

# **GOD BY EVOLUTION**

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**Dr Michael Jarvis** (PhD in Zoology, University of Cape Town)

*A scientific, personal and religious journey towards truth - towards a  
theistic 'Theory of Everything'.*

**AT LAST ! *How to fully reconcile,  
Our evolving Universe,  
With belief in the Creator.***

**The Big Bang creation** led to this most unlikely Universe  
that is full of evolution !

There is overwhelming evidence for a Universe and Earth,  
**Billions of years old, not just thousands.**

**This is a timely contribution,  
Giving new and relevant insights,  
into the on-going controversy,  
relating to the teaching of 'Intelligent Design',  
in schools and universities.**

**WARNING :** This book is not for those who retreat into the darkness of a  
closed mind, whenever faced with facts that seem to conflict  
with long cherished beliefs

# GOD by EVOLUTION

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**This book is dedicated to my wife, children, grand children, and to all who have a passion to discover truth.**

*My son, if you **accept** my words  
and **store up** my commands within you,  
**turning** your ear to wisdom  
and **applying** your heart to understanding,  
and if you **call out** for insight  
and **cry aloud** for understanding,  
and if you **look for** it as for silver  
and **search for** it as for hidden treasure,  
then you will understand the fear of the Lord  
and find **the knowledge of God.***

Bible:Proverbs 2:1-5

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**WHY THIS BOOK?**

The scientific age has encouraged the questioning of many previously held beliefs and Charles Darwin's theory of Evolution has impacted enormously on the worldview of most people living today.

This book presents a provocative re-examination of our religious roots, in the context of scientific discoveries. I challenge your concept of God and how he operates in the Universe. I challenge you to look carefully at the realities exposed by modern science. I challenge Christianity to return to its roots and abandon some man-made structures and interpretations.

I encourage you to seek truth above all else. Are you prepared to examine the belief structure you were born into, in order to discover truth? An honest pursuit of truth will truly set you free!

We live in a Universe that seems to have evolved from a Big Bang explosion millions of years in our past, an Earth that has progressively changed through the operation of known physical laws, continents that have slowly moved and changed due to geological forces, an atmosphere that has slowly changed over time and the progressive appearance of more complex life forms.

Science reveals that our existence is the result of a long series of remarkable and most unlikely 'co-incidences'. This suggests two possible conclusions, either that the Universe is the result of intelligent design by a Creator, or we just happen to be in one out of an infinite number of possible universes. Both possibilities cannot

be proved scientifically. The multi-universe theory is speculation since nobody knows what existed before the Big Bang.

According to the laws of physics, we can never get something from nothing. Therefore, the laws that existed before the Big Bang must have determined the characteristics of our Universe and of any other possible universe. We simply do not know what these 'transcendent laws' are and so we cannot say if other universes are possible. Therefore, a believer in the Creator and a believer in multiple universes are both building their world-view on a step of faith.

I propose that a better understanding of how God operates in the Universe and a better understanding of evolution, will show that God has used evolutionary processes in his creation.

Quantum physics is revealing amazing realities that challenge our understanding of dimensions. The world we are familiar with has dimensions of width, length, height and time. We need other dimensions in order to explain the strangeness of the sub-atomic world. We need to add a Timeless Dimension and at least two others. Surprisingly, a better understanding of the dimensions of reality can eliminate chance from the equation.

Probably your concept of God is far too small!

He cannot be the 'God of gaps'. He has to be, *before all things, and by him all things hold together* (Bible: Colossians 1:17). He operates in the fifth dimension of reality, the mysterious Timeless Dimension that is being revealed to us by quantum physics.

Once we have considered the evidence, we take a critical look at Christianity. How does it measure up to our scientific understanding of the Universe? What sort of Intelligent Design fits the evidence? What sort of Creator fits the evidence?

Some Christians have started from a dogmatic and narrow view of God and how he operates in the Universe. To support this view, they sometimes find it necessary to manipulate and distort facts, in an attempt to support their views. They are in danger of developing a schizophrenic approach towards science, in practice accepting many discoveries that have led to our technological age, but rejecting every discovery that seems to conflict with their understanding of God and the Universe.

An attempt by some, to maintain belief in the creation of the Earth 6000 years ago, in six literal days of 24 hours, forces them to fight a whole range of scientific discovery, by proposing theoretical explanations that cannot be supported by mainstream scientific research. When this viewpoint is promoted as the only legitimate interpretation of the Bible, it drives many people away from a serious examination of Christianity.

This book is written for people who will not retreat into the darkness of a closed mind, whenever they encounter anything that seems to threaten their long cherished beliefs.

If Christianity is to be fully relevant in our day, I believe it must embrace the overwhelming evidence for the great age of our Universe and Earth, the existence of death right from the first life and the existence of anatomically modern people before the biblical Adam. For many people, to deny these realities would be to commit intellectual suicide.

In this book I have attempted to accept the realities discovered by science, archaeology, history, personal experience and biblical revelation. I hope to show that there need not be any conflict between faith in God as creator, and acceptance of the rest of truth. **I do not have to commit intellectual suicide to become a Christian!**

This is **my attempt** to sift through the evidence. I may have misunderstood some of the issues and some of my interpretations may need changing in the future. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the overall conclusion will still remain, namely that scientific discovery and God need not be in conflict.

One motivation for this book is to **present answers to commonly asked questions about God**. I have started from basics, by examining evidence for his existence. This naturally leads us to consider frequently asked questions about the Bible and Christianity. In the process of answering these very relevant questions, it becomes clear that some historical interpretations of Christianity need to be re-interpreted, if they are to be reconcilable with the whole of truth.

This book is my personal, scientific and religious search for truth; hopefully leading towards a theistic '**Theory of Everything**', that ties-up all of reality within one awe-inspiring whole.

Some readers may prefer not to follow the detailed reasoning that has led to my understanding of reality. For this reason **I start the book with a summary of all the content**. If you disagree with any of my summarised conclusions, or seek further clarity, then look at the detailed explanations given in each of the chapters. In my full book.

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**5**

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## **SUMMARY of the whole book (Free download)**

This summary attempts to cover the main content of the book without giving any supporting documentation. **The detailed reasoning behind the statements and conclusions can be found in each of the full chapters.**

**The complete book, with all the supporting documentation, reasoning and references, totals 600 pages.**

**Each of the following summaries refers to the page number in the complete book and the chapter reference number.**

For instance, 1.1 refers to the chapter on *My background*, 1.2 refers to the chapter on *In the beginning was the Big Bang*.

In this book all quotations from literature are written in italics. For instance, Boyle (2001) notes, *There may be far more to our Universe than meets the eye, or even the most powerful telescopes.*

## **Part 1: ORIGINS**

### **1.1. My background.**

**Page: 117**

I was born in Tanzania and reared close to prime wildlife areas, giving me my interest in wildlife and zoology. Since I was also raised in a practicing Christian family, this led to serious questioning of my inherited faith and has, after many years of thought and experience, culminated in the contents of this book. It is presented, not as infallible dogma, but as a personal understanding of the major issues relating science and faith. After graduating with a PhD degree in zoology from the University of Cape Town, I have spent 30 years with wildlife research in southern Africa, resulting in my writing close to 100 scientific and popular publications on aspects of the research.

### **1.2. In the beginning was the Big Bang.**

**Page: 119**

The Big Bang is the widely accepted origin of the Universe. From apparently zero volume it has explosively expanded, over some 13 billion years, into millions of galaxies, each containing millions of stars. Even greater mysteries are revealed by science, including the 'dark energy' that fills apparently 'empty' space and behaves in ways that suggest timelessness and infinity. Distances in our Universe are measured in light years, the distance travelled by light, at about 300,000 km per second, in one earth year. Astronomers have a variety of ways by which they have determined the approximate distances to far away galaxies. These indicate that our Universe is at least 12 billion years old! As we look at light coming to us from distant galaxies, we are looking millions of years into the past.

In spite of its mysteries, the Universe appears to be governed by consistent laws. Observable things are built up from sub-atomic particles that appear to behave in a chaotic manner. However, chaotic and apparently unpredictable behaviour in this microscopic 'quantum' dimension of reality, has led to our predictable and visible Universe. How did this happen? The Universe appears to be ideally suited for us to exist. If the properties of sub-atomic particles had been very slightly different we would not be here.

A series of other remarkable co-incidences have taken place during the evolution of the Universe. Most people will accept that this points to intelligent design, but some try to avoid this conclusion by suggesting it might be explained by the Anthropic Principle. This says that there may be an infinite number of possible universes and we just happen to be in the one suited for life, and so it only seems to us that it is designed for us.

Both alternative viewpoints require a step of faith, because neither can be proved. The Anthropic idea depends on an enormous assumption, namely that an infinite number of other universes are possible. However, this depends on what existed before the Big Bang and we just do not know what that was.

Most cosmologists believe that, in the first microsecond after the Big Bang, the Universe expanded from microscopic size to astronomical size. This was far faster than the speed of light, and the laws of our Universe forbid matter to travel faster than light. Therefore, the Big Bang was initiated by 'transcendent laws' that existed before the Universe was born. Nobody knows what these transcendent

laws are and so any theory of multiple universes is based on an enormous 'maybe', in fact on a gigantic step of faith. Actually, the Anthropic Principle theory could be called a 'theory of the gaps', because it attempts to explain a long series of finely tuned events by proposing the unproven existence of an infinite number of universes. It attempts to avoid the intelligent design conclusion by proposing an alternative that is an un-provable 'gap' in knowledge.

The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that ordered systems always move towards disorder (high entropy). Therefore, the further we go back towards the Big Bang, so the more ordered it becomes. We may well ask who or what ordered it? We do not know the answer because we do not know the nature of the transcendent laws that initiated and controlled the Big Bang origin of our Universe.

### **1.3. An evolutionary Universe. Page: 126**

We live in an evolutionary Universe. There are many on-going evolutionary processes, such as the development of stars through various stages, before finally flaring up and exploding as supernovae, or dying back into Brown Dwarves. Before the stars formed, the Universe contained only hydrogen and helium, with minute traces of lithium and deuterium. As these elements condensed into the first stars, all the other heavier elements were formed within the centre of these stars. When some of these exploded as supernovae, the heavier elements were dispersed through the cosmos. The next generation of stars now contained the other elements. Our earth, with all the elements needed for life, was only possible after generations of suns had been born, lived out their lives and then exploded.

Our earth once had only one super continent that then split up by a slow process of continental drift. This is another evolutionary process. Some so-called 'creationists' have suggested that the continents could have split up in a matter of days, an event said to be associated with the biblical flood. In later chapters I look in detail at some creationist claims, including an examination of a great flood. Many of the ideas proposed by creationists are without scientific basis and are, in my opinion, based on a misunderstanding of both science and the Bible.

It is unfortunate that extreme anti-evolutionary ideas are associated with the label 'creationist', because many other Christians believe in a Creator God, but not a God who has created in the manner advocated by classical creationists. The most heated debate centres on life, its origin and development from simple to complex. My overall intention in this book is to show that a scientific worldview and a religious one, based on the Judeo-Christian Bible, are in fact reconcilable. With my training as a scientist and a zoologist, I cannot escape the conclusion that the Universe is full of evolutionary processes. However, we need to look critically at the evidence and uncover some misunderstandings, even within the ranks of scientists.

### **1.4. The nature of life. Page: 130**

Our understanding of the nature of life has become increasingly complex. In 1953 Stanley Miller created simple building blocks of proteins called Amino Acids, in the laboratory. Many thought that science was about to demonstrate how

the first life was formed. However, by 1991 this same Stanley Millar had admitted that, *the problem of the origin of life has turned out to be much more difficult than I, and most other people envisioned.*

In 2000, a working draft was produced of the human genome, the genetic instructions within each of our cells that control what we look like. Humans have 24 different chromosomes within each cell, each too small for the human eye to see. These chromosomes are composed of long strands of DNA, made up of chemicals called 'base pairs'. In man, these chromosomes contain 3, 1 billion base pairs. The amount of data hidden in our genetic blueprint is equivalent to the contents of 200 telephone directories each 500 pages long. These instructions control the complexity of interactions that enable an individual to remain alive. Even the simplest one-celled life contains thousands of letters in its genetic blueprint. Previously, science considered that much of the DNA blueprint was so-called 'junk DNA', without a specific function. However, increasingly this is proving to be incorrect.

In 2007, Dr Tim Hubbard of Sanger Institute, described research suggesting that virtually all of this 'junk DNA is in fact vital to the overall function of each cell. Even more complex than DNA, is the nature of proteins in our cells. The overall conclusion is that even the 'simplest' living cells are not simple. Another mystery is how cells divide and multiply with such precise accuracy.

DNA is made up from only four basic 'letters' but proteins are made from 20 different building blocks. In humans there are roughly 40,000 genes (made up from sequences of DNA) but a typical cell makes hundreds of thousands of distinct proteins. **Clearly there is no such thing as a 'simple' cell.**

One major milestone in the history of life was the appearance of photosynthesis. This process, by which plants can convert sunlight into energy by splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen and using the hydrogen to combine with carbon dioxide to form sugars, has been described as the most complicated reaction in the biosphere. However, it appeared right at the beginning of life's history. Without it our atmosphere would not have contained the oxygen needed for higher life forms.

The fossil record reveals that increasingly more complex life forms have appeared on earth, over the past 600 million years. Although there are margins of error associated with dating methods, science has now developed several different methods and these all agree to within known margins of error. For instance, we now have over 40 radiometric dating techniques, each using a different radioactive element. Twelve different studies of the oldest rocks in Greenland, using five different techniques on one rock formation, gave the calculated age as between 3,55 and 3,74 billion years.

Amongst many vital building blocks of life, is the unique nature of water. It seems that the effects of water on living organisms transcend mere chemistry; they are intimately linked to the most basic processes of the cosmos.

### **1.5. Evolution of life and its diversification. Page: 139**

If mankind ever succeed in solving the problem of how the first life arose, it will only be the concentrated effort and mind power of many scientists over many

years of research. Some have assumed that life must have evolved in many other places within our vast Universe. As a result NASA initiated the SETI programme in 1991, to try to locate signals from other intelligent life. Great initial optimism has now faded because, in spite of the fact that many stars and galaxies are millions of years older than our own, we have not yet detected anything. The conclusion of many leading scientists is that other intelligent life must be extremely rare in the Universe. Studies of our own solar system are revealing many features that point to our earth, moon and sun having very specific and very rare combinations of features, all adding up to making our planet very special in the cosmos.

However, once life existed on earth, how did it develop into the myriad of forms we see in the fossil record and in our present stage of world history? Fascinating similarities between life forms, their chemistry and genetics, have led to the Theory of Evolution, suggesting that life has progressed gradually, through numerous intermediate stages, from one form to another.

Three main factors are thought to be involved in this process, namely: The observation that the genetic code does differ between individuals, even within one species. As a result there are many possible combinations when a sperm and ovum combine. Secondly, in addition to these variations, we do sometimes see 'apparently spontaneous' changes occurring in the genetic material, referred to as mutations. Thirdly, the environment exerts a selective influence on which of these genetic variants survive. There are examples of how one species has changed to another over time, due to different environments selecting different characteristics.

There is still much debate about exactly how speciation takes place, but most biology textbooks assume that all life forms have arisen by this process. This assumption is because, firstly, we can see evolution taking place at the species level. Secondly, all life forms can be placed in families and family trees. Thirdly, all life shares the same basic chemistry. Fourthly, higher life forms appear to show more primitive characteristics while developing in the womb or egg. We also have modern genetic studies that show how closely related species have only slight differences between their DNA codes of life. However, what does the fossil record actually reveal about this process of change?

### **1.6. What do the fossils tell us?**

**Page: 146**

We know the various ways that fossils form in the rocks. One surprising discovery is that the fossil records on every continent appear to show sudden spurts in development of more complex forms of life. For instance, the sudden appearance of invertebrates, followed by the sudden appearance of vertebrates. The most pronounced explosion of new forms took place in the Cambrian period, almost 600 million years back. Since 1987, discoveries of major fossil beds in Greenland, China, Siberia and Namibia, have shown that this period of biological innovation occurred at virtually the same instant in geological time all around the world.

This pattern of sudden appearances has led to contrasting theories of how the evolutionary process works. Those who propose slow gradual changes, referred to as 'gradualism', compete with those proposing a theory called 'punctuated equilibrium'. Small changes are referred to as microevolution and

larger changes as macroevolution. I personally choose to use the term microevolution to describe development of a species from another closely related species. My use of macroevolution is for changes involving an increase in the amount of genetic material.

The amount of genetic material in the cells of simpler life forms is much less than in higher life forms. For example, man has 1000 times more genetic material in each of his cells than has a single-celled bacterium. The amount of DNA found in the cells of living things is roughly proportional to the complexity of the organism. If there has been a constant process of slow change, then we are entitled to expect a long and detailed record of this within the fossil evidence. Thus far we have found very few apparently intermediate forms, between major advances in life complexity.

The famous evolutionist Stephen Gould (2002) notes, *The cardinal and dominant fact of the fossil record, something that professional palaeontologists learned as soon as they developed tools for an adequate stratigraphic tracing of fossils through time: the great majority of species appear with geological abruptness in the fossil record and then persist in stasis (unchanged) until their extinction. Anatomy may fluctuate through time, but the last remnants of a species usually look pretty much like the first representatives.*

Here Gould is pointing out that the fossil record does not contain clear and detailed examples of slow changes from one species to another. Some have suggested that this may be due to the fossil record being incomplete. However, studies have increasingly shown that the record is in fact remarkably complete, and this pattern of sudden appearance of new species is also clearly shown in some rocks where we have an unbroken sequence covering many millions of years. Many examples exist of sudden appearances of new species, and the more dramatic sudden appearance of much more complex species.

Gould's theory of 'punctuated evolution', explained in his book and in my expanded chapter, may give an answer to why new, closely related species, suddenly appear in the fossils. However, evolutionary biologists tend to gloss over the greatest problem facing evolutionary biology, namely, how does the amount of genetic material in an organism increase, such as from one celled organisms to multi-celled, to invertebrates, to vertebrates, to amphibians, to reptiles, to mammals and to man?

It is disappointing to see some biological textbooks making the assumption that, because gradual, step by step evolution can be seen on one level of complexity, therefore it must have taken place throughout the evolution of life. In addition to the problem of explaining sudden increases in total genetic material, and the lack of step by step fossils between major advances, there is also the problem of explaining so-called irreducible complexity. For instance, there are many examples in nature of structures and chemical processes, such as the human eye or ear, where very precise fine-tuning is required before the structure has any function. What selective pressures led to such complex organs?

The problem of 'irreducible complexity' confronts us right at the dawn of life. The simplest living cell is a very complex structure. All of the components, including the incredible DNA code of life, must all be in place simultaneously if the cell is to function. Attempts by scientists, such as Richard Dawkins (1996), to propose possible evolutionary steps that might have led towards complexities,

such as the human eye, are highly speculative and not backed up by the fossil evidence.

It is also difficult to explain all the intricacies of so-called 'instinct' within the animal kingdom, purely from random mutation and natural selection. All life forms are born with certain instinctive (unlearned) responses, enabling them to breed successfully, or migrate by the stars, or enter an escape mode when seeing the shape of a predator, and numerous other fine-tuned instinctive responses, all built into the brains of diverse creatures.

If classical Darwinian Evolutionary Theory is valid for macroevolution, then the large changes in genetic complexity would have taken much longer than for smaller micro evolutionary changes. We would therefore expect to find vastly more fossils, showing the small steps between, for instance, invertebrates and vertebrates, fishes and amphibians, reptiles and mammals, than we find between closely related species.

These detailed, step by step changes are NOT evident in the fossil record. In fact the fossil record 'cries out' to us that the classical understanding of evolution, still taught at schools and universities, does not fit the facts revealed by the fossils. Stephen Gould's concept of 'punctuated evolution' may better explain the sudden appearance of new species from other closely related ones. However, even this modification of Evolutionary Theory, does not adequately explain the appearance of greater genetic complexity.

### **1.7. The origin of mankind.**

**Page: 157**

When we come to consider mankind and their origin, it is very important to define what 'origin' we are speaking about. Is it the first creature that gave rise to apes and mankind, or the first anatomically modern mankind, or to the origin of the first humans with language, agriculture and culture? About 200,000 years back we find two dominant *Homo* types, namely *H. neanderthalensis* and *H. sapiens*. The latter are anatomically modern humans. I concentrate discussion on these two, that are now known to us from numerous skeletons, associated tools, paintings and cultural remains.

The study of human Mitochondrial DNA suggests that anatomically modern people arose from one mother who apparently lived in Africa some 200,000 years back, nicknamed 'Genetic Eve'. This study of Mitochondrial DNA (found in cell structures called Mitochondria) is only possible for females, since males do not pass this on to descendants. However, other studies, not based on Mitochondrial DNA, indicate that we also had a 'Genetic Adam', but his age seems to be between 50,000 and 70,000 years ago! Some of the assumptions made in these studies may be wrong, since the dates for our male and female common ancestors are so different. Nevertheless, the case for a Genetic Eve and a Genetic Adam is strong. Both genetic Adam and genetic Eve are thought to have lived in Africa.

