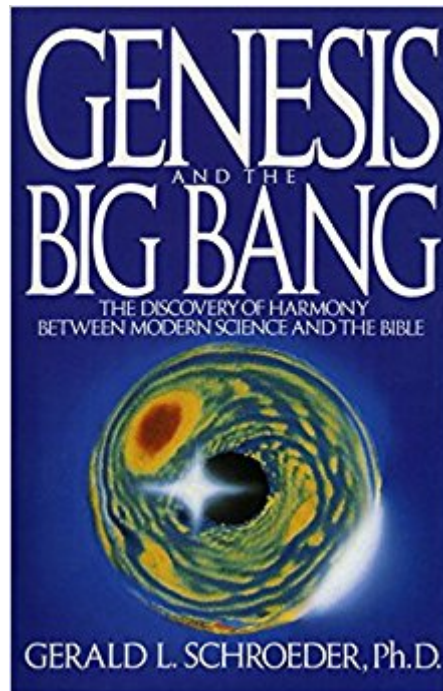


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Genesis And The Big Bang: The Discovery Of Harmony Between Modern Science And The Bible



Synopsis

In this groundbreaking book, physicist Gerald Schroeder takes on skeptics from both sides of the cosmological debate, arguing that science and the Bible are not at odds concerning the origin of the universe.

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Customer Reviews

It's pretty good. I don't agree with everything he says, but I don't agree with everything I say. The best thing about his book is that he relies only on the best and most reputable scientists and theologians (albeit almost exclusively Jewish). He never quotes crackpots or weirdoes or makes outlandish claims. The worst thing about his book is that he says "Maimonides says" and "Nahmonides says" (two important Jewish commentators) but he rarely quotes the guys. We're just supposed to take his word on it. But if what he claims is true, I want to read Maimonides' commentary on Genesis and his "Guide to the Perplexed." Supposedly (back in the 10th century, I'm pretty sure) Maimonides said, based only on his exegesis of Genesis, that there were man-like creatures before Adam, that the entire universe was created from something smaller than a mustard seed, that the six days are not comprehensible according to our time-scale (which makes sense, since how can you have a day before you have a sun?), and a whole list of other things that are remarkably consistent with modern scientific views. Anyway, there's a lot there and it's fairly interesting. It also provides a pretty good overview of the history and development of the universe. He has three big points. + Secularists have to quit kidding themselves. The physical constants and properties of the universe are so carefully fine-tuned to create the conditions

necessary for life that it speaks of design, and that the sudden appearance of life on earth -- basically as soon as conditions would permit -- is so horribly improbable as to be impossible.+ Biblical fundamentalists have to quit kidding themselves.

When Torah and natural science seem to conflict, one or the other is being incorrectly interpreted. That's the principle Gerald Schroeder propounds and defends in this remarkable volume. And I can only think that Moses Maimonides would have been delighted. What Schroeder argues, basically, is that the biblical account of creation in six days can be read as taking place over six literal days -- and that not only does this reading fail to conflict with modern science, indeed science itself supports that reading. The solution? The six days are "God's time," reckoned from within one frame of reference, and the millions of years with which science deals are "earth time," reckoned from within another. The two are reconciled by the theory of relativity. Moreover, this reading is firmly grounded in traditional Jewish texts that predated the theory of relativity by one or two thousand years. I'll let Schroeder fill you in on the details. But whether those details are sound or not, his approach is refreshingly sane. On the one hand, we have various sorts of Bible-thumper insisting that all our knowledge must come from the Word of God and nothing else -- an insistence that turns easily into anti-intellectual ranting against science. On the other, we have various sorts of scientific yahoo insisting that religion is bunk and science is the royal road to truth. Rubbish, on both counts. The Torah does indeed bear signs that it is a Divine communication, and people who believe this are being entirely reasonable. (See, e.g., Lawrence Kelemen's Permission To Receive for a defense of this view.

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