

# Pleasant Springs Church

12-Week Study · A Quantum Case For God

## A Quantum Case For God

*A 12-week discipleship study engaging Dennis Zetting's book of the same name — pairing each finding of modern quantum and string physics with the biblical theology of God speaking creation into existence*

Pleasant Springs Church · Discipleship School · Pinson, Tennessee  
Septuagint (LXX) & ESV side-by-side throughout

### THE CENTRAL THREAD

**God speaks — reality answers.** Genesis 1 records ten times that “God said.” Psalm 33:6 declares that “*by the word of the LORD the heavens were made.*” Hebrews 11:3 says the worlds were *framed by the word of God*. John 1 calls Christ the *Logos* — the spoken Word — through whom all things were made. And modern string theory says that every particle of matter is, at the bottom, a *vibrating string of energy*. Sound is vibration. Speech is vibration. The whole universe, on string theory's account, is one continuous, sustained vibration. Twelve weeks — twelve angles on the same thrilling proposition: *the universe is, quite literally, a sustained Word.*

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**Week 8** Vibrations — Creation Spoken Into Existence — *String theory and the Word of God — the central lesson*

**Week 9** Additional Dimensions and the Heavenly Realms — *M-theory's ten dimensions — and Paul caught up to the third heaven*

**Week 10** Time and the Eternal God — *Relativity, spacetime, and the God who inhabits eternity*

**Week 11** Making Sense of It All — Genesis Reconciled — *The order of creation and the harmony of the two books*

**Week 12** Living in a Spoken World — *Application — speak life, agree with what God has spoken*

## ANCHOR SCRIPTURE

Before week one, let the central biblical verse for the entire series sit in front of you. Memorize it. Pray it. Carry it through every chapter of physics we read.

### Psalm 32:6, 9 LXX (= Psalm 33:6, 9 ESV) · The Word and the Universe

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>6</sup>τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ Κυρίου οἱ οὐρανοὶ ἐστερεώθησαν,  
καὶ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ πάντα ἡ  
δύναμις αὐτῶν... <sup>9</sup>ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπε, καὶ  
ἐγενήθησαν, αὐτὸς ἐνετείλατο, καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν.

#### English Standard Version

<sup>6</sup>By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,  
and by the breath of his mouth all their host...  
<sup>9</sup>For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded,  
and it stood firm.

Three words to notice. **Logos** — the Word, which John 1 will name as Christ. **Pneuma** — breath, spirit, wind, *vibration of the air*. And **he spoke, and they came to be**. A spoken word is a vibration of air. A vibration of air is, on the modern account, the macroscopic shadow of a vibrating string at the deepest layer of physical reality. Psalm 33 says the cosmos came into existence as the long shadow of a divine vibration — the «breath of his mouth.» Three thousand years later string theory says — in mathematics — the universe is, at the bottom, vibrating strings of energy. Twelve weeks unpack what that convergence means.

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WEEK 1 OF 12

## The Two Books

*Why a Christian should care about modern physics*

### THE BIG IDEA

The medieval church spoke of *two books*: the book of nature and the book of scripture, both written by the same God. When the two seem to disagree, we have either misread the data or misread the text — the Author cannot contradict Himself. Modern physics is the most careful reading of the book of nature humans have ever done. Scripture says creation will testify (Rom 1:20). For twelve weeks we listen to what it testifies.

If you grew up in Sunday school you may have been told, quietly or loudly, that science and faith are enemies — that you must choose. This series rejects that premise. The author of Genesis is also the author of every photon, every quark, every vibrating string of energy at the bottom of physical reality. To love Him with all your mind (Matt 22:37) is to take both books with full seriousness.

Dennis Zetting's *A Quantum Case For God* — the book this twelve-week series engages — makes a modest and powerful claim. Not that science *proves* God, but that the discoveries of modern quantum and string physics have eroded every scientific basis on which one might confidently assert that a creator God *cannot* exist. And, in many specific cases, the physics reveals exactly the kind of reality scripture predicts.

This week sets the stage. We look at the doctrine of two books, the Pauline claim that creation is a legible witness, and the thread that will tie every following week together: **God speaks; reality answers.**

### SCRIPTURE

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## Romans 1:20 · Creation Is a Witness

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου τοῖς ποιήμασιν νοούμενα καθορᾶται, ἢ τε ἀίδιος αὐτοῦ δύναμις καὶ θειότης, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτοῦ ἀναπολογήτους.

### English Standard Version

For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

## Psalm 18:2 LXX (= Ps 19:1) · The Heavens Narrate Glory

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

οἱ οὐρανοὶ διηγοῦνται δόξαν Θεοῦ, ποίησιν δὲ χειρῶν αὐτοῦ ἀναγγέλλει τὸ στερέωμα·

### English Standard Version

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

## Psalm 32:6 LXX (= Ps 33:6) · The Word and the Worlds

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ Κυρίου οἱ οὐρανοὶ ἐστερεώθησαν, καὶ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ πᾶσα ἡ δύναμις αὐτῶν.

### English Standard Version

By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### The Doctrine of Two Books

Augustine of Hippo (354–430) wrote: «*It is the divine page that you must listen to; it is the book of the universe that you must observe.*» The metaphor traveled through Aquinas, Bonaventure, Galileo, Bacon, Kepler, Newton, and into the Reformation. Calvin called the world *theatrum gloriae Dei* — the theater of God’s glory. The instinct is the same in all of them: the same God authored both. Read either honestly and you arrive at the same Author.

### The Thread That Ties Every Week

Genesis 1 records ten times that «*God said.*» Psalm 33 says the heavens were made by His *word* and framed by the *breath of His mouth*. Hebrews 11:3 says the worlds were framed by the *spoken word of God*. John 1 calls Christ Himself the *Logos* — the Word — through whom all things were made. Speech

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is vibration of air. Vibration of air is the macroscopic shadow of a vibrating string at the bottom of physical reality. The whole physical universe, on the modern account, is one continuous, sustained vibration. The whole physical universe, on the biblical account, is a sustained Word. The two books say the same thing.

