes the earth to go around the sun.

So, we can see that God made these things to measure out seasons. Now, the word seasons doesn't mean necessarily all four seasons. In the Bible, the word season means just distinct periods of time, as when it says that some people, like Moses, decided not to choose sin for a season.

Well, he didn't mean for three months, he meant for a period of time. And so, a season is generic for a period of time in Scripture. But the heavenly bodies were created in order to make it possible to measure out periods of time.

And interestingly, one measurement of time that is not measured by astronomical bodies is a week. A day, a month, and a year is, but a week is not. There's nothing astronomical that would mark out seven days as a distinct period of time.

That is done strictly by God's decree. When he decreed that men would, you know, work six days and rest one, that was a decree that, in a sense, set an artificial period of time, which is still observed, as far as I know, in every society today. I don't know if there's, you know, maybe in some tribal areas, they don't have any weeks or whatever, but essentially all, as far as I know, all societies have a seven-day week that are civilized in any way.

What does it mean, he made them for signs? He said, for signs and seasons and days used. He made the stars and the sun move for signs? What is a sign? A sign is something that carries information. Now, maybe this means in a natural sense, sort of like early man, early mariners, early on learned how to navigate by the stars.

That's an amazing thing. Actually, astronomy was the earliest exact science, because it didn't take very long for people to observe the stars and to observe the patterns over the course of a year are predictable, and to actually learn to navigate and so forth. So the stars carried information, at least about how to get from one place to another, like traffic signs, in a way, freeway signs.

But some people think that he made the stars for signs in a more spiritual sense. And that is that as a sign carries information, God designed the stars in such a way that they would carry information about God. Now, I don't want to spend too much time on this, because I sometimes spent whole lectures, sometimes two lectures on this one point, and we need to quit in a few minutes.

But let me just summarize what some people believe. Those who believe it are evangelicals. I have had in my hands at one time or another, five different books written by mainstream evangelical scholars who promote this theory that I'm about to share

with you.

And that is that God actually preached the gospel in the constellations, and that the constellations were designed to carry that information, the gospel. Now, here's how this theory works out. Essentially, all societies have recognized 12, I think all 12 houses of the zodiac associated with months.

In the course of a year, the sun and the solar system move within the universe, within the range of certain constellations that repeats every year. There are 12 groups of constellations. Anyone who's ever been into astrology knows about this, because astrology is all about this.

The 12 houses of the zodiac. However, pagan astrologers did not invent the 12 houses of the zodiac. They are mentioned in the book of Job under the Hebrew name, Mazaroth.

When God is speaking to Job, he says, can you bring out the Mazaroth in its course? The word Mazaroth in Hebrew means the 12 signs. And it's in the context of God talking about the Pleiades and the Orion's belt and astronomical things. Can you bring out the 12 signs in their course, in their time? And so even the Bible recognizes, even God speaking, speaks about there being 12 signs, 12 houses of the zodiac, as it were.

It's Satan that has taken this information and corrupted it into a form of divination. And so pagan astrology, which probably originated as far back as Nimrod in Genesis chapter 11 and the Tower of Babel, because most scholars believe the Tower of Babel was an astrological observatory, and that perhaps the pagan versions of astrology that you still find in the horoscopes and the newspapers originated back in the days of the Tower of Babel. And it was a corruption of the information that God put in the stars.

God had indeed put 12 signs up there. He made the stars for signs. And those signs would carry important information that God wanted people to know.

But the devil didn't want people to know, and so he came up with an alternate use of them, an alternate way of understanding them, so that they are seen almost as divine influences that affect people who are born under their house of Gemini or Pisces or Aquarius or whatever, that they somehow determine human fates and so forth. It almost makes the stars and the constellations into godlike influences in human life. That's pagan, that's demonic.

