

Note: These TOC's are the first 4 pages of the ms.

"A Garden of Edens"

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Preface

Introduction

Annotated Table Of Contents of "Options" Section

Part I: Ancient, Modern and Future Scientific Origin Theories:

Chapters A-C

Not yet included: Possible future directions of origin theories: insert material re consciousness (not accounted for in current physical theory), evolution of consciousness not yet accounted for in current evolutionary theory, holism etc;

Part II: Religion, Biblical Religion, and Scientific Origin Theories

Biblical Religionist

Accounts Deliberately Contradictory (to set the tone, why we interpret it not as written)

Oral Tradition Accompanying Torah

paths to resolution (why the Options below solve the problem)

Part III: Interpretations of the Creation and Eden Accounts

Options: Various Ways to Interpret Genesis ...

Speculative Approaches

ALLEGORY

Part IV: Discussion and Epilogue

Critical Discussion: Synergy and Plasticity

Epilogue:

Bibliography

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The book has two versions:

1. For educated Jews, with many Traditional Jewish sources;
2. A version geared more for a believing Christian audience.

Interspersed in the ms are references to quotes/sources: I may wish to insert in the web version long citations, eg from Plato and Lucretius, DeNouy, Blum etc;

(Note: AR to AR: the photocopies are in two binders.

Quotes from Jewish sources such as Rambam, Ramban, Midrash and Philo etc are in two more binders.)

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Annotated Table of Contents

- Overview of Scientific Origin Theory: Ancient Greek conceptions regarding the origin of the universe and of life. Lucretius's view. Medieval conceptions. Rambam. An introduction to the theory of the big bang and of evolution, and to the overall scientific origin theory. Why the big bang theory was originally considered as being too close to religious ideas of creation to be palatable as a scientific theory. Various philosophical interpretations of the big bang theory. Why scientific origin theories are considered to present conflicts with the Biblical creation account.
- Similarities to the Big Bang and Evolution in Traditional Sources: Genesis can be interpreted via a combination of various traditional Jewish sources in order to construct a parallel between the origin theory and traditional interpretations of Genesis. In this sense Genesis can be read as agreeing with the scientific model of the origin of the universe and of life.
- Both the agreement with origin theory, and the conflict with the origin theory, are inherent in the fact that Genesis has more than one interpretation.
- Creation as an Additional Act of Creation/Formation to a Pre-Existent Big Bang Universe

The words of the creation account can be interpreted literally, but in a different context than is ordinarily assumed - for example, as being a description of the creation of the earth alone, or of the solar system alone, rather than of the universe as a whole.

- The Indefinite Age of the Universe: Two Traditional Sources. Hidden Chronology and the Creation Date ('Seder Olam':R.Shimon Schwab). Tradition does not accept that creation took place at a specific date, a certain given amount of time ago.
- Predecessors and Contemporaries of Adam: Biblical and Rabbinic Sources indicating that Adam was not the first human and therefore one need not see contradiction between evolutionary theory and Traditional understandings of the Biblical accounts of Adam.
- Adam as a Race Rather than as an Individual: Biblical and Rabbinic Sources indicating that an entire race of humans were created, so that the Biblical story of Adam relates to an earth populated as described by evolutionary theory.
- The order of creation: various Traditional approaches. The creation account as interpreted traditionally is sufficiently flexible to be seen as compatible with some aspects of scientific theory.
- The 'Creation Accounts' as Something Other Than Descriptions of Creation (R. Yosef Albo, Rashi). There is no conflict with science since the opening chapters of Genesis do not deal with creation but rather with the purpose for which the universe was created.
- The Creation Account: A Description From A Human-Type Perception

The creation account can be taken as a description of creation from the point of view of the Creator, but translated into human terms - as a human would have experienced the beyond-human-comprehension processes accompanying creation;

- The Creation Accounts as Literal Descriptions of Mental Events in the Mind of God: e.g. the Mental Blueprint Design of the Universe:

Traditional sources contain many references to there having been many events on the mental level and in the spiritual realm accompanying or preceding the creation of the universe. There are also numerous references to a blueprint from which God created the universe. Thus, the creation account in Genesis can perhaps be expected to contain references to these events, or perhaps even to be dealing only with these mental and or spiritual events rather than with actual historical events in the physical universe.