## THE CONVERGENCE

Scripture says creation witnesses. Modern physics is the most careful listening to that witness we have ever done. The series is not *science vs. faith*; it is two faithful readings of the same Author.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Where did you first learn that science and faith are opposed? Was it ever explicitly taught, or just absorbed?
2. Augustine, Aquinas, Newton, Faraday, Maxwell, Kelvin, and many of the founders of modern science were Christians. Why does our culture rarely tell that story?
3. Romans 1:20 says creation makes the invisible attributes of God *clearly perceived*. Where in your own life have you most clearly perceived God through nature?
4. If the two books cannot contradict, what would honest reading require of you when an apparent contradiction shows up?
5. Read Psalm 33:6 aloud. What does it mean to you that the universe began as a *spoken* thing?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Father, you are the Author of two books and the same God speaks through both. Forgive us when we have set them against each other, when we have read your scripture lazily or your creation lazily and blamed the disagreement on you. Open our minds to read both with care. Open our hearts to find you in both. Bring us through these twelve weeks more in love with you, more in love with your world, more able to give a reason for the hope that is in us. We ask it through Jesus Christ, the Logos in whom all things hold together.*

**Amen.**

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WEEK 2 OF 12

## What Are Quantum & String Physics?

*Atoms, particles, strings — and the limits of human knowing*

THE BIG IDEA

**Classical (Newtonian) physics** works on objects you can see. **Quantum physics** works on objects so small you cannot see them, where the rules become — in Feynman's word — *absurd*. **String physics** goes one layer deeper, claiming every particle is a vibrating strand of energy. The honest verdict of the smartest physicists alive is that they understand a tiny corner of the universe and have *no idea* what is on the other side of it. Scripture has said precisely this for three thousand years.

Classical (Newtonian) physics is what most adults learned in high school: forces, falling apples,  $F=ma$ , the inverse-square law of gravitation. It describes *large* things in the four dimensions of length, width, depth, and time. It works brilliantly for buildings, bridges, planetary orbits, and Major League Baseball.

Quantum physics is the study of energy, matter and motion at the sub-atomic scale — particles smaller than the atom: quarks, electrons, photons, gluons, neutrinos. At this scale, classical physics breaks down. Particles seem to be in two places at once. They behave like waves until you look at them, at which point they behave like particles. They «tunnel» through walls. They communicate instantaneously across any distance.

String physics (also called string theory, M-theory, or *superstring theory*) goes deeper still. It proposes that every particle is, at the bottom, a tiny vibrating strand of energy — a *string*. What kind of particle a string becomes is determined by the *frequency* at which it vibrates, like a guitar string sounding one note for an electron and another for a quark. On this account, the universe is one vast symphony.

The honest verdict of the most accomplished physicists alive is that they understand only a tiny corner of all this. Richard Feynman: «*my physics students don't understand it either. That is because I don't understand it. Nobody does.*» This is not the embarrassment of the field. It is its glory. Scripture, three thousand years ahead, predicted exactly this posture as the precondition of wisdom.

### SCRIPTURE

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## Job 38:4–5 · Where Were You?

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

ποῦ ἦς ἐν τῷ θεμελιοῦν με τὴν γῆν; ἀπάγγελον δέ μοι, εἰ ἐπίστασαι σύνεσιν. τίς ἔθετο τὰ μέτρα αὐτῆς, εἰ οἶδας; ἢ τίς ὁ ἐπαγαγὼν σπαρτίον ἐπ' αὐτῆς;

English Standard Version

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements — surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it?

## 1 Corinthians 13:12 · Now We Know in Part

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην.

English Standard Version

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

## Proverbs 25:2 · The Glory of Searching Out

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

Δόξα Θεοῦ κρύπτει λόγον, δόξα δὲ βασιλέως τιμᾶ πράγματα.

English Standard Version

It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### The Bucket and the Pacific

Zetting offers a memorable image: imagine walking up to the vast Pacific Ocean and filling a five-gallon bucket. That is what science knows about the universe — a miniscule fraction, yet the implications of that sliver are reshaping how we see the world. The bucket is magnificent. It is also, by volume, statistically zero compared to the ocean. This is the right epistemic posture for the scientist; it is also exactly the posture Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13:12. We know in part.

### Quantum and the Death of Certainty

For two centuries after Newton, classical physics carried an aura of completeness. In the late 1800s, leading physicists were openly suggesting that the work was almost done. Then quantum mechanics arrived. Particles refused to stay where they were put. The act of observation changed what was being

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observed. Cause-and-effect at the smallest scale dissolved into probability. The universe, it turned out, was much bigger and stranger than the bucket of classical science had revealed. Quantum did not destroy the bucket; it revealed the Pacific.

## Strings and the Symphony

String theory takes one further step. If you look closely enough at a particle, the theory says, you find a vibrating strand of energy. Different frequencies of vibration produce different particles. All of matter is, at the bottom, a vibration. The image is irresistibly musical. The universe is a sustained song. Remember that image. By week eight we will be singing it back to Genesis 1.

### THE CONVERGENCE

The greatest physicists of our age confess they know in part — exactly what Paul confessed in 1 Corinthians 13:12. The deepest principles they reach (vibrating strings, hidden dimensions, probability-not-certainty) are not in tension with scripture. They are scripture's description of creaturely knowledge translated into mathematics.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Have you ever held a confident scientific (or theological) certainty that later cracked? What did that experience teach you?
2. Job 38 has God interrogating Job about creation. If God asked you the same questions today, how would your answers compare to Job's? Would your answers be better or just longer?
3. Feynman said «nobody understands quantum mechanics.» Why might admitting that be necessary for honest science?
4. 1 Corinthians 13:12 says we know «in part.» Where does the church most often forget that — in theology, in apologetics, in prayer?
5. If matter is, at the bottom, vibrating strings of energy, how does that change (if at all) how you think about «the physical world»?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Father of measure and number and weight, you have hidden enough that searching is a joy and revealed enough that we may know you. Save us from the small certainty that fits in a five-gallon bucket. Stretch us toward the Pacific of your wisdom. Teach us to know in part without despair, and to wait for the day when we shall know fully, even as we have been fully known. We ask it through Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. **Amen.***

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WEEK 3 OF 12

## The Big Bang and 'In the Beginning'

*Lemaître, Hubble, expansion — and Genesis 1:1*

### THE BIG IDEA

For 2,200 years after Plato and Aristotle, the «steady-state» universe was scientific orthodoxy: the cosmos had always existed, fixed and eternal. Then in 1927 a Catholic priest named Georges Lemaître proposed that the universe was *expanding*, and therefore had a *beginning*. Edwin Hubble confirmed it by measuring redshift in 1929. The big bang was born. Two thousand years earlier, Genesis 1:1 had said the same thing in seven Hebrew words: **in the beginning, God created.**

Through the 1920s, every major cosmologist believed the universe had always existed in roughly its present form — eternal, static, unchanging. This was the philosophical inheritance of Plato and Aristotle, twenty-three centuries strong. To suggest otherwise was scientific blasphemy.

