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How Do Christians View the Creation of the World? (Leader"s Guide and Participant's Guide)

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Leader’s Guide to
How Do Christians View the Creation of the World?
A Study of Christian Perspectives on Creation

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How to Use This Material?

This study of the perspectives that Christians hold on the creation of the world is composed of eight modules. The 1st through 3rd modules address the basic three Christian perspectives on creation, using articles and other websites as source material. The 4th-7th modules address these perspectives in more detail, delving into distinguishing concordist and non-concordist interpretations of Scripture using Haarsma and Haarsma’s book *Origins: Christian Perspectives on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*. The final module analyzes the non-concordist interpretation of Scripture that is found in John H. Walton’s book *The Lost World of Genesis One*.

The 1st through 3rd modules contain a summary of the position addressed (usually a brief article or two), definitions of potentially unfamiliar terms, the strengths and weaknesses (as we perceive them) of the position presented in the material, and discussion questions.

The 4th through 7th modules contain two sections. The first section presents a set of Reading and Reflection questions that are to be completed before each meeting and are meant to help the participant wrestle with the concepts introduced in that week’s chapters. The second section consists of two (or more) Discussion questions, which will be written by the participants and the leader as they read. Both sets of questions are meant to foster discussion, but your group should by no means limit itself to the questions contained in these sections.

The final module offers some basic discussion and reflection questions for readers of *The Lost World of Genesis One*, in order to familiarize readers with the author’s understanding of how one’s worldview influences one’s interpretation of the Bible.

This study is intended for informal, small group discussion, such as that of a Bible study or small group. The themes presented in each submodule may be unpacked on their own, but it is the hope of the authors that the entire study may be useful to the interested reader (leader and participant alike). The study is also aimed toward high school students, college students, and post-college adults with an interest in how science and the Christian faith interact.

As you read, it is our hope that you will come across (and come up with) questions which challenge you, both in understanding your personal faith and in understanding science. In these questions, you will have the opportunity to grow through asking and answering these questions: Why has the church historically believed in *this* answer or *that* answer? How might you be challenged to defend your answer?
Planning and Preparing for a Session

The material assumes that each session will last for about 30-45 minutes. It also assumes that each participant will have read the assigned chapter(s) and considered the Reading and Reflection questions ahead of time.

It must also be noted that the provided discussion questions are intended as a guide for your discussion, but you should by no means restrict your discussion to these questions. Try to keep your group’s discussion relevant to the general themes addressed in the module, but be flexible.

Equipped for Service

This “Leader’s Guide” is meant to equip leaders of these small group discussions, and thus the following pages are far more detailed and expansive than the average participant may judge necessary for complex discussion. For example, we often include information or references from other sources. This has been done in the hope that you, as the leader, may more easily facilitate and moderate discussion amongst your peers in the small group. Your small group may be made up of the generation that initiates change in how the common Christian comes to understand these questions and answer – in the service of your peers, do not underestimate your own significance as a leader or co-leader.
Introduction to Modules 1-3: the “Three Basic Perspectives”

When it comes to perspectives on the Creation account, it is easy to draw battle lines. The us-versus-them attitude is frequently vicious, and too often people from all perspectives fail to listen to each other and fail to seek an accurate understanding of why people believe what they believe. As invigorating as these impassioned verbal clashes can be, this is not a productive (or a Christian!) approach. We must love our neighbors, and part of loving our neighbors entails putting ourselves in their shoes. Though pondering the Creation account is important, we believe that it is not ultimately a salvation issue.

In these modules, we describe three ways (four, if you include the “Digging Deeper” module) that Christians interpret the Creation account. In each, we will summarize the basics of the position and introduce some of the materials which people from these perspectives use to support their opinion. We hope that these introductions will allow participants to better understand their own perspective on the Creation account and to be well equipped to engage in gracious conversations with people who hold different perspectives.
Module 1, Three Basic Perspectives (Part 1): Young Earth Creationism


The Basics

Young Earth Creationists (YECs) believe that we should explain phenomena we observe in the natural world using the Bible, and that the theory of evolution is necessarily a secular religion. They advocate for a largely literal interpretation of the creation account. They hold that all living things were made by God via independent creative acts, that all biological changes that occurred since Creation are only changes within a species (or “kind”), and that Noah’s flood was a historical, global event. The YEC position is concordist because it maintains that the Creation account has a basis in history.