These studies do not state that our common mother or father were the only people around at the time, just that all the descendants of others have died out. This suggests that our common ancestral parents had genetic characteristics that were superior. Later in this book I show that the biblical Adam and Eve are not the

same as the 'genetic' ones. They were two individuals from within modern human genetics, but situated in the Middle East.

When modern mankind suddenly appeared on earth, they spread into areas of the world where Neanderthal man already existed. In at least some areas there is evidence for limited interbreeding. However, both Neanderthals and early modern man had very similar lifestyles. They both used stone tools and were hunters and gatherers. There is no clear evidence of agriculture or buildings, little evidence of art, and there is no evidence of a developed language. Although Neanderthals had not been associated with art or ornaments throughout much of their history, some of the later sites, coinciding with appearance of anatomically modern man, do start to show these traits.

Experts in reconstructions of features from skeletal remains, freely admit that representations of these early people in museums and books are often misleading. It is likely that Neanderthals looked very much as we do, not as often depicted in books and museums (see evidence in full chapter).

From the first appearance of modern man, until about 12,000 BC, we have the Old Stone Age, mainly characterised by primitive stone tools and some cave paintings. Between 12,000 BC and 8,000 BC we have the Mesolithic Age or Middle Stone Age, characterised by more advanced stone tools. Between 8,000 BC and 2,700 BC we have the Neolithic Age, characterised by even more advanced stone tools. Somewhere within the early Neolithic Age (at least by 6000 BC) we see some clear evidence of agriculture, domestication of plants and animals, and the building of small collections of simple buildings. These developments all occurred in the Middle East.

One of the earliest collections of buildings, relating to this early agricultural period, is at Catal Hoyuk, situated in modern Turkey and dated at between 6,250 and 5,400 BC. However, there was no evidence of writing, organised religion, metal use or complex infrastructure.

Then, around 4000 BC, there was another sudden and very dramatic advance in civilisation, first seen in the Tel Brak and Ebla type cultures, followed by the Sumerian culture. This dramatically advanced civilisation did include complex language, writing, mining, metal smelting, organised religion, specialised buildings and complex social infrastructure.

From its Middle East origin, this first complex civilisation spread to the Far East, where the first Chinese Shang dynasty appeared in about 1,700 BC. Prior to this there was evidence for primitive agriculture in China, but no advanced civilisation. Complex civilisation appears to have spread by migration of people from the Middle East, first to China, and then on to the Americas. The first evidence for food production economies in America was about 250 BC, followed by the Moche and Aztec empires.

### **1.8. The origin of agriculture, language and culture. Page: 163**

If we now look in more detail at the origin of agriculture, language and culture, we find that there are many diverse theories. Clearly, one of the factors needed was a more stable and warmer climate. Ice core analysis shows that the climate started to warm up after the last Ice Age, about 10,000 years ago (8000 BC). The first evidence for agriculture was in the Middle East shortly after 6000

BC (Catal Hoyuk excavations), and this spread out over the world through the migration of people. There is evidence to show that, for agriculture to take hold, people had to come from farming stock rather than simply learn about it from neighbours.

There have been several migrations of anatomically modern humans from the Middle East. The first involved people with a simple hunter/gatherer life style. This was followed soon after 6000 BC by people who took primitive agriculture around the world. Then, after the first complex civilisation appeared in about 4000 BC, there followed another migration of 'civilised' mankind to far corners of the world. The earlier crossings between continents were probably at times when sea levels were lower. Later crossings were by boat, since knowledge of boat building dates back to the dawn of civilisation.

It is clear that genetics alone cannot explain the dramatic and sudden appearance of modern 'cultural man'. Humans have to be born into a culture in order to learn to talk. Children brought up by wild animals can never learn our basic human skills. There are many modern studies showing that the culture into which we are born influences the way we think. In the Western World, our ways of thinking have been greatly influenced by early Greek culture. Studies show that great advances in civilisation and knowledge over the past 8,000 years, have not come about through development of improved genetics. As far as we can tell, our stone-tool hunter/gatherer ancestral *Homo sapiens* had the same genes as we do and the same size brain.

The question remains, who or what produced the dramatic cultural changes, especially those about 4,000 BC, that led to the sudden appearance of complex language, organised religion, writing, mining, mineral smelting and complex city societies? Some scientists have suggested that the first 'proto-language' evolved slowly. However, at the same time these scientists trace all Indo-European languages back to only one proto-language, originating in the Middle East.

If language did evolve slowly then we would expect many different proto-languages, not just one. This is because mankind were spread over a large geographical area and each isolated population would have evolved their own sounds to describe the world around them.

Early *Homo sapiens* would have communicated by a combination of basic sounds and postures, similar to what we see in chimpanzees or other primates. However, this form of communication is very different to the complex language that appeared so suddenly around 4000 BC. For this dramatic advance, mankind must have been exposed to dramatically different environment, culture or circumstance. But, where did that new cultural environment come from?

### **1.9. The spread of modern man throughout the Earth.**

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A closer look at the spread of modern man throughout the earth, suggests a series of outward migrations from the Middle East. The earliest *Homo sapiens* spread out over the world when they were still using stone tools and following a hunter/gatherer lifestyle. Later, after the invention of agriculture in the Middle East, these agricultural people also spread out over the world and brought agricultural lifestyles to far corners of the earth. Finally, from about 3000 BC the

Sumerian civilisation, with its writing, mining, smelting and complex urban structures, also spread out to far corners of the earth. It took on its own characteristics in China and the Americas.

Each subsequent migration from the Middle East confuses the picture, but there is clear anatomical evidence, from shapes of skulls, of at least two separate invasions of America and one study of dental evidence suggests three colonisations. The last migration came out of the Sumerian civilisation about 3000 BC, leading to the Shang dynasty in China in 1700 BC and to the Maya civilisation in America after 1000 BC.

The distinctive characteristics of each civilisation can be explained by the fact that they are long distances apart. During the expansion from the Middle East, many generations passed without establishing towns or cities. Much of the inherited civilisation became lost, but not the basic abilities to communicate, build houses, smelt metal, and express thoughts in pictorial form. The spread of later civilisations was probably speeded up by domestication of horses.

## **Part 2: A SEARCH FOR REALITY**

### **2.1. Summary of scientific quotations on 'reality'.**

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Quotations from science reveal a Universe of increasing mystery, and a need to suggest more dimensions to reality than our familiar length, width, height and time. This chapter is already in summary form and so it is difficult to summarise it further. Please do read the whole of chapter 2.1. to see a fuller context for each quotation. A further brief summary is that the characteristics of the sub-atomic reality, that we call the quantum world of reality, seems to demand existence of another very real dimension of reality, namely the Timeless Dimension. This is not merely an absence of time, but is a real dimension with its own laws and characteristics.

The quantum world behaves in timeless ways. Its particles live in an eerie world of uncertainties and ghostly multiple existences. 'Entanglement' is an unnerving kind of link that can develop between two or more protons, electrons or atoms, even if they inhabit distant parts of the Universe. There is even evidence of entanglement between moments of time, meaning that future events might actually influence past events! What is disturbing to our minds is that interactions between sub-atomic 'particles', at opposite ends of the Universe, can happen instantaneously. In fact everything within the quantum world of sub-atomic particles seems to behave as if it 'knows' everything else that is happening in this Timeless Dimension.

Empty space is full of a vast 'sea' of energy, and some calculations indicate that this energy could be infinitely great. The quantum 'weirdness' is all linked to universal constants and the speed of light. Furthermore, our existence is the end product of a string of amazing cosmic 'co-incidences'. We still do not have adequate answers to fundamental questions, such as; what is mass, light, energy, gravity, and time?

An overall 'theory of everything' that ties together all the amazing discoveries of science, still eludes us. Some of the world's most brilliant minds

now suspect that we have been looking for answers in the wrong places, and only some outrageous new idea will get us further!

## **2.2. Preliminary conclusions about reality.**

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From our studies of the Universe, we can come to some preliminary conclusions about reality. One clear conclusion from scientific studies, is that our understanding of the Universe undergoes a continuous process of change. We are now looking again at ideas first proposed by the ancient Greeks. They proposed that space contained some mysterious 'ether'. Later, scientists proposed that this invisible material medium was what made it possible for light to travel through space. However, this idea was soon thrown out, but now we are back to concluding that 'empty space' is indeed full of enormous amounts of so-called 'dark energy' that could be infinitely great!

In addition, the observation that sub-atomic particles can communicate with each other instantaneously, and elementary particles can spontaneously pop out of nothingness and disappear again, leads us to conclude that we are only understanding a small part of reality. The 'particles' of the quantum world are famous for their weirdness, appearing to exist in more than one place at once. This 'non-locality' hints at a possible connection between local physics and distant matter in the Universe – a connection that could be mediated by the 'quantum ether' of 'empty space', namely dark energy. In fact, our familiar four dimensional Universe, composed of length, width, height and time, cannot be the whole picture of reality. We need a Timeless Dimension, with its own laws and characteristics, in order to explain the strangeness and apparent timelessness of the sub-atomic realities.

The Universe is also full of examples of incredible fine-tuning that all add up to our existence. The statistical chance of all these 'co-incidences' existing together in one Universe is smaller than minute. As a result of this statistical improbability, some scientists are coming up with theoretical alternatives, such as theories of multiple parallel universes. These theories all fall under the heading of the Anthropic Principle. They argue that, if an infinite or very large number of different universes are theoretically possible, then we may just happen to be in the one Universe where life could evolve. Therefore, they suggest, it could just seem to us that our Universe is designed by a Creator!

All scientists agree that our existence hints at almost supernatural fine-tuning, but this has provided some atheistic scientists with the motivation to try to find other alternatives, such as the Anthropic Principle. However, a good scientist should keep his mind open to all possibilities and, without doubt, the most likely candidate to explain the fine-tuning of the Universe, is the Intelligent Design option.

## **2.3. A Theory of Everything.**

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We need a theory that attempts to explain how scientific discoveries, spiritual realities, you and I and God, can all fit within one overall 'theory of everything'. Reconciling the apparent contradictions of our scientific discoveries, seems to demand that we accept at least one more dimension of reality, namely

the Timeless Dimension. Since all matter is made up by the interactions of the quantum world of electrons, positrons, protons, neutrons, etc, it is logical to conclude that our world of matter, that is locked into the 'arrow of time', is not only made up from the quantum world, but is actually held together by it. The Timeless Dimension is in all things, through all things, and by its energy interactions all things are held together.

I believe that acceptance of the Timeless Dimension, characterised by non-locality and an infinite energy matrix, is the only way that all the observations of physics and cosmology can be tied up into one all-embracing 'Theory of Everything'. A fundamental building block for this Theory of Everything is an understanding of 'timelessness'. This has to be a fundamental dimension of reality, not just the absence of time.

Timelessness can be visualised as a dimension in which energy is in constant 'vibration' between what we would call the past and what we would call the future. It is not so much that time does not exist. Rather that, within the Timeless Dimension, it is possible for a theoretical observer to be independent of time and to move in any direction of time instantly and to any locality in the cosmos instantaneously. The reason that 'virtual particles' appear to fleetingly pop into and out of existence within 'empty space', is because this timeless energy vibration between past and future, passes through instants of 'now'. At each instant that the vibration crosses the mid-point of the vibration, between past and future, (the 'now' point), the timeless energy is momentarily detectable in our time dimension.

Science tells us that time and matter came into existence at the Big Bang. However, according to the laws of conservation of energy, matter and energy are interchangeable. In other words, matter had to come from some form of pre-Big Bang energy. The Universe could not arise from nothing, but it could have arisen from the infinite energy that exists within the Timeless Dimension, and which reveals itself to us as the Dark Energy of 'empty' space. The Big Bang probably occurred when part of the infinite energy of the Timeless Dimension became trapped into time. In other words, when matter is formed it 'freezes' part of the Timeless Dimension energy into the NOW.

Since the Timeless Dimension is characterised by complete freedom of instantaneous interaction between what we in time would call the past, the present and the future, this trapping of one aspect of timeless energy distorts and bends the uniformity of timelessness. This distortion may create what we describe as gravity. This understanding of gravity and timelessness may explain why the Universe expansion appears to be speeding up. The interaction between timeless energy and time may also explain the origin of sub-atomic particles, and phenomena such as 'non-locality', 'entanglement' and 'superposition'. It also enables us to propose an answer to the question; what is light and electromagnetic radiation? These questions are considered in some detail in the expanded chapters of this book. Furthermore, this electromagnetic radiation is propelled though many light years and vast distances, by the vibration of the Timeless Dimension energy.

I believe an understanding of the Timeless Dimension also enables us to obtain a better concept of the nature of 'mass'. Once we accept that timeless energy exists everywhere, then it is this timeless energy that communicates

instantly with all parts of timelessness exactly what is taking place within time. Since the Timeless Dimension permeates all of the cosmos and beyond, and is not limited by space and time, it has to be infinite in magnitude. In a real sense part of infinity is still infinite. This is because that part of infinity is inextricably linked with the whole Timeless Dimension. The constant vibration of the Timeless Dimension energy, between past and future aspects of timelessness, creates all movement within the time dimension. It propels light through the vastness of space; it creates the vibrating energy that we detect in the quantum world of sub-atomic 'particles'. In addition, it ensures that each manifestation of energy within space/time is actually continually interacting with the timelessness and infinity of the Timeless Dimension.

I suggest that the energy of the Timeless Dimension empowers all movement within the time dimension. This empowerment is via the timeless energy vibration that synchronises all energy within the cosmos. Furthermore, the scientific observation, of non-locality and inter-connectedness within the quantum world of sub-atomic 'particles', suggests that each and every movement of energy within the time dimension creates a 'ripple' within the Timeless Dimension, and this event is instantaneously detected by all parts of the Timeless Dimension.

#### **2.4. Two more dimensions of reality.**

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A Theory of Everything cannot be complete without two more dimensions of reality. At some point we have to face the question of the ultimate origins of our Universe. We also have to face the problems of explaining phenomena such as consciousness, telepathy, and the influence of mind over matter. We also need to explain why the Second law of Thermodynamics does not seem to apply in evolution. We also need to explain how it was possible that the Big Bang was, according to the Second law of Thermodynamics, the most incredibly precise, ordered and fine-tuned event.

This law states that systems tend to move from order to disorder, which implies that the further we go back in the evolution of the Universe, so the more ordered it must become. It takes external energy inputs to reverse this universal law. If we go right back to the Big Bang origin, this was not a random and chaotic event; it was a very precisely ordered event. We need to ask ourselves, who or what ordered it?

Another basic law of physics states that matter (which is a form of energy) cannot be created or destroyed, it can only change to another form of energy. Therefore, why should the Big Bang be an exception? The Universe could not have been created out of nothing. Logically, the energy locked into our Universe had to come, via the Big Bang, from some sort of pre-Big Bang energy.

An acceptance of the Timeless Dimension, with all its probable sub-dimensions, has the potential for far greater diversity of reality than we can experience within the space/time dimensions. This is because any 'consciousness' that may exist within this dimension is totally freed from the constraints of time and locality.

The human mind and consciousness still mystifies scientists. Entry into the Timeless Dimension is dependent on the entrant being in an energy form without locality. All forms of matter are excluded, because matter is localised time-

trapped energy. It is possible that 'consciousness', which is an entity without mass, can escape into the Timeless dimension. This may explain telepathy and other mind/matter interactions. It seems quite possible that our human minds and our consciousness are actually the result of the interaction between a time-based instrument (the brain) and the timeless, non-local, super-symmetry of the quantum dimension, namely the Timeless Dimension of reality.

Some scientists remain sceptical about telepathy and ESP (extra sensory perception), and mind over matter experiments. However, many of these studies are scientifically valid and do show the reality of these phenomena. Contact between human minds and God can also be considered as telepathic. Scientifically controlled experiments have shown that the phenomenon of 'entanglement', existing in the quantum world of sub-atomic particles, also applies to time. Entanglement between moments of time is so bizarre that it could expose a hole in the very fabric of quantum theory.

Research is suggesting that ESP, telepathy and the influence of mind over matter are realities. Extra sensory perception is probably caused by the human mind interacting with the non-locality of the timeless energy field of the Timeless Dimension. Because of this, the ESP effects are independent of distance and independent of time. Mind over matter experiments had measurable and statistically significant effects over vast distances, even when the subjects exerted their minds several days after, or several days before the experiment took place!

If 'thought' and 'consciousness' are a form of 'associated' energy that has no mass, then I suggest they are able to enter the Timeless Dimension, characterised by non-locality and instant communication between all parts of that dimension. If the activity of the human mind is able to contact the Timeless Dimension, then telepathic thought transfer between minds could occur instantaneously, independent of distance and independent of time.

If thought transfer can occur between human minds via the Timeless Dimension, then it will be a small step to suggest that there is thought, mind, and consciousness within the Timeless Dimension. Just as our world has levels of energy complexity, and has culminated in the amazing energy manifestation called life, in similar manner the Timeless Dimension includes the equivalent degrees of complexity, including a dimension of 'timeless consciousness' and/or a dimension of 'spirit'. It seems that, within the Timeless Dimension no information is ever lost. We just do not know how to access this information. However, if we could discover the key to opening up access to the 'quantum library', we might find amazing things, such as the quantum book of our lives!

## **2.5. The God dimension.**

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We now consider in greater detail the dimension of reality that we call God. He is the supreme intelligence and he operates within the Timeless Dimension, but is independent of this dimension. He, like the cosmic laws that gave rise to the Big Bang, is transcendent. This means he exists before the Universe was created and will continue to exist if the Universe ends. Once we admit to the possibility, or I would say the certainty, that intelligence exists within the Timeless Dimension, this opens us up to accepting the reality of 'spirit beings', such as angels and demons. This realm of spirit could be considered the 6<sup>th</sup> Dimension of reality.

How could the mind of God cause the Big Bang? The key would seem to be the power of mind over matter. How about God, with his awesomely great mind, causing the Big Bang event by 'thinking into' the infinite energy of the Timeless Dimension and wilfully imposing a 'locality', an instant of 'now'?

Much has been said about Chaos Theory. The apparently chaotic movements in the quantum world contrast with much more predictable events in the macroscopic world (the world we can see). Since the macroscopic is built upon the quantum world, there have to be mechanisms for creating order out of chaos. In the quantum world we know that the final state depends on very slight inputs, or 'initial conditions'. For instance, it has been suggested that a hurricane in America could have been started by a butterfly wing beat in Japan!

To my mind chaos in the quantum world is the ideal medium for the influence of 'mind' over matter. Just a very slight nudge can create direction towards a desired outcome. In this way God can 'think' into quantum chaos the initial conditions that lead to pre-calculated outcomes. If a locality, or an instant of 'now', is introduced to the Timeless Dimension, by means of the concentrated mind power of the Creator, then this could cause an instantaneous concentration of timeless energy into one locality. In a sense the past, present and future aspects, of a measured portion of timeless energy, would be instantly concentrated into an enormous burst of energy, a Big Bang burst of NOW.

Some cosmologists suggest that there was just a 'random quantum fluctuation' that initiated the Big Bang. I suggest that such an hypothesis is no more provable, and is far less probable, than the God alternative. For those of us who have had other inputs in life that convince us that there is a 'spirit' dimension to reality, we will naturally favour this alternative to the 'chance quantum fluctuation' hypothesis. After all, it is far more logical to create something from pre-existing something, than it is to create something from nothing.

In the debate between an atheist and a Christian pastor, the atheist told the chairman, *"What I cannot accept about people like the pastor, is that they expect me to believe that some theoretical god made everything from nothing"*. The pastor replied, *"I admit it takes a step of faith to believe that God made everything from apparently nothing. However, my atheist friend wants me to believe that nothing made everything from nothing. To my mind that takes even greater faith."*

In essence, I suggest that God caused the Big Bang by concentrating the power of his mind, to channel a pre-calculated portion of the infinitely great timeless energy matrix (dark energy), into an instant of 'now'. Thereafter, he controls detailed evolution of the Universe, mainly through the laws of physics that are an inescapable part of the Universe he initiated, and by exerting the power of his Mind to impose initial conditions onto the chaos of the quantum world. In both cases we propose the continuing and intimate influence of his super-mind over matter. Once we accept this scenario, we are no longer surprised at the many 'co-incidences' that were vitally important during the evolution of the Universe.

God is the great mathematician, and the whole of reality is based within a mathematical framework. Some of that mathematics has no clear function, other than to emphasise that God is a mathematician. For instance, have you ever wondered why the moon and the sun look to us to be exactly the same size, even though the sun is vastly larger? The distance, size and orbital paths of the sun,

moon and earth result in total eclipses of the sun and moon. The cycle of eclipses is so constant that most ancient cultures were able to predict them.