Then in 1927, a Belgian Catholic priest with a doctorate in physics, Monsignor Georges Lemaître, published a paper claiming the universe was actually *expanding*. If it was expanding now, he reasoned, it must have been smaller in the past. Run the film backward far enough and you arrive at a single point — what Lemaître called the *primeval atom* — from which everything came. The universe, he was saying, had a **beginning**.

Two years later in 1929, Edwin Hubble at Mount Wilson observatory measured the light from distant galaxies and found that almost every one of them was *redshifted* — their light stretched toward the red end of the spectrum, which means they were moving away from us. The further the galaxy, the faster it receded. The universe was, in fact, expanding. Lemaître was right.

The English physicist Fred Hoyle, who hated the theory, mocked it on a 1949 BBC broadcast as a «Big Bang idea.» The name stuck. What had been heretical in 1927 was mainstream by 1965 when the cosmic microwave background was discovered — the leftover radiation from the bang itself. The universe began. Genesis had said so for three thousand years.

### SCRIPTURE

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## Genesis 1:1 · In the Beginning, God Created

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν.

### English Standard Version

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

## John 1:1–3 · All Things Through Him

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>1</sup>Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος. <sup>2</sup>οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν. <sup>3</sup>πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν.

### English Standard Version

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

## Hebrews 11:3 · The Worlds Framed By the Word

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

πίστει νοοῦμεν κατηρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι Θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων τὸ βλεπόμενον γεγονέναι.

### English Standard Version

By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### 'In the Beginning' — A Beginning Means a Beginner

Plato and Aristotle did not believe in a creator God. They did not need to — the universe, on their view, had always existed. A universe that has always existed needs no explanation. But a universe that *began* — that came into being at a finite moment in the past — demands an explanation. What caused it? On the philosophical principle that nothing comes from nothing, the answer must be something that did not itself begin. Something *eternal*. Lemaître's discovery returned the cosmological argument to the front of the room.

### The Hebrew "In the Beginning"

The first word of Genesis in Hebrew is *b'reshit*. The Septuagint translators rendered it *en archê* (Ἐν ἀρχῇ) — *in the beginning*, in a starting point. The same phrase opens John's gospel a thousand years later.

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John writes *en archê ên ho Logos* — in the beginning was the Word — deliberately echoing Genesis 1:1. He wants the reader to make the connection: the One who began the universe is the same Word now incarnate in Christ.

## Order of Creation — A Real Tension

Critics rightly point out that the Genesis order (heavens and earth, light, sky, dry land, plants, sun and moon, fish and birds, land animals, humans) does not match the scientific order (energy, the four forces, stars, galaxies, planets, primitive life, animals, humans). The two orders are not identical. Honest readers from Augustine onward have proposed several resolutions: the *day-age* view (each Genesis day is an epoch), the *framework* view (the six days are a literary structure of forming and filling, not a chronological log), and the *cosmic temple* view (Genesis 1 is the inauguration of the cosmos as God's temple). Week eleven will return to this carefully. For now: both books begin in the beginning, and the same God wrote them.

### THE CONVERGENCE

Lemaître's discovery did not invent the doctrine of creation; it confirmed in physics what Genesis 1:1 had stated as scripture for three thousand years. The universe began. Whoever denies a beginning is now denying both the Bible *and* the cosmic microwave background.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Why might it have been a Catholic priest, not an atheist physicist, who first proposed an expanding universe? What in his theological commitments may have made him more open to the data?
2. Genesis 1:1 says God created the heavens and the earth. The Big Bang says everything came from a singularity. Are these the same claim, complementary claims, or competing claims?
3. What do you make of John 1:1 deliberately echoing Genesis 1:1?
4. Hebrews 11:3 says «what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.» How does this match what physics now says about the singularity?
5. If you have wrestled with the apparent disagreement between the six days of Genesis and the 13.8-billion-year timeline, where are you in the wrestling now? (Week 11 will return to this directly.)

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## CLOSING PRAYER

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*God of the beginning, before the beginning you were. You spoke and the singularity unfolded. You spoke and time itself began ticking. We thank you for the Belgian priest who trusted the data, for the astronomer at Mount Wilson who measured the light, for every scientist who has helped confirm what your first verse already said. Make us your kind of beginners — humble, expectant, ready to be surprised by the largeness of what you have done. Through Jesus Christ, the Word who was in the beginning. **Amen.***

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WEEK 4 OF 12

## Light and the Omnipresence of God

*Quantum electrodynamics — God is light, and in him is no darkness*

### THE BIG IDEA

Light — not just the visible kind, but the full electromagnetic spectrum from radio waves to gamma rays — is everywhere in the universe, at every moment, actively involved in every bond, every chemical reaction, every thought in your brain. It is, in the technical sense of the word, *omnipresent*. Scripture has said exactly this about God for thousands of years: **God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.**

Most people, when they hear the word *light*, think of the yellow glow from a lamp or the sun. That is *visible light*, and it is a startlingly small fraction of what physicists call the **electromagnetic radiation (EMR) spectrum**. The full spectrum spans seven categories: radio waves, microwaves, infrared, visible light, ultraviolet, X-rays, and gamma rays. Visible light occupies a sliver of the spectrum so thin that, if the whole spectrum were a road trip from Los Angeles to New York, visible light would account for less than one inch of the journey.

All of these are *light*. All of them are everywhere. As you read this sentence, your body is being passed through, moment by moment, by radio waves from a radio station, microwaves from your neighbor's WiFi, infrared from every warm object in the room, visible light from the screen or window, and ultraviolet from any sunlight in reach. The earth's atmosphere mercifully filters out most X-rays and gamma rays, but they exist throughout the universe in vast quantities.

More remarkable still: light is not merely *present* everywhere; it is *actively involved* in everything. The branch of quantum physics called **quantum electrodynamics (QED)** has shown, with experiments accurate to twelve decimal places, that every chemical bond, every interaction of matter with matter, every firing synapse in your brain right now, is mediated by photons of electromagnetic energy. Light is what holds the brick wall together. Light is what holds your hand together. Light is what allows the words you are reading to be perceived. Light is the universal glue.

### SCRIPTURE

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## 1 John 1:5 · God Is Light

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

Καὶ ἔστιν αὕτη ἡ ἀγγελία ἣν ἀκηκόαμεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀναγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς φῶς ἐστὶ, καὶ σκοτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία.

English Standard Version

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

## John 8:12 · The Light of the World

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

Πάλιν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησε λέγων· ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου· ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἐμοὶ οὐ μὴ περιπατήσει ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ, ἀλλ' ἔξει τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς.