And it's an early demonic error, which probably reflects the devil's early attempts to obscure something very important that God had put there. Now, there's something interesting over in Romans chapter 10 that's relevant to this matter. In Romans chapter 10, verse 17 and 18, Paul said, So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

But I say, have they not heard? Have they not heard what? Well, he's talking about the

gospel, actually. The verse is earlier, he talks about they have not obeyed the gospel. And so he's saying, have they not heard the gospel? Have people not heard the gospel? He says, yes, indeed, they have.

Then he quotes from the Old Testament. Their sound has gone out to all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. Now, whatever Paul's quoting there, he sees it as proof that people have heard the gospel.

What is he quoting? He's quoting Psalm 19. And Psalm 19 begins with these words and continues with the words that Paul quoted. Beginning at the start of Psalm 19, it says, The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament.

And this would mean, of course, the things in the firmament, the stars and all that, shows his handiwork. Day unto day utters speech. Night unto night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world. That last verse I just read is the one Paul quotes when he says, Have not people heard the gospel? Yes, they have heard the gospel, he says.

And he quotes this verse. What's this verse saying? This verse is saying that in the heavens, in the firmament, there is knowledge being transmitted every night. And there's no language on the planet that hasn't read the sign, has not heard the voice of the stars speaking this message.

Their voice is heard everywhere. Interestingly, it says at the end of verse four, In them he has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber and rejoices like a strong man to run its race. It's difficult for Christians not to see that as something of an emblem of Christ, the sun, who is the bridegroom.

But it's saying that the stars, perhaps he means the twelve signs of the Zodiac, are like a tabernacle in which the sun is enshrined. You see, the sun's motion in the course of a year is within the realm of these twelve groups of constellations. They're like a tabernacle for the sun.

It's like a bridegroom. Now, what is David thinking? And what was Paul thinking when he quotes this and indicates that people have indeed heard the gospel because of this verse? Many people think that Paul is saying that the gospel has been preached in the constellations of the Zodiac and that God designed those constellations in such a way as to deliberately communicate knowledge every night. As people look up the stars, every night conveys knowledge.

Every day speaks to people. Now, this is a little bit more of a long shot, but you know, in Galatians 3, it says that God preached the gospel to Abraham. And there was a famous occasion in Genesis 15 when God took Abraham out under the stars.

And he said, in our translations, he says, can you number the stars? If you can number the stars, that's what your seed will be like. Remember that? In the first two verses of Genesis 15, first five verses, excuse me. The word number, can you number the stars? If you look it up in a lexicon, it has a wide variety of possible meanings in the Hebrew.

One of those meanings is to decipher. Now, I said this is a bit of a long shot. I'm not going to push this point.

But some think that maybe God said, if you can decipher the stars, that's what your seed in Christ will be like. That is, there's a message there, if it can be properly deciphered, that describes Christ. Now, one thing that is an interesting phenomenon is that you can go all over the world and find people who know that one of those constellations is the twins.

Gemini in Latin, but in other languages, different words that mean twins. You know, there's a constellation that represents a virgin. In Latin, it's Virgo.

In other languages, it's a different word. In their languages, it's still a virgin. Taurus is a bull.

Cancer is a crab. Scorpio is a scorpion. Aquarius is a water bear.

Pisces is a fish, and so forth, in all languages, just about. And what's interesting about that is that they don't look like that. If you look at the stars in Cancer, they don't look like a crab, there's just a few stars scattered around.

And if you look at the star charts where they draw the pictures, it's not like a dot-to-dot picture. It's like the stars hardly dictate the shape of the picture at all. And you think, well, these stars, these constellations, that doesn't look like twins, that doesn't look like a scorpion.

How is it that all these cultures saw that as a scorpion? Or that as twins? It doesn't look like that. Why do all these different societies believe that that represents twins, or that a scorpion, or that a bull, or that a virgin, or that a lion? Where are they getting that from? Well, all cultures came from Noah, of course. Although the languages changed to the Tower of Babel, they would take with them their knowledge of nature and of things like that.