There is also the observation that the whole of quantum physics may be based on an arrangement of prime numbers. If we include '0' as a prime number, because it represents 'infinitely small' and therefore cannot be divided. In addition, if we exclude the numbers 1, 2, and 3 from our list of prime numbers, then, according to Plitcha (1998) all the other prime numbers can be plotted on a series of expanding circles. We then find that all of the prime numbers radiate outwards to infinity in the form of a cross. This has been called the 'prime number cross'. Plitcha gives his reasons why we need to exclude the numbers 1, 2, and 3 from the list.

The importance of 'mind', in relation to the planning and implementation of the Universe, throws new light on words written long ago. We know that words are the expression of thoughts, and thoughts are the creation of mind. We read, *In the beginning was the 'word' and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made.* (Bible book of John 1:1-3)

## **2.6. Powerhouse of the Cosmos**

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I suggest it is the Timeless Dimension energy that is the powerhouse of the Universe. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> Dimension that permeates throughout the time-locked universe. The 6<sup>th</sup> Dimension of Spirit and the 7<sup>th</sup> Dimension that is God, all operate through the Timeless Dimension. This dimension is involved in all things, is through all things and by means of its non-localised vibration, all of time-bound energy (matter) is sustained and held together. The Timeless Dimension (in biblical terminology 'eternity'), propels time towards timelessness, it creates the 'arrow of time' and the 'arrow of gravity'. It propels electromagnetic radiation throughout millions of light years of travel through space. It interacts with time to produce quanta of energy.

At the Big Bang origin, positive, negative and charge-less pockets of energy were formed, that are the building blocks of the time-locked Universe. This dimension interacts with time-locked energy to create mass, electricity and gravity. If we extrapolate backwards from the present-day Universe to the Big Bang singularity, we discover a state of apparently infinite density and apparently infinite energy. It appears to be infinite density and infinite energy because, at the exact moment of the Big Bang, we encounter the interface between a purely timeless energy matrix that is infinite and the creation of a localised limitation of this timeless energy into a moment of 'now'. That limitation of energy into 'now', concentrated part of infinity into time-locked matter. At the Big Bang time and timeless infinity meet.

Most cosmologists believe that, during the first fraction of a second after the Big Bang, the Universe expanded from sub-atomic size to astronomical size, at a speed vastly faster than the speed of light! This means that the 'inflation phase' took place within the Timeless Dimension. Matter cannot be accelerated faster than the speed of light. Clearly, the Big Bang was initiated and controlled by transcendent laws. In other words, it involved laws that are independent of the Universe and independent of time.

There is no true 'chaos' in the cosmos. What appears to be chaos, to an observer in the time dimension of human experience, is in fact our partial view of total reality. Within the Timeless Dimension all outcomes are known in advance throughout the Universe. Therefore, chaos and chaos theory are only relevant as a way of describing our limited view of total reality.

Cosmology thrives on amazing proposals, such as 'cosmic super strings' and 'wormholes'. I suggest that these scientific theories all point in the same direction. They are all struggling to explain a Universe that is very mysterious and 'mind boggling' to the human intellect. The proposers of these theories are all trying to understand the relationship between time and timelessness. I believe all the amazing scientific discoveries point to the reality of the Timeless Dimension and to the reality of God.

There is plenty of room within cosmology and physics for the existence of a very supreme and awesome being. *In the beginning God made (out of apparently nothing) the heavens and the Earth* (Bible: Genesis 1:1). I am convinced that an understanding of the seven dimensions of reality, holds the key to a comprehensive 'Theory of Everything', that ties up and inter-relates all the observed realities of the Universe. We live in a seven dimension cosmos, with dimensions of length, breadth, height, time, timelessness, spirit, and God. If we leave out any of these realities from our overall theory, we will inevitably fail to grasp how the whole of reality is interrelated and forms part of one awesome whole.

## **2.7. The omnipresent Mind.**

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Some of the characteristics of God can be deduced from our studies of the Universe. His existence within the Timeless Dimension must mean he is aware of every detail in the Universe. In order to be present everywhere he must exist in the eternal 'now'. That 'now' experience is nevertheless free to move instantaneously to any point in time, and to any place in the Universe. This is because he operates within the non-locality of the Timeless Dimension. If he is independent of time and locality he can be in control of every part of the cosmos simultaneously. He has to be omnipresent, omniscient, have access to all power and be eternally existent. He is the 'I am that I am', the ever present 'I Am' revealed to Moses.

## **2.8. Summary: Design or chance?**

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If we try to summarise the evidence for chance or design in the Universe, we find ourselves facing just two major alternatives. Either the Universe has been specifically designed by the Creator, or there are an infinite number of possible universes. In the latter case we just happen to be in the one in a billion billion chance Universe, that is ideally suited for intelligent life. Because we just happen to be in this Universe it appears to us to be the result of design, when in fact it is the outcome of blind chance.

Scientists call this viewpoint the Anthropic Principle. However, the Anthropic Principle makes the un-provable assumption that there are in fact other possible universes, let alone billions of possibilities. This is an assumption because nobody knows what existed before the Big Bang.

In real life, we never get something from nothing and, according to the Second law of Thermodynamics, the Big Bang was an incredibly organised and precise event. Many amazing co-incidences are listed in my full chapter, all adding up to statistical odds against chance that are astronomically great. To emphasise the minuteness of the possibility of chance, for explaining all this, consider the following illustration by Dr. Louw Alberts (Former professor of Physics): If our earth was made up of sand grains, there would be  $10^{31}$  such sand grains. Now place  $10^{24}$  other such earths (10, followed by 24 noughts), all made up of sand grains, onto an imaginary two-pan scale, and balance it exactly. If you now remove only one sand grain from the pile of earths, this will give you the deviation similar in scale to that needed to disrupt the process from the Big Bang to our present Universe.

Furthermore, this question of chance vs. Intelligent Design, is more than an intellectual exercise, it has profound effects on the attitudes of individuals and societies. The past 100 years have shown many mass murder situations, motivated by individuals and movements that ruled out the God option.

Some of the amazing 'co-incidences' are as follows:

1. The essential features of the Universe are encoded in a handful of fundamental numbers. If any of these were even minutely different from what they are, the Universe would be unrecognisable.
2. If the strong nuclear force were just a few percent stronger, the sun would have burnt up all its hydrogen fuel in less than a second.
3. Other fundamentals that need to be exactly as they are include the speed of light, the strength of gravity, and the charge on an electron.
4. Gravity behaves completely differently to other known forces. It acts on everything, including light, in an indiscriminate way. It is 30 times weaker than other forces. This is a vital fact that keeps your chair from falling through the floor, because the electrical bonds that hold together a layer of wood are stronger than the gravitational pull of an entire planet.
5. The cosmological constant has to be exactly the magnitude it is otherwise it would have hindered the formation of galaxies and stars.
6. If we extrapolate back in time, to when the Universe was the size of a grapefruit and matter was 100 orders of magnitude denser, at this stage the cosmological constant would have had the same value as now. In other words, for every  $10^{100}$  parts matter, physical processes would have created one part of vacuum energy. This is a degree of exactitude that seems ludicrous to expect from the real world.
7. Stellar nucleosynthesis, the process within stars by which the heavier elements essential for life are manufactured, is only possible because of very specific quantum properties of carbon nuclei.
8. Our earth is just the right distance from our sun to allow water to exist in liquid form, and this is vital for life to exist.

9. Water has peculiar properties, unlike other similar substances. It seems to break basic rules of chemistry, such as expanding when freezing. If this were not so then the oceans would freeze from the bottom upwards. Since life first appeared in the seas this would have made it impossible. Water is a vital part of all life.
10. Our sun is one of very few suns that have a relatively stable heat production, essential for life.
11. Another unusual characteristic of our sun is its orbit around the centre of the galaxy. This prevents it plunging into the inner galaxy where life-threatening supernovae are more common.
12. Our planet is the only one in our solar system that has plate tectonics, resulting in the movement of continents and the upwelling and sinking of molten rocks below the continents. This process is essential for life as we know it.
13. The search for life elsewhere in our Universe is increasingly showing that our earth may be uniquely suited for life. The size and situation of the moon is also vital, our sun is a rare class of suns with relatively stable orbit through a part of the galaxy with less chance of collision with comets. Our cousin planet Jupiter appears to shield the earth from most asteroid strikes. If there are other planets out there, suitable for life, they must be very rare.
14. Our planet is the only one in our Solar System with a moon of an appreciable size to the planet it orbits. This keeps our tilt stable and maintains a relatively stable climate. Rare moons such as ours may be necessary for the emergence of life.
15. Even our earth's position in our galaxy is important. If we were closer to the galactic centre animal life would be at much greater risk from mass extinctions. But if we were further away there wouldn't be enough of the heavy elements needed to build rocky planets, and to fuel the radioactivity that keeps plate tectonics rolling. This plate tectonics is also essential for life on our planet.
16. The origin of the complex DNA code of life, which is acknowledged to be the best of more than a billion possible codes. Those who have studied this amazing blueprint for life admit that it is extremely unlikely that such an efficient code arose by chance.
17. The appearance of photosynthesis right at the start of life on earth, was essential for all future life. This created the oxygen in our atmosphere. However, this process has been described as the most complicated reaction in the biosphere. So we are faced with the reality that the most complex reaction known to life appeared at the very dawn of life!
18. The history of life, whereby amazing complexities, such as humans, came about in spite of several episodes of mass extinction of life by comet strikes on earth. The statistical chance of this is, in itself, highly remote.
19. The appearance of many biological structures, such as the human eye and a myriad of complex chemical systems within living organisms, that do not fulfil their complex functions until almost

fully formed. Even the origin of the first simple living cell, presents us with enormous questions. A simple cell is composed of many parts, all of which have to be present simultaneously for a cell to function. The DNA code of life is just one of these complex components. If these arose via mutations and natural selection alone, this implies a whole series of amazingly unlikely and statistically impossible co-incidences. Theoretical evolutionary stages towards complexities, such as the human eye, are not backed up by the fossil record.

20. The overall statistical chance of all the vital ingredients falling into place by chance, is incredibly small. It has been calculated as 1 part in  $10^{55}$ . That is 10 followed by 55 noughts! In the real life situations that we face around us, we would normally conclude that such statistical odds say 'impossible'.

## **2.9. Summary: Age of Universe and Earth**

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Some of the evidence can be summarised as follows:

1. There is strong evidence that our Universe is expanding and, judging from its present size, this implies billions of years of Earth time since the Big Bang origin.
2. Our powerful telescopes, with known magnification power, enable us to gain some insight into the vastness of the Universe and the average distance between the millions of galaxies, each composed of millions of stars.
3. The vastness of the Universe is also shown by comparing the intensity of light reaching us from distant galaxies. The doubling of distance reduces brightness by a factor of four.
4. Discovery that the red shift, in light coming from distant galaxies, is proportional to their distance. This led to calculations showing that the approximate distance to some distant galaxies is about 12 billion light-years.
5. Development of radio telescopes has now enabled direct measurement of the distance to one galaxy that is 23.5 million light years away. This independent measurement is now used as a yard-stick to refine other previous estimates for distant galaxies.
6. Distances to objects within 300 light years can be achieved by simple geometry.
7. Observations of distant galaxies show that the most distant ones are receding from us at rates directly proportional to their distance. This seems to confirm earlier evidence that the Universe is expanding.
8. The total evidence from astronomy, all points to a Universe that is very large and very old. It is at least 12 billion light years across. Therefore, the light we see has been travelling towards us for millions and billions of earth years. Therefore the Universe is at least that old.
9. Even if future research should come to the most unlikely conclusion that the Big Bang never took place, we will still be faced with a Universe that is billions of light years across and is therefore billions of years old.

10. Our planet Earth is not as old as the Universe. The heavy elements needed for life were all manufactured within stars that later exploded as supernovae. This dust then accumulated into planets such as ours. We are the end result of a series of suns being born, living out their long lives, and then exploding as supernovae.
11. We study the age of Earth in various ways. These include various radiometric dating techniques, the speed of continental drift, the geology of rock formation and erosion, and the evidence from ice cores drilled through Antarctic ice.
12. Dating techniques are based on the known rate of decay of radioactive minerals. The time taken for half the atoms to decay is the half-life. Twelve different studies of the oldest rocks in Greenland, using five different techniques on one rock formation, gave the calculated age as between 3.55 and 3.74 billion years.
13. Geological studies reveal that processes of rock formation, erosion of mountains and mountain upliftment, all point to long periods of time, not just a few thousand years.
14. Another dating method called C14 is reliable only to 40,000 years ago. Within accepted margins of error this method has given many reliable dates for objects of independently known age. One biblical example is the tunnel dug by King Hezekiah. The biblical date is between 715 and 686 BC and the carbon dating of plants in the original plaster of the tunnel, gives a date of around 700 BC.
15. Numerous archaeological remains have now been dated, and these include human bones of individuals who lived in Europe at least 30,000 years ago. In other words, these anatomically modern humans lived long before the biblical date for Adam (4157 BC). The existence of such people is also supported by biblical references, including the origin of Cain's wife, the people he feared would kill him when he fled from the Garden of Eden, the people he was building a city for, and the descriptions of 'sons of God', 'daughters of men' and the 'Nephilim'.
16. Another commentary on the date of the earth is from a study of continental drift. Originally there was one super-continent and this slowly broke up into our present pattern. This process continues today. Measurements of its speed, and distances moved, show that Africa and South America started to split apart about 160 million years back. We now know the geological forces causing this movement. Although it is possible that the speed of movement may have varied a bit in the past, this variation is within narrow margins of possibility.
17. One of the first continents to break away was Australia. Its unique types of animals show that this took place before placental mammals were on the earth. In other continents, we find fossils of Australian type animals, but all these were brought to extinction by the later arrival of placental mammals. In other words, the distribution of live animals and fossils, around the world, also bears witness to this process of slow continental drift.
18. Our planet originally had an atmosphere without significant levels of oxygen. We now know that nearly all the oxygen was created by photosynthesis within plants. However, in order to raise the oxygen level to

- that needed by higher life forms, this would have taken several million years.
19. Within the past 15 years, drilling has been undertaken in the Antarctic, down through the ice that has accumulated year by year for thousands of years. We now have a continuous ice core dating back about 800,000 years. This age is shown by subtle changes in the ice, caused by snowfall during annual winter and summer conditions in the Antarctic.
  20. Also within the Antarctic, we have found fossil beds containing animals that lived in temperate climates, such as cold blooded amphibians. Clearly, these rocks are below the 800,000 years of accumulated snowfall. In other words, these fossilised animals lived and died more than 800,000 years ago.

This sort of accumulation of evidence convinces most people that our Earth is at least millions of years old. In fact it must be a lot older than this.

### **2.10. Fundamentalism, truth and logic.**

**Page: 232**

The world contains some major clashes in views, and truth and logic are at times sacrificed on the altar of fundamentalism. Modern day fundamentalists are people who reject alternative interpretations of reality by appealing to some higher authority, whether real or assumed. They interpret most things in terms of 'sacred' writing or an interpretation of that 'sacred' writing, or in terms of a 'basic assumption' that overrules all else. We find fundamentalists within Moslem, Christian and scientific world views.

For instance, some Moslems only accept one narrow interpretation of the Qu'ran, handed down to them by certain imams. Such people have rigid interpretations of creation and reject all ideas of an evolutionary Universe and the scientific evidence for the great age of the earth. They also have dogmatic attitudes towards non-Moslems and Jews and cannot accept the right of Jews to a homeland in Israel.

Within the Christian faith we find those who have one dogmatic and narrow interpretation of the Bible, and who fail to integrate new discoveries into their fundamentalist world view. These conservative fundamentalists reject evolution and the great age of the earth. On the other extreme we have liberal fundamentalists who place human reason above all else. Furthermore, many of these 'liberals' have made dogmatic assumptions and anything that does not fit into these assumptions is rejected.

Within the scientific community we find a significant and vocal group of practicing scientists who speak and write in a way that clearly reveals their fundamentalist attitude towards truth. They rule out all truth that cannot be subjected to the scientific method, or to scientific examination. These scientists sometimes go further and make it clear that, when investigating origins and processes within the Universe, one basic assumption must be made, namely that there is no God. The God option is not even considered and anyone who suggests that Intelligent Design could be a factor in the totality of reality is scoffed at and labelled as, 'falling back on intellectually lazy and scientifically invalid beliefs'.

The holding of scientifically un-provable beliefs is not in itself a matter for concern and it most definitely will not lead humanity into another 'dark age'. However, if a person or group of people go further, rejecting the laws of logic and deny facts discovered by science, then there is a real danger of such individuals descending into the 'darkness' of a closed mind.

Early Islam went through an historical period of enlightenment and discovery, but today Moslem societies generate very little new knowledge. Scholarly debate and criticism flourished in the old Muslim world and it was possible to publish many things that today would result in an appointment with the censor or worse. Christianity had to break free from the shackles of a Middle Ages dogmatic religion, before the Renaissance and Reformation could bring a new explosion in knowledge.

### **2.11. My personal journey of discovery.**

**Page: 237**

This chapter describes my personal journey of discovery, leading from serious intellectual doubts about God whilst at university studying zoology, via a series of real life experiences during war in Rhodesia, to other real life experiences, all culminating in a renewed conviction of the reality of God. Please read the chapter for details. Generally the 'finger of God' was shown through split second timing of events. Statistically, it is impossible to explain all of the events in terms of blind chance.

These experiences included three times that I went through ambushes during the war and once I just missed, by less than 10 minutes, a fire-fight with our own side. In each situation unexpected split-second timing of events led to escaping death. Amongst other experiences there were close encounters with lions and missing an appointment with a criminal gang, whom I did not realise were extremely dangerous. Unknown to me the police were on their trail and arrested them the evening before I was due to meet them at a lonely venue.

The chapter details a number of other cases, all leading me to the realisation that God can supernaturally intervene in real life situations, even in the life of one individual.

## **Part 3: A NEW LOOK AT THE BIBLE**

### **3.1. The Bible as history.**

**Page: 251**

The Bible is full of verifiable history. An honest study of the facts will enable a reversal of theological trends of the past century, where doubt was placed on the historical truth detailed in the Bible. We will discover that the events described in the first books of the Bible are indeed real events. Once this is established, it follows that the Bible should not be viewed as a book of myths and moral illustrations. It is a book with many verifiable facts, firmly based on real history and real places.

A Christian can confidently call himself or herself a fundamentalist, in the sense that their faith and doctrines are based on the fundamentals of the Bible and these fundamentals are based on verifiable facts of history. This chapter, and

following chapters, details some of these facts. The approach is to outline key events described in the Bible, together with the biblical dates that these events were said to have happened. These are then compared with archaeological findings and other studies such as ice core analysis.

Modern dating techniques are investigated, to show their reliability and the accepted margins of error. For objects less than 40,000 years old the margin of error can be as much as 250 years. Also, various assumptions are made, such as the relative proportions of C14 and C12 in the atmosphere when the item was made. Nevertheless, in spite of some limitations, these dating techniques are valuable tools for the study of ancient history.

Key events in the Bible are listed, together with methods used to derive these dates. On this basis Adam dates to about 4157 BC, the birth of Noah to 3056 BC, the Great flood to 2556 BC, the birth of Abraham to 2166 BC, the Israelites entry to Egypt as 1876 BC and the exodus from Egypt as 1446 BC.

It is of interest that the Jewish year is also based on the biblical references to genealogies and events, right back to Adam. However, they derive a date for Adam as 3760 BC. From reasoning given in my full chapter I believe the date of Adam is more likely to be 4157 BC.

Although the Bible is based on real events, there remains a legitimate need to re-interpret the meaning of some passages in the light of modern discoveries. For instance, although there was a real flood, we need to realise that this was not a world-wide flood. Although there was a real Adam, he was not the first man.

### **3.1.1. Who was Adam?**

**Page: 256**

At the end of the last ice age, about 10,000 years ago (8000 BC), mankind experienced a rapid change in lifestyle. The first evidence for agriculture and simple collections of buildings dates to between 5,500 and 6,000 BC. Then a further dramatic advance occurred about 4,000 BC in the Middle East, with the first true civilisations being revealed by excavations at Tel Brak and Ebla, followed by the Sumerian civilisation.

The oldest true city, so far excavated, is Tel Brak in modern Syria. This dates to about 4,000 BC. The first biblical reference to a city was where Adam's son Cain, who had killed his brother Abel, fled to the land of Nod and, *Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enosh*. From Bible passages, we can calculate the birth of Cain's father, Adam, to about 4157 BC. This puts Cain's city well in line with archaeological evidence.

Adam, at 4157 BC, was in the Neolithic Age, within the period where archaeology shows that early cities first appeared. The Bible also links Adam to agriculture, *Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it*. Clearly, Adam, with his agriculture and connection with a city, is firmly in harmony with a realistic historical context.

