

Genesis 2.0

Genesis (New International Version)	Science Interpretation
Chapter 1 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.	The text literally means, “At the beginning of time God (who already existed) created everything out of nothing.” Today we understand that the Big Bang was the beginning of matter, energy, space, and even time itself, all expanding from a single point in a very precise manner. The Big Bang theory was resisted for decades in part because of its resemblance to Genesis 1 and metaphysical implications.
2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.	This verse establishes the physical vantage point that is used from here forward. Four billion years ago, following the “Hadean” period, the Earth was a hostile, stormy, turbulent, water-covered ball. The Hebrew word for “hovering” is also used elsewhere in Genesis to describe an eagle protecting her young in the nest. The specific indication of God’s presence in physical space seems significant. Science tells us that the earliest life forms began in the ocean 3.5 billion years ago.
3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.	The atmosphere changes from dark to cloudy. Light can now shine through Earth’s thick cloud cover. Now there is day and night on the surface of the Earth. The phrase “There was evening, and there was morning” is a traditional Jewish expression of completion, rather than a literal evening and a literal morning.
6 And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” 7 So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. 8 God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.	The water cycle begins. Clouds condense and form the ocean. Water evaporates from the ocean and forms clouds.
9 And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. 10 God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.	The continents (“Pangaea”) rise above the surface of the ocean, forming land and sea.
11 Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. 12 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.	Plants appear before animals. Notice that the wording in the Bible says the “land produced vegetation.” This does not rule out an Evolution 2.0 process. Also notice that it talks about plants bearing seeds and fruit according to their various kinds. It takes much longer than 24 hours for any of these things to happen.
14 And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky	Up to this point the atmosphere has been thick and opaque. It is not possible to see sun and moon as distinct objects in the sky. The atmosphere clears. Now sun and moon are visible. The moon and stars were already casting their light on day

<p>to give light on the earth.” And it was so.</p> <p>16 God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars.</p> <p>17 God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth,</p> <p>18 to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.</p> <p>19 And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.</p>	<p>1 (see verse 3), but were not visible as distinct objects until day 4. This detail is important! Otherwise the story does not make scientific sense. Our modern knowledge of the solar system predisposes to read the Creation story from an “outer space” vantage point, but it is written from the same point of view ancient people would have read it in—from the Earth.</p> <p>Notice that twenty-four-hour days are not even mentioned before day 4.</p>
<p>20 And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.”</p> <p>21 So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.</p> <p>22 God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”</p> <p>23 And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.</p>	<p>The Earth is dominated by birds and fish. Insects and dinosaurs are also present on the Earth during this time but the author is not concerned with them.</p> <p>“According to their kinds” is scientifically correct. Dogs never give birth to anything but dogs. However we know experimentally that Hybridization and Symbiogenesis produce species 1 + species 2 = species 3 in short periods of time.</p>
<p>24 And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so.</p> <p>25 God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.</p>	<p>Earth is dominated by large mammals. Ancient Jewish people would have thought in terms of livestock.</p>
<p>26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”</p>	<p>God refers to Himself as “us” (Elohim)—God is plural.</p>
<p>27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.</p>	<p>Man is a spiritual being, the first creature made in God’s image. Unlike the animals, man is both body and spirit. This is why the origin of man’s body plan, which is adapted from lower animals, doesn’t alter his spirit identity as a child of God.</p>
<p>28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”</p>	<p>Man is given the gift of caring for the Earth and the environment.</p>
<p>29 Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.</p> <p>30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.</p>	<p>Verses 29–30 are often taken to imply that all creatures were vegetarians before the Fall. But that would also imply that animals and people had nothing to eat until verse 29. This view seems excessively literal. I see it as a proclamation of bounty and of the sufficiency of the Earth to nourish itself.</p>
<p>31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was</p>	<p>The text says all was very good. It doesn’t say it was paradise or perfection.</p>

morning—the sixth day.	
Chapter 2 1: Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 3 And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.	God ceases from his creative work on the seventh day. Notice there is no statement “And there was evening and there was morning, a seventh day.” We are living in the seventh day now.

7 Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.	Humans and animals alike are made of dirt. Here, God takes a body and grants it a spirit. The Hebrew word for “living being” according to BlueLetterBible.org means “soul, self, life, creature, person, appetite, mind, living being, desire, emotion, passion.” This is why we see a cultural “Cambrian explosion” in ancient history. Art, writing, language, worship, architecture, agriculture and religious ceremony suddenly appear in a geological instant.
But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.	Rather than literally meaning “rib,” I think it means something more than merely physical. God transformed a male creature into the first human being. The man did not know he was alone—God did. Here, God takes something from the man and gives it to the woman, making her his partner—and leaving him incomplete.
23 The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”	Being made in the image of God changes not only the way we see ourselves, but our relationship to others.
24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.	If you go to any Jewish or Christian marriage conference, they’ll invariably say that “becoming one flesh” is far more than a physical act of sex. It’s emotional and spiritual oneness. Sex in a loving relationship is a deeply spiritual experience. Why? Because the “rib” in verse 21 refers to something that is also emotional and spiritual. Only in a loving marriage is this brokenness reconnected. This is why Adam felt complete with his new wife, and it’s why a dead marriage is the worst form of loneliness.