**Genesis & Science**

Key Words:

chronological order - the ‘time order’/ the order in which things took place

cosmology - the study of the universe (cosmos)

billion - 1,000, 000,000 (thousand million)

natural selection - ‘survival of the fittest’ where those creatures that are best adapted to their surroundings are most likely to live long enough to reproduce whilst weaker creatures die too soon so that only the best creatures survive in the long run

commentary - further explanation of a text or story

conservatives - In Christianity, this means people who hold traditional beliefs. (This is nothing to do with the Conservative Party in politics.)

liberals - In Christianity, this means people who take on board more modern beliefs that may go against traditional ideas. (This is nothing to do with the Liberal Democrat Party.)

It is worth bearing in mind that some Scientists are Christians, such as Francis Collins who lead the Human Genome Project. This is not a simple debate between ‘religion’ & ‘science’. Some people believe in both at the same time.

**A. Differences between Genesis and the Scientific Cosmology**

**Genesis 1-2** **Scientific Explanation**

1. **Before the universe**

**Cannot create matter** out of nothing.

Universe *possibly partly* created **out of nothing**.

1. **Timescale**

**15 billion years**

**6 days**

1. **Method**

a. **God speaks**

b. God forms Adam **from the** **dust** and breathes life into him.

Chain of **evolution** through natural selection from single cell creatures eventually to apes then humans.

1. **Nature of humanity**

Humans are “just an advanced breed of **monkeys** on a minor planet”. (Stephen Hawking)

Humans made in **God’s image**.

1. **Purpose of humanity**
2. Humans made to be in a **relationship with God** and
3. to **look after the earth** on God’s behalf.

Everything is a **meaningless** random accident with no purpose to it.

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**B. Attitudes to Scientific Cosmology**

1. **Creationists (strict conservative Christians):**
	1. believe that the Genesis 1-2 is **literally true**;
	2. Big Bang & **Evolution** theories are **mistaken**.
2. **Moderate conservative Christians:**
	1. Bible inspired by God but Genesis 1-2 is **true but** **not 100% literally**;

because:

* + 1. Genesis is a book **about faith not a scientific book**;
		2. In Gen. 1 each **‘day’ = millions of years**;
	1. **Big Bang & Evolution** are true.
1. **Liberal Christians:**
	1. Bible **contains mistakes** but Gen 1-2 are **fables** that teach true ideas about God being behind it all;
	2. God made the universe using **the Big Bang & Evolution**.
2. **Atheists:**

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* 1. The **Bible is outdated** andfull of **myths that are untrue.**
	2. **God did not make the universe.** We have **explained how the universe was made through Science** and do not need to mention a god.