However, Adam was not the first man, so what was his relationship to pre-Adamic *Homo sapiens*? This is discussed further in chapters, *Reconciling Genesis with science* and *'The Garden of Eden*. However, it is noteworthy that he would have lived at the time when linguistic studies suggest the first proto-language appeared in the Middle East.

The Garden of Eden, where God placed Adam, is described as being situated at the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Botanical studies on the origin of domesticated food crops also point to this same geographical area. In other words, all these dramatic advances in human civilisation occurred in the same locality and at the same time as the biblical date for Adam, and in the same locality!

### **3.1.2. A great flood.**

**Page: 258**

The Bible places the great flood of Noah's time at about 2456 BC. There are references to a great flood in Sumerian accounts and in legends of many diverse peoples. The Sumerian account is on clay tablets, dated at 2,000 to 2100 BC and, although highly embellished, this does bear resemblances to the biblical account. It seems to place the great flood a little before the rule of King Gilgamesh, and his rule is believed to have been very close to the biblical date.

Regarding the animals in the biblical Ark, archaeological discoveries show that zoos and decorative gardens existed right back to the dawn of civilisation. Noah probably collected his own private zoo. The earliest clay tablet so far found with cuneiform writing dates to between 3100 and 2900 BC. Clearly, Noah could have recorded the flood account himself.

We now have evidence for pre-flood cities, including ruins below the Black Sea. The sudden end of the city of Nabada also coincides with this biblical time for the flood. Clearly zoos, cuneiform writing, and evidence for a great flood in parts of the Middle East, all relate to a period of time that is within the same general period as the biblical dates for Noah and the flood. This flood account, and the impossibility of it covering all the world, and the impossibility of the ark containing all the world's animals, is covered in greater detail in the chapter, *The biblical flood*.

### **3.1.3. The great length of recorded life spans.**

**Page: 260**

If we look at recorded life spans in the biblical book of Genesis, we find that these remain very long until the flood. After that they drop rapidly, but are still measured in hundreds of years. However, by the time of King David the average life had decreased to 60 or 70 years.

This pattern of decline in longevity suggests several contributing factors. Firstly, the last Ice Age was very harsh and this would have acted as a powerful selective pressure to remove from the human genome any but the most robust individuals. Secondly, during the Ice Age, the prevalence of sickness was greatly reduced due to the cold climate. As the earth warmed in about 10,000 BC, viruses, bacteria and parasites steadily increased in number. Once true cities were built, this formed an ideal combination for an increased prevalence of human sicknesses and the accumulation of transcription faults in the human DNA pool. Cities also encouraged the adoption of behaviour harmful to health. The most significant post-Ice Age factor could have been further dramatic changes in climate. This scenario, of rapid climatic change, is suggested by the Genesis account, where the rainbow was seen for the first time only after the flood events associated with Noah.

We can speculate on one other possible contributing factor. The biblical description of the formation of Eve, from a part of Adam, raises the possibility that Adam had also been 'genetically engineered' from genetics of surrounding humanity. In this case it is possible that the genetics of the Adamic family line was significantly altered by God, resulting in longer life spans. This could be another reason why we are told that God made Eve from Adam's genes, rather than simply taking her from the surrounding humanity. This is further emphasised by the Genesis statement that, after Adam had named the animals, *but for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord...*

We then read in Genesis about interbreeding between the Adamic family line (sons of God) and the other humans (daughters of men), this produced evidence of 'hybrid vigour', shown by the exceptionally large size of the resulting progeny. This dilution of the Adamic genetics with pre-Adamic genetics, could also have contributed to a steady decline in life spans. This is if we make the assumption that life spans in pre Adamic humanity were shorter than in the Adamic line.

The pattern of progressive shortening of life spans, as recorded in the Genesis accounts, is a further strong case for biblical historicity. Those writers, who suggest that biblical accounts were derived from Sumerian myths, are not in line with available facts. The evidence points to Moses, who was trained in all the learning of Egypt and with access to the libraries of Egypt, as having used much earlier written accounts, probably written by Adam, Noah and others.

This is also suggested by Moses' use of Babylonian words in the first eleven chapters and Egyptian words in the last fourteen chapters. Also reference to towns which had either ceased to exist, or whose original names were already so ancient in the time of Moses, that he had to insert the new names so that they could be identified by the Hebrews living in his day.

It is most unlikely that Moses relied on oral traditions, since the details of genealogies and length of lives suggest reference to written accounts. In fact, many of the chapters in Genesis start with the words, *This is the account of*, and in Genesis 5, it states *This is the **written** account of Adam's line*.

#### **3.1.4. The dates of Abraham.**

**Page: 263**

The Bible places Abraham's birth at 2166 BC in the city of Ur of the Chaldeans. About 100 years later he encountered the 'children of Heth', from whom came the Hittites. The ancient city of Ur is modern Tell-el Muqayyar. Excavations have revealed thousands of clay tablets that describe the life and times, including details of business deals and politics. The Chaldeans were semi-nomadic, which fits the description of Abraham, with his tents and flocks.

His birth was near the height of the 3<sup>rd</sup> dynasty of Ur. When Abraham encountered the ancestors of the Hittites, the Genesis account suggests they were an insignificant people compared to Abraham, whom they described as a great prince. This is historically correct, since archaeology has shown that the 'children of Heth' only became the powerful Hittite nation around 1720 BC, some 350 years after Abraham. The biblical account also mentions towns that, until recently, were thought to be purely fictitious, such as Ebla.

Clay tablets, excavated in Ebla, have revealed that Sodom, Gomorrah, Adamah, Zeboiim and Zoar were real cities. Ebla reached its peak of fame about 2300 BC, and was destroyed in about 2250 BC, a mere 100 years before the birth of Abraham. One tablet recorded the creation in a sober manner, revealing monotheistic beliefs. This is in contrast to later Sumerian accounts that were polytheistic. The Ebla account suggests that monotheism preceded polytheism, and this account is much closer to the biblical account than later Sumerian polytheistic myths.

Ebla reveals that cuneiform text in the Semitic language was well established before Abraham's time. A great library of cuneiform texts was found at Ebla. This gives further support to the suggestion that, when Moses wrote most of the first books of the Bible, he could have had access to similar tablets written by Noah and even by Adam, copies of which could have been located within the libraries of ancient Egypt. So far, archaeological evidence does not contradict any information in the first four Bible books.

### **3.1.5. Israelites go to Egypt.**

**Page: 264**

The Bible says that the small family of Israelites moved to Egypt in 1876 BC, because a famine was severe 'in all the world'. Meanwhile Joseph, a son of Jacob (Israel), previously sold into slavery by his brothers, had risen to be second in control of Egypt. This was because he interpreted Pharaoh's dream and warned him of seven years of plenty followed by seven years of failed crops.

Analysis of ice cores, drilled through glaciers on Mount Kilimanjaro, reveal a catastrophic drought that started in 1997 BC and lasted about 300 years. These authors, and other research, link this to a much more widespread drought that led to creation of the Sahara desert at this time. By 1876 BC the drought had already lasted 124 years, but this did not affect Egypt as much, because its agriculture relies on the Nile water. Nevertheless, according to the biblical account, Egypt did suffer seven years of crop failures during this period.

Clearly, the reason given in the Bible for the Israelites move to Egypt fits well with the scientific evidence for this prolonged dry period. The Bible also mentions a change of Egyptian dynasties, about 300 years after the Israelites moved to Egypt. Archaeology confirms this change when Ahmose, son of Kamose, finally expelled the Hyskos rulers and ushered in the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty. The Bible reads, *A new king, who did not know Joseph, came to power in Egypt.*

### **3.1.6. Israelite Exodus date from Egypt.**

**Page: 266**

Archaeology reveals that the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty started about 1570 BC, and then the Israelites became slaves to the Egyptians for about 124 years. The Bible says they finally left Egypt, after a series of plagues and signs had forced a reluctant Pharaoh to let them go, some 430 years after their initial move to Egypt. The biblical date of the exodus is around 1446 BC.

The most likely Pharaoh at this time was Thutmose III, and paintings from the tomb of his Visier Rekmire, depict Semites working as slave labourers on building projects. Other support for this date comes from the Amarna letters that contain correspondence from kings in Canaan, who ask the help of Pharaoh

against the Habiru (Hebrews). This corresponds with the biblical dates for the Israelites conquest of Canaan.

Scholars have become confused by references in the Bible to the cities of Rameses and Pithom, associated with a later Pharaoh Rameses II. Some scholars consider this is an example of later editing of the biblical account, so as to inform readers of current names of ancient Egyptian cities. There is also strong evidence for the biblical date of the exodus, coming from studies of volcanic ash deposits in the Nile delta. These link the 'darkness that could be felt', with volcanic eruptions in the northern Mediterranean.

Various archaeological evidence is listed in this chapter, suggesting that the most probable Pharaoh at the time of the exodus was Thutmose III. Some Egyptian scholars believe he reigned from 1503 to 1450 BC. It is interesting that the biblical account suggests he was drowned in the Sea of Reeds in 1446 BC. Furthermore, his eldest son was killed by the 'angel of death' that formed the final plague. Thutmose III was followed by the reign of Queen Hatshepsut, who reigned during the minority of her son Amenhotep II. Was he only a minor at the time of his father's death because the eldest son had been killed by the 'angel of death'?

It is interesting that the biblical Moses had a name that was part of the Pharaoh's name Thut-moses. Moses was probably born during the reign of Thutmose I, and we read that he was reared as 'son of Pharaoh's daughter'. Other archaeological evidence reveals brick making at this time, used for building 'store cities', as mentioned in the Bible.

In Canaan, research by Kenyon shows that the cities of Jericho and Ai were both deserted from the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century until the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC. This is remarkable confirmation of the biblical dates for the destruction and burning of these two cities by the Israelites. They left Egypt in 1446 BC, spent 40 years wandering in the desert, and conquered Jericho in about 1406 BC. This is in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, exactly as archaeology confirms.

Other support, for the exodus date, are studies of volcanic ash deposits in the Nile Delta. Clouds of wind-blown ash are the probable explanation for the *darkness that could be felt*, recorded as one of the plagues sent by God to persuade the Pharaoh that he was in control of nature. The most likely candidate volcano was Vesuvius, since C14 dating of one of its major eruptions gives 1370 BC. This, together with the stated margin of error gives 1450 BC, only 4 years before the biblical exodus date. We know that ash from eruptions in the northern Mediterranean can reach Egypt, as shown by discovery of ash deposits in the Nile Delta, linked to the earlier Santorini eruption.

### **3.1.7. The origin of languages.**

**Page: 271**

The Bible states that there was originally only one language, centred in the Middle East. Modern studies of linguistics traces all Indo-European languages back to a common 'Proto-language' that originated in the Middle East at an estimated 4000 BC. It is significant that the biblical date for Adam is 4157 BC. Some scholars claim to be able to see deeper links amongst all the world's language groups.

The biblical claim, that languages spread out from the Babylonian area, is supported by discoveries at Nabada in northern Mesopotamia. Cuneiform script

was apparently invented by the Sumerians around the Babylon area, but the Nabada tablets are in Cuneiform script although in the Semitic language. Cuneiform script was invented about 3000 BC, or even earlier, but the Nabada tablets are dated some 650 years later. This fits the proposal that the original language was indeed centred near the Sumerian civilisation, and that other languages migrated outwards from there.

We are again faced with a problem explaining the sudden appearance of just one proto language. A slow evolution of language would have led to many varieties of proto-language. What did one group of early mankind encounter that enabled them to suddenly obtain a complex language, followed almost immediately by writing, metal smelting, complex cities, organised religion and a complex social structure? Archaeology confirms that this all happened soon after 4000 BC and the biblical date for Adam is 4157 BC!

### **3.1.8. Other evidence for the Bible as history.**

**Page: 274**

Archaeology has brought to light a great wealth of information confirming names, places, customs, battles, and other details mentioned in the Bible. For instance, the tunnel that brings water into the centre of Jerusalem was built, according to the Bible, by King Hezekiah between 715 and 686 BC. Carbon dating of plants and wood buried in the original plaster that coated the tunnel, gives a date of around 700 BC.

Other examples are given in my expanded chapter. In fact, it is generally agreed that the biblical version of Israelite history, after the reign of King Solomon, is based on historical fact, corroborated by independent accounts of kings and battles in Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions. For the period prior to about 930 BC there has been more debate about the historicity of the Bible. That is why I have concentrated on establishing the historical base of the earliest books of the Bible, namely of Genesis and Exodus.

I have been at lengths to point out, from dates derived from the Bible accounts, and from archaeology, that the Bible accounts most definitely have that 'ring of truth', and are firmly based in real history. This suggests that Moses, the presumed author of the books of Genesis and Exodus, had access to much more reliable accounts of the events than, for instance, the Gilgamesh Sumerian account.

Moses, as a prince of Egypt, was schooled in all the arts and learning of the Egyptians and almost certainly had access to vast libraries of clay tablets and papyrus manuscripts. Very possibly he had access to the original accounts written in Cuneiform script by Noah, and probably also by Adam, since archaeology confirms that cuneiform script was in existence before Noah's time. Clearly, it is unacceptable to hear comments by some uninformed people who suggest that the Bible is 'just a lot of myths and fables'.

### **3.2. Reconciling 'Genesis' with science.**

**Page: 276**

I do urge you to read the full version of this chapter. However, I will attempt to summarise the main points. This biblical account of beginnings is far more flexible than many Christians have suggested. The Hebrew word 'yom' means

'day', but can also have other meanings. It is used in at least four very different ways in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. For instance, the light part of a day is called yom, the period between the 'evening and morning' is called yom, and in chapter 2 the whole of creation is summed up in one yom. In the account of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it is stated that, "*in the 'yom' that you eat of it you will surely die*". In this case the yom refers to a single earth day. This 'yom' word can also be legitimately translated as an 'age', a 'period of time', or 'years'.

To God, time is almost irrelevant. I suggest a legitimate alternative translation of Genesis chapter 1, where the seven 'yoms' are seven great creative periods. Each great period has the words, *Thus the end (evening) of the first 'yom' (time or age) came, and the dawning of a new age (yom) began*. Genesis also contains words very suggestive of long processes. For instance, "*Allow light to appear*" or again, "*Allow the land to produce vegetation*", *'and it came to be so'...*

The order of events recorded in Genesis is very similar to that revealed by science, provided we choose the most suitable legitimate translation of certain Hebrew words. For instance, the Hebrew word 'oph' need not refer to birds. It can mean 'flying creatures' such as insects. Similarly, the Hebrew word 'asah', used when describing the appearance of sun and stars, can actually mean 'appointed to their function', rather than 'made'.

The whole account is given from an earth perspective, as if viewed by a hypothetical observer on earth at the time. When the sun and stars were 'appointed to their function' this corresponds to the period when the thick cloud cover started to thin and so these heavenly bodies became available for determining seasons, as we now see in nature, with all the biological cycles linked to phases of the sun, moon and stars.

The Genesis account stands out as unique in its monotheism, its similarity in broad detail to scientific discovery, and the inbuilt historical details that are being confirmed by archaeology. Genesis correctly lists the sequence in which life appeared, the correct historical context for Adam - firmly within the Neolithic age. This was when agriculture and city building first appeared.

In my view, many of the suggestions made by so-called 'creation scientists', who hold to a creation in six literal earth days, are not acceptable to science and would require me to commit intellectual suicide if I accepted them. However, an acceptance of great periods of time and evolutionary processes, forces monotheistic religions to look at other issues, such as the origin of mankind, the origin of physical death, the relevance of the biblical account of the Garden of Eden, the question of the justice of God and several other interrelated issues that are covered in other chapters of this book.

### **3.3. The biblical flood.**

**Page: 283**

In chapter 3.1.2 we looked at the evidence for a great flood in the Middle East. A superficial reading of the flood account in Genesis may give the impression that it covered the entire world. However, the Bible does not state this, nor does logic allow for it. Most probably it covered that portion of the world where the first civilisation started and where it was still concentrated. The biblical date was approximately 2456 BC and archaeological evidence shows that the first

civilisation only spread beyond the Middle East some 500 years later, in about 2000 BC.

We can read the biblical account in Genesis chapter 6. In this account, whenever the English translators of the original Hebrew spoke of 'world' or 'earth', this was a translation from only two words, namely 'adamah' and 'erets'. These same words are found in hundreds of other places in the Bible and are there translated mainly as ground, land, earth or country. In only four cases are they translated as world!

Noah was one of the first zoo keepers, that archaeology shows were part of civilisation right from the start. The animals Noah took into his 'ark' were probably only those found in his region. There is no way that all the animals, birds, insects, and fresh water creatures could have fitted into the Ark, together with enough food and water for a full year. Those who adhere to a worldwide flood interpretation, have many problems to solve, including how to accommodate the 100 plus species of dinosaurs, some weighing 100 tons, and other animals known only from the fossils, and how to get unique faunas, such as the Australian ones, all the way from there and return them afterwards to Australia.

The earth also contains other unique animal and plant faunas. How did Noah get these back to their isolated habitats after the flood? Certainly, very good scientific evidence exists to show that continental drift separated the major continents long before the time of Noah. Also, if the flood was worldwide, it would have been saline like the sea. How did Noah supply a conservative estimate of 4,200 tons of fresh water to his floating zoo?

The recorded dimensions of the ark are close to the ideal for stability, and contained about 8,800 square meters of floor space, but by no stretch of imagination could it have contained all the life forms, their food and fresh water. Also, if the flood had been worldwide, where did the water disappear to after the flood?

So, what caused this catastrophic flood in the Middle East? Various possible contributors include, bursting of post glacial melt water lakes, and the torrential rain for 40 days could have been triggered by a meteor or comet strike. Explorations under the Black Sea have revealed buildings, and it is possible that the flood covered this vast area of low elevation land, that stretches from north of the Balkan Peninsula in the west, through the present Black Sea, the Caspian Sea and even further east.

To the south of this area we have a continuous belt of much higher ground. This massive body of water could have finally broken through into the Mediterranean Sea via the present day Bosphorus Strait. This might explain the biblical statement that from the time the rain stopped, it still took at least six months for the waters to drop enough for Noah to emerge from the Ark.

Thus, although the biblical account of Noah is based on fact, the interpretation of these accounts needs to take note of scientific and archaeological discoveries, and other legitimate translations of key Hebrew words. This enables those of us raised in the scientific age, to avoid having to commit intellectual suicide.

We read in the biblical book of Genesis that God planted a special garden, into which he placed a single man and later added a woman. Research into the origin of domesticated plants reveals a locality on the borders of modern Syria and Turkey. This is fascinating because the biblical account gives this same location for Eden, between the headwaters of four rivers, two of which are still called by the same names today.

In this garden, the Creator gave this pair of humans a simple test, apparently designed to demonstrate whether, when in ideal health and idyllic surroundings, they would be able to choose to obey instructions given by God.

The Bible defines any failure to live up to instructions given by God as 'sin'. Adam and Eve failed the test, and this was a demonstration that all of us would likewise have failed.

This account can be read in a way suggesting that Adam and Eve were the first humans, and that they were immortal. I believe the evidence clearly shows that neither of these interpretations is correct. Adam was created mortal and God then 'breathed' into the already living Adam, his Holy Spirit, and Adam was then 'born again' into an 'Eternal Life' relationship with God.

The biblical message is that mankind lost that close 'Eternal Life' relationship as soon as they sinned, but the New Testament portion of the Bible says that Jesus restored to mankind the possibility of re-entering into the same sort of Eternal Life relationship with God. Jesus is referred to in the Bible as the 'Second Adam' and he reversed what was lost in the Garden of Eden.

The New Testament message is that God, through Jesus, made a way of restoration into an Eternal Life relationship, in which we can again be sons and daughters of God and have our sins forgiven, thus enabling access once again into the presence of a holy God. Please read the detailed explanations in the full chapter.

Regarding the origin of mankind, both science and the Genesis account make it clear that Adam and Eve were not the first humans. Archaeological dates link very closely to biblical dates in the Genesis account. Excavations at Tel Brak reveal the oldest true city, dated back to about 4,000 BC. The biblical date for Adam is 4157 BC, a mere 157 years before the oldest true city discovered so far. The Bible mentions a city being built by Adam's son Cain.

There is also evidence that the first organised religion was monotheistic, just as stated in Genesis. The later Sumerians were polytheistic, but inhabitants of Ebla, some 700 years earlier, were monotheistic! Ebla, existed a mere 157 years after the biblical date of Seth, grandson of Adam. The Bible specifically states that the first organised religion started after Seth's birth.

The biblical account has several references to pre-Adamic man, including the origin of Cain's wife, the people whom he feared would kill him, the people for whom he was building a city, and reference to the Nephilim and intermarriage between the 'sons of God' and the 'children of men'. Some have suggested that these 'sons of God' were spiritual beings. However, I present evidence to show that this is a reference to the Adamic family line interbreeding with other anatomically modern people around them.

