



# Does Science Disprove God and the Bible?

By

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“God is dead. We do not need him. It’s time to give up childish things and think as adults. Become scientifically literate. Become informed. Grow out of religious belief just as you did with the belief in the Tooth Fairy, Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny.” John W. Loftus, Author and Atheist (Debunking Christianity Blog)

John Loftus is well known for his ‘conversion’ from Christianity to atheism. Is he right about God? Loftus claims that science is a better explanation of existing phenomena than the Bible. He also believes that Christians are ‘not’ scientifically literate and need to ‘become informed.’ Is he right about that?

Let’s take a closer look.

Atheist: "Science disproves God and the Bible."

Christian: "Which science?"

That's one way to respond to atheists who make a statement about 'science' disproving God and the Bible. The intention in such a response is not to be disrespectful or push aside the argument. It is meant to lead to a robust conversation about the Bible and various sciences that are addressed in its pages. Rather than dodge the 'science vs Bible' debate, the purpose is to elevate it to a real discussion that's based on evidence, reason and logic.

One of my favorite attacks toward Christians on talk radio more than 45 years ago was about science disproving God and the Bible. Scores of Christians called my radio show every week to argue about it, but none of them could answer my questions about science and the Bible. It wasn't that there were no answers, but the Christians who called didn't know the answers or were not able to articulate what they knew. It wasn't until I interviewed a Christian who was a professor of science that I began to see another side to the debate.

# What Is Science?

Let's begin by defining a primary term used in the argument.

The word 'science' comes from the Greek word *episteme*, which translates into the English word 'knowledge.' Merriam-Webster defines 'science' as —

- knowledge about or study of the natural world based on facts learned through experiments and observation
- a particular area of scientific study (such as biology, physics, or chemistry)
- a particular branch of science
- a subject that is formally studied in a college, university, etc.
- the state of knowing
- knowledge as distinguished from ignorance or misunderstanding
- a department of systematized knowledge as an object of study <the science of theology>
- knowledge or a system of knowledge covering general truths or the operation of general laws especially as obtained and tested through scientific method

The 'scientific method' is defined as "principles and procedures for the systematic pursuit of knowledge involving the recognition and formulation of a problem, the collection of data through observation and experiment, and the formulation and testing of hypotheses" (Merriam-Webster).

The New Testament uses a similar word, *epistemon*, in James 3:13 where James asks, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.” The word “understanding” is a translation of *epistemon*, which originates from *epistamai* (I know, understand) and carries the idea of ‘being intelligent and experienced as one having the knowledge of an expert.’ (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, Zondervan Publishing, 1978, p 243)

Plato used the word *episteme* in the sense of ‘justified true belief’ (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, [The Analysis of Knowledge](#), 2001). Aristotle viewed *episteme* as being ‘an exact form of knowledge concerned with unchanging truths.’ He believed that this form of knowledge was arrived at “through the use of reason and tested by coherence or correspondence.” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, [The Correspondence Theory of Truth](#), 2002)

Science is not knowledge or a system of knowledge about just ‘one thing,’ as in the atheist’s statement that “science disproves God and the Bible.” Science is a method of learning about ‘many things’ (e.g. scientific method). Let’s look in on the conversation between the atheist and Christian to see what comes next.

Atheist: "Science disproves God and the Bible."

Christian: "Which science?"

Atheist: "What do you mean 'which science'?"

Christian: "There are many scientific disciplines and sub-disciplines. Which one do you believe disproves God and the Bible?"

Atheist: "All of them."

Christian: "Okay. Choose one and we'll start there."

The claims I made as an atheist about science disproving God and the Bible were broad and sweeping. I had some specific things in mind when I said that to Christians, but expressed my thoughts in a general format by using the term 'science' to cover all of my arguments. It wasn't until a Christian narrowed the terminology in our discussion that I began to think about God and the Bible in specific terms. Discussions Christians have with atheists should be narrow and specific so the Bible is viewed in its correct context to statements it makes that relate to various aspects of 'knowledge' (science).

