

Interpreting science from the perspective of religion

The dinosaur evolved, lived, became extinct and was fossilized during a few literal hours on earth!

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Abstract

According to the Christian theology, the universe, the earth and life were only created by God about 7500 years ago. God created the universe, the laws of the universe and life. Yet, according to scientific theories and facts, the age of the universe is around 13.7 billion years, the earth was formed about 4.5 billion years ago, life started on earth about 2.5 billion years ago and species evolved through natural selection over millions/billions of years. How can one reconcile these apparently irreconcilable differences? Can religion and science be reconciled at all? Some religious people just ignore the scientific evidences of evolution and most scientists reject and deny religious teachings outright. I think it is impossible to ignore the Dinosaur fossils and the associated ages determined by rigorous scientific methods such as carbon dating. I also think science cannot reasonably ignore religion because science still has far too many unanswered questions and is already starting to come to a dead end in many areas, including in physics. Therefore, we start by accepting the scientific theories and evidences and then work to find a way to find religious explanations, which is a new scientific paradigm proposed in this paper. This leads to a new insight: God completed millions/billions years of evolutionary processes in a few *literal* hours and days! God accelerated the evolutionary processes of biology, fossilization, geology and cosmology. The dinosaur evolved, lived, became extinct and was fossilized within a few literal hours! The interpretation of this leads to new and profound view.

Preface

Today science has become so powerful as to challenge the faiths of people, particularly in technologically advanced societies. Particularly, the scientific evidence of evolution, such as the ages of fossils as measured by scientific methods, has shaken the faiths of many. Although some of the ideas presented in this paper may appear to be naïve (and presented in not too good English), I believe that this paper challenges the prevailing view that science and religion are necessarily mutually exclusive and that scientific evidence disproves religion. In fact, I have discovered overwhelming, *direct* scientific evidences of God in physics since I wrote the first version of this paper [3][4][5][6][7][8]. Today I have much more *direct scientific evidence* of God than I had twelve years ago.

I wrote the first version of this paper about twelve years ago. Since then I have been doing fundamental research in theoretical physics, mainly on the speed of light, gravity, quantum phenomena and other related questions. After years of struggle with the daunting problem of absolute vs. relative motion and the speed of light, I was able to develop a very compelling model of the speed of light that, unlike all existing theories, can resolve the puzzles related to the speed of light. However, despite the successes, there were still gaps in my theory. Eventually, I found the missing link while working on an apparently unrelated problem in physics: quantum phenomena. Particularly, I discovered that the Which-Way quantum experiment was an overwhelming scientific evidence of God's *direct* intervention in the universe. The ramifications of this were far reaching, including the ultimate explanation of Albert Einstein's theory of constancy of the speed of light relative to all observers, and several quantum phenomena such as quantum entanglement, and even classical physics. When I wrote the first version of this paper in an attempt to find an explanation to evolution theory from the perspective of religion, I never imagined God's intervention in the operation of the universe to the extent I later discovered about His intervention in quantum phenomena. Therefore, one of the motivations to write this second version is to present this additional scientific evidence of God.

I have also included an additional interpretation which was not in the first version of this paper. It is not that I didn't think of this third interpretation when I wrote this paper twelve years ago. I chose not to include it because I was unable to clearly answer some questions that may arise from this interpretation. However, since the ideas presented in this paper are not meant to be complete and are only meant to show that possible alternative explanations exist and to present new ideas on which others can build, I have added a third interpretation in an attempt to reconcile the theory of evolution with religion.

Introduction

The discovery of the scientific theories on the origin and evolution of life and the universe was one of the achievements of science during the last century. These theories are supported by evidences, observations and scientific experiments. The apparent success of these theories has caused considerable controversies for decades because of their perceived conflict with religious teachings.

Different theories and explanations were developed to reconcile the conflict between the scientific theories and religious teachings about the origins and ages of the universe and life. The Young Earth creationism (YEC) is perhaps the most relevant theory to consider here. YEC attempts to give explanations to these differences.

The two well- known puzzles are:

1. If the earth is only a few thousand years old, why do we see the lights from distant stars ?
2. Why do we measure the ages of the earth and fossils to be billions and millions of years?

YEC's explanations are:

“God created the earth and the universe with the appearance of age” and

“ God created the stars with their light in transit “.

However, these explanations give rise to another problem: Why would God want the universe to *specifically* ‘appear’ that way and why would God create the star light in transit? YEC has no answer to these.