The chapter goes into considerable detail on the origin and nature of the Nephilim. They were large people, possibly the result of interbreeding between the Adamic family line and other humans, who had in turn undergone some

interbreeding with Neanderthals. Follow the reasoning in my chapter. Remnants of this bloodline still existed hundreds of years later when the Israelites were conquering Canaan. Biblical references (all detailed in the full chapter) clearly link these later Nephilim to a descendant of Noah.

Regarding the origin of Eve, we are told she was created from a part of Adam. The fact that God, the master geneticist, chose to follow this path of creating a living human (Eve) from part of a living human (Adam), may well throw light on how he has operated at times throughout the evolution of life on earth, to 'jump start' life to an advanced level.

In summary, I believe the Garden of Eden account describes a stage in God's interaction with his creation. He decided the time had come to channel anatomically modern mankind into dramatically new knowledge. The Genesis account suggests that mankind received a major boost in knowledge, through direct instruction to Adam from God. We read how Adam talked with God and got instructions from God, such as to name the animals.

This interaction provides us with the most likely scenario, to explain the sudden appearance of complex language, writing, metal smelting, organised religion, and advanced civilisation. It also explains the archaeological evidence that the first organised religion was monotheistic.

All this advanced knowledge was only possible once humanity had a complex language. Linguistic studies confirm the sudden appearance of the first language in this area of the Middle East and at the time in which the Bible places Adam.

This instruction of Adam in the first complex language, placed him in marked contrast to the rest of anatomically modern humanity. It enabled the Adamic family line (called the sons of God), to spread out and civilise the other humans around them (called the children of men).

This dramatic increase in knowledge was needed in order to start development of the technology that ultimately would lead to the full potential for mankind on planet earth. In addition, the account clearly states that a profound spiritual lesson was being demonstrated in Eden. This showed that mankind, even when in idealistic surroundings, was nevertheless not able to obey God. It also demonstrated that mankind had been given free wills. Furthermore, the account introduces us to the reality of spiritual dualism and conflict, and the reality of Satan and spiritual rebellion in the Universe.

This understanding of the Genesis account raises other questions in the minds of monotheistic theologians. These include the origin of death, the nature of sin, the character of God, and others that are discussed in later chapters.

In summary, I suggest that Adam was taken by God from pre-Adamic genetics, possibly given a genetic upgrade, and was taught the first complex language and writing by God himself. This enabled him to receive instruction on many different things, resulting in the Adamic family becoming the catalyst by which the rest of humanity were 'jump started' to a dramatically new level of civilisation.

From a biblical perspective, Adam and Eve were real people, placed within a real Garden of Eden and given a totally new and unique place in God's agenda for planet Earth. They were in reality a 'new creation', since they were probably the first anatomically modern humans to have a complex language, the first to be

given instructions directly from God, the first to receive a greater spiritual capacity from God, the first to be given a law from God and the first to break a law of God. In other words, as the Bible states, Adam and Eve were the first humans to sin, because the biblical definition of 'sin' is the wilful breaking of a known law given by God to mankind.

Bible believing Christians need not fear this evolutionary view of the origin of mankind. The nature of sin and its effect on our relationship to our creator, remain as stated in the Bible. In later chapters we will see the biblical evidence for mankind being mortal, right from the start. In the Garden of Eden they did not become mortal, but they did lose their unique 'Eternal Life' relationship with their creator.

### **3.5. How reliable are the Bible documents?**

**Page: 305**

People who say that the Bible is "just a man-made collection of fables and stories" have not honestly and thoroughly looked into the matter. The Bible is a remarkable collection of books, written in various styles and by many different human authors. Some parts are historical accounts, some are poetry, some prophetic statements about future events, some record the words and ideas of other people, and some delve deeply into theology. They are written over centuries, yet contain a remarkable unity of message.

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls showed that the Old Testament (Jewish Bible) hardly changed over centuries of copying. A copy 900 years later was virtually the same as the Dead Sea Scrolls. With reference to the New Testament portion of the Bible, these were all written within the life time of eye-witnesses of Jesus, and almost certainly within 30 years of his death. The steps leading to acceptance of all the New Testament writings are outlined in this chapter.

Furthermore, Christianity was a missionary faith from the beginning, and so the New Testament books were translated into various languages within the first century. Now, 2000 years later, scholars can compare thousands of later editions in each of these languages, and have discovered no differences of importance. This evidence, combined with archaeological discoveries, has convinced serious scholars that these documents have come down to us substantially as originally written.

Therefore, we cannot logically suggest that subsequent generations have significantly altered their content to suit changing concepts of theology. The only legitimate question is whether or not the original authors were mistaken in what they wrote, or were deliberately misleading. When, in later chapters, we look at some of these writings, and compare accounts by different authors, I hope it will become clear that there was not any intention on behalf of the authors to mislead or misinform.

It is interesting that the three monotheistic religions all claim to accept the Old Testament documents as authentic, and both Christianity and Islam claim to accept the New Testament gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. However, some claim that people have distorted or changed the content to suit their own personal agendas. Since there is no evidence of this changing of texts having taken place, it follows that this view is not acceptable.

In other words, either we accept these documents in their entirety or we are not entitled to claim that we accept them. For instance, the writings about Jesus (Yeshua), known to Islam as nabi Isa, must either be accepted in their entirety or not at all. We cannot say we accept that he was a great prophet and quote some of his teachings, yet reject every statement he made relating to his own authority and deity, or reject the reported events surrounding his crucifixion and resurrection.

So, how did such a remarkable book come together? In the light of actual events, the claims made in books such as the De Vinci Code are totally unacceptable. The criteria used when compiling the New Testament Bible was initially that the books must have been written by one of the first Apostles who had been close to Jesus, or have been approved by them. Stages in compilation are outlined in this chapter.

Study of the origins of other modern and ancient sects and religions shows that these are based on teachings or writings that deviate in fundamental aspects from the core Bible teachings. Sometimes these movements are initiated by single charismatic individuals who play on the ignorance of their followers. However, some sects have developed over a prolonged period of time through the gradual inclusion of teachings that are not found in the Bible.

Some Christian traditions that have deviated the most from the Bible refer to all other Christian traditions as 'sects'. The only basis that can level the 'playing field' and ensure that each variation within Christianity is judged by the same criterion, is the Bible. Even amongst those who accept the Bible as their ultimate authority in matters of faith and conduct, there is a need for teaching on how to understand the Bible.

### **3.6. Understanding the Bible.**

**Page: 310**

Some Christians refer to the Bible as 'infallible'. However, our New Testament Bible contains some passages that were not found in the earliest known documents. Some attempt to sidestep this problem by saying it is infallible 'as originally given'. Since nobody can categorically state what the original content was, this basis of faith is not really satisfactory.

When the Bible records words spoken by God or by Jesus, these are considered by most Christians to be infallible. Similarly, words written by those approved of by the close followers of Jesus while here on earth. These can all fall within the category of 'infallible in matters of faith and doctrine'. Some Christian traditions, such as the Church of England, state that the Bible is the 'final court of appeal in matters of doctrine and practice'.

However, when we look at biblical accounts relating to historical events, some do differ in details. Examples include a comparison of 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21, or between 2 Samuel 21:19 and 1 Chronicles 20:5. In the New Testament we also find relatively minor differences; for instance, between Matthew 8, Mark 5 and Luke 8, in their account of casting out of demonic possession from a man.

We also need to accept that some parts of the Bible are poetic and not literal, and real spiritual truths can sometimes be illustrated by non-factual analogies. In other places the writers were struggling to describe things that they

could not understand. For instance the Exodus 10:21 account of *darkness that could be felt*. In reality it was something that could be felt that caused the darkness, and we now know that this event coincided with ash clouds being blown over parts of Egypt from an eruption in the northern Mediterranean Sea.

The fact that the biblical description was not scientifically accurate does not diminish its authenticity. This event and others in the Bible, merely show the limits of human understanding.

Another example is a description of an event that the witnesses could only explain if the sun had stopped still (Joshua 10). In 1908 there was a repeat of this sort of event. The Joshua account correctly noted that large stones also fell from the sky and killed many of the fleeing troops. In 1908 a comet exploded in the upper atmosphere over Siberia, causing fine debris that reflected sunlight at night until 3 am. The light was so bright that people could read the smallest writing.

The Bible is one of the ways that God speaks into the human experience. He also speaks through nature; *The heavens declare* (Psalm 19). This same Psalm describes the sun in a way that was used by the Middle Ages Church, to support their view that the sun and stars rotate around the Earth. When Galileo questioned this he was branded as a heretic. Today, we can learn from this historic event, namely that we need to treat some biblical passages as poetic and expressing spiritual truths within the limitations of the knowledge of the writer. We need the 'voice of God through science' to help us to interpret some biblical passages more accurately.

The Bible shows that God has revealed himself to mankind in stages over time, an evolutionary revelation to mankind. Because of difficulties encountered when trying to understand parts of the Bible, it is essential to take its overall message and to compare individual verses with this message. It helps to compare passages and themes, not to latch onto individual verses and build a theology or a sect on this, as has happened in the past. Sometimes, such as in the book of Job, the views of various people are recorded, but this does not mean that all the views are correct, or can be used by theologians to build a doctrine.

An example of comparing various accounts of one event, are the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. All three accounts record Jesus as saying words that have caused confusion over the centuries, "*I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened*". The Greek word used for 'generation' is 'genea'. However, equally valid translations are 'age', 'nation' or 'time'. We can ask what Jesus meant when he used the word in this context. The answer is only to be found in verse three of the Matthew account.

We read that the disciples asked Jesus, "*What will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age*"? The Greek words used in this question for 'end' is 'sunteleia'. This actually means 'full end'. This has sometimes been incorrectly translated into English as 'end of the world'. However, the Greek word translated by some as 'world' is actually 'aeon' and this can equally meaning 'age', 'indefinite time' or 'dispensation'.

Therefore, the question asked by the disciples was actually, "*Tell us*", they said, "*When will this happen and what will be the sign of your coming and of the full end of this age*?" Jesus then gives an account of wars, earthquakes, the destruction of the Jewish temple, and other dangerous times. Then, in verse 29 of the Luke

account, we read that Jesus said, *“Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near”*. Then comes this dramatic statement, *“I tell you the truth, this GENEVA will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away”*.

Some people have attempted other explanations of these words. However, a comparison of the three accounts leads to the conclusion as follows: Question: “Tell us, when will these things happen and what will be the sign of your coming and the full end of this age?” Answer: “Truly truly (without a doubt) I say to you, this AGE (geneva) will certainly not come to a full end until all these things (that I have told you about) come to pass”.

Jesus also said that these disasters were like ‘birth pains’, getting more frequent towards the end. The International Red Cross keeps records of natural disasters showing that, prior to 1996, these averaged 200 per year. However, since 1996 the incidence has steadily increased and by year 2000 had reached 392. In 2002, these disasters killed 25,600 people. In 2003 this was trebled to 76,806 people, and in 2004 this trebled again to 250,000 people killed. The USA Geological survey reveals that the number of earthquakes over 7.0 on the intensity scale, has dramatically increased over the past 40 years. Another study of Hurricanes shows that these have doubled in number over the past 100 years, linked directly to climate change.

Jesus ends his discourse by saying, *“If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect (those chosen as part of God’s plans) those days will be shortened”*. Initially these words referred to the predicted destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, but probably also had a further relevance to us in our precarious nuclear age.

Jesus also passed comments on the Old Testament Bible. He added to it, but also changed its emphasis. For instance, he said, *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbour and hate your enemy’ but I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”*. He also clarified past actions described in the Old Testament, where judgments seemed harsh and sometimes involved men, women and children. He pointed out that God acts in history to channel nations and events towards pre-determined goals.

For instance, Psalm 1 speaks of God ‘laughing at the schemes of kings and rulers because he is the one who ultimately determines the destiny of nations’. However, the individuals caught up in these events will also stand before God at Judgment day. Here the balances will be balanced and all will then be able to see that he is a God of justice, mercy and love.

Jesus explained that all people will ultimately be judged according to what they did or did not do during life. However, our actions will be judged in the light of what we knew we should have done. He also said that many, who found themselves last during life, will find themselves first in the life to come. This whole question is analysed in detail in the full chapter.

Many people are fascinated with predictions of the future. The Bible contains far more predictions about future events than any other book. Furthermore, many of these were later fulfilled in amazing detail. However, fulfilled prophecies show us that the original prophecies often condense long time-scales into apparently much closer events. Jesus demonstrated this aspect of prophecy by stopping in mid sentence while applying Isaiah 61 to himself. He read, *“to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour”*, but stopped short of the next line, *and the day of vengeance of our God*. In other words, Jesus was saying that the first part of this prophecy was being fulfilled by him during his earthly ministry in Israel, but the ‘vengeance of our God’ will only be fulfilled later.

One of the many Old Testament prophecies, concerns the city of Tyre. The prophecy includes specifics that were fulfilled in amazing detail over a period of hundreds of years, step by step.

### **3.8. Prophecies fulfilled by Jesus!**

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The Old Testament Bible contains at least 29 prophecies relating to the coming Messiah. All of these were fulfilled through the person, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ. The statistical chance of all these prophecies coming together in one life is extremely small. Once again, this gives us confidence in the uniqueness of the Bible. The most dramatic of these Messianic prophecies is Isaiah chapter 53. Another remarkable passage is Isaiah 9: 6-8. Here we are told that a human child will become a ruler, but at the same time will be called mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of peace, and his kingdom will be everlasting. What better description of the baby born in a stable, crucified as a criminal, rose from death as a demonstration of his Deity, and soon to return to rule from the throne of David in Jerusalem? These prophecies are detailed in this chapter.

### **3.9. Prophecies spoken by Jesus – already fulfilled!**

**Page: 336**

Jesus made some very specific prophecies that have already been fulfilled in great detail. He predicted the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, one stone from another. This was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Romans put down a Jewish rebellion. The temple caught fire and the gold dome melted. The gold ran down between the wall stones and the Roman soldiers took it apart to retrieve all the gold.

Jesus warned that a time would come when the Jewish holy places would be desecrated. This was fulfilled several times. He predicted that the Jewish people would fall by the sword and be taken as prisoners to all nations. This happened in AD 132 when the Emperor Hadrian put down another Jewish uprising and then systematically destroyed every Jew. They were either killed or sold into slavery. Jerusalem became a Romanised city, completely resettled by Gentiles and with a statue of Hadrian in the temple of Jupiter, placed on the site of the former Holy of Holies of the destroyed Jewish temple.

The only Jews who escaped were Christians who took the warnings of Jesus seriously and fled the country before the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Specific prophecies fulfilled include: The Holy places of Judaism were desecrated more than once, the city was destroyed by surrounding armies (plural), the temple was

destroyed, the Jews no longer performed ritual sacrifices, the early Christians did flee to the mountains, the Jewish captives were dispersed through all nations, the Jews no longer had a homeland, Jerusalem was 'trampled on' by non-Jews for nearly 2000 years, a time would come when the 'times of the Gentiles are fulfilled', when Jews would once again control Jerusalem. This last fulfilment started in 1948 and reached completion in 1967 during the Six Day War.

He also predicted a time would come when those killing Christians would believe they were serving God. This was fulfilled several times, firstly through the Jewish authorities, then through the Romans who killed Christians who refused to call Caesar God, then through the Inquisition of the Roman Catholic Church, then through Moslem religious expansion. Other prophecies by Jesus, that have been fulfilled, are listed.

### **3.10. Some Bible prophecies still to be fulfilled.**

**Page: 340**

These other prophecies include events that will climax world history, and usher in the direct and visible rule of God on earth. Many of these predictions centre on the Middle East and more specifically on Israel. Humanity is heading for self destruction unless God intervenes in a new way. To the Christians, the Messiah who will soon usher in the new rule of God is none other than Yeshua (Jesus Christ).

The world is heading towards times of unprecedented trouble, threatening the very survival of humanity. We might say that mankind must take the blame, but God says, "*I will devastate the earth and scatter its inhabitants*". This is because God has repeatedly warned mankind that the inevitable consequence of disobedience against his laws is ecological disaster and death.

There are laws of cause and effect. Some 'end times' prophecies describe events that almost certainly relate to nuclear conflicts. There are also several prophecies speaking of the sun and moon being darkened and the stars not giving their light. We know that nuclear war, massive volcanic eruptions, massive meteor strikes, or a combination of these could create exactly this scenario.

### **3.11. Bible prophecies relating to Israel.**

**Page: 348**

Prophecies talk of God bringing the Jewish people back to their homeland twice. The first time was after the exile to Babylon. The second was fulfilled in 1948. We read "*I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them*" Also, "*In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (valley of decision)*". In 1948, amidst great and continuing controversy, the state of Israel once again came into being. Opposition by much of the world to this restoration was also clearly revealed in the Bible prophecies relating to the 'end times'.

In the light of the many other Bible prophecies, that have already been fulfilled, those who believe that the state of Israel should not exist will have a lot to answer for. Much innocent blood is being spilt for this theology. The Bible suggests that at some point the Jewish people will recognise that Yeshua really

was and still is, their long awaited Messiah. We read, *They will look on him, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him.*

A time will come when there will be peace, when justice and authority will spread from Jerusalem to all the nations. Before the final climax, we are told that all nations will be gathered around Jerusalem. We already see this via the United Nations and its resolutions, but the prophecies tell of much bloodshed before the nations realise that it is God who ordains our destinies, and he has ordained that Israel will play a pivotal part in his 'end times' plans for humanity.

### **3.12. The history and future of Israel.**

**Page: 353**

The Jewish people trace their history back to Abraham who was born in Ur of the Chaldeans in 2166 BC. Jews trace their history through Abraham's son Isaac and the Arab nations trace theirs from Abraham's son Ishmael. In earlier chapters we saw that all these events are placed in real history. Isaac's son Jacob and family moved to Egypt in 1876 BC to avoid a widespread famine. Initially they were well treated because of Joseph, a son of Jacob who had previously been sold into slavery, but had risen to be second to Pharaoh. However, the Israelites later became enslaved by a new dynasty of Pharaohs. They were then brought out of Egypt by God, using Moses to perform many miracles. Then came 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, before the conquest of Canaan brought them into the land originally promised by God to Abraham.

Then in 586 BC Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem and exiled many of its people to Babylon. Amazingly, as predicted by prophets, Jews were permitted to return to Israel when a new King Cyrus the Mede conquered the Babylonian Empire. Jews were then in Israel with a measure of independence until the Romans incorporated them as a province and imposed Roman law.

In 70 AD Roman armies crushed an uprising and in 137 AD another uprising was brutally crushed, and all Jews were exiled, killed or sold into slavery. For the next 1811 years, the state of Israel no longer existed. Then in 1948 the United Nations voted to give a portion of the original Israel back to Jews as a national homeland. This amazing event, whereby a nation was re-created in a single day, was foretold in biblical prophecies. A king once asked a philosopher, "What proof have we that God exists?" The answer, we are told, was "Sir, the Jews".

What are the prospects for lasting peace? The Bible suggests that this will not happen until Yeshua returns in visible form. Then all other dogmas and delusions will instantly disappear. Then all people will instantly know that there is only one Creator God. Then it will not matter if you are born Jewish, Palestinian, Moslem, Hindu or Christian. This revelation of Jesus will instantly create only one religion and one allegiance.

## **Part 4: GOD AND EVOLUTION**

### **4.1. My theistic concept of biological evolution.**

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I am a theist, meaning that I believe in a God who created the Universe and who remains in detailed and personal relationship with his creation. Regarding the

evolution of life on Earth, it continues to puzzle zoologists why the fossil record shows sudden additions to life forms. In chapters on, *Evolution of life and its diversification*, and, *What do the fossils tell us*, we noted that there is abundant evidence for microevolution, whereby new species arose from existing species, but all on the same level of genetic complexity. However, the expected detailed and abundant stages towards larger changes, that involved increased genetic material, are not seen in the fossil record.

Clearly, this process of achieving increased amounts of genetic code was not a steady slow process otherwise the fossil record would contain vastly more intermediate forms, than all the fossilised remains so far discovered. We do not even have satisfactory theories on how this increase in genetic material can take place. The increase has been massive, for instance, man has over 1000 times more DNA in each cell than has a 'simple' bacterium. Even the simplest living organism has thousands of 'letters' in its genetic code.

To the theist, it does not really matter exactly how changes took place, provided our concept of God is great enough. The key to reconciling science and faith is having a correct and large enough concept of God. Even if future research discovers a 'mechanism' whereby increased genetic complexity comes about, this will still not alter my conviction that God is 'in all things, through all things and by him all things are held together'.

So, where is God in all of this? He operates in and through the timeless 5<sup>th</sup> Dimension that is independent of locality, independent of time, and he is aware of every minute detail in creation simultaneously and instantaneously. Within the 'time dimensions', he is able to influence outcomes by imposing initial conditions onto quantum 'chaos', through the power of his super-mind over matter. In this way he is able to direct and determine what outcomes materialise. This applies to outcomes of evolutionary processes but also shorter-term outcomes, such as weather patterns and situations relating to individual life circumstances of you and I.