English Standard Version

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

## Psalms 138:7–10 LXX (= Ps 139:7–10) · Where Shall I Flee From Your Presence?

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>7</sup>ποῦ πορευθῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός σου, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου ποῦ φύγω; <sup>8</sup>ἐὰν ἀναβῶ εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, σὺ ἐκεῖ εἶ, ἐὰν καταβῶ εἰς τὸν ἄδην, πάρει· <sup>9</sup>ἐὰν ἀναλάβοιμι τὰς πτέρυγας μου κατ' ὄρθρον, καὶ κατασκηνώσω εἰς τὰ ἔσχατα τῆς θαλάσσης, <sup>10</sup>καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖ ἡ χεὶρ σου ὀδηγήσει με.

English Standard Version

<sup>7</sup>Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? <sup>8</sup>If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! <sup>9</sup>If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, <sup>10</sup>even there your hand shall lead me.

## Colossians 1:17 · All Things Hold Together

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

καὶ αὐτός ἐστι πρὸ πάντων καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν.

English Standard Version

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### Quantum Electrodynamics, in One Paragraph

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Every atom is a nucleus orbited by electrons. Electrons carry electromagnetic charge. When atoms bond — when two hydrogen atoms join an oxygen to make water, when sodium binds with chlorine to make salt — it is their *electrons* that do the joining, and the joining requires a constant exchange of photons (individual particles of light). Photons mediate the electromagnetic force. No photons, no bonds. No bonds, no matter. No matter, no universe. QED has been tested in millions of experiments. It is the most accurately verified theory in the history of science.

## Active vs. Passive Omnipresence

Zetting draws a careful distinction. *Passive omnipresence* means something is present everywhere but not necessarily doing anything in any given place. *Active omnipresence* means it is present everywhere *and* is involved in every event occurring there. Light, as QED has shown, is actively omnipresent throughout the universe. The God of Psalm 139 is actively omnipresent throughout the universe. The physical universe has, as it were, a scaled model of the divine attribute hardwired into the way it works.

## The Brick Wall, the Hand, and the Spoon

You cannot walk through a brick wall, but not for the reason most people assume. There is, in fact, enormous empty space inside every atom — if the nucleus were a golf ball, the nearest electron would orbit three miles away. What stops you is not the matter of the bricks; it is the *electromagnetic force* between your electrons and theirs. Light, in the form of exchanged photons, is what makes the wall solid. Light is what makes your hand solid. As you press your palms together, the resistance you feel is photon exchange. The whole world is, in this strict physical sense, *held together by light*. Compare Colossians 1:17 (*in him all things hold together*). And John 8:12 (*I am the light of the world*). The Logos who holds all things together is the Light who fills all things.

### THE CONVERGENCE

QED proves that light, in the full sense of the electromagnetic spectrum, is actively omnipresent in the universe. Scripture has always said God is light and that he is actively omnipresent. The physical fact does not *prove* the theological claim — but it shows precisely the shape of universe a Christian metaphysic predicts. A God who is light has made a world held together by light.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Psalm 139:7–12 slowly. Where in your life have you most needed to know there is no place you can flee from God's presence? Where have you most wanted to?

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2. If your hand is held together by photons of light right now, what does that change about how you imagine the physical world?
3. Jesus said *I am the light of the world*. In light of QED, is that a metaphor, a metaphysical claim, both, or something deeper?
4. Colossians 1:17 says *in him all things hold together*. The verb is in the perfect tense — ongoing, sustained. How does that affect how you read the news?
5. The full EMR spectrum is mostly invisible to human eyes. What other realities in your life might be present everywhere yet usually unnoticed?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change — you are the light, and there is no darkness in you at all. Forgive us for living as though you were absent anywhere, or quiet anywhere, or uninvolved anywhere. Open our eyes to see your active presence in every place we walk, every atom we touch, every breath we draw. May the One whom you have sent — the light of the world — shine in us today. **Amen.***

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WEEK 5 OF 12

## Wave-Particle Duality and Hidden Reality

*The double-slit experiment — and the things which are not seen*

### THE BIG IDEA

When you fire a single electron at a screen with two slits, it behaves like a *wave* — spreading out, interfering with itself, producing an interference pattern. But the moment you set up a detector to *watch* which slit it goes through, it switches and behaves like a *particle*. Reality at the quantum level depends on whether and how it is observed. What we usually call «the seen world» is the surface of a much deeper, much stranger reality the senses do not normally reach. Hebrews 11:3 says exactly this.

If light were only a wave, you would predict that firing light through two slits onto a screen would produce two bright bands — one behind each slit. But the experiment, first done by Thomas Young in 1801, produces an *interference pattern*: many bands, alternating bright and dark. That is the classic fingerprint of waves — like ripples in a pond — overlapping and cancelling and reinforcing one another. So light must be a wave.

But Einstein in 1905 (the same year as his special relativity paper) showed that light can also behave as discrete particles called *photons* — tiny packets of energy. The Nobel committee gave him the prize for this, not for relativity. So light must be a particle.

Which is it? Both. Quantum physics calls this **wave-particle duality**. Light is both, and what it shows up as at any given moment depends on the situation. The bigger surprise came when physicists ran the same double-slit experiment with single *electrons* — ordinary particles of matter, fired one at a time. They produced an interference pattern too. The single electron, somehow, was going through *both slits at once* and interfering with itself.

And then the truly disturbing finding: when a detector is placed to *see* which slit the electron actually goes through, the interference pattern **disappears**. The electron stops behaving like a wave and starts behaving like a particle. The *act of observation* changes the reality being observed. The double-slit experiment is, in the words of Feynman, the experiment that contains *all of quantum mechanics*. It tells us that the world beneath our senses is not what our senses report.

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## SCRIPTURE

### Hebrews 11:1, 3 · Things Not Seen

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>1</sup>Ἔστι δὲ πίστις ἐλπίζομένων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων... <sup>3</sup>πίστει νοοῦμεν κατηρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι Θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων τὸ βλεπόμενον γεγονέναι.

#### English Standard Version

<sup>1</sup>Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen... <sup>3</sup>By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

### 2 Corinthians 4:18 · Seen and Unseen

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα, ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα· τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια.

#### English Standard Version

As we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

### Colossians 1:16 · Visible and Invisible

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα, τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὄρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα...

#### English Standard Version

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible...

### Genesis 1:1–2 · Formless and Void — The Wave State

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>1</sup>Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν. <sup>2</sup>Ἡ δὲ γῆ ἦν ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος, καὶ σκότος ἐπάνω τῆς ἀβύσσου, καὶ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἐπέφερετο ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος.