As a theist, I believe that we may not be able to completely comprehend creation of the universe by God. However, we may create theories, analogies, and models to interpret the scientific theories and facts even though we know that all theories are ultimately imperfect and need changes or modifications when we have deeply understood them and their limitations, which often takes a long time. But why would we need such theories, analogies or models?

The scientific theories about the origins and ages of life and the universe are supported by observations and are therefore impossible to reject rationally. The influence of science in society has become so powerful that science has become a ‘justification’ to reject religion. By definition, however, science cannot be a reason to reject religion; only our own free will (the existence of which is still one of the most controversial topics among atheists) determines our choice. Reconciliation of science with religion not only mitigates these problems but also opens a new way of doing science.

But how can one reconcile these apparently irreconcilable conflicts? Can religion and science be reconciled at all? Some religious people just ignore the scientific evidences of evolution

and most scientists reject and deny religious teachings outright. I think it is impossible to ignore the Dinosaur fossils and their ages as determined by rigorous scientific methods such as carbon dating. I also think science cannot reasonably ignore religion because science still has far too many unanswered questions and is already starting to come to a dead end in many areas, particularly in physics. Therefore, we start by accepting the scientific theories and evidences and then work to find a way to find religious explanations, which is a new scientific paradigm. The interpretations presented in this paper and their implications should not be interpreted as suggesting on what actually happened, which is a divine act that may be beyond our comprehension. The two related questions that this paper attempts to answer are:

1. Why do scientific dating methods show ages of billions and millions of years and why do we see the lights from distant stars if the earth was only created about 7500 years ago?
2. How can evolution theory be interpreted in religion?

Billions of years vs. thousands of years

Why do we measure ages of millions/ billions of years and why do we see lights from distant stars if life and the universe were only created 7500 years ago?

One might argue that the theory of biological evolution could be seen as a fairly established theory both by its conceptual coherence and by evidences of fossil records. However, this would be inconsistent with religious teachings that life and the universe were only created thousands years ago.

However, if we assume the correctness of the scientific theories and facts, it may be possible to figure out the reconciliation idea: **God completed millions and billions years of evolutionary processes in a few *literal* hours and days!** The dinosaur species existed for around 165 million years on earth according to science. However, according to the Genesis, God completed creation of all life in three literal days. Therefore, the whole dinosaur species existed on our earth for only a few *literal* hours. **The dinosaur evolved, lived, became extinct and was fossilized in a few *literal* hours.** This means God 'speeded up' the evolutionary processes hundreds of billions times. God did not speed up biological evolution in isolation, He speeded up all the evolutionary processes in the universe: biological, fossilization, geological and cosmic. The 'SPEEDING UP' can be interpreted in two different ways:

1. The first interpretation

The first interpretation is to think of an analogy with increasing the speed of a CD player. Suppose the speed is increased one thousand times. You wouldn't be able to clearly see anything in the film you are watching. Imagine increasing the speed a billion times!

To interpret the scientific theories from the perspective of Genesis, we divide creation works into two: creation in the heavens/space and creation on the land, the sea and air. According to Genesis the six creation days were literal days.

On Sunday God created the heavens and the Earth ex nihilo¹. The universe was created in its initial form on Sunday. When the universe was just created on Sunday, the age of the universe might have been, roughly, some value less than 11.2 (13.7 minus 2.5) billion years. (2.5 billion being the age of life on earth). God completed the whole evolution with astronomical speed.

On Monday, God created space, dividing between the two waters: the heavenly waters and the sea.

On Tuesday, God speeded up the evolution on earth separating land and sea and oceans through geological processes. He also speeded up the evolution of plants on land up to the emergence of plants on land.

On Wednesday, God speeded up the cosmic evolutionary processes up to the formation of the stars, galaxies, the sun and the moon. The cosmic evolutionary processes might have been completed up to the 13.7 billion years point, which is the age of our universe estimated today. Thus, the evolutionary processes on earth might have been some billion years (less than 2.5 billion) behind those of the heavens/ cosmic.

On Thursday, God speeded up the evolutionary processes on earth up to the evolution/ evolving of sea/water creatures and birds. The evolution of land plants (which started on Monday) may have continued on this day too.

On Friday, God speeded up the evolutionary processes on earth up to the evolution of land animals, the animals we see on earth today. On this day, sea creatures and land plants also continued to finally evolve to those living on land and in the sea/oceans today. On Friday, all evolutionary processes had already been completed: biological, fossilization, geological and cosmological. On this day the dinosaur and many ancient animals and plants would have already become extinct and their bodies fossilized. On Friday, God created Adam and Eve Himself in His image. Adam and Eve are not results of evolution according to religious teaching.

