

Facts and Fancy about the Bible - 13

The 18th century French author Voltaire, in one of his attacks on the Bible, was mistaken to claim that there could not be mornings and evenings before the fourth day of creation, when “God MADE two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth” - Genesis 1:16.

We noted previously that “In the beginning God CREATED the heaven” - the expanse which contains the sun, moon, and stars - “and the earth” - Genesis 1:1, which indicates that these heavenly bodies, although existing, were not yet visible from earth.

The very first action in the dark and water-covered earth was when “God said, ‘LET THERE BE LIGHT’; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day” - Genesis 1:3.

The very mention of day and night at this point speaks of the earth revolving on its axis to distribute the incoming sunlight around the globe. Evening is the time when the sun is setting and morning is the time when the sun is rising. And while the sky is shrouded in clouds the sun is hidden from view, but the light still shines through.

It can help to consider that the Genesis account, being God’s revelation to mankind, describes events from the point of view of an observer on the earth. The sun, moon and stars, while they already existed, were not visible from there until the fourth day, when “God made two great lights” - this is not “create” (bring into existence), but “made” in the sense of “appointed” as the Hebrew word is rendered in Job 14:5 and Psalms 104:19 “He appointed the moon for seasons...” And so we have in Genesis 1:16 that “he appointed... the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.”

Had Voltaire noticed these facts he would not have so foolishly accused the Holy Scriptures of error. Right from day 1, before God pronounced “Let there be light” the earth was turning on its axis - as it was after “Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days” - Exodus 10:22.

But that skeptic takes no notice of the other Scriptures which show that the creation account is also an allegory of how God was going to take the earth from being a dark uninhabited planet to being populated with enlightened and immortal people -

To begin with, “darkness was on the face of the deep” - Darkness is used in Scripture to represent ignorance of God and His purpose. When the New Testament writer wishes to describe the transition from ignorance of God to a knowledge of the gospel he said that God “called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” - 1 Peter 2:9.

Jesus declared of himself, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” - John 8:12. And Paul said, “God who commanded light to shine out of darkness has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” - 2 Corinthians 4:6. And so Jesus Christ “has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” - 2 Timothy 1:10.