#### English Standard Version

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

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## THE BIBLICAL CASE

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### Zetting's 'Christmas Lights' Analogy

Dennis Zetting offers a memorable picture for what the double-slit experiment may mean theologically. Imagine a house with a million Christmas lights hung over every square inch — the trees, the lawn, the swimming pool, the fence. The owner spent eleven months stringing them. On Christmas Eve he gathers his neighbors, but instead of flipping all the switches at once he turns them on one at a time — the house, then the lawn, then the trees, then the pond. Were the lights *real* before they were switched on? Of course. But from the neighbors' perspective they were not *perceptible* until the switch was thrown. Zetting's argument: Genesis 1 may describe exactly this. Genesis 1:1–2 says the earth was *without form and void* (Hebrew *tohu wa-bohu*; LXX *aoratos kai akataskeuastos*, literally *invisible and unconstructed*) — an undetectable wave-state. Then in verse 3, God speaks: «*Let there be light,*» and creation is observed into existence — the switch is thrown. Genesis is, on this reading, the most detailed ancient description of what quantum physicists call the wave-to-particle transition.

### What the Bible Already Said About 'What Is Seen'

Hebrews 11:3 is one of the most quietly radical sentences in scripture. It says *what is seen was not made out of things that are visible*. In Greek: *eis to mê ek phainomenôn to blepomenon gegonenai*. The visible world has its origin in things invisible. For two thousand years that statement puzzled theologians. Now physicists are saying the same thing: the macroscopic visible world rests on a microscopic substrate that is not visible at all and does not even behave according to visible-world rules.

### The Observer and the Observed

One of the deepest implications of the double-slit experiment is that the universe at the quantum level is not the kind of thing that simply *is* independent of who is watching. Reality at the bottom is relational — it answers to observation. Some interpretations of quantum mechanics (the Copenhagen interpretation, most famously) take this to mean that consciousness itself is a fundamental ingredient of physical reality. Others disagree. But all serious physicists agree the data are baffling. From a theological angle, this is unsurprising: scripture says there is a Conscious Observer who has been watching every quantum event since before the foundation of the world. *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good* (Prov 15:3).

### 'Things Not Seen' Is Not Anti-Reason

Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as *the conviction of things not seen*. Modern readers sometimes recoil from that, hearing it as a license for credulity. But modern physics has demonstrated, with mathematical rigor and laboratory verification, that some of the deepest and most certain truths about the physical world are about things not seen. The atom is not seen. The electromagnetic field is not seen. The Higgs boson was predicted by mathematics 50 years before it was verified at CERN. Faith and sight are not

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opposites; they are a sliding scale, and the further into reality you press, the more you live by reasoned conviction about things not seen.

## THE CONVERGENCE

The visible world rests on an invisible one. The behavior of matter depends on whether and how it is observed. Hebrews 11:3 made this claim before there were electrons to fire through slits. 2 Corinthians 4:18 told us the unseen is what abides. Quantum physics has supplied the laboratory demonstration of a metaphysics scripture has held all along.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Hebrews 11:3 says «what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.» What does that mean to you now, having heard about wave-particle duality?
2. Does the observer effect — that reality at the quantum level depends on observation — change how you think about Proverbs 15:3 («the eyes of the LORD are in every place»)?
3. Where in your life are you most tempted to live by *sight* only? What would 2 Corinthians 4:18 ask of you there?
4. If matter behaves one way when watched and another when not, what implications might this have for our intuitions about «reality is what you can see and touch»?
5. How does the existence of mathematically-predicted-then-experimentally-verified physical realities (like the Higgs boson) reframe the popular slogan «I won't believe what I can't see»?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Lord, you have hidden so much, on purpose, behind the surface of things. You have made a world whose deepest layers will not show themselves to a casual glance. Forgive us when we have settled for the surface and called it all that is. Give us the faith of Hebrews 11 — the reasoned conviction of things not seen. Make us patient observers, willing to look long enough that the deep reality begins to disclose itself. Through Jesus Christ, in whom every visible and invisible thing was made. **Amen.***

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WEEK 6 OF 12

## Entanglement and the Body of Christ

*Spooky action at a distance — and that they may all be one*

### THE BIG IDEA

Two particles, once entangled, remain instantaneously correlated across *any* distance — across the universe, if you like. Measure the spin of one and the spin of the other is determined in the same instant, faster than light could travel. Einstein called it *spooky action at a distance* and hoped it would turn out to be wrong. Decades of experiments have confirmed it. The Bible has been describing a similar reality — the church as one body across all distances and times — for two thousand years.

In 1935 Einstein, Podolsky and Rosen published a paper meant to embarrass quantum mechanics. They imagined two particles produced together, with correlated properties (say, opposite spins), and then separated by a huge distance. Quantum mechanics predicted that measuring the spin of one would *instantly* determine the spin of the other. Einstein argued this must be absurd. Nothing can travel faster than light. Therefore quantum mechanics must be incomplete.

He called it *spukhafte Fernwirkung* — spooky action at a distance. It became known as the EPR paradox. For thirty years it remained a thought experiment.

Then in 1964 John Stewart Bell formulated a mathematical theorem that would let you experimentally distinguish between Einstein (*local hidden variables*) and standard quantum mechanics (*genuine entanglement*). In the 1970s and 80s, Alain Aspect and colleagues ran the experiments. The result has been confirmed dozens of times since, including at trans-continental distances and in space-based experiments. **Einstein was wrong. Entanglement is real.** Two particles, once joined, remain correlated across any distance, instantaneously. The Nobel Prize in Physics 2022 was awarded for this work.

Nobody knows quite what to do with this. The information «passing» between entangled particles is not normal information — it cannot be used to send signals. But the correlation is real, instantaneous, and unaffected by distance. Some physicists speak of a *non-local* structure to reality — that at the deepest level, things are not really «separate» in the way classical physics assumed.

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## SCRIPTURE

### John 17:20–21 · That They May Be One

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>20</sup>Οὐ περὶ τούτων δὲ ἐρωτῶ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τῶν πιστευόντων διὰ τοῦ λόγου αὐτῶν εἰς ἐμέ, <sup>21</sup>ἵνα πάντες ἐν ᾧσι, καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ κάγω ἐν σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ἐν ᾧσιν, ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύσῃ ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας.