Note that, according to the interpretations presented in this paper, God speeded up all evolutionary processes on earth at the same time: not only biological evolution, but also geological and fossilization. On the other hand, the cosmic evolution was going normal while evolution on earth was being speeded up and vice versa. The rotation and revolution of the earth should be normal on all days because all the six creation days were literal days. On each day, God completed evolutionary processes which would have taken millions and billions of years. And the dinosaur species, from its own perspective, existed for millions of years. However, all animals and plants would have lived in the day time, experiencing no nights.

To explain the two perspectives of time we may use an example. Suppose that you started living on creation Friday at 12 PM, at noon, and that there were already different kinds of animal species on earth. Suppose you had a dog and a cat and you lived in a hut. Then, after many

years, your dog and cat died normally. Then you continued to live for millions of years. Over million years you had changed your living sites and built and abandoned huts many times. You lived so long that you eventually forgot about your dog and cat completely. Then, after millions of years, you had a dog and a cat again (which evolved and were different from the ancient ones). For millions of years living in the day time, you never looked at your watch. Then one day you were AWAKENED suddenly and looked at your watch: it was only 2 PM, you were AWAKENED! Only two literal hours had passed since you started living! Almighty God! You KNEW that these were *real, literal* hours! Then you looked around: "How have I come to live in this hut! Two hours ago I was living in a different hut at a different place and had different kinds of dog and cat!" You would have never known what really happened between 12 PM and 2 PM. You would have no reference as your memory of the past had vanished because of the vast length of time that had passed. All you knew was you had different kinds of cat and dog two hours ago than those you had then. Your ancient hut, which you lived in two literal hours ago, could only be discovered by archaeology, if at all. And the remains of your ancient dog and cat had been fossilized.

2. The second interpretation

God created all life on earth (except humans) during three literal days through biological evolutionary processes which would have normally taken millions or billions of years. The dinosaur existed on earth for around 165 million years *from its own perspective*. *From God's perspective* the dinosaur existed for a few *literal* hours, between dawn and dusk, with the sun sweeping the sky only once. Of course, by definition God's perspective is not limited; we say this only to explain the two perspectives; only God can have both perspectives simultaneously. From the dinosaur's perspective, however, *the same sun* swept the sky billions times, resulting in billions of days and nights. Scientifically this is impossible to accept or understand. Spiritually it is possible to accept (but difficult to comprehend) because we believe nothing is impossible to God. However, this interpretation seems to contradict the Genesis because there seems to be no such implication there. However, this interpretation is interesting and may be developed further, so we will keep it.

Suppose you lived during the six days of creation week. When you got up in the morning of one of those six days, on creation Thursday, there were no fish, no birds, no land animals at all on the earth and you heard God saying He would create sea creatures and birds that day. There were already different kinds of plants on land, as they had been created (delivered by land as commanded by God) on Tuesday. So you waited until sunset to see birds and fish, but none appeared. You waited for one year, still no birds or fish appeared and you thought that God didn't keep His word. Then you continued to live for millions of years. During this era biological evolution continued, different sea creatures and birds evolving, old species becoming extinct, new species emerging, bodies of dead creatures being fossilized, evolutionary, fossilization and geological processes all working in parallel. Eventually you forgot all of your ancient history and what God said one morning millions of years ago. For you, the days and nights and everything were all normal.

Then one Thursday, at sun set, after living for millions of years, you discovered that (a revelation!) that day was *the same* day, the creation Thursday, on which God said He would create fish and birds millions of years ago! And 12 hours ago! God awakened you! Almighty God! You had a clear and fresh memory that He had said He would create birds and fish *in the morning of that same Thursday*. In the morning (you could clearly remember!) there were no fish, no birds, no sea creatures, but then, at sun set, you see them here and there. And the environment, the landscape, mountains, forests had drastically changed, due to geological processes, erosions, **but you clearly knew and felt it to be the same** area/landscape that existed in the morning, 12 literal hours ago! You had a clear and fresh memory of that morning as if you had never passed through millions of years! But you had no memory of what happened in between! What would you have felt? You would have felt as if you had never lived for millions of years and as if you had been dreaming the whole day. You would certainly have been a millions years old man. This can be interpreted as follows: even though you hadn't *really* lived for millions of years, you were biologically millions years old. The same may be true for the ages of fossils and rocks. During those millions of years you thought you lived very very long, but after AWAKENING you realized and felt you lived only for a single literal day.

The above interpretation can be applied to the creation of the heavens and the earth on Sunday, the separation of land and sea/oceans on Tuesday, and to all the events that took place from Sunday to Friday.

3. The third interpretation

The third interpretation is as follows.