YECs attribute the disparity between how they view creation and how “evolutionists” view creation to a difference in worldview. YECs view God’s Word as a literal history, and they interpret scientific observations in light of that worldview. YECs have a commitment to a literal interpretation of Scripture, and “evolutionists” have a commitment to an ancient earth. They believe that the reason more people don’t “believe the Bible and creation” is that “man is at enmity with God and suppresses the truth in unrighteousness”; “facts don’t convince anyone” of one position or another (see “Why Aren’t People Convinced by Facts?” by Avery Foley, published answersingenesis.org, 2017). It would seem as though seeing Creation as a revelation from God requires one to first accept a literal interpretation of God’s special revelation: Scripture.

Major Proponents

Answers in Genesis (AiG) is one of the largest organizations dedicated to promoting a YEC view of the creation. They are “an apologetics ministry, dedicated to helping Christians defend their faith and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.” Though much of their publications focus on defending a YEC perspective, they also publish apologetics materials.

The Creation Research Society (CRS) is another major YEC organization. CRS is an association of scientists and non-scientists who work to defend a YEC perspective through the scientific research of special creation. Unlike AiG, it is entirely dedicated to defending YEC.

Variations on the Position

Apparent Old, also called Created Old or the Omphalos hypothesis: This idea states that God created the earth to look old. In this scenario, the earth is between 6,000 and 10,000 years old, but it was created with evidence of prehistoric events that never actually occurred. This idea resolves the apparent conflict between the geological record and a literal interpretation of the
genealogies in Genesis, but it is not a scientific theory because it is not falsifiable. Some find this theory theologically unacceptable because it seems to imply a deceitful God.

The Strengths of the Position

YEC are very aware of the importance of recognizing the sanctity of Scripture. They recognize that Scripture and Creation are not (and cannot be) inherently in conflict because God authored both, and that human interpretation can make it seem as though the two are in conflict. They are very concerned about maintaining a Biblical worldview, and they found every aspect of their interactions with the world on their interpretation of Scripture.

The YEC reading of Scripture is very accessible: they take everything Scripture says at face value. This simple interpretation requires no special education about the historical context of the human authors of Scripture.

The Challenges of the Position

YEC would argue that they do not believe science and faith to be in conflict, as long as science is aligned with a literal interpretation of all of Scripture. While they are correct in asserting that the facts of Creation are subject to human interpretation (and humans are fallible), they fail to recognize that the facts of Scripture are also subject to human interpretation — even a literal reading of Scripture is an interpretation of Scripture. A literal reading of the Creation account assumes that God intended His Word to be a science and a history textbook as well as His revelation of His salvation for His people. The idea that the earth is 6,000 to 10,000 years old is an interpretation of the stories and genealogies recounted in Genesis and other Old Testament books.

YECs are correct in asserting that one’s basic presuppositions about the nature of the world impact one’s interpretation of the natural world. However, they do not recognize that even strong Christians who are committed to the belief that God is the author of Creation look at scientific data and conclude that it points toward an old earth.

A literal reading of the Creation account makes it difficult to reconcile some components of Genesis 1 and 2 with each other. For example, we learn that light was created on day one (and there were days from the get-go), but the sun and moon were not created until the fourth day. In addition, plants—which require sunlight for survival—were created before the sun.
Discussion Questions

How does this position fit with what you believe about the creation of the world?

What benefits of accepting this position do you see?

What challenges of accepting this position do you see?

What are some of the basic assumptions YECs make about how to read Scripture? How do they justify these assumptions?