This controlling of outcomes by mind power is probably the normal way that God controls the day by day running of the Universe. In addition, wherever necessary during evolution of this Universe and life, he may have intervened in a way similar to his intervention at the creation of Eve from Adam's genetics. In other words, at intervals throughout the history of life, he could have undertaken genetic engineering to 'jump start' existing life forms in new directions. The most likely candidates for this genetic engineering were situations that required an increase in complexity, meaning an increase in genetic material.

Scientists do not have the means of determining ultimate causes. Many scientists and many theists need a major shift in thinking. Please read the whole chapter to follow the reasoning leading to these and other conclusions. In this chapter I summarise again the two alternative views of the origin of our Universe. We are all forced to admit, due to the discoveries of science, that our Universe and its suitability for life, is the end result of a long list of incredible fine-tuning 'co-incidences' .

There are numerous instances where slight changes in the properties of matter would have resulted in a Universe totally unsuited for life. There are also 'co-incidences', such as the appearance of photosynthesis right at the dawn of life on earth. Without this process, defined by some biologists as the most complex

biological process known to science, the earth's atmosphere would not contain the oxygen needed for higher life forms.

These amazing facts force us to adopt one of two possibilities. Either, the Anthropic Principle, which holds to the unproven assumption that our existence is just a lucky chance. It suggests that the reason we have the impression that the Universe is designed just for us, is because we just happen to be in the one in a trillion billion possible universes that is just right for life. In other words, the assumption is made that there are, or were, an incredibly large number of possible universes, each with slightly different properties.

The alternative view is the Intelligent Design principle, stating that, even if there were other possible universes, the one we are in has come about as the result of purposeful design by the Creator. Both alternatives require a step of faith and both require various assumptions that have not been proven by the scientific method.

My views fall firmly in the Intelligent Design camp, for the following main reasons:

First. The Second law of Thermodynamics means that, if we go back to the Big Bang, this had to be a highly organised and specific event. The natural question is; who organised it?

Second. The widely held view amongst scientists that, during the first microsecond after the Big Bang, the Universe expanded from microscopic size to astronomical size at a speed much faster than the speed of light, demands that the Big Bang was initiated by laws that are totally different to those operating in our Universe today. This is because, according to the laws operating in our Universe, matter cannot be accelerated to the speed of light. Therefore, the Big Bang was controlled by 'transcendent laws' that are independent of the laws operating in our time-based Universe. Even if future research should do away with the 'inflation phase', we would still need transcendent laws to explain the Big Bang.

Third. The evolution of life has seen an increase in complexity over time. This is again in opposition to the same law of thermodynamics.

Fourth. There are a series of precise characteristics of matter, all of which are essential for our Universe to exist.

Fifth. The complexity of the simplest life forms and the DNA code have no explanation in terms of blind evolutionary processes.

Sixth. The existence of many complex structures and chemical processes within life forms, where these structures can only function when fully formed. Natural selection processes cannot adequately explain how these complex structures arose. How can such processes select for the many intermediate stages that only have a useful function when the whole complex is in place?

Seventh. The lack of detailed and numerous transition fossils between advances in genetic complexity.

Eighth. The precise characteristics of our planet and our moon and our sun, making it extremely unlikely that intelligent life has evolved on any other planet in our galaxy.

Ninth. The evidence for the 'finger of God' down through the pages of recorded history.

Tenth, The personal experiences of people down through the ages, whereby individuals have experienced that 'supernatural' events do happen.

Eleventh. The events associated with the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

All these facts, and probably many others, add up to very strong support for the Intelligent Design option. It is by far the most logical and most likely explanation for our Universe.

Clearly both options demand full and honest study and merit presentation in schools and universities. The Anthropic Principles' dependence on a vast number of possible universes, means that this theory stands or falls on whether in fact such alternative universes are possible. This in turn depends on the nature of the transcendent laws that initiated and controlled the Big Bang. Nobody knows what these laws are. Furthermore, even if other universes are possible, this still fails to rule out the possibility that the one Universe we exist in, was chosen by the Creator.

If the Intelligent Design camp is right, this has a number of profound implications. It means that God has to be faced, that life after physical death needs to be taken seriously. It means facing the fact that our destiny is in the Timeless Dimension, where intelligent 'quantum beings' are independent of time, and that we face a 'day of accounting' when the 'quantum books' of our lives will be opened. It means that all the claims of Jesus Christ need to be faced. These are not just intellectually interesting issues for debate. The Theistic Evolution model has profound implications for morality and for eternity.

How does all this relate to the 'goodness' of creation, as described in the Bible? How does it relate to theological questions such as 'The origin of death', the 'Justice of God', or the 'Love of God'? These are discussed in other chapters.

I believe this theistic view of evolution could have pleased Charles Darwin. He ended his famous book with the words, *There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed **by the Creator** into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved.* Some more recent editions of this book have left out the words 'by the Creator'!

#### **4.2. The origin of death.**

**Page: 371**

The great age of the earth and the fossil evidence clearly show that birth, growth and death have been a fundamental part of life on earth right from the beginning. Furthermore, most of these species existed on earth long before man appeared on the scene.

The biblical book of Genesis does say that Adam and Eve were promised a quality of life that was 'eternal' if they obeyed their Creator. However, the rest of the Bible clarifies what is meant by Eternal Life. It is a quality of life in intimate relationship with the Creator. It is called an Eternal Life relationship.

Adam was not created immortal! Paul, amongst others, clearly distinguishes between the physical and the spiritual. He points out that Adam was created mortal and that mortal creatures, made of flesh and blood (dust) cannot inherit immortality. Physical death did not start in the Garden of Eden, but

spiritual death did. When Adam and Eve sinned (disobeyed God) they died spiritually. They lost their close and intimate relationship with their Creator.

Wrongdoing was already in the world before Adam, but the Bible makes it clear that no account is taken of wrongdoing if the perpetrator has not been given knowledge of a law of God. The New Testament section of the Bible explains how the Eternal Life relationship can be re-gained, but those who re-gain it will nevertheless still die physically.

The Garden of Eden demonstration and test was part of God's overall plan, designed to show that no-one is capable of total obedience to God. This realisation was an essential part of God's evolutionary revelation to mankind.

At the Roman cross on Mount Calvary, God revealed his ultimate solution, by himself (Jesus) taking the penalty of his own law, thus 'redeeming' all who choose to avail themselves of his substitution plan. There was no immediate solution to mankind's Garden of Eden dilemma in the time of Adam. The Genesis account says that mankind were prevented at that time from regaining the Eternal Life relationship. The Genesis account states that once Adam and Eve had sinned, they were prevented from eating from the 'tree of life'. That Tree of Life was only made available centuries later, namely the wooden Roman cross on which Jesus was crucified, referred to in the scriptures as 'the tree'.

This understanding of death and Eternal Life is also suggested by the scientific evidence for pre-Adamic humanity, the evidence showing that birth, growth and death have been a part of life right from the start, the biblical evidence for pre-Adamic people, the biblical writings of Paul and the words of Jesus, such as in John 11:25. Jesus said, "*Whosoever lives and believes in me will never die*". He was saying that physical death is distinct from spiritual death, and even though a person dies physically his spirit does not die. Jesus was saying that those who regain a relationship with their Creator, through what he was about to achieve for mankind at Calvary's cross, will enter again into an Eternal Life relationship that will endure after physical death.

Acceptance by Christians that Adam and Eve were mortal from the beginning does not alter the Christian Gospel message. Regardless of whether or not mankind were always mortal, the fact remains that we are all mortal today. Therefore, the vital message of the Christian Gospel remains the same as always, namely that mortal creatures can inherit immortality through what Jesus achieved for mankind on the cross at Calvary.

This immortality is not the immortality of our physical bodies, nor merely a survival of our 'spirit', but it is an Eternal Life relationship with our Creator that survives physical death. Furthermore, there is the scriptural promise of a new 'quantum' body, just like that of the resurrected Jesus, for those who put their trust in him. This question is pursued further in the chapter 7.1, *My understanding of Christianity*.

## **Part 5: A NEW LOOK AT CHRISTIANITY**

### **5.1. Christianity, Judaism and Islam.**

**Page: 379**

A comparison of the world's religions shows that only these three are truly monotheistic. Monotheism is the only satisfactory conclusion from a Universe

such as ours. However, except for the revelations given to Adam, the natural tendency of mankind is to believe in many gods or spirits.

There are a number of listed beliefs common to all three monotheistic religions. The main and most vitally important difference between Christianity and all other faiths is the person of Yeshua (Jesus Christ), or nabi Isa, as the Moslems call him. This is why it is so important to look carefully at who he really was, and who he still is, and what he really achieved through his death and resurrection.

For this reason, in earlier chapters we looked carefully at the evidence for the reliability of the biblical accounts. We saw that these have come to us almost exactly as originally written down by people who knew Jesus intimately.

There is no justification for claims that early Christians edited and altered the records relating to what he said and did. These same records make it abundantly clear that Jesus was actually killed for blasphemy (claiming to be God). The resurrection of Jesus is the vital proof that God was confirming the claims made by Jesus before he died. God was proclaiming in dramatic manner that *"This is indeed my only begotten son"*.

Other differences between the monotheistic faiths include their understanding of God's character, in the names they give him, how mankind should approach him, how to obtain forgiveness, the position of women, attitudes to enemies, how to treat people of other faiths, how to obtain converts to the faith and tolerance towards those who change their faith.

## **5.2. What are miracles?**

**Page: 382**

There are at least two categories of 'miraculous' events. First, those involving known laws of the universe, but where the timing, intensity and place of the events is ordained by God. Second, those events that seem to be totally beyond explanation by known natural laws.

The Bible states that 'miracles' can be initiated both by God and by Satan. For instance, *But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf.* (Revelation 19:20)

Good examples of miracles of timing and locality are the so-called 'plagues of Egypt' recorded in the Bible. In each case, except the last plague, the miraculous was seen in the locality, the intensity and the timing of the start and end of the plague. The 'darkness that can be felt' plague has been linked to a cloud of volcanic ash from a volcanic eruption in the northern Mediterranean Sea.

Miracles without known 'natural law' involvement include the last plague, where *'the angel of the Lord struck down all the first born in Egypt'*. In the New Testament, the incidence of similar miracles increases, including Jesus walking on water, 5,000 people fed from five small loaves and two fishes, and the raising of the dead.

Clearly, all categories of 'miracles' carry the stamp of 'supernatural'. However, increasing knowledge does allow us to move some events from the totally unexplained category to partially explained, according to known laws. However, such explanations do not remove the miraculous aspects of timing, locality and intensity.

Imagine living in an age before inventions such as radio and television. If you had been told that someone in America could listen to the voice of someone in

Europe and hold a direct conversation with them, you would probably have said this was impossible unless there was a miracle. If you had been told that world events could be seen by virtually every living human, as they were taking place, would that have been another fable or classed as a miracle?

Many miracles do happen today, but there are also many false claims. Miraculous healing of sicknesses does still occur, but unfortunately miracles, signs and wonders have also been claimed at some mass crusades where people or organisations get the credit, and where the events are associated with money making schemes.

Some miracles reported in the Bible are human interpretations of what happened. For instance, in the book of Joshua, chapter 10, we read how Joshua prayed that the sun stand still so that he could defeat his enemy. His prayer seemed to be answered because daylight continued late into the normal night time and it is recorded that great stones or hailstones fell on the enemy and killed many. The natural interpretation of these events was that the sun had stopped. However, the recorded combination of extended light with great stones from the sky, makes it most likely that the actual cause of the extended light was a comet or asteroid exploding in the upper atmosphere.

A very similar event occurred in 1908 when a comet exploded over Siberia. After sunset the light was so brilliant that people could read the minutest lettering. This bright light lasted until 3.00 am and was caused by sunlight reflected from microscopic dust from the comet or asteroid explosion in the upper atmosphere.

### **5.3. Who was Yeshua (Jesus: nabi Isa)?**

**Page: 391**

There is no doubt that Jesus of Nazareth really existed and was sentenced to death by the Romans. That he was an historical figure is confirmed by numerous sources, regardless of what people may believe about him. Furthermore, the whole growth of Christianity is illogical if Jesus had not lived and taught, died and risen again.

#### **5.3.1. Main events of his life.**

**Page: 392**

He was born to working class parents, probably in April/May 7 BC, raised according to Jewish customs, trained in his father's profession of carpentry, and suddenly started a ministry of teaching and healing in about 26 AD.

The 7 BC date is based on an unusual conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn and Venus within the constellation of Pisces. According to a study of ancient Babylonian beliefs, this combination of planets would have indicated to them the birth of a king within Israel. Babylonian astrologers considered Pisces to be a star sign representing the Jews, Jupiter was king of gods and Saturn represented justice and Palestine. The biblical records state that wise men from the east came in search of the baby Jesus, *because they had seen his star in the east.*

If this birth date is true, then it also fits other details of the narrative about the birth of Jesus, including references in Luke's gospel to a census and to King

Herod the Great. Jesus was born in a livestock stable in Bethlehem, then when a year or two old he was taken to Egypt to escape a death threat from Herod. On the death of Herod in 4 BC (historical records), he was taken back to Israel, but the family then settled in Nazareth.

It is of interest that the church used to believe in the 7 BC date. This was only changed by the Roman Catholic Church in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The Ethiopian Coptic church did not follow this trend and so their calendar remains 7 years behind ours.

When Jesus started his public ministry, he was at first popular with most people, because of his miracles and unconventional words. However, he soon became very critical of hypocrisy amongst religious leaders. Opposition steadily grew because of his claims to be God. The Jewish authorities wanted him killed because of his blasphemy. However, no-one could be sentenced to death except by the Romans. After his arrest on the evening of 2 April 33 AD (13 Nissan of Jewish calendar), the Roman governor was finally pressurised to have him beaten and crucified.

His death was certified by the Roman soldiers, and Pilate allowed a wealthy Jewish man to take the body for embalmment and burial in his own cave tomb. This reconstruction of the dates of these events is backed by scientific research outlined in this chapter. It meant that Jesus died when almost exactly 40 years old. It is interesting that the numeral 40 is considered an important symbol of completeness throughout the Bible.

### **5.3.2. Some famous teachings.**

**Page: 397**

Jesus is widely known for his 'Sermon on the mount'. He also passed revolutionary commentary on the laws written down centuries earlier by Moses. For instance, he changed '*an eye for an eye*' morality to "*Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*". He gave a sample 'Lord's prayer', "*Our Father, in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*".

The Sermon on the Mount gave a new approach to many things, such as, "*Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God*". Jesus emphasised that God sees the heart and thoughts of people, and honours most of all the good deeds that we do quietly and without human praise.

His greatest anger was shown when people were making money out of the hunger of others for the things of God. He made a whip and chased the merchants out of the Temple. He also said that on judgement day some people who say, "*Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers*". Who were these 'evil doers'? Probably they were those who used religion to make lots of money for themselves.

He was also very angry about people who, “*cause one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea*”. How frightening that so much abuse of children has taken place through people in trusted positions in churches.

Jesus also spoke strongly about lies and deception. How tragic that much of this comes out of religious structures, including Christian churches. He also emphasised that our acts of mercy, or lack of them, will be a major criteria at judgment day.

### **5.3.3. His miracles.**

**Page: 401**

Jesus performed very dramatic miracles. Physical healing included paralytics, withered limbs instantly becoming whole, lepers cured, deaf and dumb healed and the blind seeing. He even raised the dead. Miracles over nature included turning water into wine, stilling the storm, a supernatural catch of fish, multiplying food to feed thousands with many basket full left over, and walking on water.

### **5.3.4. His direct claims to deity.**

**Page: 403**

The most controversial things about Jesus were his direct and indirect claims to be God in human form. Christianity stands or falls on whether or not these claims were true. It is the resurrection of Jesus that finally places God’s stamp of approval on all the amazing claims that Jesus made.

The main reason he was killed was his claim to be God. His Jewish audience recognised when he made these claims and each time they tried to stone him, as was dictated by Mosaic Law for blasphemers.

### **5.3.5. His indirect claims to deity.**

**Page: 405**

Jesus used titles such as Son of God, and he used a very personal name for Father, Abba, when speaking of God. His audience knew that these were indirect claims to deity.

## **5.4. Who died on that Roman cross?**

**Page: 406**

To answer questions such as these, we have started out to show the reliability of the Bible documents. Serious research by literary scholars confirms that these have been handed down to us substantially as originally written, by those who knew Jesus intimately. His followers knew him and knew without a doubt that it was he who was hauled before the courts and crucified. In addition, the Jewish authorities knew that they had their man, not some hypothetical substitute.

Perhaps one of the most powerful testimonies is recorded by John, who was the disciple closest to Jesus. On the cross Jesus looked at his mother and said “*Dear woman, here is your son*” (John) and to John he said “*Here is your mother*”.

*From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. Clearly, there was never any doubt that it was Jesus who hung on that cross.*

### **5.5. What about the resurrection?**

**Page: 407**

One of the most compelling arguments for the resurrection of Jesus was the dramatic change shown by his followers. They were changed into courageous evangelists who were prepared to die horrific deaths rather than deny the resurrection message. The various accounts of the resurrection, by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, do disagree in some minor details, showing that they did not compare manuscripts in detail.

If we list the main events around the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus we find that there are no irreconcilable differences in the accounts. The main basis for belief by the early disciples was their own personal and intimate contact with the risen Jesus.

#### **5.5.1. Jesus was really dead.**

**Page: 413**

After a severe whipping that often itself caused death, Jesus was crucified by experienced Roman executioners. Finally, just to make sure he was dead, the soldier pierced his side with a spear. The blood and watery fluid that flowed out is clear proof to any medical man that death had taken place.

In addition, preparation for burial involved wrapping the body in long strips of linen, stuck together with sticky spices. We are told that 34 kilograms were used. This in itself would have extinguished any remnant of life. The embalming cocoon technique had been learnt by the Jews during their time in Egypt.

There is no way that a live person could get himself out of such a cocoon. This is why the account of Peter and John running to the tomb is so convincing. They looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there empty and immediately believed that Jesus had risen.

We are not told why this was so obvious. It was obvious to them because the cocoon that had surrounded Jesus was still intact, but had simply sunk, because the body was no longer inside. It had apparently vaporised or 'teleported' out through the grave cloths and spices.

#### **5.5.2. The tomb.**

**Page: 416**

Jesus was laid in Joseph's newly cut cave tomb that was situated very close to the crucifixion site. The recorded details surrounding the burial are far more elaborate than for any other character in ancient history. Furthermore, it seems that no one, not the Romans nor the Jewish authorities, doubted that Jesus was dead and was placed in that tomb. Furthermore, extraordinary measures were taken to try to avoid removal of the body.

The guard placed at the tomb was almost certainly the Temple Guard, not Roman soldiers. This explains how the Jewish authorities managed to persuade them to fabricate the events in exchange for a large sum of money. These cave tombs can be seen today. One feature was the heavy circular stone, weighing several tons, that was rolled across the cave entrance in a groove cut into the

rock. Such a stone could only be moved by several people acting together and only from outside the tomb.

### **5.5.3 The body had gone.**

**Page: 418**

Finding the body of Jesus was of utmost importance to the Jewish authorities. Such a find would be the ultimate proof that he had not risen from the dead, as now claimed by his followers. Nine reasons are listed, all showing that the only logical conclusion is that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead. This was not a resurrection to a normal physical body, but a new Timeless Dimension 'quantum' body that could appear and disappear and was not limited by material objects such as closed doors.

According to the most probably reconstruction of events, Jesus was dead for almost exactly 40 hours, spanning parts of three days.

### **5.5.4. The ultimate reality.**

**Page: 419**

Here again, we start our reasoning by looking at the reliability of the Bible documents. We then look at the evidence for the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. This is all as a basis for our faith. However, we never discover the ultimate reality of the resurrection until we step out by faith and take hold of the offer made to mankind. This offer is that, as we reach out in faith to God, he reaches out to us.

We become convinced, through experiencing God at work in our own lives, that he is real. In previous chapters I outlined some personal experiences of God acting supernaturally in my own life situations. These led me to the point where I had a firm base from which to reach out further by faith. I then took Jesus at his word, and decided to put in place his guidelines on how to know God in personal experience. Now, looking back over some twenty years, I have no doubt of the reality of God, nor of his revelation to mankind through Jesus his unique son, nor the reality of the Holy Spirit who is at work throughout this world and in my own personal experience.

This conviction is not based on formulas, ceremonies, or church pronouncements. The simple truths, outlined by Jesus and the first Christians, have often become lost in the distortions and institutions built by men. The certainty I speak of comes from a personal relationship, a personal commitment, and personal experiences.

