

Equipping Session 1

3 Questions

- Is the 24-hour interpretation necessitated by the text?
- Does a biblical world view support the endeavor of science?
- How do I distinguish a scientific statement from a philosophical statement?

Genesis

Is the 24-hour interpretation necessitated
by the text?

What is meant by “necessitated”?

- Necessitated means there is only one faithful interpretation or understanding of the particular text.

What is meant by “faithful”?

Literal interpretation:

- to interpret the text as it was intended to mean by the author.
- This takes into account the genre or type of literature,
- how the words of the text were used and understood in the original context,
- Historical context, etc.
- It does not mean to interpret the text simply by what is written, without any other considerations

Genesis

Observations in favor of Young Earth Interpretation

- A first glance reading
 - Get the impression that 6 specific periods of time are referred to
 - “evening and morning” formulations
 - Definite article “the” as opposed to “a third day”
 - Exodus 20:8-11: the work week of 7 days is an analogy of the pattern of God's creating activity

Genesis

- One does not get the sense of this occurring over a long period of time
- Other statements in Scripture seem to demonstrate this understanding.
 - Exodus 31:17 (ESV) "It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.' "
- "Yom" is the Hebrew word used to indicate a 24-hour day

Summary of 24-hour hypothesis

- “Day” refers to a 24-hour period
 - “yom” refers most frequently to 24-hour period
 - “evening and morning” formulations
 - Definite article “the” as opposed to “a third day”
 - Exodus 20:8-11: the work week of 7 days is an analogy of the pattern of God's creating activity
 - Exodus 31:17 (ESV) “It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.’ ”

Second Closer Glance

- Seventh day does not have the “evening morning” formulation
 - How is this explained?
 - Ad hoc hypothesis: a hypothesis brought in to explain the anomalous datum/data in order to save the original hypothesis
- Difference in sequence between chapter one and chapter two

Different orders between 1 & 2

- Light
- Waters
- Land & Vegetation
- Sun and Moon and Stars
- Birds and Fish
- Land animals and Man, male and female
- Male man formed from dust
- Vegetation (at least in Eden)
- Land animals and birds
- Female man is made

Second Closer Glance

- A 24-hour day is not the only literal understanding of “yom”
 - Genesis 2:4 (ESV) These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the *day* (yom) that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

Genesis

Brown Driver Briggs Hebrew

1) day, time, year

- 1a) day (as opposed to night)
- 1b) day (24 hour period)
- 1b2) as a division of time
- 1b2a) a working day, a day's journey

1c) days, lifetime (plural)

1d) time, period (general)

1e) year

Hebrew wording

- If there is a cardinal number, then it means a 24-hour period. However, the literal Hebrew says “one day” not “day one”
 - Cardinal number: expresses an amount; one day
 - Ordinal number: expresses a position in a series; day one or first day

(Dr. G. DeWeese, lecture notes)

Genesis

- The analogy of the work week still holds if “yom” does not refer to a 24-hour period. *It is an analogy of pattern, not a specific time period.*
- The reference to the 7 “days” of creation may still hold while not necessitating the 24-hour hypothesis

Genesis

- Finally, the 24-hour interpretation is historically recent.
 - Arose from the Seventh-Day Adventism and the visions of Ellen White (Tim O'Connor)
 - Same observation is made by historian Mark Noll in Scandal of the Evangelical Mind.
- What this means: the 24-hour hypothesis is not the traditional understanding of Genesis 1 within the Church

Summary

- The 7th day breaks from the formulaic pattern of “evening and morning”
- “one day” not “day one” for the first day and following
- 24-hour understanding of “yom” is not the only literal meaning of “yom”
- Gen 2 does not follow the order of Gen 1
- The analogy of work week still works with non-24-hour understanding

Is the 24-hour interpretation necessary?

No.

- For these reasons it does not seem that the 24-hour understanding of Genesis is a necessary understanding.

There is room for different understandings and the text will not be the only source of information, especially in regards to the age question.

Any questions?

Question #2

Does a biblical world view support the scientific endeavor?

- Support: provide the necessary foundations or “thrust” to get the project off the ground
- Scientific endeavor: to gain knowledge of the natural world
- What would those foundations be?
- Is science, loosely defined, truth conducive?
- Does a biblical world view support the truth-conduciveness of science?

Does a biblical world view support the scientific endeavor?

Romans 1:19-20 (ESV)

For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. [20] For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Does a biblical world view support the scientific endeavor?

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For what *can be known* about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. [20] For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world(Gk, cosmos), **in the things that have been made**. So they are without excuse.

Summary Argument by Paul

- 1) God has made known what can be known of God in the world/nature/creation
- 2) God made man for this world (Gen.)
- 3) If (2), then man was made with the faculties to know this world as it is, i.e. to function properly in this world
- 4) If (1) and (3), then mankind is without excuse
- 5) Therefore, mankind is without excuse

Does a biblical world view support the scientific endeavor?