What are some of the basic assumptions YECs make about how to interpret Creation? How do they justify these assumptions?

Do you think that promoting a YEC view of Creation is necessarily a component of defending the Christian faith and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ?

What assumptions does AiG make about Christians who do not hold a YEC position? How do they justify these assumptions?
How are YEC perceived by other Christians who hold other views on Creation? By non-Christians who hold other views?
Module 2, Three Basic Perspectives (Part 2): Progressive Creation

Reading Materials: “Our Mission: Engage & Equip” and “FAQs” by Reasons to Believe.

The Basics

Progressive Creation (PC) is one Old Earth Creationist (OEC) position; it maintains that the earth is older than 6,000 to 10,000 years. PC affirms that Scripture is without error “historically, scientifically, morally, and spiritually,” and that it is the final authority in “all matters it addresses” (see “Our Mission: Engage and Equip,” published reasonstobelieve.org, n.d.). PCs believe that Creation “gives a trustworthy revelation of God’s character and purpose,” and that Scripture and Creation can never be in conflict because God is the author of both.

PCs believe that the creation account in Genesis follows a basic chronology that matches historical, scientific timelines, and that Scripture contains only a selective summary of God’s activity in Creation. Humans have “the privilege to fill in the details” through studying the natural world. In the PC position, God created the world through a series of special creation events (hence the “progressive” in the title). Species are not products of evolutionary processes, but instead appear fully formed at certain points throughout history. Though they do not support the evolution of species, they do usually support evolution within species (or microevolution).

They support the historicity of Adam and Eve, and generally accept the timeline used by proponents of the theory of evolution (e.g. the earth is billions of years old). The PC view is concordist, and it employs a different literal interpretation from the YEC position. (The main difference is the interpretation of the duration of the days of creation.)

Major Proponents

Reasons to Believe (RtB) is a major supporter of an old earth, progressive creation view. Their mission is to “spread the Christian Gospel by demonstrating that sound reason and scientific research – including the very latest discoveries – consistently support, rather than erode, confidence in the truth of the Bible and faith in the personal, transcendent God revealed in both Scripture and nature” (see “Our Mission: Engage and Equip”). Jack Collins and Hugh Ross are some of the foremost spokespeople for the PC position.

Variations on the Position

Some PCs hold a Day-Age view of the Creation account. This position interprets the word for “day” (which is “yom” in Hebrew) to mean an indefinite amount of time. In 2 Peter 3:8, Scripture says that “One day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day,” and elsewhere in Scripture “yom” is used to reference an undefined period of time. The Day-Age view
allows a literal interpretation of the Creation account to fit within the billion-year timeframe suggested by geology and other fields of science.

The Day-Age view is also held by some Evolutionary Creationists.

**The Strengths of the Position**

The PC view preserves the general chronology of the Creation account, though the timeframe in which it takes place is extended. It accounts for the development of Creation mentioned in Genesis 2 by allowing more time to grow, and it aligns with a modern understanding of geology and paleontology. The PC view also employs a fairly simple reading of Scripture – it is essentially a literal reading, but the interpretation of “day” is figurative.

**The Challenges of the Position**

It can be difficult to deal with the reality of death from a PC position. In a YEC framework, it makes sense that there was no death prior to man’s Fall. In a PC framework, the timeframe necessitates some death prior to the Fall. Some resolve this conflict by saying that the death brought into the world by the Fall was mankind’s death or that the death was a spiritual rather than biological one.

The PC view also does not resolve the issue of photosynthetic plants existing prior to the sun.
Discussion Questions

How does this position fit with what you believe about the creation of the world?

What benefits of accepting this position do you see? What do you consider to be the challenges of accepting this position?

What are some of the basic assumptions PCs make about how to read Scripture? How do they justify these assumptions?

What are some of the basic assumptions PCs make about how to interpret Creation? How do they justify these assumptions?

What do you think of the idea that biological death existed before the Fall? How do you interpret the “spiritual death” of man as a consequence of the Fall?

