

presented in the passage. Regardless of the question how Moses got the information that is in these chapters, what he wrote down is a true account of exactly what God wants us to know.

5. WE MUST NOT READ THINGS INTO THE NARRATIVE, NOR ASSUME THAT IT IS MEANT TO BE COMPLETE.

Nothing that was ever written was complete. A complete account of something would be impossible to a finite man. There are always additional elements and ideas that cannot be stated in the space that is available. In John 21:25 we read as follows: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." Jesus did things of which we have no record. The Bible simply gives us a selection of those that are most important for us to know. This is true about anything that we describe. It is necessary to make a selection. God caused that the writers of the Bible should make a selection in every part of it. The selection is not complete and cannot be.

If I make a statement that I came up here yesterday from Philadelphia, that is a true statement as far as it goes, but it does not tell the method I used to come. It does not say whether I walked, rode horseback, swam, took a train, a bus, or used a private car. If I mention any one of these means of conveyance, it does not tell whether I used it all the way or part of the way. It does not tell by what route I came. There are dozens of questions that could be asked. It would take a whole volume fully to describe a simple event in the life of any of us. Millions of elements and aspects entered into God's establishment of the universe as it is. We must not assume that all of this is intended to be fully explained in the account of Genesis.

The Bible is not a book of physics or chemistry. We could not write a complete physics or chemistry book from the statements in the Bible. That is not its purpose. Its purpose is to tell us about God and how we may be saved from our sins and be born into the family of God. However, wherever it touches on physics or chemistry we can be sure that what it says is correct.

The Bible is not even a book of history in the sense of attempting to give us a complete history. It does not give us a complete history of Israel. It explains those matters that are important to the account of salvation. We can be sure that whatever it states is true and dependable, but that there will be many elements that are left untouched.

Let us now look at the chapter and see how this principle enters into our interpretation. The first verse says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." What sort of beginning does this mean? Is it speaking of the creation of the universe as a whole, or of the particular earth on which we live? It may be a reference to the creation of original matter, out of which all the parts of the universe came into being. Or it may be speaking simply of the particular earth with which the Bible principally deals. In the latter case it is the beginning of this earth that is here in mind, not the beginning of the whole universe. As between these two we simply are not given material to make a decision. The Bible elsewhere clearly teaches that everything in the universe comes from God's creative power, and also stresses the fact that everything about this earth is a result of His creative activity. We cannot state dogmatically whether verse 1 relates to the universe as a whole, or to this earth and the heavens that surround it. In any event both are true. Both are true whichever of them is discussed in this particular verse.

There are many who say that between verse 1 and verse 2 there is a gap of millions of years. They consider that the life span of a pre-Adamic race, the downfall of Satan, and a chaotic upheaval on this earth, occurred between verses 1 and 2. The