

# Part II: Time, Chs 6-8

Life Together • Doug Olena • September 29, 2024  
From *The Sacred Chain* by Jim Stump

“There is a bigger picture of our identity and our place in the grand scheme of things that seems to emerge from the Bible, and a different picture of ourselves that seems to emerge from the long eons of our universe’s history.”

—*Jim Stump, p. 62*

# Part 2: Time

- \* God's Weekly Planner
- \* Keeping Time
- \* God's Priorities
- \* Rethinking Time and the Bible
- \* Finding Deeper Faith with  
Arundhati Roy and G. K.  
Chesterton



# Both Stories

- \* If both of these two stories of the cosmos are true, then how do we organize them together without conflict?
- \* They both organize the age of the universe in terms of time, but differently.
- \* Stump has decided to use a weekly planner (Bible) to show the 13.8 billion years (science) of the universe's history.

# Both Stories

- \* Organizing these two calendars will require a good bit of summarization, but that doesn't mean contradictions don't count.
- \* In formal logic there is a form of proof that suggests first the opposite of what one believes to be true, (in case there are any doubts,) this proof by contradiction will expose flaws in the logic of a belief or position.
- \* What kind of evidence counts? What is the qualitative truth value of the offered stories?

# Biblical Story

- \* The Wesleyan Quadrilateral gives the biblical scope.\*
- \* The text of the Bible itself is limited, finite, and originates in an ancient culture that can't be separated successfully from the words themselves.
- \* The answers are compelling only to the inside group, but the truth of them should be accessible to all readers.
- \* The truth of the process relies on the best data and interpretation.

\*[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wesleyan\\_Quadrilateral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wesleyan_Quadrilateral)

# Scientific Story

- \* The scientific story does not carry an absolute declaration.
- \* The truth of the process relies on the best data and interpretation.
- \* New data have the job of forcing reevaluation of current theories.
- \* The residue of scientific effort is technological civilization.



