

D.M.

Great Books of World Literature

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The Clockmaker

“I cannot imagine how the clockwork of the universe can exist without a clockmaker,” once declared the philosopher Voltaire. Although many agree that the “clockwork of the universe” was created by someone, many people disagree on who that someone or group of people is. Approximately five and a half thousand years ago, two accounts of creation and nature were written – one in Hebrew, the other in Greek. The names of these books are Genesis and *Theogony*. While the Genesis account tells the story of how one God created everything, *Theogony* describes a blurred account of the thousands of gods, and how nature is the offspring of the gods. Although Genesis and *Theogony* were written thousands of years ago, Genesis is more believable than *Theogony* for three reasons: It is written without contradictions, it is written more as a fact than as a mythical tale, and it is written in a methodical way.

The first quality of Genesis is its absence of any contradictions. Genesis, when compared to itself, is still accurate. The book begins “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” (Genesis 1:1) and then later it refers to this fact many times such as when God says, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth” (Genesis 6:7). This idea of God creating everything is repeated as one can see an enormous amount of times, signifying that it is not to be read any other way but that God did create everything. This idea is never contradicted not only through the book of Genesis, but actually throughout the entire Bible as well. An additional example of its consistency is when God describes himself as “The LORD

God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,” and in Genesis 25:19, the reader sees that Isaac is indeed “Abraham’s son”. These are just two examples of the amazing consistency in Genesis.

On the contrary to this, the *Theogony* has multiple contradictions. The first example of this is when it declares in the same sentence, “Even to the gods who are immortal, Death is an enemy” (*Theogony* 48). This is a clear contradiction that makes no sense and cannot be overlooked. Furthermore, the innumerable gods are often called holy, but sometimes “quarreling arises among the gods” (48), so how can quarreling gods be holy? Throughout the rest of the book, similar blatant contradictions occur that are not easily overlooked when determining the historical accuracy of *Theogony*.

The second reason Genesis is more believable is the factual way it was written. At the start of the book, a creation account in detail is given, even including time. It stated that “then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (Genesis 2:3), showing how long creation took. Not only is the creation account factual, but the numerous genealogies provide an excess amount of facts: “Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. Enosh lived ninety years, and begot Cainan.” Genesis (5:6-9). This is an example of an extremely clear and precise genealogy, clear and precise enough so that the reader knows how old Cainan was when Seth died. Throughout Genesis 5, this concept of an accurate genealogy proceeds on for many generations. In conclusion, it is easy to see the amount of accuracy and precision the author of Genesis wrote with, revealing the validity of the book.

Opposing this phenomenon, the account of the *Theogony* has no such factual details. “And Night bore frightful doom, and the black ker, And Death and Sleep, and the whole tribe of Dreams.” (*Theogony* 30) This is just one example of the unfactual, flippant way *Theogony* was written. Another example of the lack of facts is how the gods have children, such as “Athene, daughter of the Aegis-bearing Zeus” (*Theogony* 23). It seems strange that the gods have children, and how many of their children come through very immoral means, and yet are called “that holy race” (*Theogony* 23). These are two completely obvious examples of how fictitious the *Theogony* really is.

The last reason Genesis is more credible than *Theogony* is that it is written methodically. The first chapters are very reasonable, describing the first week in Earth’s history. From there on, it describes the lineage of the first people, and what those descendants did. Fascinatingly, the beginning of the book starts with “In the beginning” (Genesis 1:1), an evident example of how straightforward and methodical Genesis is. Another example of its orderly composure is the definite manner it tells the story of creation. When it proclaims “God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1), the way it is phrased leaves no room for interpreting what it declares differently. This leaves one to believe with confidence that the book is undoubtedly a methodical and believable piece of literature.

Conversely, the *Theogony* is written in a sloppy, unmethodical manner. Switching from the births of a multitude of gods, to the unmeasurable strength of Zeus, and back to countless other births, the reader asks the simplistic questions of, “What is the main point here?” The book does not start with anything reasonable but instead begins: “With Heliconian Muses let us start our song; they hold the great and godly mount of Helicon” (*Theogony* 23). This bewildering start is not a methodical or understandable beginning to the story. The rest of the book mirrors the

beginning, leaving the reader with a profound sense of confusion. The complete idea of believing such an atrociously compiled book is inconceivable.

In conclusion, *Genesis* is more credible than *Theogony* since it has no contradictions, it is written factually, and it is written in an organized way. Most importantly, the reader must remember why it is necessary to know which one is more believable. If one knows his origins and who created him, is it not of value to read his creator's written word and to change his own life based on what his creator says? Taking Voltaire's analogy a step further, if a clock rejected its maker, how much swifter would it become a pile of rubble?

Works Cited

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