# Science and the Bible

The Bible is not specifically a science ‘textbook,’ but many scientists have found the Bible to be scientifically accurate in statements recorded in its pages. That, I believe, should be the discussion Christians have with atheists.

Let’s take the first verse in the Bible as an example of how science and the Bible work together.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Genesis 1:1

What science or sciences (particular areas of scientific study) would be involved in determining the truthfulness of Genesis 1:1? Here are some of the possibilities:

- Astronomy – study of outer space
- Astrophysics – branch of astronomy that deals with physics of stellar phenomena
- Chemistry – science of composition, structure, properties, and reactions of matter, especially of atomic and molecular systems
- Cosmology – study of physical universe considered as a totality of phenomena in time and space
- Geochemistry – chemistry of composition and alterations of solid matter of the earth or celestial body

- Geodesy – geologic science of size and shape of the earth
- Geology – scientific study of origin, history, and structure of the earth
- Physics – science of matter and energy and interactions between the two
- Planetary sciences – scientific study of planets (including earth) and moons and processes that form planetary systems
- Theology – study of God and God’s relation to the universe

That is not an exhaustive list, but it’s a starting point for a discussion about science and the Bible.

Imagine building a list of sciences that could be used in a discussion about every verse in the Bible. With more than 31,000 verses in the Bible and hundreds of scientific disciplines and sub-disciplines, theists and atheists have their work cut out for them to investigate science and the Bible thoroughly.

Back to our example of the first verse in the Bible. The Bible claims there was a beginning – “In the beginning.” What say the sciences?

“The most popular theory of our universe’s origin centers on a cosmic cataclysm unmatched in all of history—the big bang. This theory was born of the observation that other galaxies are moving away from our own at great speed, in all directions, as if they had all been propelled by an ancient explosive force.” National Geographic, [Origins of the Universe: An Expanding World](#)

A Belgian priest named Georges Lemaître developed the theory of the ‘big bang’ in the 1920s. Astronomers Edwin Hubble and Milton Humason conducted research during the ‘20s into the spectral shifts of galaxies that led to a conclusion that galaxies are moving away from each other at great speeds. Another support of the ‘big bang theory’ was the observation of ‘cosmic microwave radiation.’

“The existence of the CMB radiation was first predicted by Ralph Alpher in 1948 in connection with his research on Big Bang Nucleosynthesis undertaken together with Robert Herman and George Gamow. It was first observed inadvertently in 1965 by Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson at the Bell Telephone Laboratories in Murray Hill, New Jersey. The radiation was acting as a source of excess noise in a radio receiver they were building. Coincidentally, researchers at nearby Princeton University, led by Robert Dicke and including Dave Wilkinson of the WMAP science team, were devising an experiment to find the CMB. When they heard about the Bell Labs result they immediately realized that the CMB had been found.” National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), [Universe 101 – Tests of Big Bang: The CMB](#)

Keep in mind that Moses wrote the words “In the beginning” during the 15th century BC. That was almost 3,500 years before modern science developed a theory of a ‘big bang’ beginning.

The Bible claims that ‘God’ created the heavens and the earth ‘in the beginning.’ What say the sciences?

“The big bang theory leaves several major questions unanswered. One is the original cause of the big bang itself. Several answers have been proposed to address this fundamental question, but none has been proven—and even adequately testing them has proven to be a formidable challenge.” National Geographic, [Origins of the Universe: An Expanding World](#)

I might add that ‘theology’ (study of God) is also one of the ‘sciences.’ In fact, theology was once known as “queen of the sciences” and was highly revered in universities around the world. The Bible was viewed as the ‘source’ of all truth and the foundation of an accurate worldview. Many of the great scientific discoveries of the natural world were made by scientists who believed in God, the Bible and the supernatural world.

So, has ‘science’ disproven the first verse of the Bible? It has not. In fact, the scientific disciplines of astronomy and astrophysics agree with the Bible that the universe had a ‘beginning.’ That’s a good place to start the discussion about science and the Bible.

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