# God's Weekly Planner

## Chapter 6



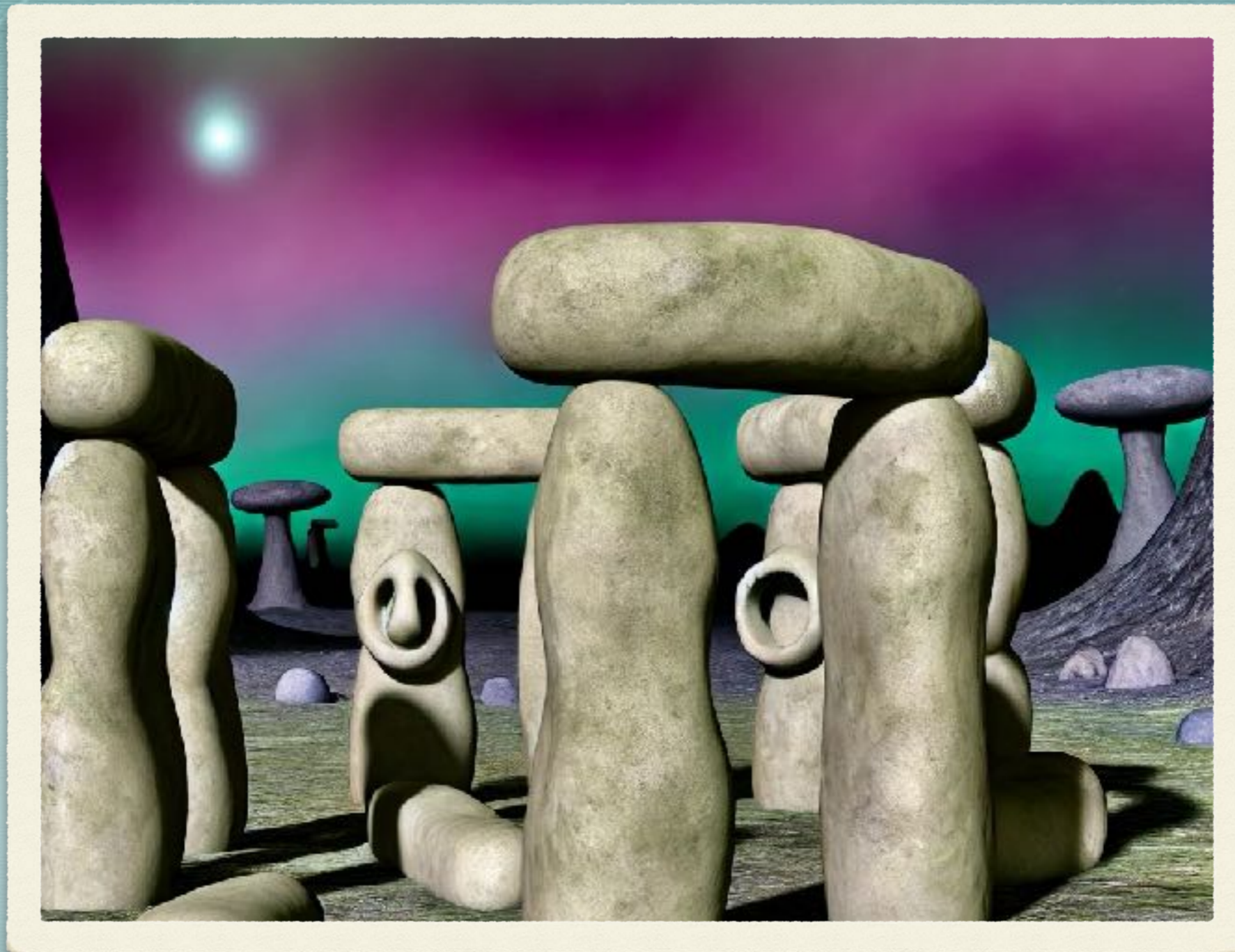
# Time Table

- \* Creation of the Universe (13.8 BYA) - Sunday, 12:00 am.
- \* The Milky Way Forms (11 BYA) - Monday 9:36 am.
- \* Our Sun Forms (4.57 BYA) - Thursday 4:22 pm.
- \* Earth Forms (4.54 BYA) - Thursday 4:44 pm.
- \* First Life on Earth (4 BYA) - Thursday 11:17 pm.
- \* Multicellular Life (800 MYA) - Saturday 2:16 pm.

# Time Table

- \* First Trees (400 MYA) - Saturday 7:08 pm.
- \* Dinosaurs (230-65 MYA) - Saturday 11:12 pm - 11:23 pm.
- \* Primates (55 MYA) - Saturday 11:23 pm.
- \* Last Common Ancestors with Chimpanzees and Bonobos (6 MYA) - Saturday 11:56 pm.
- \* Homo Sapiens (300 KYA) - Saturday 11:59;47 pm.

How Do We Know  
This is Correct?



# Keeping Time

Chapter 7

# Keeping Time

- \* To understand the challenge to the biblical timeframe, Stump needed to “understand the science behind scientific conclusions.” 69
- \* What’s the difference between our modern clock accuracy and ancient timekeeping?
- \* What is the cultural difference between ancient and modern timekeeping?

# Keeping Time

- \* Keeping time in nature:
  - \* Maeshowe - 5,000 years ago measured the year at the winter solstice from within the cairn. When inside the cairn, one could see the sun set precisely over the stone placed half a mile away.
  - \* Tree Rings - Count the yearly tree rings to find out how old the tree is. Variability in the weather allows distinct marks that can be synchronized with other trees.

“There is a sequence of oak trees in Ireland that goes back 7,429 years, and a sequence of oaks and pines in central Europe that goes back 12,460 years.”

—*Jim Stump, p. 62*

# Keeping Time

- \* Keeping time in nature (cont):
  - \* Annual layers of sediment at the bottom of some lakes. Like tree rings weather patterns change the way sediment is deposited. There is an example in Japan that records more than 50,000 years.
  - \* Radiocarbon dating is effective for 50,000 to 60,000 years ago.



# Keeping Time

- \* Keeping time in nature (cont):
  - \* Potassium 40 has a half life of about 1.3 billion years. Measuring this gives an age of 3.5 billion years to rocks found in Greenland.
  - \* The speed of light is constant at about 300,000 kilometers per second (or 186,000 miles per second.)
  - \* The cosmic background radiation left from the big bang. Predicted in the 1940s and detected in 1960s.

The age of the universe is 13.8  
BYO with these techniques.

# Keeping Time

- \* Objections:

- \* God could have made the universe with the appearance of age.

- \* Did God make the universe with the appearance of great age 6,000-10,000 years ago?

# Keeping Time

- \* Queries:

- \* Did Adam and Eve have belly buttons,
- \* mature trees with rings already in them,
- \* the right amount of Carbon 14 still in the samples,
- \* and just the right amount of cosmic background radiation to create the appearance of age in the earth?

# Keeping Time

- \* By analogy God could have created the universe 600 years ago or 6 years ago with all the appearance of age.
- \* How does the realization of a 13.7 BYO universe change our perspective on the Bible?



# God's Priorities

## Chapter 8

# God's Priorities

- \* 78 What conclusions can we draw about God's priorities if we both accept the weekly planner in chapter 6 and the science behind it in chapter 7?
- \* God watched fusion create all the heavier elements in the universe by fusion in stars from Monday morning to Thursday afternoon, "40% of the time of creation, about 6 billion years.

# God's Priorities

- \* On this account Homo Sapiens are a brief afterthought not arriving until 99.998% of the timespan of creation.
- \* 2.5 million ants for every human on planet.
- \* 1000x bacterial bio mass than humans.
- \* J. S. Haldane observing the number of beetle species suggests that "God must have an inordinate fondness for beetles seeing as how they are about 1/4 of the species on the planet.



# God's Priorities

- \* There were other human species besides Homo Sapiens who died out.
- \* So, if time is a measure of God's priorities, then humankind is a very minor afterthought.
- \* Why couldn't God have done all his creating miraculously, instantaneously?

# How to Read Them

- \* 82 “Saying that God creates the land is a personal explanation. Appealing to volcanos and tectonic plates is a scientific explanation.
- \* “Having a scientific explanation does not write God out of the picture.”

# How to Read Them

- \* 83 Miracles: How does the Bible portray them?
  - \* They were not labor saving devices.
  - \* 84 Hungry people are fed, sick and injured people are healed, and Jesus resurrects as the firstfruits of the kingdom.
  - \* Doing miracles is for people's eyes, a demonstration.
  - \* Maybe he enjoys the process that takes billions of years.