#### English Standard Version

<sup>20</sup>I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup>that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

### 1 Corinthians 12:12–14, 26–27 · One Body, Many Members

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>12</sup>Καθάπερ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα ἓν ἐστὶ καὶ μέλη ἔχει πολλά, πάντα δὲ τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος τοῦ ἐνός, πολλὰ ὄντα, ἓν ἐστὶ σῶμα, οὕτω καὶ ὁ Χριστός... <sup>26</sup>καὶ εἴτε πάσχει ἐν μέλος, συμπάσχει πάντα τὰ μέλη, εἴτε δοξάζεται ἐν μέλος, συγχαίρει πάντα τὰ μέλη. <sup>27</sup>Ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐστε σῶμα Χριστοῦ καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους.

#### English Standard Version

<sup>12</sup>For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ... <sup>26</sup>If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. <sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

### Romans 12:5 · Members One of Another

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

οὕτως οἱ πολλοὶ ἐν σώμα ἕσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ, ὁ δὲ καθ' εἷς ἀλλήλων μέλη.

#### English Standard Version

So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### What Entanglement Actually Says

Two important clarifications, lest we over-claim. First, entanglement does *not* let you send information faster than light. The correlation cannot be exploited for communication. Second, entanglement is fragile in practice; particles «decohere» quickly when they interact with their environment. But the principle is verified beyond reasonable doubt: at the deepest level, the universe contains genuine

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non-local correlations. Two things that *were one* remain, in some real sense, *still one*, no matter the distance between them.

## The Body of Christ Is Entangled

When Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12 that the church is *one body*, that *if one member suffers, all suffer together*, he is not speaking sentimentally. He is naming a metaphysical fact. The believer in Pinson, Tennessee is genuinely, ontologically joined to the believer in Yangon, Myanmar, by the Spirit that indwells both. Distance does not weaken the bond. Centuries do not weaken it; the saints in glory are joined to us still (Heb 12:1). Communion is real. Quantum entanglement does not *prove* the body of Christ, but it shows the structure of reality is exactly the structure the doctrine of the church predicts: a universe in which things joined remain joined.

## The Trinity, Entangled From Eternity

Push the analogy one further step. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three separated persons who occasionally cooperate. They are *perichoretic* — mutually indwelling, inseparable, one God. Jesus prays in John 17 that the church would share in that pattern: *that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you*. The deepest non-locality in the universe is not entangled particles. It is the Triune God.

### THE CONVERGENCE

Einstein was sure that nothing real could be correlated faster than light. He was wrong. Entanglement is real, demonstrated, Nobel-winning physics. Scripture has said for two thousand years that the church is *one body* across all distances and that the Triune God is one across all eternity. The deepest physical discovery of the last century is exactly the kind of universe Christian doctrine predicts.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Paul says «if one member suffers, all suffer together» (1 Cor 12:26), have you experienced that as a real fact or only an ideal? Tell the story.
2. Distance does not weaken entanglement. Does distance weaken your sense of being one with the worldwide church? Why or why not?
3. Communion of the saints includes those who have died. How does quantum non-locality (or just the resurrection) reframe that for you?

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4. Jesus prays that we would be one «just as» he and the Father are one (John 17:21). What is the implication of that «just as»?
5. What would it look like, this week, to live as though you are entangled with another believer somewhere who is praying for you right now?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Triune God, mystery of mysteries, you are three persons and one God, perfectly joined, perfectly distinct, perfectly one. You have prayed us into your oneness, that we may be one as you are one. We confess we have lived as though we were separate, isolated, alone — as though distance and time could break the bond your Son has made between us and you, between us and every believer. Restore us to a true experience of communion. Make us feel the joy of those who rejoice today and the suffering of those who suffer today. Bind us closer to the church on every continent and in every century. Through Jesus Christ, in whom we are all one. **Amen.***

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WEEK 7 OF 12

## The Quantum Eraser and the Omniscience of God

*The delayed-choice experiment — declaring the end from the beginning*

### THE BIG IDEA

The **delayed-choice quantum eraser experiment** shows something so strange most physicists will admit they do not fully understand it: a measurement made *now* can determine whether a particle, *in the past*, behaved as a wave or a particle. The decision a scientist makes today can «erase» or «preserve» information about an event that has already happened. Time, at the quantum level, does not flow in the simple one-way direction our common sense assumes. Scripture has said for three thousand years that God *declares the end from the beginning* and is unbound by time.

The setup begins where last week began: the double-slit experiment. Fire single photons at a screen with two slits; you get an interference pattern (wave behavior). Add a detector that tells you which slit each photon went through; the interference pattern collapses (particle behavior). So far, ordinary quantum weirdness.

Now the wrinkle, first proposed by John Archibald Wheeler in 1978 and experimentally realized in increasingly sophisticated forms ever since: *delay the measurement*. Send the photon on its way. Wait until *after* it has already passed through the slits. *Then* decide whether or not to measure which slit it went through. If you decide to measure, the photon retroactively behaves like a particle. If you decide not to measure, the photon retroactively behaves like a wave. The decision *now* seems to determine the behavior *then*.

The **delayed-choice quantum eraser** (Yoon-Ho Kim et al., 1999) goes one step further. Even after the «which-slit» information has been recorded, you can later *erase* that information — and the photon's past behavior switches back from particle to wave. Erasing the present record changes what happened in the past.

No serious physicist claims this is backward time travel in any usable sense. (You cannot send signals into the past.) But all serious physicists agree: time, at the quantum level, is not the simple one-way arrow our intuitions assume. The «present moment» is much more entangled with «past» and «future» than common sense imagined. Scripture says God lives on the outside of that entanglement entirely.

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## SCRIPTURE

### Isaiah 46:9–10 · Declaring the End From the Beginning

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>9</sup>καὶ μνήσθητε τὰ πρότερα ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ Θεός, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι πλὴν ἐμοῦ·  
<sup>10</sup>ἀναγγέλλων πρότερον τὰ ἔσχατα πρὶν αὐτὰ γενέσθαι, καὶ ἅμα συνετελέσθη·

#### English Standard Version

<sup>9</sup>Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, <sup>10</sup>declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.'

### Psalms 138:1–4 LXX (= Ps 139:1–4) · You Have Searched Me and Known Me

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>1</sup>Κύριε, ἐδοκίμασάς με καὶ ἔγνωσ με· <sup>2</sup>σὺ ἔγνωσ τὴν καθέδραν μου καὶ τὴν ἔγερσίν μου, σὺ συνήκας τοὺς διαλογισμούς μου ἀπὸ μακρόθεν·  
<sup>3</sup>τὴν τρίβον μου καὶ τὴν σχοῖνόν μου σὺ ἐξιχνίασας, καὶ πάσας τὰς ὁδοὺς μου προεΐδες·  
<sup>4</sup>ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι λόγος ἐν γλώσση μου.