- Yes.
 - “ever since the creation of the world,” includes pre-fall condition and post-fall condition
 - Sin, while a hindrance and the reason for suppressing the truth, it does not prevent knowledge of nature/world/creation;
- Implication: in principle one must not believe in God in order to know nature
- Thus, science can bring us knowledge

Does a biblical world view support the scientific endeavor?

- Implication: a Christian cannot reject ALL of what scientists tell us,
- What one can challenge is that which challenges “what can be known of God in the things that have been made.”

Does a biblical world view support the scientific endeavor?

Yes.

In fact, history shows that modern science was fertilized by theistic science, i.e. a science that grew out of a theistic understanding of the world.

Question #3

What is the difference between a scientific statement and a philosophical statement?

The rate gravity causes objects to accelerate on earth is 32 ft/s.

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Murder is wrong.

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DNA has four base molecules: adenine (abbreviated A), cytosine (C), guanine (G) and thymine (T).

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If you know something it means you have a justified true belief.

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DNA has four base molecules: adenine (abbreviated A), cytosine (C), guanine (G) and thymine (T).

What is the difference between a scientific statement and a philosophical statement?

The physical universe, i.e. the world of atoms, subatomic particles, etc., is the proper object of scientific study.

What is the difference between a scientific statement and a philosophical statement?

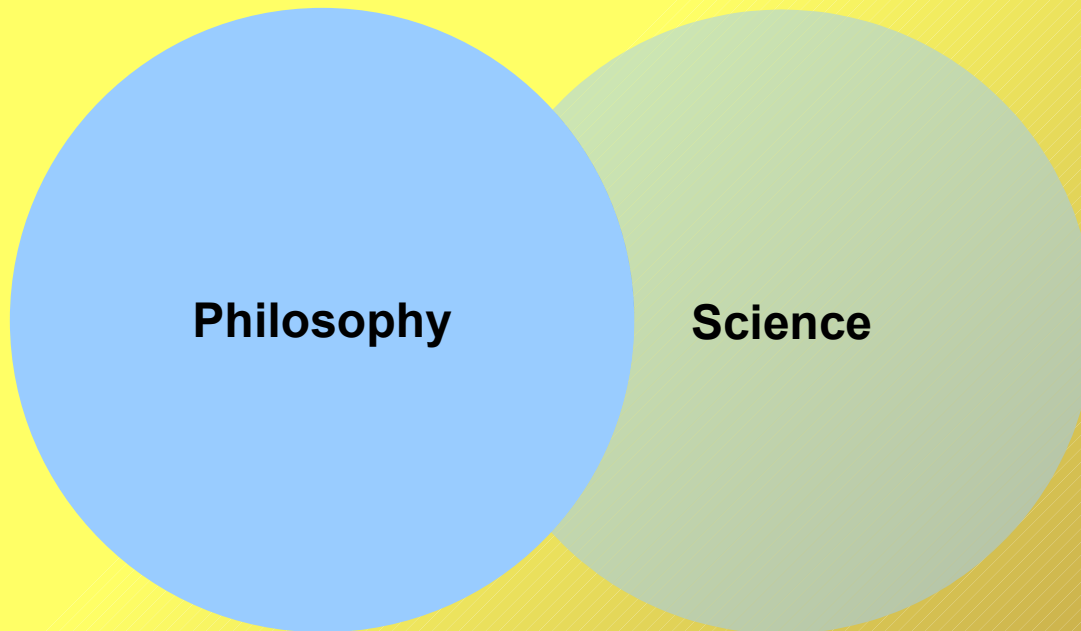
Scientists ought not falsify their results.

What is the difference between a scientific statement and a philosophical statement?

Natural selection is the term referring to the process that particular organisms better suited for a particular environment will reproduce more than those who are not as well suited.

Philosophy and Science

Philosophy of Science



Authority Thesis

the idea that in those areas where science and philosophy both have something to say, in general the philosophical considerations are more important (greater intellectual force) than the scientific considerations

In fact, if one tries to argue that in those areas referred to above science is more authoritative than philosophy, one is using philosophy to justify that claim, not science.

What is the difference between a scientific statement and a philosophical statement?

Answer: It is not an easy question to answer. Some statements are easier than others to discern.

Summary

- The author of Genesis 1 did not intend to necessitate a 24-hour day meaning with “yom”
- Thus, Genesis 1 does not teach anything about the age of the earth or universe
- The bible supports the scientific endeavor, thus in principle there is nothing that opposes a biblical world view from being informed by science.

Summary

- While there are some clear statements of science and philosophy, other statements overlap between the two.
- This requires a better understanding of science.

Next Session

Toward a Better Understanding of Science