The dinosaur never actually /physically existed and lived on the earth. The dinosaur evolved, lived, became extinct and was fossilized in the imagination of God. Suppose that the theory that life started from a single cell is correct. According to the third interpretation, therefore, the first living cell existed and evolved to all animal and plant life in the imagination of God.

An analogy would be as follows. Suppose that we knew all the laws and processes of formation of the universe and the first cell and its evolution into higher forms of life over millions and billions of years. Then we could create a simulation of all the laws and processes of the evolution on a supercomputer. The simulation starts from the first living cell and creates more and more complex forms of animal and plant life over millions of years in the simulation. Thus the dinosaur would come into existence at some point in the simulation, lives for millions of years in the simulation, becomes extinct according to the law of natural selection and fossilized after millions of years in the simulation.

Then suppose that at some point in the simulation, after millions of years in the simulation, the earth, with all the living creatures on it and a small model universe pops out of the computer, say with the size of a ball. Thus, this physical earth or universe would be just a

continuation of the simulation and the only difference would be that the processes are real and not simulation. The physical/real earth, living things and the universe start and continue from their last state in the simulation. The laws of the universe, the laws of life (evolution) etc. are exactly the same as the laws used in the simulation. Thus, by the time the model earth or model universe pop out of the computer and become physical, the dinosaur would become extinct and fossilized and only the animals and plants known to live on earth today can be seen. Ancient animals and plants that had long become extinct cannot be seen.

Therefore, the millions and billions of years of evolution of life and the universe were completed in the imagination of God. God created real animals and plants and the real universe after millions and billions of years of 'simulation'. Therefore, by the time the universe, the earth and living things were created (came into existence), many of the ancient animals would have become extinct and fossilized, and therefore ***only their fossils come into physical existence***. On the other hand, the animals as we know them today, for example the horse, 'lived' in the simulation and continued to live after creation also.

Young Earth creationism (YEC)

Returning to the Young Earth creationism (YEC) theory:

1. God created the earth and the universe with the appearance of age
2. God created the stars with their light in transit.

Thus, in this paper we have found an explanation to YEC's:

"God created the stars with their light in transit"

Thus, according to the third interpretation, the star lights were in transit when the universe was created (came into existence). The light travelled billions of years in God's imagination. In the computer simulation analogy we used above, the computer would simulate billions of years of propagation of light (by applying Maxwell's equations, for example), before the model universe finally pops out of the computer, by which time the star light would be already in transit.

The explanation to:

"God created the earth and the universe with the appearance of age"

is also straightforward. By the time the universe was created, it was already billions of years old. Although the universe hadn't *really* existed for billions of years, it was exactly as if it had existed for billions of years because the same laws applied to the universe when it was in the imagination of God and after it was actually created.

Which perspective of time is real? How can we know which perspective of time is real?

In the above two interpretations two perspective of time were shown. Which one is real ? Is it the millions years or the single literal day? Fossil ages of millions and billions years are not real, literal ages. They are illusions. This means that only God's perspective is real. Genesis tells us that

the days were literal days, so they were literal days. The state of evolution, fossilization and geological processes are equivalent to millions and billions years' processes from the perspective of the speed of these processes observed today. Scientists simply extrapolate the time needed for these processes to reach their present state by assuming that the rate of these processes has been constant throughout the history of the universe.

But how can we know real time? I think perhaps the only way we can know the reality of the million years vs. the single literal day is ***through our consciousness. We just know*** that one time perspective is real and the other one is illusion. If this is true, then, even an atheist scientist would have insisted it was really one literal week and not billions of years, after AWAKENING, if he had lived during the creation week to witness the creation of life and the universe by God, because he is a ***conscious*** being.

Therefore, the 7500 years of the Christian theology is true, literal time whereas the billions and millions years of science are simple extrapolations based on *currently observed rate* of these evolutionary processes and are illusions.

An analogy to the two perspectives of time would be to think of a person starting from some place and making a journey to another destination. He took a path which was 30,000 kilometers long to the destination. He might have travelled for 10 years before reaching his destination. And when he finally arrived after ten years, he thought that he was very far away from where he had started, but it immediately happened to him that he was almost *at the same place* that he started ten years ago! He noticed a mysterious path which was only 10 kilometers long to the same destination! What would he *feel*?!

Apparent Inconsistencies between fossil succession and Genesis and implications

When we look at the succession in fossil records [2], we see that typically the ages of the fossils are, from longest to shortest: snails, fish, some plants, mammals, birds. But, according to Genesis, plants were the first to be created, and birds were created before mammals. This apparent inconsistency might be related to the fact that Genesis tells us about the succession of creation, whereas fossil ages tell us about the succession of death. Therefore the difference of life expectancies could have brought these inconsistencies. Perhaps the life spans could have been millions of years, varying from species to species. Additionally the variation in the likelihood of fossilization of each species may have some limited role.

