

# Examples of Scientific Accuracy in the Bible

By David Pyles

When studying the science of the ancient world, one is more apt to be impressed with its ignorance than to admire its accuracy. However, the Bible offers a definite exception to this rule. The scriptures are replete with statements suggesting scientific knowledge that predated the corresponding discoveries of secular science. Given that Bible writers were not scientists, and given that the scientific information at their disposal was generally misleading, the accuracy of the Bible can only be attributed to the inspiration of God. Here are a few striking examples of scientific accuracy in the Bible:

- 1) The Genesis account of creation asserts that all humans descended from the same parents, Adam and Eve. There is now considerable debate in the scientific community over recent genetic studies which indicate that all men have a common father and that all women have a common mother. In fact, the latter claim is sometimes called the “Eve hypothesis.” Some scientists are skeptical about these studies, and even those who are supportive would not generally accept the Genesis account; however, Bible believers should expect further research to add yet more evidence supporting these hypotheses.
- 2) Genesis 10:25 spoke of a man named “*Peleg*” whose name means “division.” The text says he was so named because “*in his days the earth was divided.*” It is now commonly believed that all continents of the earth were once combined into a single continent called “Pangaea.” This belief is based upon the fact that present continents appear as pieces out of a puzzle. There are also other evidences, including several geological similarities on matching continental edges.
- 3) The Bible asserts that the stars are innumerable (Gen 15:5, Gen 17:7, Heb 11:12). This does not necessarily mean that we are incapable of mathematically expressing their number. It means that no human has the ability to count them individually so as to achieve their sum. It is claimed there are 100 billion stars in our galaxy alone. If stars were counted around the clock at one star per second, then it would take over 3000 years just to count these. Add to this the fact that there are as many as 100 billion galaxies. However, there were many scholars prior to Galileo who believed that the stars could be counted, and several attempts were made to do so. Many of these counts only arrived at around 1000 stars.
- 4) There is reasonable evidence that the scriptures speak of dinosaurs. As should be expected, this evidence comes from Genesis, the book of origins, and from the book of Job, generally believed to be the oldest book in the Bible.

First, Genesis 1:21 speaks of God creating “*whales*” on the fifth day of creation. The Hebrew word translated here as “*whales*” is generally translated “dragons.” It is translated as “*monsters*” once, “*whale(s)*” twice, “*serpent(s)*” thrice, and “*dragon(s)*” 21 times.

Second, Job's statements concerning the “*behemoth*” (Job 40:15-24) might be referring to dinosaurs. Its tail is compared to a cedar tree. Its strength, and apparently its bulk, is in its loins.

It is said to be the chief of the ways of God, and is described as having the ability to drink up a river. No modern animal meets this description in all points.

Third, Job's description of the "*leviathan*" (Job 41) very much resembles a dinosaur. Some would dismiss this description as fictitious because the leviathan is described as breathing fire; however, some creation scientists believe this could have happened. The creature would merely need glands to produce a chemical that would combust when exposed to air. The bombardier beetle in fact has this ability. The fact that nearly every major culture of the world has traditions about such dragons lends yet further credibility to the possibility of their existence in the past.

5) The fact that the earth is of spherical shape is generally considered to be recent knowledge. However, Isaiah 40:22 spoke of the "*circle of the earth*" approximately 750 years before Christ.

Other statements in the Bible also indicate that God revealed this truth long ago. For example, David said that God has removed our transgression from us as far as the east is from the west (Ps 103:12). On a spherical surface, east and west are infinitely separated in the sense that one can travel indefinitely in either direction without ever attaining the other. However, Solomon described the wind as blowing in circuits, first towards the south and then turning toward the north (Eccl 1:6). North and south are not infinitely separated as east and west, because a southward traveler on a spherical surface will be heading north after crossing the South Pole.

6) In possibly the oldest book of the Bible, Job asserted that God hung the earth on nothing (Job 26:7). The first scientist having this understanding would appear to be Copernicus around 1500.

7) The rotation of the earth was likely revealed in Job 38:12, where God asked of Job:

*Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; that it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment.*

God asked Job if he had ever dictated the time of the morning or the location of the sunrise ("*dayspring*"). As soon as the sun is risen, its light will "*take hold of the ends of the earth*" in the sense that it touches all of the landscape, and the wicked are "*shaken out of it*" (the earth) in the sense that thieves, drunkards, adulterers, and others who practice their sins in darkness are forced to desist from these activities as they retreat from the light. Also, the beauties of the earth are revealed by the light, and its coloration is made to appear as that of a beautiful garment. Finally, the text asserts that God's command of the morning derives from His control of the earth, "*which is turned as clay to the seal.*" Hence, the suggestion is that God regulates the morning by rotating the earth as a potter rotates the clay. Yet, ancient wisdom would have asserted that God regulated the morning by control of the Sun, and indeed, this is the perception of any uninformed mind.

8) Paul asserted in Acts 17:26 that "*God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.*" Until recent times, it was believed there were significant

differences in the blood of various human races. We now know that all races of men are of common blood.

9) Psalms 8:4-8 likely reveal the existence of systematic ocean currents:

*What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.*

Matthew Maury (1806-1873) is commonly known as the father of oceanography. He was among the first to discover and chart systematic ocean currents. Maury claimed that his research was inspired by Psalm 8:4-8.

10) Job 38:16 spoke of springs in the sea. It is now known that there are indeed such springs on the ocean floor.

11) The earliest literature indicating an understanding of hydrological cycle was apparently around the third or fourth century BC. However, the essential details of this cycle were all revealed in the Bible well before this time. This may be seen from the following texts:

*The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirlleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. – Eccl 1:6,7*

*For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof: which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly. – Job 36:27,28*

*It is he that buildeth his stories in the heaven, and hath founded his troop in the earth; he that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name. – Amos 9:6*

12) It was not until this century that medical science had a full understanding of the fact that most diseases are caused by infection of microscopic organisms. Accordingly, the medical values of sterilization, sanitation, and quarantines were virtually unappreciated. Yet the Bible is so replete with such wisdom that time and space are not sufficient to cover them in a paper such as this. Here are some examples:

*This is the law, when a man dieth in a tent: all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days. And every open vessel, which hath no covering bound upon it, is unclean. And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. – Num 19:14-16*

*Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place. But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken: and if it be sodden in a brasen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water. – Lev 6:27-28*

*And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be. – Lev 13:45-46*

These considerations, and many other evidences, serve to confirm the necessity of Divine inspiration to account for the wisdom of the Bible. We must therefore concur with Paul:

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. – 2Tim 3:16-17*

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