- The Creation accounts as literal descriptions of events in the Spiritual plane. Appendix: the construction of the Spiritual Forms - Ramkhal;

The creation account is a translation into humanly comprehensible physical terms of events which occurred in the spiritual plane in connection with the creation of the spiritual cosmos, these events being parallel to, or analogous to - but certainly not identical to - events which occurred in the physical universe as it was being created.

- The Creation account as Adam's Prophetic Vision. [Appendix: Ramban.]

The 'creation account' can then be a description of the creation of the universe as perceived in a prophetic vision by Adam, a description of it being passed down the generations and then incorporated into the Torah by Moses at God's behest (or word for word dictation).

- The Creation Account as a Divinely Sanctioned Prophetic Conception of Creation by a prophet other than Adam: At various junctures in the history of mankind, God engaged certain individuals in a special manner, and this encounter allowed the communication to them of various aspects of reality inaccessible to a purely intellectual and rational investigation of the universe. Perhaps they experienced 'prophetic visions', some of these visions perhaps involving elements related to some aspect of the creation of the universe.

This vision may have been that of a pre-Mosaic prophet, or of Moses himself. Indeed, this prophet may have been not one we are familiar with from the Torah - and may have been some 'non-Jewish' prophet¹, which prophecy was later included in the Torah by Moses at God's behest (or word for word dictation). *Appendix: A Reply to Ramban's Objections*

- The Creation Account as a Divinely Sanctioned Revision of an Ancient Pagan Conception of Creation:
- The Creation Account as Allegory: An extensive exploration of the traditional sanction for allegorical interpretation, the history of traditional allegorical interpretation, the methodology of various interpreters as applied to the creation and Eden accounts.
- The Instant Universe: It is possible to interpret both accounts as being literal descriptions of actual physical historical events while at the same time accepting that the universe is indeed in a 'big bang emergent state' as described by scientific theory. In this scenario, after God created the universe as detailed in the first creation account, and after the events told of in the garden of Eden account², God 'rested' by creating a self-consistent system of natural law which would allow the universe to operate

¹ (for example, according to traditional sources, Job was a non-Jewish prophet, contemporary with Moses - he certainly experienced profound visions as recorded in the Torah, as did Bil'am).

² The garden of Eden account relates events which occurred on the sixth day of creation, that is, prior to God's establishment of the system of natural law at the onset of the Sabbath.

'independently', in a 'natural' manner. As part of this procedure, God put the universe into a state consistent with this system of natural law - that is a big-bang-emergent state³.

- This is an interpretation in which both creation accounts - although not comprising a complete description of the entire process of the development of the universe - are nevertheless purely-literal descriptions of actual physical events⁴.

Critical Discussion and Analysis:(excerpts of incomplete newer material)

Synergy, AntiSynergy and Annihilation

Synergy is what happens when the total is greater than the mere sum of the parts. The opposite can happen as well.

We offered many approaches to understanding Genesis: have we achieved synergy or the opposite?

Does the Infinite Plasticity of Genesis Imply Meaninglessness.

Is it the plasticity of the text or the flexibility of our interpretation/interpretation methodology which allows them to not contradict? If Genesis can be made to parallel all scientific accounts from ancient Greeks to today does that mean that it is empty (if it is so flexible?).

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The book ms itself begins with this:

Introduction to Part I

Chapter A deals with the history of the development of origin theories in general. Chapter B discusses the conflicts between early versions of the origin theory and the Biblical creation account. Chapter BB discusses the conflict as experienced today. Chapter C provides a brief sketch of the modern origin theory.

CHAPTER A: ORIGINS AND BOUNDS

THE INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTS OF THE ORIGINS AND BOUNDS OF SPACE, TIME, LIFE AND THE UNIVERSE

³ As explained there, this 'instant universe' was created at the stage of the emergence of the first free willed conscious being, as hinted at in the story of the Tree of Knowledge.

⁴ However the creation accounts even in this case are not complete and explicit descriptions of all the relevant major events since they do not describe in an explicit manner the placing of the universe into a big-bang-emergent state .