How do you think God views time? What do you think of the idea that the days in Genesis are not 24-hour periods? Does it make sense that God would recount the story of Creation to His people using His understanding of time?
Module 3, Three Basic Perspectives (Part 3): Evolutionary Creationism

Reading Materials: “About BioLogos”.

The Basics

The Evolutionary Creationist (EC) perspective maintains God revealed Himself through both Scripture and the created world – so the two cannot be in conflict – and that science is an “important and reliable” means of learning about God through the study of His Creation. In particular, ECs believe that evolutionary biology is an accurate description of how God created the diversity of life we observe in the world. Unlike the YEC and PC positions, it accepts the findings of modern science without exception; even non-Christians studying Creation can uncover truths about the natural world. EC is distinct from evolutionism, which is an atheistic perspective that believes science to be the only source of truth. EC is sometimes referred to as Theistic Evolution (TE), but that term has fallen out of use.

ECs can interpret the Creation account in a number of ways, but all maintain that the Creation account primarily teaches us about who created the world and the relationship between God and Creation, not how the world was created. Some ECs read Genesis 1 and 2 as a poetic framework that is organized topically rather than chronologically. Moses used the seven-day framework to reinforce the pattern of work and rest God desired for His people. The first three days of creation represent “creation’s kingdoms,” and the second set of three days represent “creation’s kings,” with Adam being the king of earth as God is King of Creation (see “Report of the Creation Study Committee,” published pchistory.org, 2000). Other ECs take the Day-Age position or the Analogous Days position, which maintains that the days of creation refer to “broadly consecutive” days of unspecified length.

Major Proponents

BioLogos is one of the largest supporters of an EC view of creation. It seeks to help Christians come to terms with the compatibility between evolutionary biology and Christianity. It publishes blog posts and other resources that explore how to reconcile modern science with Scripture and faith.
The Strengths of the Position

The EC position recognizes that human interpretation is required when studying both means of revelation (Scripture and Creation), and it accepts both modern science and theology as generally reliable means of learning about God. Though human interpretation of Scripture and Creation can introduce errors into our understanding of God’s revelation to His people, we should not totally discount theology and science.

This position accounts for the fact that God accommodates His people when revealing Himself (e.g. He speaks to His people in terms they’ll understand) when reading descriptions of Creation in Scripture. The Israelites had no framework through which to understand concepts such as biological evolution and billions of years (and there was really no need for them to have an understanding of modern science). The EC framework also eliminates apparent conflicts between science and the Creation account by asserting that the Creation account is primarily a source of theological truths, not scientific truths.

The Challenges of this Position

Some people believe that the EC view takes Scriptural interpretation too lightly and elevates science above theology. Some view the EC position as a compromise between Christianity and “secular science.”

Like other OEC positions, EC requires death before the Fall. (See the PC view for responses to this challenge.) The EC position also usually assumes the evolution of humankind. Many struggle to understand sin and souls in the face of human evolution. When did humans gain the image of God? When did we gain the capacity to sin?

It can also be difficult to differentiate between EC and Deistic Evolution (DE), in which God is not active in the world today. The difference between the two camps often comes down to how people view natural laws. Many ECs view natural laws to be simply the way God acts (so every natural process is necessarily dependent on God’s activity), and DEs often maintain that natural laws can act independently from God. (See “Digging Deeper” Submodule on Deism for more information.)

Discussion Questions

How does this position fit with what you believe about the creation of the world?
What do you know about the theory of evolution? Where did you learn about it?

What benefits of accepting this position do you see?

What challenges of accepting this position do you see?

What are some of the basic assumptions ECs make about how to read Scripture? How do they justify these assumptions?

What are some of the basic assumptions ECs make about how to interpret Creation? How do they justify these assumptions?

What does it mean to be made in the image of God? How might ECs explain when and how humans gained the image of God?