#### English Standard Version

<sup>1</sup>O LORD, you have searched me and known me!  
<sup>2</sup>You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. <sup>3</sup>You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. <sup>4</sup>Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.

### Romans 8:29 · Foreknown and Predestined

#### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

ὅτι οὓς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισε συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς·

#### English Standard Version

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

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## Job 28:24–27 · He Sees Everything Under the Heavens

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

*24* αὐτὸς γὰρ τὴν ὑπ' οὐρανὸν πᾶσαν ἐφορᾷ, εἰδὼς τὰ ἐν τῇ γῆ πάντα ἃ ἐποίησεν... *26* ὅτε ἐποίει οὕτως, ὑετὸν ἠρίθμησε, καὶ ὁδὸν ἐν τινάγματι φωνᾶς, *27* τότε εἶδεν αὐτὴν καὶ ἐξηγήσατο αὐτήν, ἐτοιμάσας ἐξιχνίασεν.

English Standard Version

*24*For he looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens. *25*When he gave to the wind its weight and apportioned the waters by measure, *26*when he made a decree for the rain and a way for the lightning of the thunder, *27*then he saw it and declared it; he established it, and searched it out.

## Hebrews 4:13 · All Things Naked and Open

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

*καὶ οὐκ ἔστι κτίσις ἀφανῆς ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, πάντα δὲ γυμνὰ καὶ τετραχλισμένα τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ, πρὸς ὃν ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος.*

English Standard Version

And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

## 1 John 3:20 · God Is Greater Than Our Heart and Knows All Things

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

*ὅτι ἐὰν καταγινώσκη ἡμῶν ἡ καρδιά, ὅτι μείζων ἐστὶν ὁ Θεὸς τῆς καρδιάς ἡμῶν καὶ γινώσκει πάντα.*

English Standard Version

For whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.

## Daniel 2:22 · He Reveals Deep and Hidden Things

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

*αὐτὸς ἀποκαλύπτει βαθέα καὶ ἀπόκρυφα, γινώσκων τὰ ἐν τῷ σκότει, καὶ τὸ φῶς μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐστὶ.*

English Standard Version

He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### What 'Omniscience' Actually Means

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Christian theology has never said God knows the future *by being a really good guesser*. God's knowledge of all events — past, present, future — flows from his being *outside time*. He does not look down the timeline and see what is coming; he is equally present to every moment of the timeline at once. Boethius (6th century) called this *totum simul*: the whole, all at once. Augustine had said much the same. It is a careful theological move that protects both divine knowledge and human freedom (a theme our Soul and Hell study took up under the heading of *middle knowledge*). The delayed-choice experiment does not *prove* divine timelessness, but it shows that even at the level of physics, «the present» is not the simple, isolated thing common sense imagines.

## Past, Present, and the Quantum Eraser

What the delayed-choice eraser actually demonstrates is that for some quantum events, there is no fact of the matter about whether the particle was a wave or a particle *until* the relevant measurement is made. The «past» for the photon was, in a sense, undetermined — held open — until the «present» measurement was performed. This is deeply counterintuitive, but it is the consensus reading of the experimental data. It means time at the quantum level is not the simple sequential ledger our brains imagine. There is room in the structure of the world for what scripture has always taught: a Knower who is not bound by the ledger.

## Knowledge Is Not Coercion

An old worry comes back to the surface here: if God knows what I will do, am I really free? It is the same worry the Soul and Hell study faced. The answer is the same: *knowing what someone will freely do is not the same as making them do it*. Your weather app may know it will rain tomorrow without causing the rain. God's omniscience — including his knowledge of the «future» that, from his vantage, is as visible as the past — does not erase your agency. It simply means he never gets caught off guard by your choices.

### THE CONVERGENCE

The delayed-choice eraser dissolves the naive picture of time as a one-way arrow that simply ticks forward. Scripture has always said God lives outside that arrow entirely — declaring the end from the beginning, knowing words before they are on your tongue. Physics is not catching up to scripture so much as bumping into a feature of the world scripture has long described.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Read Psalm 139:1–6 slowly. What is most comforting in it? What is most uncomfortable?
2. If God's knowledge of your future does not coerce your present, why does it still *feel* like it might?
3. Does the strangeness of time at the quantum level help you imagine, even by analogy, what it might mean for God to be outside time?
4. Isaiah 46:10 says God declares the end from the beginning. How does that change how you read the news headlines this week?
5. Romans 8:29 talks about being foreknown and predestined to be conformed to Christ. What is one practical step you could take this week to cooperate with that foreknown shaping?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Eternal God, you live beyond the clock. You see today, yesterday, and the day after next as one single day under your gaze. You knew us before we were knit in the womb; you wrote our names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Forgive us for living as though the future were closed to your wisdom or the past were closed to your healing. Help us trust the One who declares the end from the beginning and who has promised that all things work together for good for those who love him. Through Jesus Christ, the Alpha and the Omega. **Amen.***

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WEEK 8 OF 12

## Vibrations — Creation Spoken Into Existence

*String theory and the Word of God — the central lesson*

THE BIG IDEA

**String theory's central claim: every particle of matter is, at the bottom, a tiny vibrating string of energy. Different frequencies of vibration produce different particles. The whole universe is, in the most literal physical sense, a sustained song.** Genesis 1 records ten times that «*God said.*» Psalm 33:6 says the heavens were made *by the word of the LORD* and *by the breath of his mouth*. John 1 calls Christ the *Logos*, the spoken Word, through whom all things were made. Speech is vibration. The two books are saying the same thing.

This is the central week of the series and the lesson the entire study has been building toward. The user-request that began this series asked for one thing in particular: the biblical theology of *God speaking creation into existence*. Week eight is where the physics most directly meets that theology.

**String theory** (also called *superstring theory*, *M-theory*, or *unification theory*) is the most ambitious framework in modern physics. Its central claim is breathtakingly simple: if you zoom in close enough on any particle of matter — quark, electron, photon, neutrino — what you find is not a tiny billiard ball but a tiny vibrating *string* of energy, like an impossibly small guitar string. The *frequency* at which a string vibrates determines what kind of particle it is. An electron is a string vibrating one way; a quark is the same string vibrating another way. Change the frequency and you change the identity.

If string theory is correct — and it remains the leading candidate for a unified theory of physics — then the entire physical universe is, at the bottom, **a single vast vibration**. Every atom in your body, every photon carrying this page to your eyes, every star in every galaxy: all of it, sustained vibration. **The universe is, literally, a song.**

Now consider what scripture has been saying since the first page of the Bible.