If all life evolved from a single cell, where did that first cell come from? What is soul?

Evolution theory tells us that all life evolved from a single cell about 3.5 billion years ago, but doesn't tell us how that first *living* cell came into existence in the first place.

According to science a living cell is nothing more than a collection of molecules arranged in a very complex way. Therefore, there would be no difference between a living cell and an identical cell that has just died. There is no such thing as soul, according to science.

I would like to make my own speculations as follows. God assembled the first cell from molecules

and conserved it for billions of years. When that cell was first created/assembled, it was nothing more than a collection of molecules arranged in a very complex way. Then over billions of years the cell (and its parts) gradually *learned* why it was created that way. All parts of the cell gradually learned their purpose in the cell and learned to work accordingly. In other words, the cell developed an immaterial soul over billions of years and became conscious. Further reasoning leads to the conclusion that even non-living matter has consciousness (only that the consciousness level is low) depending on the complexity. A cell has much higher level of consciousness than an atom because it is much more complex than an atom. If the atoms and molecules do not have life, then it would be impossible for a cell to have life. In other words, there are no non-living things in the universe.

This raises a question: can humans create a living cell by assembling molecules and conserving it for billions of years in the same way? I would say that God not only assembled and conserved that first cell, but also taught it (with love) to be alive and its purpose (and the purpose of its parts), for billions of years. Do humans have the love, kindness and patience to teach the cell they assemble, for billions of years? The love of God is so great that He can bring a non-living cell to life.

Compare two persons: one is very kind and the other is unkind. The kind person can make other people do whatever he/she wants them to do because people obey him/her. On the contrary, no one obeys the unkind person. God's love and kindness is so great and infinite that even non-living things such as atoms and molecules obey Him. Can humans have such kindness and love as to bring a non-living cell to life?! We know that we humans do not even have the kindness and love to other fellow humans, let alone bring a non-living cell to life.

Also, the design of the cell must be perfect for it to develop life. A car or a computer can never be conscious even over billions of years because their design can never be perfect. On the other hand, the design of God is so perfect that the purpose of the cell and its parts are self-evident.

Conclusion

Finally, which of the three interpretations is 'correct'? Are these interpretations *correct* at all?

The purpose of this paper is to show possible ways of interpreting science from the perspective of religion, and is not to explain what actually happened. So this paper is not strictly concerned with the *correctness* of the interpretations.

On the other hand, we can describe some limitations of the interpretations. The first interpretation, although simple to understand, has some problems. From scientific point of view one of the questions that arise is: if the dinosaur had existed for a few literal hours in the day time, and for millions of years from its own perspective, then the dinosaur would have lived for millions of years in the day and would never have experienced night. Plants also had been living in eras of day time. And these may create difficulties scientifically. But should we see these as problems? If one accepts the idea of two time perspectives these should also not create problem because it is hard also to understand two perspectives of time scientifically. The problem with the second interpretation also is that it is incomprehensible scientifically or rationally.

The first interpretation implies that God can speed up different processes independently: in this case the evolutions in the heavens AND the evolutions on the land, sea and air. If the

speed of a CD player is increased, everything speeds up equally. However, according to the first interpretation, God can speed up the two processes (heavens and earth) independently. The two evolutions should go independently to match with Genesis.

The third interpretation is equally compelling. However, there is a problem. If the dinosaur had only existed/lived in the imagination of God, how can we explain the fact that its fossil is found buried in earth? A possible explanation would be as follows. The first living cell and its evolution into complex and higher forms of life including the evolution of the dinosaur and many ancient species took place together with the geological evolution of the earth itself in the imagination of God. Therefore, by the time the earth came in to existence, the dinosaur fossils also came into existence *as part of the earth*. That is, it is not that the earth was first created and then life started to evolve. The evolution of life took place together with (and as part of) the evolution of the earth in the imagination of God up to the point of actual creation of the earth. This interpretation may solve the problem we already raised about animals and plants living during eras of day time or night time. This can be explained as follows. The sun rose and set normally in the imagination of God for the dinosaurs and therefore there would be no problem.

I would like to stress the point that these interpretations are not meant to be complete and fully answer all the questions. They are mainly meant to show that possible alternative explanations exist. They are also meant to be ideas to inspire others to build on.

I have also presented my own ideas about the origin of life and the soul.

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