What do you think about the concept of accommodation? Where else in Scripture do we see accommodation?
Some say an EC view means that God is not omniscient, omnipotent, or omnipresent. Do you think that this is a fair assessment? What assumptions does this assessment make?¹

¹Suggested Answer: This assessment assumes that God’s drawn-out creative process indicates that He is unintelligent, weak, and distant. ECs would maintain that God’s drawn-out creative process indicates how God takes great pleasure in the act of creating.
Digging Deeper Submodule, Three Basic Perspectives (Part 4): Deism

Though few people would self-identify as deist, many people live as though they are deist—they live as though God has no interest in how they live their lives. Deists generally believe that God initiated the creation of the world, but has not been involved in Creation since. Some “Christian” deists question the divinity of Christ, preferring to profess that Christ’s real significance was His moral teachings, not the salvation He accomplished through His death and resurrection.

For some Evolutionary Creationists (EC), it can be difficult to steer clear of Deistic Evolution (DE). DE would say that Creation is self-sustaining, so God does not need to interact with His Creation further after He initiated the Big Bang. If the theory of evolution provides a way for Creation to develop itself without any apparent divine intervention, some conclude that divine activity in the world is superfluous. This assumes that natural laws are distinct from divine action; it assumes that divine action is only that which we consider “unnatural.” If we believe that natural laws are just descriptions of how God acts in the Created world (or descriptions of the way God has designed the world to function), this dichotomy between the divine and the natural becomes irrelevant.
Introduction to Modules 4-7: *Origins: Christian Perspectives on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*

Who are the authors of *Origins*?

Deborah B. Haarsma serves as the president of BioLogos, a group dedicated to “invit[ing] the church and the world to see the harmony between science and biblical faith as [they] present an evolutionary understanding of God’s creation” ([http://biologos.org/](http://biologos.org/)). From 1999 to 2013, Deborah served as a professor and chair of the department of Physics and Astronomy at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She earned a Ph.D. in astrophysics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and undergraduate degrees in physics and music from Bethel College in St. Paul, Minnesota. She often speaks and writes on astronomy and Christian faith, equipping young adults, pastors, and churches to engage science.

Loren D Haarsma, according to his faculty profile on the calvin.edu website, has been an associate professor in the Physics and Astronomy Department from 1999-present. Previously, he also completed five years of postdoctoral research in neuroscience in Boston and in Philadelphia after earning a bachelor's degree in Physics and Mathematics from Calvin College, an M.S. from University of Washington, and a Ph.D. in atomic physics from Harvard University. He has several ongoing projects in the realm of electrophysiology, and has written various publications on “the intersection of science and Christian faith” ([http://www.calvin.edu/~lhaarsma/scifaith.html](http://www.calvin.edu/~lhaarsma/scifaith.html)).

*Origins* is described on Deborah Haarsma’s profile page of the BioLogos website as “a book presenting the agreements and disagreements of Christians regarding the history of life and the universe.”

(One can read more about the Haarsmas, respectively, at: [http://biologos.org/about-us/our-team/deborah-haarasma#sthash.y4To9cTP.dpuf](http://biologos.org/about-us/our-team/deborah-haarasma#sthash.y4To9cTP.dpuf) and [http://www.calvin.edu/academic/phys/faculty/haarsma-loren/](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/phys/faculty/haarsma-loren/).)
Module 4: God’s Word and God’s World; Worldviews and Science
Chapters covered: Chapters 1 & 2

Reading and Reflection

What are some of the basic assumptions that scientists make? How do these compare with assumptions Christians make?

How might you explain the fact that many scientific discoveries are made by people who don’t believe in God?

How would you respond to the claim that God must exist because scientists can’t explain some phenomenon in the natural world? Define the “God-of-the-Gaps” fallacy.

Aside from human origins and the age of the universe, can you think of examples where your scientific understanding has influenced the way in which you read certain passages of Scripture?