And that would perhaps explain, if Noah and people previous to Noah knew what these constellations represented, then when the language changed, they'd just have different words for the same things, but they'd all recognize that it's the same thing. It says in two places in Scripture, one is in Isaiah and one's in Psalm, that God calls all the stars by their names. It says He brings out their hosts by number and He calls them all by their names.

The stars have names. It is possible that God taught those names to Adam, and Adam taught them to his offspring. And the names of those stars that were originally known by the ancient people are retained in the traditions of what those stars represent, so that the Twelve Houses of Zodiac really do retain something of God's original revelation.

Some of this is conjecture, I'll grant it, but it's a paradigm that fits a lot of different Scriptures and a lot of different facts. The suggestion is that in the course of the year, the sun moves through these Twelve Houses and tells a story. But of course, like a circle has no beginning and no end, how do you know where the story begins or ends? Interestingly, the ancient Egyptians seemed to know, because in the Sphinx, you know, the Sphinx has a lion's body, but a woman's face.

And in the Sphinxes, they have found, on the walls, ancient Egyptian depictions of the Twelve Houses of the Zodiac. And you'll find that the circle of the Zodiac is broken between the lion and the virgin. In fact, there's a picture of the Sphinx itself with the lion's tail pointing to the lion, and the woman's face with him, the virgin.

And it would seem to suggest that the story starts with the virgin and ends with the lion. And in the star charts, interestingly enough, traditionally, they depict the lion pouncing. And there's another constellation in Leo, the lion, that is called Serpens, the serpent.

And if you look up any ancient star chart, you'll see that the last constellation is a lion pouncing on a serpent. Now, there's been lots of suggestions about the different meanings of the different Houses of the Zodiac between those. But there's at least a reasonable suggestion that the story begins with the virgin.

And ends with the lion pouncing on a serpent, which would be precisely how the New Testament starts and ends. In fact, there's one star in Virgo, the virgin, that's called the seed. There's another star in that constellation called the branch, both of which, of course, in the Bible are terms for Christ.

And as you go through the different constellations, there have been guesses. And they are only speculative now because we've lost, we've lost apparently the ancient knowledge of what these things said to the ancient people. But there are guesses that scholars, Christian scholars, have made about how these each might tell part of the story.

Sagittarius, the centaur, has the body of a horse and a torso and upper body of a man. And they think maybe that's a depiction of the dual nature of Christ, you know, divine and human animal nature, as it were. I mean, there's suggestions like that, but no one knows that they're true.

But what's interesting is at the Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles, there was once a man, Dwayne Spencer was a Presbyterian theologian. He was talking on this subject to

a missionary conference in Los Angeles. And he said that after he spoke, a missionary came up to him and says, you know, I knew about this because I was a missionary in Japan to some tribal people up in a remote mountainous area.

I was the first missionary to reach them. And the missionary said, when I told the gospel, there was an old woman in the crowd who just got all excited. And she said, I know this story, I know this story.

And the woman was, of course, the tribal astrologer. And she said, I've been telling my people this story from what I see in the constellations. But we just never knew what his name was before this.

Now that's anecdotal stuff. It makes an interesting case. Can't be sure.

But all things considered, when the Bible says God made the stars for signs, and then later speaks in Job of the 12 signs of the zodiac, there's a good chance that when God created on the fourth day the stars, he deliberately wrote a neon sign in the sky about Jesus. And Paul says, you know, everyone's heard it. Everyone's heard that gospel.

There's no language or place on earth where the voice is not heard, where that knowledge is not known. And so this is very possible that when Genesis says he made them for signs, to give light on the earth. He made these to give light on the earth.

And of course, in the Bible, light doesn't just mean natural light. But illumination, spiritual light as well. And so it's very possible that this theory is correct.

I give it to you only as a theory, but it is one that is, I think, worthy of consideration. We're going to have to stop at that point and come back next time to finish up the first chapter.