## **5.6. One God or many?**

**Page: 420**

Is it true to say that there are many faiths but only ONE God? Let's face reality, this world has people who worship and serve 'gods' so different from each other that logic dictates they cannot all be the same. When looking into this, it is reasonable to consider how people behave as a reflection on the type of god that they worship.

We find those who worship ancestral spirits, gods of wood and stone, devil worshippers, personality cults, and even 'lucky charms'. What makes an object a god? Surely it is anything that we believe gives us access to the supernatural. If we

believe it brings us luck, or protects us from harm, then we are attributing to the object supernatural powers! How then do you classify 'lucky charms' worn around your neck?

Today we have a movement broadly defined as 'New Age' that has repackaged the 19<sup>th</sup> century spiritual mysticism of mediums and séances. This includes belief in such things as 'healing crystals'. Many religions rely on the visions or 'revelations' of only one man or woman. By contrast the Bible is formed from the inputs of many authors over many centuries, all combining into one supportive view of God and reality.

Much of the confusion of beliefs and cults can be explained if we accept that there are personalised 'beings' (spirits) of evil, and that these take pleasure in deceiving mankind. If a cosmic battle is in progress between God and Satan, is it surprising that mankind is subjected to cosmic-sized conflicts of belief? Furthermore, some belief structures are clearly associated with pure evil.

As I am writing this, the South African news is reporting the find of a young herd attendant who had been attacked for 'muti', and parts of his body cut off while he was still alive. This is the belief amongst many in Africa, that certain body parts, taken from live victims, are powerful medicines. Would we classify the propagators of such beliefs as good, bad, wicked, or satanic? How do we classify some Islamic extremists who execute people by slowly sawing off their victim's heads in front of video cameras?

The three great monotheistic religions need to re-examine their concepts of God. Does he sanction the brutal killing of women and children? Intolerance of different views has, at times, raised its ugly head in all three monotheistic religions, such as the killing of Protestants by the Inquisition sanctioned by the Roman Catholic Church, and the massacres of Moslems and Jews during the Crusades of the Middle Ages.

Clearly, people do worship a great variety of gods, as is shown by the type of actions done by their followers. However, in spite of all this confusion of beliefs, the nature of the Universe seems to demand only one Creator God. The God, who initiated the Big Bang Creation of our Universe, has to be the 'all wise one'.

Since he operates in and through the Timeless Dimension, characterised by non-locality and instant communication, such a God has to be independent of time and locality. He is immortal, invisible, omnipresent, all wise and all powerful. Such a God is far greater than our understanding of him. It is therefore logical to conclude that none of us has a complete understanding of God.

The Christian message is that God took the initiative and has given humanity an evolutionary revelation of himself. Supremely, he took the initiative by becoming one of his creatures, so as to reveal to mankind his concern for us, and to reveal to us something of his nature and his plans for the world, and to rescue us from a destiny without hope.

Attributes of God such as compassionate, loving, and just, cannot easily be derived from our observation of the Universe. These characteristics are discovered by revelation, by experience and through the person, life, teachings and actions of Jesus Christ; as a revelation of the character of God.

How can Christians say that they believe in one God and at the same time say that he is a Trinity? Jesus, who claimed to be one of the Trinity, also told his hearers that God is ONE. It is a surprise to some that the Old Testament also speaks of God revealing himself in three ways. Firstly, as the awesome Father God who lives in unapproachable power, as revealed to the Israelites at Mount Sinai. Secondly, as the Spirit who formed a relationship with Moses and others, and enabled them to have supernatural wisdom. Thirdly as the God in 'human likeness' who spoke with Abraham and who wrestled with Jacob.

### **5.7.1. God the Holy Spirit.**

**Page: 429**

The Lord said to Moses, *"I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them"*. Talking of the 'End Days' the prophet Joel wrote that God says, *"I will pour out my Spirit on all people"*.

When Jesus rose from the dead and later ascended into heaven, God chose to continue his interaction with mankind and with human history, by presenting himself amongst mankind, no longer visibly, but as an omnipresent Holy Spirit.

### **5.7.2. God the Son.**

**Page: 429**

The New Testament is not alone in referring to God as sometimes appearing in human form. Christians consider some Old Testament appearances of God to be the 'time-travelling' Jesus. It is only in our modern scientific age that we can start to understand that someone who is born at one time in history can nevertheless go backwards or forwards in time. Time travel is theoretically possible according to science.

Probably the first reference to God in human form is in Genesis 3, *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day*. Previously we read how God interacted with Adam in a way that was very suggestive of a face to face encounter.

In Genesis 18, *The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre... Abraham looked up and saw three men*. The account then describes a conversation Abraham had with one of the 'men' addressing him as if he is God, the 'judge of all the earth'. The 'man' replies as if he is God answering Abraham.

Again, Jacob wrestled with a 'man' all night. The 'man' then blessed him and changed his name to Israel. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, *It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared*. Later God appeared to Moses in a human likeness, *Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When both of them stepped forward, he said "Listen to my words: When a prophet of the Lord is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams. But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the Lord*.

What a contrast to the earlier appearance of God in fire and unapproachable holiness, who said that no-one could see him in this state and live.

There are several illustrations of how something can exist in various states or phases. We have the example of water, but an even better illustration is 'space'.

This is composed of length, width and height. Each is a separate reality but each has to be part of one in order to create space. In similar manner, time is composed of past, present and future. Each is a real aspect of time, but they have to be considered together in order to obtain a full picture of time.

This is the Christian understanding of the ONE true God. He has revealed himself as the one eternal, all-powerful, all wise Creator of all things, as God in human form, and as God the omnipresent Holy Spirit. The appearances of God in human form, before the Christian age, are in fact the pre-incarnation appearances of Jesus Christ, who himself said, *"I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born, I am!"*

### **5.8. Free will and predestination.**

**Page: 433**

It is difficult for us, who are creatures locked into the 'arrow of time', to imagine how human history looks to an intelligence operating in the Timeless Dimension. Each of us has 'free will', meaning that we have the ability to make choices. However, we are also told that God predestines certain outcomes. One famous Bible passage says, *For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.*

In other words, God looks into the future and sees your life and mine stretched out before us. He can see in advance the sort of choices we will make whenever a decision has to be made. He can see that, if we are given an opportunity to respond positively to his claims on our lives, we will in fact respond positively. Now, since he has foreknowledge of this possibility, he therefore decides to bring influences and circumstances into our lives, so that we will in fact have the opportunity to make that choice to accept him into our lives.

God's foreknowledge does not mean that he forced us to make a choice, but it showed him that we were potential candidates. Therefore, he predestined us to have the opportunities to make certain choices, and he predestined us to be part of his eternal plans. He does this in various ways, one of which is to prompt another Christian to go to a specific place at a specific time, so as to present the Gospel message to the 'potential candidate'. This in no way removes our responsibility to make choices, nor our accountability for our choices. God is merely presenting us with opportunities to make those choices. Furthermore, he knows in advance how we will choose. In summary, God chooses us because he knew in advance that we would choose him.

### **5.9. Why blame God?**

**Page: 435**

Mankind is quick to blame God for a variety of things, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes etc. If he is almighty, why does he not prevent these? Let's begin by analysis of this word 'almighty'. This means that he has access to all possible sources of power, all possible outcomes, and has the ability to bring into being any of these possibilities. However, possible outcomes may not be limitless, since the nature of reality imposes limitations.

Science tells us that the conditions necessary for life to exist are extremely narrow and limited. If the properties of matter were just a fraction different we would not have a suitable Universe for life to exist. It is very possible that, even an almighty God might be restricted in the type of Universe he brought into existence. Once he decided to create physical life and humanity, he was faced with the realisation that there may have been only one possible type of Universe that could achieve this goal.

He would have known that such a Universe would evolve over millions of years of earth time, and would contain one unique solar system, with one unique planet suitable for life and for mankind. God would also have known that such a planet would have storms, tides, earthquakes, and tsunamis.

So, what overriding and crucial situation made it so important to proceed with creation of the Universe and mankind? We can only speculate about this. However, if he had not gone ahead with his planned Universe, then you and I would not be here to discuss the issue. We should ask ourselves, which of two options we would prefer. Would we really prefer never to have existed or, in spite of life's difficulties, are we glad to have had a chance to experience life, and to have had the chance to be part of an eternal destiny?

I realise that this chapter raises serious questions with those Christians accustomed to a theology that blames all undesirable aspects of nature on the sin and rebellion of mankind. The contents of this book will inevitably require some basic shifts in understanding parts of the Bible. However, it is vital to undertake this re-thinking, in order to bring Christian theology into line with some undeniable facts.

These facts include the great age of the earth, the reality of death and predators long before mankind were on earth, long before the Garden of Eden, and long before Adam and Eve sinned. We also need to face the reality of continental drift, earthquakes, tsunamis, storms and floods, long before the Garden of Eden and sin.

It is true that the Bible does link some disasters with the wrongdoing of mankind. It is also true that God sometimes allows disasters on nations that continue to allow gross wrong in their midst. It is also true that the biblical book of Job says that Satan can manipulate the forces of nature, but only as far as God allows.

Nevertheless, these events, such as earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis are a part of God's creation. They were used by him as part of the natural forces that shaped planet Earth, long before mankind and sin were around.

This re-think of Christian interpretations of the Bible, in no way means rejecting any of the biblical truths. This book gives my own journey towards reconciling faith with science. You will notice that I remain a committed Christian, who still holds to the Bible as my ultimate authority in all matters of faith and doctrine. Furthermore, my understanding of the Christian Gospel remains fully reconcilable with biblical writings, and with the practical application of this by the early Christian church.

The Bible clearly describes God as loving, merciful and just. At the same time, he is portrayed as a God of judgment and anger, and is even described as the warrior who destroys his enemies. When we look at nature, we find a world with pain and death. The history of life shows that many creatures flourished at one time, but then passed into extinction. From a study of nature we might be excused for concluding that God has little compassion. In the Old Testament Bible, he is described as being loving towards those who seek for him and obey him. Obedience brings blessing but disobedience brings trouble.

We may ask, is his love conditional or unconditional? He does unconditionally love the world and all its people, and desires good for all. However, the application of this love to individual human lives is conditional. Rejection of God and his laws, leads him to withhold the practical application of his love, yet he still tries to draw us back, even through the adverse times. He uses difficulties in our lives to get our attention.

His love for humanity is dramatically illustrated by Jesus in the parable of the Prodigal son. This parable illustrates a number of truths, such as that God has given us a free will and he does not overrule our choices. He allows difficult circumstances to try to bring us to our senses. He waits expectantly and hopefully for our return to his love. He forgives unconditionally when we turn back to him. He does not expect us to clean up our act and get rid of our filthy clothes. He organises that clean-up for us once we turn back to him.

Furthermore, much of what happens in this world is the result of the cosmic battle between good and evil, between God and Satan. It is God who calls the shots. He alone ultimately holds all the cards. Your life and mine either fit into God's plans or they do not. It is our choice, depending on how we respond to his claims on our lives.

The greatest demonstration of the love of God is expressed in the words of Jesus in John 3:16, *For God so loved the world that he gave his only son...* We can marvel at this revelation of God. Through all the trials and uncertainties of our individual human lives, God never stops loving us!

### **5.11. A God of justice?**

**Page: 441**

One common criticism of Christianity is the perception that there is no other way to God except through Jesus Christ. Although this statement is a central part of Christian teaching, it can be misleading if taken out of its true context. It is not true that all who have not accepted Jesus are automatically eternally lost. What the Bible does say, is that Jesus is the only way to God, because he has been appointed by God as the judge of all men at the last judgement.

Therefore, it is his decision as judge that will determine our eternal destiny. The crucial question is how will Jesus judge?

The Christian message is that humanity will be broadly in three groups at judgement day. First, those who have heard the message of God's love and forgiveness shown through Jesus Christ, and have responded positively. Second, those who have heard and understood the message about Jesus, but have rejected it. Third, those who have never heard, or have heard it in such a distorted manner that Jesus was never clearly revealed to them. According to the words of Jesus, many in this third group will still find mercy at judgment day.

In other words, some who never heard of Jesus, yet responded positively to whatever revelation of God given to them, and responded positively to their God-given conscience, may discover that they have been given access to heaven. However, they will also discover that their judge is Jesus, and he alone has the authority to pardon them, and this pardon is only possible because of what he achieved for mankind at Calvary's cross.

All biblical descriptions of judgement day emphasise that we will be judged according to 'what we have done'. However, the words of Jesus make it clear that what we have done will be judged in the light of what we knew we should have done. Amazingly, Jesus said it will be better for the men of Sodom on judgement day, than those of cities that witnessed his miracles but did not repent from their sins. At judgement day the balances will be balanced and all will see that our God is a God of love, mercy and justice.

The Bible also emphasises that those who have, during this life, accepted Jesus into their lives as saviour and Lord, will not have to face the same sort of judgment as other people. They will also be judged by Jesus, according to what they have done with the gifts and abilities God has given to them, but this judgement is to determine rewards in heaven, not to determine their eternal destiny. The rest of humanity will be judged to determine whether or not their actions reflected a desire to respond to the revelation of God that was given to them. However, only God knows the precise criteria that Jesus will use.

How does the justice of God match up to some of the Old Testament events that seemed so harsh? Jesus explained that God has two destinies for every person. The first relates to our destinies while here on earth, for a few fleeting years of mortality. The second relates to our eternal destinies, when the Creator will balance the balances. He will judge all of us according to what we did while here on earth, but this will be judged in the light of what we knew we should have done, and in the light of the opportunities we had, or the opportunities we did not have.

What we did, or did not do, will be a clear commentary on whether or not we had faith in God. We are told in the Bible that we are 'saved' by faith. However, the sort of faith spoken about is a quality of faith that leads to action towards God and action for God.

It is most rash of any person to accuse God of any injustice, because none of us has yet experienced our ultimate destiny. Thus, when Christianity says that Jesus is the only way to God, this means that he is the judge of all mankind, and the basis for any pardon granted is what Jesus achieved at Calvary's cross. Therefore, people who lived before Jesus Christ, such as Abraham and all those from other ages and religions, will also stand before Jesus as judge.

The judge will judge justly, but the judge is Jesus and it is his right to pardon anyone he chooses, but such pardon is only possible on the basis of what he achieved when he died for the sins of the world.

Those who have received the greatest revelation about God, but have rejected it in their minds or through their actions, are those who most need to fear their inevitable appointment with the Jesus of Calvary's cross and the resurrection.

Some people struggle to reconcile the God revealed in the Old Testament (Jewish Bible), with the same God revealed in the New Testament. From the writings of Moses it is clear that some instructions, such as the Ten Commandments, were received directly from God. Some of the other rules and regulations were Moses' interpretation of God's revelations, as they applied to specific human situations.

For instance, the Mosaic rule allowing a man to write a certificate of divorce if he was displeased with his wife. Jesus commented on this, "*Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away. It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law. But at the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate*". Jesus was saying that some of the laws of Moses were written to meet specific needs at the time.

Jesus brought a greater revelation of God than that available to Moses. However, some of the harsh actions recorded in the Old Testament were apparently instructed by God. We can only understand these if we realise that his long-term goals justify the means.

The Canaanite nations were driven from the land and destroyed because they had become corrupt and depraved. Their removal was part of God's plan to keep Israel as a monotheistic witness to the world. However, the people destroyed at God's instruction will all stand before the judgement throne of God at judgement day. Here they will discover that the events they experienced here on earth were only a small part of the total picture. They will be judged according to what they did, but what they did will be judged in the light of what they knew they should have done.

The revelations given to Moses and the Israelites, formed a basis of instruction in God's holiness and un-approachable-ness, except via very specific procedures and sacrifices. Jesus opened up a 'new and living way' into God's presence. This unmerited favour (grace) shown by God, through Jesus Christ, can only be understood when we fully grasp the awesome majesty of the Creator.

The fact that we, creatures of dust and rebellion, can now approach this awesome being, is a revelation of the Grace of God. The Old Testament history, laws and sacrifices, were all a shadow of things to come. The death of Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice for sins. He fulfilled the 'law and the prophets'.

### **5.13. Morality: Absolute and relative.**

**Page: 453**

All mankind have a conscience that tells them that some actions are right and others wrong. This is modified by culture and upbringing, but all of us make choices that we instinctively classify as good or bad. We also need to accept that some morality can be relative. For instance, killing your neighbour is almost universally looked upon as being unjustified, but in times of war the attitude often changes.

Thus, in one circumstance I might quote 'love your neighbour as yourself' as the reason why I should treat my neighbour kindly, help him if in need, and not kill him for his possessions. However, come a situation where my family or nation

are threatened by a ruthless aggressor, then I might quote this same 'love your neighbour as yourself' as my main motivation for taking up arms to defend my family, my neighbours and my nation.

But, is there an absolute standard of morality? Some people mistakenly try to apply Einstein's Theory of Relativity to moral issues. Einstein was horrified by this misinterpretation of his discoveries and said "relativity is for physics, not ethics".

Probably the most widely used basis for moral judgments is that summarised in the 10 commandments. First: You must have no other gods before me. However, even within Christianity we find situations where 'sacred objects' or dead 'saints' or even the mother of Jesus, can take precedence over the one true God.

Second: You must not make a graven image. As soon as people start to attribute supernatural powers to a statue or other symbol, or lucky charm or relics, or a crucifix, they open themselves up to deception.

Third: You must not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Fourth: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Mankind suffer if they do not have one day of rest per week. Fifth: Honour your father and mother. Sometimes this is hard if children have grown up in dysfunctional families. However, an essential step in emotional healing is to forgive our parents.

Sixth: You must not kill. This refers to murder, since there are situations where war is justified, such as against Hitler in the Second World War. However, other forms of killing, such as abortion, can fall under the classification of murder.

Seventh: You must not commit adultery (sleeping around). God knows that this is not in the long-term best interests of humanity.

Eighth: You must not steal. Taking money from God-seekers, to line our own pockets, is the worst form of stealing known to man. Ninth: You must not bear false witness against your neighbour. This includes all forms of scandal, slander, idle talk, deliberate exaggerations and distortions of the truth. Tenth: You must not covet. This commandment turns all the others from outward legal codes to inward moral standards.

If God revealed his standards for humanity then these have to be considered as absolute. A philosophy that refuses to accept absolutes soon leads to tolerance of every view, and there soon develops a blurring of right and wrong.

In the political dimension, the most just system known to mankind is actually democracy. Free elections, freedom of speech, freedom of religious belief and expression, the rule of law, independence of the judiciary and a legal system based on internationally recognised human rights. A true democracy should give equal rights to men and women, and should protect children from abuse. However, freedom of speech has good and bad dimensions. There is a need for some limitations to what people can say and promote.

#### **5.14. Re-incarnation.**

**Page: 463**

Christians do not believe in re-incarnation because the Bible states, *it is appointed for man once to die and after that the judgment.* The whole concept also has logical problems. First: If I live this life, and develop a personality and memories, it is highly unsatisfactory to come back as someone who normally is

unaware of details of his or her previous life. I might just as well have passed into oblivion when I died.

Second: There are more people alive today than the total alive in all previous ages. There must be a chronic shortage of human spirits waiting to receive new bodies.

Third: Who decides where you and I return for our next life? If it is God, why would he initiate a process that must have continued for millions of years without achieving any noticeable advance in human morality?

Fourth: I hate to think of the terrible fate awaiting those spirits that have not yet reached the final state before our Earth is burnt up by our dying sun.

The Christian message is far more satisfying and likely from a logical viewpoint. Furthermore, belief in re-incarnation has led to undesirable social ills, such as the caste system in Hindu cultures. All the major humanitarian advances of recent centuries sprang from the Biblical tradition and mainly from Christianity.

## **Part 6: HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY**

### **6.1. The shames of historical Christianity.**

**Page: 467**

I believe that many people are agnostics or atheists, or have turned to other faiths, because of what they see in the most evident structures and actions of the Christian church down through the centuries. Since this book is an attempt to re-create faith in the God of the Bible, and in Yeshua (Jesus), it becomes essential to face this issue and to determine how it was that some of Christendom has arrived at this sad position. Also, so-called Christian countries have produced a flood of corruption and moral decay.

The first 300 years of Christianity were glorious and uncorrupted. However, after it became the state religion, it was soon corrupted beyond recognition. We saw new doctrines, physical persecution and death to dissidents, the Inquisition, the crusades and forceful conversions to Christianity. After the Reformation, in spite of a partial return to basic Christianity, there were cases where Protestant 'churches' also sanctioned killing of people who differed from their views.

Anti-Semitism within churches, only became prominent after the second century, largely promoted by the Roman Catholic Church, but later continued under Luther and some other 'reformers'. In our times, the church has been rocked by revelations of widespread sexual abuse of children by priests and the realisation that this is no new phenomenon; it was just effectively covered up in the past.

The immense wealth locked up in churches is another reason for people turning away from Christianity. This is not just the Roman Catholic Church, but also some Protestant mass media evangelists. Many attempts have been made to unite churches. However, this is impossible unless each is prepared to set aside their 'traditions' and return to the Bible as their ultimate authority in matters of faith and doctrine.