In the Introduction, the Haarsma’s point out different ways of explaining the cause(s) of natural phenomena, such as the weather. What is your response when you learn that something heretofore mysterious or unknown has now been explained by science? Does having a scientific explanation reduce God’s role in nature?

Discussion

In addition to answering the Reading and Reflection questions, please write two of your own questions about ideas presented in this week’s assigned chapters.

1.

2.
Module 5: Science as A Process for Studying God’s World; God’s Word and God’s World in Conflict?

Chapters covered: Chapters 3 & 4

Reading and Reflection
What makes astronomy different from other fields of science (biology, chemistry, physics, etc.)?

Is it possible to study a process scientifically if you can’t observe it from beginning to end?

Is it possible for non-Christian scientists to do good science? Why or why not? Should science done by Christians look different than that done by non-Christians? If so, how?

Has the Fall affected the physical laws governing distant astronomical bodies? As you discuss this, consider some specific objects like the Andromeda Galaxy and (as discussed in the chapter) the Crab Nebula, which is located 6500 LY away. When it comes to studying the natural world, where is the effect of sin most pronounced?

The authors of Origins ask whether it is ever appropriate for Christians to allow what we learn from the study of creation to affect how we interpret Scripture, and vice versa. How would you answer these questions?

When might it be appropriate to let science affect biblical interpretation? When would it be inappropriate?

Is it even possible to prevent our science from influencing our biblical interpretation? Explain.
When it comes to understanding the natural world, how might our modern worldview differ from that of an ancient Near-Eastern culture? How might this influence our interpretation of the Bible?

Several places in Scripture note: “The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved” (1 Chron 16:30; Psalm 93:1; Psalm 96:10). Do these verses support a geocentric model? Are they inconsistent with the Copernican (Sun-centered) view of the Solar System? Why or why not?

Discussion
In addition to answering the Reading and Reflection questions, please write two of your own questions about ideas presented in this week’s assigned chapters.

1. 

2. 
Module 6: Concordist and Non-concordist interpretations of Genesis

Chapters covered: Chapters 5 & 6

Reading and Reflection

When would it be appropriate to let scientific discoveries influence our interpretation of Scripture? Consider the following scientific assertions.

- The distance to the Andromeda Galaxy is estimated to be about 2.5 million ly away, so the light we observe from Andromeda left that Galaxy millions of years ago.
- Radiometric dating of Apollo rocks show that the lunar mare basalts were produced around 3 Ga.
- Seafloor spreading rates, magnetic polarity reversals, and radiometric dating suggests that the Atlantic Ocean basin started to form about 200 Ma.

How would the different concordist readings of Scripture deal with the previous scientific assertions? How would non-concordist readings of Scripture deal with these?

- literal young-Earth
- gap theory
- day-age
- appearance of age
- non-concordist

What are some indications that a scientific argument is strong? That it is speculative? That it is fundamentally flawed? What scientific arguments for age do you find most compelling? How should Christians deal with scientific evidence that points toward an ancient universe and Solar System?

Something to consider: What approach to interpretation (as described by the authors) do you believe faithfully considers God’s revelation both in creation and in Scripture?
Discussion
In addition to answering the Reading and Reflection questions, please write two of your own questions about ideas presented in this week’s assigned chapters.

1.

2.
Module 7: An Ancient and Dynamic Universe
Chapter covered: Chapter 7

Reading and Reflection
Why does the vast size of the universe imply an ancient universe? Why do scientists believe the universe was once much hotter and denser shortly after its beginning? What lines of evidence do you find most convincing? What lines of evidence do you find least convincing? Think about why you agree or disagree with scientific conclusions about age.

Recent astronomical estimates suggest that there are as many as 500 billion galaxies in the universe, each of which contains billions of stars. Does the vastness of the cosmos make you feel more significant or less significant? (What determines our significance?)

How does the study of astronomy help you better understand God? Which of God’s attributes have become more vivid to you after studying this book?

How might modern scientific theories about the universe’s origin fit in with a Christian view of creation? Why should we be careful of “adopting” a particular scientific view as being “Christian”?

Discussion
In addition to answering the Reading and Reflection questions, please write two of your own questions about ideas presented in this week’s assigned chapters.

1. 

2. 
Introduction to Module 8: Non-concordism and Scripture

Note: This module draws quotes from *The Lost World of Genesis One* for the purpose of discussion and to inspire participants to go deeper, to read more about their own creation perspective. However, it is not essential to the discussions that the leader and all participants will have read the book. In fact, these questions may be addressed as thought questions for your small group to answer without *The Lost World*. Still, we would recommend reading the Lost World series of books for your own understanding and reference.

Who is the author of *The Lost World*?

John H. Walton is professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College and Graduate School. Walton earned a Masters in Old Testament Studies from Wheaton, as well as a Ph.D. in Hebrew and Cognitive Studies at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. He also served as Old Testament professor at Moody Bible Institute for two decades before joining the faculty and staff at Wheaton. As dedicated readers of *The Lost World* will discover, his primary literary focus is in the development of Hebrew culture, including areas of comparison between the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East (especially as those areas are illustrated in Genesis). Walton’s many books include *The Lost World of Genesis One*, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve*, and *The IVP Background Commentary: Old Testament* (with Victor Matthews and Mark Chavalas).

For those interested, more of his biography and background can be found on his Faculty page at wheaton.edu. See [http://www.wheaton.edu/Academics/Faculty/W/John-Walton](http://www.wheaton.edu/Academics/Faculty/W/John-Walton).

As you read, one would do well to keep in mind that Walton holds a healthy respect for the Old Testament (and the New), along with pastors and theologians of yesterday and today. As both a Christian and a scholar, he dedicated much of his life to the study of the Bible. What he proposes in this book is simply one interpretation, but he obviously regards it as a valuable interpretation enough to publish a book on the subject. Any Christian, whether he or she walks away from the book singing Walton’s praises or not, might consider study and analysis of such an interpretation to be worthy of one’s effort and time.
Module 8: Non-concordism and Scripture
Readings: The Lost World of Genesis One (opt.)

Discussion
How does recognizing that God reveals himself through both Scripture and Creation (Rom 1:20; Psa 19; Belgic Confession Article 2) shape how we explore and learn about the natural world, or how we approach science? For example, do you believe that radioactive isotopes can be used in such a way as to reveal something about creation?

In Proposition 1 of The Lost World of Genesis One, Walton warns against connecting biblical texts to the current (present-day) scientific consensus (page 15). Why might he be wary of this? What is the main risk of this type of concordism?

Several places in Scripture note: “The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved” (1 Chron 16:30; Psalm 93:1; Psalm 96:10). Do these verses support a geocentric model (that is, a model in which the Earth is at the center of the Solar System and the Sun orbits the Earth)? Are they inconsistent with the Copernican (Sun-centered) view of the Solar System? Why or why not? Should we attempt to connect verses like Genesis 10:25 to the theory of Plate Tectonics?

On page 17 of The Lost World of Genesis One, Walton writes, “Through the entire Bible, there is not a single instance in which God revealed to Israel a science beyond their own culture. No passage offers a scientific perspective that was not common to the Old World science of antiquity.” What are your thoughts on this statement? How might it influence how we approach science & Scripture?

The ancient Mesopotamians (the original audience of Genesis) had a cosmology like that shown on the left (the Greeks likewise had a geocentric cosmology). The modern heliocentric (Copernican) cosmology (shown on the right) for the Solar System has spherical planets orbiting the Sun.
Which of these cosmologies would you consider to be the “most biblical”? Was new (prescient) information offered to the Israelites about the structure & operation of the cosmos?

When it comes to understanding the natural world, how might our modern worldview differ from that of an ancient Near-Eastern culture? How might this influence our interpretation of the Bible?
Bibliography

Module 1-3
n.a. “FAQs.” Reasons to Believe. n.d.

Module 4-7

Module 8