Many pagan symbols and beliefs became incorporated into Christianity. Early Christians developed 'creeds' to summarise their faith. The Roman Catholics added to these, including in 1854, the Papal Definition of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. This elevated her to such a level that it reinforced

the practice of praying to her as an intermediary between man and God. The crowning event of Pope Pius IX's reign was the Vatican Council of December 8, 1869. They adopted the doctrine of Papal Infallibility. This means that whenever the Pope speaks 'ex cathedra' such pronouncements are infallible, and so become a fundamental part of Christian faith and doctrine. The Ecumenical Council in 1950 adopted a new view of Mary, proclaiming that she never died, but was taken straight to heaven and is now Queen of heaven and earth.

However, fortunately we do find many wonderful Christians in all the diversity of Christianity's structures. Within the Roman Catholic Church there is a refreshing move of God amongst many of the faithful. However, the call to all Christians today is to return to their roots and discard the traditions and errors that have been adopted over the centuries.

If the leadership and members of traditional churches are not prepared to go back to the Bible and the structure and beliefs of the first Christians, then I believe the call of God to this generation of Christians is, *"Come out of her my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes"* (Revelation 18:4-5).

## **6.2. The first Christians.**

**Page: 480**

What was early Christianity like? The first Christians were putting into practice the words of Jesus and the words of his first Apostles. Christianity was a loving and caring community that spanned all races, and cultures and expanded like a wildfire across the Roman Empire, not by force of arms, but by the witness of changed lives. There were no needy people amongst the believers and they had a strong social conscience towards non-believers.

The New Testament made it clear how to become a Christian, including repentance towards God, belief in Jesus and who he is, baptism of believers by immersion under water, and receiving the indwelling Holy Spirit. There was an emphasis on caring for the needs of others, on honesty, and especially honesty with money matters. Early Christians would be horrified if suddenly exposed to much of modern Christianity.

## **6.3. The first church.**

**Page: 484**

The hallmarks of early Christianity were simplicity, community, evangelism and love. It had little formal organisation, maintained no church buildings or membership rolls, taught easy to understand doctrines, and followed a plan of financing activities by personal giving. Initially the Apostles, who were mainly those disciples who had been with Jesus from the start, were afforded special status. This was because the early Christians realised that they were uniquely able to pass on the teachings of Jesus at a time before anything had been put to writing. However, very soon each local congregation of believers obtained the writings found in the New Testament Bible. This meant that it was no longer necessary to have an Apostle present to give authority to the gatherings.

The New Testament writers described how the Christians met and how their gatherings were participation meetings, where each believer was encouraged

to share needs, answers to prayers, insights into the Bible, and to relay spiritual insights .

## **Part 7: BASIC CHRISTIANITY.**

### **7.1. My understanding of Christianity. Page: 489**

None of the conclusions reached in this book are inconsistent with the Bible. However, in places this reconciliation is only possible once we are prepared to look at legitimate alternative translations of some key passages. When this is done, the Bible can be harmonised with modern scientific discoveries.

The following chapters give my personal understanding of Christianity. In order to reach these conclusions I have discarded some traditions and additions to basic Christianity, that have arisen since the time of Jesus and the first Christians.

#### **7.1.1. The Creator. Page: 490**

There is only one supreme Creator of all things, but he is referred to by various names. In various language translations of the bible, we have different names. In English we call him God, in French Dieu, in Swahili Mungu. I am sure that the Creator knows and understands when you or I are directing praise, worship or requests to him, no matter what name we use. However, he also knows if our concept of the Creator is correct or in error.

He is the Eternal Spirit, independent of time and locality. He guided evolution by operating within the Timeless Dimension, and by imposing 'initial conditions' onto the apparent chaos of the sub-atomic world. Our God does not fill gaps in knowledge. He is intimately involved with every process and event in the Universe. This is because all matter is held together by the quantum dimension of reality. This is the powerhouse of the Universe and God controls it.

Because God operates within the Timeless Dimension, revealed to us by quantum physics, he is independent of time and locality and is aware of every detail of events throughout the Universe, and instantaneously. Because he is independent from time, this means he can move to any moment of our time experience, past or future, and can be present throughout the Universe simultaneously!

#### **7.1.2. Voluntary limitations to his power. Page: 491**

The Creator chose to limit himself in various ways. For instance, he created spiritual beings called angels in a way that made them immortal. This placed limitations on how God could deal with a rebellion amongst the angels. He could not destroy them. He also appears to have limited his power by deciding to create a Universe just right for humanity. This is because both mankind and angels were created with 'free will' and this led to rebellion in the Universe and the need for God to initiate a very costly way of rescuing humanity from being a part of the rebellion camp.

He has also limited his role on Earth, in so far that he has delegated responsibilities to mankind to rule the Earth. Mankind have largely failed in their mandate to rule wisely and so their selfishness has led to much sadness, destruction of the environment, wars and many other painful consequences.

### **7.1.3. The Garden of Eden and mortality.**

**Page: 493**

Adam was created mortal. God then 'breathed' into the living Adam his Holy Spirit, and Adam became a spiritually aware creature in an Eternal Life relationship with his Creator. God then educated Adam with the first complex language, followed by other instruction.

He then 'genetically engineered' Eve from a part of Adam, and brought her into the same Eternal Life relationship and the same new spiritual awareness. He then subjected them both to a test; a demonstration to show that mankind are not capable of keeping the laws of God. When they disobeyed a simple command, they 'sinned' and so lost their close Eternal Life relationship with their Creator.

Physical death was not the issue here, since mankind were created mortal. When God said to Adam that disobedience would cause 'death', *on the day that he disobeyed*, this was clearly not referring to physical death. They lived for many more years.

The New Testament writers also equate the imparting of the Holy Spirit to people, as the imparting of Eternal Life to them. This view of Eternal Life, being different from physical immortality, is also necessitated by scientific discoveries, such as pre-Adamic humanity and the existence of death right from the start of life on earth. There is also the biblical evidence for pre-Adamic people.

This understanding of Adam's mortality does not have to make any fundamental change to the Gospel message. Irrespective of whether Adam was initially mortal or immortal, through Jesus Christ we, mere mortals, have the promise of Eternal Life.

### **7.1.4. God's plan of salvation.**

**Page: 497**

The moment Adam and Eve disobeyed a God-given command, they automatically found themselves part of the cosmic battle between God and the rebellious angels led by Satan. Satan now had a 'legal right' over them, because God had pronounced a law stating that rebellion against his authority meant banishment from his presence. We are told that God knew it would turn out this way, 'even before the creation of the world'. Therefore he already had a secret plan to rescue humanity from the fate determined for the rebellious angels. For, *God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son, that whoever believes (places their trust in him) shall not perish, but will have Eternal Life.*

At Calvary Jesus reversed the Garden of Eden failure. He died in our place. Only he could do this, because he was the one who passed the law. That law stated that disobedience leads to spiritual death (separation from his presence). Therefore the judge took upon himself the penalty of the law he created. He, the guilt-less one, took upon himself the penalty for sin. Therefore, he has bought the right to pardon any of humanity who appeal to him for pardon. In this way, the Eternal Life, lost in the Garden of Eden, is regained at the Calvary cross. We still

all die physically, but we now have the same Eternal Life that Adam and Eve had before they sinned.

#### **7.1.5. Eternal existence and Eternal Life.**

**Page: 501**

There is a clear difference between eternal existence and Eternal Life. All humanity and angels have eternal spirits. A spirit cannot fully express itself without a body. The new body promised by Jesus is the gift of the Creator to those who find mercy at judgment day. The Eternal Life, that will possess the new 'spiritual body, and will exist in the presence of the Creator, is described as LIFE. Eternal existence, without a new spiritual body, and existing outside the presence of God, is described as DEATH.

#### **7.1.6. How to inherit Eternal Life.**

**Page: 502**

The New Testament makes it clear that entrance into the Creator's grace (his unmerited favour) is a free gift. All we have to do is repent of our rebellion and ask him for his forgiveness. He then forms a renewed bond with out Spirit, referred to by Jesus as being 'born again'. Then the merit of Jesus' death on Calvary is applied to us. It is through the merit of Jesus, as our substitute, redeemer, and intercessor, that we can now approach with boldness into the very presence of the awesome Creator. It is in his merit that we can call the awesome Creator 'our Father' and even 'daddy'. It is through Jesus that we enter into an 'Eternal Life' relationship.

#### **7.1.7. A call to changed lives.**

**Page: 505**

Once we have received this free gift of forgiveness and Eternal Life, our Creator calls us to a life of change, and to a life of service. If we fail to do the good works that God has planned in advance for us to do, we will have to give an account. We ought to want to do them out of gratitude for the free gift of salvation.

#### **7.1.8. Baptism and sacraments.**

**Page: 506**

Baptism of children only leads to salvation if the child, once of age, makes a personal decision to accept Jesus Christ as saviour and Lord. Baptism was meant to be an outward and visible sign of repentance and acceptance of 'new life' through what was achieved by Jesus at Calvary. Baptism is not a 'sacrament'. In other words, it is not an act that 'of itself' brings salvation.

The whole question of sacraments needs to be looked at in the light of Bible teaching. The New Testament states that salvation (being born again) involves repentance towards God and faith in Jesus and what he has done at Calvary. Baptism under water is as sign of being washed clean by God and becoming identified with his death. It is a sign of being buried, or dying to our old life as we are immersed, and raised to new life in Christ as we are raised out of the water.

Baptism does not save us from the consequences of sin. It is the first sign of obedience to our new Lord and is a symbol of cleansing and resurrection to new

life. It is repentance and faith that lead to God forgiving our sins, and the convert then receives the Holy Spirit into his/her life. Baptism is a symbol of the work of the Trinity God.

Salvation involves our repentance towards Father God, our acceptance of the redemptive work of the only begotten Son of God at Calvary's cross, and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. That is why Jesus instructed his followers to baptise converts "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit".

In the third century after Jesus, the church started to change baptism into a sacrament, but it was only in the fifth century when it was decided that baptism was essential for salvation. This was based on Augustine's formulation of the doctrine of Original Sin. He argued that infants are born sinful and therefore subject to the wrath of God. Augustine was also the first of the church 'fathers' to formulate a 'doctrine of sacraments'. He argued that the sacraments of baptism and communion were essential for salvation.

These views on baptism and sacraments are not, in my opinion, found in the Bible.

### **7.1.9. Original sin?**

**Page: 508**

I may initially horrify some Christians when I say that I do not see the doctrine of 'original sin' in the Bible, but rather the principle that sin is breaking of a God-given law. The Jewish understanding is not one of Original Sin. Furthermore, if all mankind since Adam are born 'sinful', this creates an enormous problem with the sinless-ness of Jesus Christ. We read that he was fully man, in addition to being fully God and he was tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. The whole Gospel message centres on the sinless-ness of Christ, enabling him to be a guiltless substitute for mankind. If, through his human ancestry, Jesus was born with 'original sin', he could not have been sinless!

The one Bible passage that superficially may suggest 'original sin' is Romans 5. However, my understanding of this does not support the doctrine. There is a big difference between being born with a tendency to sin and being born a sinner. We do all sin, because we are all selfish by nature. However, this does not mean that we are born sinners. The fifth century church formulated this doctrine of 'original sin' to try and bolster its concept of baptism.

Another problem with this doctrine is that it does not take into account pre-Adamic humanity. They were not held responsible for wrong actions because they had not yet received any law from God (sin is breaking a God-given law). Furthermore, if pre-Adamic mankind did not yet have a complex language, as was given by God to Adam, they would not have had the means of understanding spiritual things.

Adam's genetics were almost certainly the same, or very similar, to that of pre-Adamic mankind. The only significant difference was that Adam now had the capacity to make moral choices. His failure to keep a God-given instruction resulted in the first sin. This did not change his genetics; it only changed his spiritual standing in relation to the Creator.

In other words, Adam and Eve did not pass on 'sins guilt' through their ova and sperm, to following generations. The only thing that was passed on was the spiritual legacy of the Garden of Eden failure to keep a law of God. They passed on

the practical effects of losing their close Eternal Life relationship with God. All of humanity suffered from this estrangement between man and God, an estrangement that can only be overcome through the merit of Jesus on the cross.

Each baby is born into a world that is full of sinful actions. However, it does not inherit sin, but only the tendency to selfishness and this inevitably leads to sinful actions. A child only becomes fully responsible for its actions when it reaches an age of responsibility. God takes into account what we do, but also what we knew we should have done. This is a principle repeated in various ways throughout the scriptures.

#### **7.1.10. The communion celebration.**

**Page: 514**

The early Christians celebrated this memorial as part of a normal meal. It was meant to be a constant reminder to Christians of the death of Jesus and his blood shed for our salvation, and of his promised return. However, by 153 AD the celebration with the common meal had ceased.

For a full understanding of this memorial, we need to compare the various accounts found in the New Testament. The bread never actually becomes the body of Christ and the wine never becomes his blood. Once again, the simple truths understood and practiced by the early Christians, became complicated, distorted, mystified, and formulated into 'sacraments' and ceremonies only performed by 'authorised' people.

Furthermore, the simple truths understood by the first Christians, have become distorted to the extent that they require us to 'commit intellectual suicide' if we accept them. How can we accept that plain bread becomes the literal flesh of Jesus and plain wine becomes his literal blood? Jesus told us to eat the bread and drink the wine as simple reminders of his body broken and his blood shed.

This ceremony is not a 'sacrament', meaning something that 'of itself' imparts spiritual blessing. The spiritual blessing is only obtained by those who celebrate this memorial with the correct attitude – a humble and grateful remembrance of what was achieved by Jesus at Calvary. We are also told in the scriptures that those who participate in this memorial without the correct motives, actually suffer adverse spiritual consequences, sometimes resulting in physical sickness. I personally believe this is not because of some magical effect caused by the bread and wine, but because hypocrisy towards God and man leads to internal conflicts that often do lead to stress-related sicknesses. It also leads to estrangement from God and this has physical consequences.

#### **7.1.11. Divorce.**

**Page: 517**

Divorce is only one of many types of human failings. The attitude of some churches towards divorce is in conflict with the rest of the Gospel message. Those churches that deny divorcees full rights as church members, or deny repentant divorcees the right to re-marry, are acting contrary to the repentance and forgiveness principles found in the scriptures.

#### **7.1.12. The role of women.**

**Page: 517**

Women played a major role in the Old Testament times and increasingly so in New Testament times. There are clear statements placing men and women on an equal basis and, in spite of cultural beliefs of the times, women took a role in spiritual activities of the early church, including prophesying. Peter's first sermon referred to the fact that God had, *poured out his spirit on men and women and all would prophesy*.

It was only in the third century that church structures introduced institutionalised limitations on the roles of women. However, there are biblical references that emphasise, although women can perform all the spiritual tasks that men can, there is nevertheless a clear instruction that men are meant to be the final authority in families. This is not a dictatorial role, but one of love, respect and consideration of the woman's views. Furthermore, the normal biblical principles governing 'church functioning' is that men should take a lead, but again, not as dictatorial dominance but due to a God-given characteristic that men are, on average, genetically programmed to be leaders.

### **7.1.13. Physical healing**

**Page: 519**

Much confusion is caused when Christians base their 'theology of healing' primarily on Isaiah 53. When it says, *by His wounds we are healed*, Peter relates this to our being 'healed' from the penalty of sin, not to physical healing (1 Peter 2:24). In Matthew's Gospel, the writer quotes this Isaiah chapter, as evidence that Jesus was the Messiah.

God created all life to be mortal and so we are impacted by things that can harm our mortal bodies. Dramatic physical healings do occur in our days, but not automatically on command. We need to follow the example of Jesus. He only did what he 'saw' his Father doing. Any Christian praying for the sick must ask for insight and wisdom to know what to pray for in each individual situation.

The Bible gives examples of why God does not always heal us physically. His main concern is for our Eternal Life destiny and our character and faith preparation for that destiny.

### **7.2. My summarised 'Statement of faith'**

**Page: 522**

This chapter is hard to summarise, since it is already a summary. I suggest you read the chapter. It is possible to understand the Christian message much better once we accept that this Universe is involved in a cosmic battle between God and Satan, between good and evil. God provided mankind with a way of escape from the rebellion side, through the death and resurrection of himself on the Cross.

This same Jesus has been appointed to judge the living and the dead, at the last Judgment. All who find mercy and are granted Eternal Life, will discover that, irrespective of whether they ever heard of Jesus, it is solely through his merit and his decision that we are saved from 'eternal death', which is that state of eternal existence outside the presence of God.

### **7.3. Joining the winning team.**

**Page: 532**

Our most significant choices in life relate to our destinies in the Timeless Dimension. We must choose which side we are on. A personal experience of God's reality, the power to speak effectively in the name of Jesus, the blessings promised to Christians, and the answers to prayer, all hang on this question: Have I made a firm and determined decision to follow Jesus?

It is only when we make this decision that we start to experience the great and awesome victory that God won on the Cross at Calvary. There the battle was won against the rebellion of Satan and his demons. Now the fighting still continues, but the Devil knows it is just a mopping up operation. It is like the Second World War landing on the Normandy beaches. That was the turning point of the war.

Becoming a Christian does not mean joining any particular church, or saying any magic formula, or going through any ritual or ceremony, or paying any money, or having any 'sacrament' given to you or said over you. . You do not need a priest to introduce you to God. You do not even need anyone else to pray for you. Becoming a Christian is a personal transaction between you and God. He hears everything you say to him. He even hears your unspoken words and thoughts!

Being a Christian is not to follow rules and regulations. It is a personal relationship with God. As this relationship grows, so does our love for God. We then find that we want to bring our lives into line with the things he wants us to do.

Why is the Christian 'gospel' good news? Basically, it gives us meaning and purpose in life. We have an eternal destiny! We also have a calling on our lives, to do good works *prepared in advance for us to do*. This chapter includes a suggested prayer of surrender to the claims of our Creator over our lives. I also summarise the normal sequence of events seen in the early Christian church.

The suggested prayer is as follows, but you can use your own words. It is our heart attitude that is the vital issue.

"Great God, you created me and gave me this amazing chance to be part of an Eternal Destiny.

You have loved me enough to give yourself for me on the cross of Calvary.

There you defeated Satan's claim over my life and destiny, by dying in the place of sinners like me.

God, I know I am a sinner. I have often failed to do what I knew was right.

I stand guilty in my own eyes, but also in yours.

I ask you to forgive me, just as you have promised to do.

You forgive me on the basis of what you did when you died in my place on the cross.

I now gratefully accept your free and unmerited forgiveness.

Thank you so much for making it possible to receive forgiveness.

Since you have promised to forgive me, I can now also forgive myself.

Because you have forgiven me, although I do not deserve it, in like manner I can now see my way open to forgive those whom I have been unable to forgive. They may not deserve my forgiveness, but neither did I deserve yours!

Thank you so much Jesus for dying for me.

Thank you Father God for the cross and all that it means.

I am truly sorry for my sins, both against you and other people.  
 I can think of many specific sins.  
 Thank you so much for forgiving me!  
 Lord God, I know that I am weak, but you have promised to be with me and help me to overcome the world with its false values, the flesh that so easily leads me astray, and Satan who tries to trip me up.  
 I do want to follow you from this day forward.  
 I want to be loyal to your 'army' and your kingdom.  
 I ask for your Holy Spirit to fill my life and to empower me day by day, to march in step with your best plan for my life.  
 I want to grow in my personal relationship with you as my Saviour and my Lord.  
 I resolve to spend time reading your word, learning to pray, learning to listen to you, learning to serve others, meeting often with other committed Christians for fellowship, for teaching, and for service to others.  
 Give me a passion for you, a passion to discover more of your truth.  
 Help me to find a group of Christians who are truly on fire for you".

My friend, if you can agree with this sort of prayer and have said it yourself, then, whether or not you feel any great emotion, you have just entered into the family of God through the merit of Jesus Christ. He has now recorded this event in his eternal records. He has become your PERSONAL saviour. You have just started a personal relationship with God!

The scriptures say that you should now tell someone about your decision. If you are in a country where Christians are persecuted, maybe write to us, but also ask God to lead you to other secret believers in your area.

#### **7.4. Christianity is a missionary faith.**

**Page: 540**

There are important reasons why we need to tell others about our faith. It is an outworking of 'love your neighbour as yourself'. It enables removal of heavy loads of guilt, it gives meaning to life, removes the fear of death, gives power to overcome habits and sins, can transform society, it is a direct command from Jesus, and it is part of God's great plan for humanity and the world.

#### **7.5. A life worth living.**

**Page: 542**

Living the Christian life, in close fellowship with God and your fellow believers, will be an exciting experience. Furthermore, all these experiences are part of our preparation for Eternal Life in the Timeless Dimension. Wow!

In this chapter, I give one example of this Christian adventure, as it happened while I was climbing Mt Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

#### **NOTE FROM AUTHOR**

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