### SCRIPTURE

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# Pleasant Springs Church

12-Week Study · A Quantum Case For God

## Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26 · And God Said...

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>3</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· γενηθήτω φῶς· καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς... <sup>6</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· γενηθήτω στερέωμα... <sup>9</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· συναχθήτω τὸ ὕδωρ... <sup>11</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· βλαστησάτω ἡ γῆ... <sup>14</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· γενηθήτωσαν φωστῆρες... <sup>20</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· ἐξαγαγέτω τὰ ὕδατα... <sup>24</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· ἐξαγαγέτω ἡ γῆ... <sup>26</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον...

### English Standard Version

<sup>3</sup>And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light... <sup>6</sup>And God said, 'Let there be an expanse...'  
<sup>9</sup>And God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered...'  
<sup>11</sup>And God said, 'Let the earth sprout vegetation...'  
<sup>14</sup>And God said, 'Let there be lights in the expanse...'  
<sup>20</sup>And God said, 'Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures...'  
<sup>24</sup>And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures...'  
<sup>26</sup>Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image...'

## Psalms 32:6, 9 LXX (= Ps 33:6, 9) · By the Word of the LORD

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>6</sup>τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ Κυρίου οἱ οὐρανοὶ ἐστερεώθησαν, καὶ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ πᾶσα ἡ δύναμις αὐτῶν... <sup>9</sup>ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπε, καὶ ἐγενήθησαν, αὐτὸς ἐνετείλατο, καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν.

### English Standard Version

<sup>6</sup>By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host...  
<sup>9</sup>For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

## John 1:1–3, 14 · The Word Was God — The Word Became Flesh

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>1</sup>Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος. <sup>2</sup>οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν. <sup>3</sup>πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν... <sup>14</sup>Καὶ ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ.

### English Standard Version

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made... <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory.

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## Hebrews 1:3 · Upholding All Things By the Word

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

ὁς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ...

English Standard Version

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power...

## Hebrews 11:3 · The Worlds Framed By the Word

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

πίστει νοοῦμεν κατηρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι Θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων τὸ βλεπόμενον γεγονέναι.

English Standard Version

By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

## 2 Peter 3:5 · By the Word of God the Heavens Existed

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

λανθάνει γὰρ αὐτοὺς τοῦτο θέλοντας, ὅτι οὐρανοὶ ἦσαν ἔκπαλαι, καὶ γῆ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ δι' ὕδατος συνεστῶσα τῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγῳ.

English Standard Version

For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God.

## Psalms 28:3–4 LXX (= Ps 29:3–4) · The Voice of the LORD Over the Waters

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>3</sup>φωνὴ Κυρίου ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων, ὁ Θεὸς τῆς δόξης ἐβρόντησε, Κύριος ἐπὶ ὑδάτων πολλῶν. <sup>4</sup>φωνὴ Κυρίου ἐν ἰσχύι, φωνὴ Κυρίου ἐν μεγαλοπρεπείᾳ.

English Standard Version

<sup>3</sup>The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over many waters. <sup>4</sup>The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

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## Job 37:4–6 · God Thunders With His Voice

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>4</sup>ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ βοήσεται φωνῇ, βροντήσῃ ἐν φωνῇ ὑβρεως αὐτοῦ... <sup>5</sup>βροντήσῃ ὁ ἰσχυρὸς ἐν φωνῇ αὐτοῦ θαυμάσια· ἐποίησε γὰρ μεγάλα, ἃ οὐκ ἤδειμεν, <sup>6</sup>συντάσσων χιόνι· γίνου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς...

### English Standard Version

<sup>4</sup>After it his voice roars; he thunders with his majestic voice, and he does not restrain the lightnings when his voice is heard. <sup>5</sup>God thunders wondrously with his voice; he does great things that we cannot comprehend. <sup>6</sup>For to the snow he says, 'Fall on the earth,' likewise to the downpour, his mighty downpour.

## Isaiah 55:11 · My Word Shall Not Return Empty

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

οὕτως ἔσται τὸ ῥῆμά μου, ὃ ἂν ἐξέλθῃ ἐκ τοῦ στόματός μου, οὐ μὴ ἀποστραφῇ, ἕως ἂν συντελεσθῇ ὅσα ἠθέλησα, καὶ εὐοδώσω τὰς ὁδοὺς σου καὶ τὰ ἐντάλματά μου.

### English Standard Version

So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### Sound, Vibration, and the Spoken Word

A spoken word is, physically, a vibration of air molecules produced by vocal cords vibrating at specific frequencies. Sound is vibration. Speech is sound. *Speech is a macroscopic, audible vibration.* String theory says that at the microscopic, inaudible level, every particle of matter is *also* a vibration. The same word — **vibration** — describes both the universe's deepest physical substrate and the way human language exists in air. The continuity is not accidental. Scripture says reality came into being *because God spoke*; modern physics says reality is, at the bottom, a sustained vibration. Nikola Tesla, who built much of the modern world out of insight into vibration, said it bluntly: *«If you want to find the secrets of the universe, think in terms of energy, frequency and vibration.»* The convergence with Genesis 1 is, frankly, electrifying.

### Cymatics — Where Frequency Becomes Form

Two hundred years ago a German physicist and musician, Ernst Chladni, sprinkled sand on a metal plate and drew a violin bow across its edge. Different frequencies of vibration caused the sand to leap into intricate, perfectly symmetrical geometric patterns — circles, stars, flowers, lattices — each one unique

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to the frequency applied. The field that grew from this is called **cymatics** (from the Greek *k&yumacr;ma*, «wave»). Today you can watch dozens of YouTube demonstrations: pour a non-Newtonian fluid (cornstarch and water) onto a speaker, play a single tone, and the fluid leaps up into three-dimensional moving sculptures. Frequency *shapes matter*. This is laboratory-demonstrable, not theory. Dennis Zetting's point in *A Quantum Case For God* is that if a simple sine wave can sculpt cornstarch into ordered form, the question of what could sculpt the universe by frequency takes on a very different weight. Genesis 1 is a record of one Voice, applying frequency after frequency, until the cosmos took shape.

## 'The Breath of His Mouth'

Psalm 33:6 pairs *logos* (word) with *pneuma tou stomatos* — *the breath of his mouth*. Breath is the medium of speech; *pneuma* is the Greek word for breath, wind, and spirit all at once. The verse is making a very specific physical claim about creation: it happened by vocalisation. God breathed; God spoke; the vibration of his speech generated the heavens. Three thousand years later, string theory tells us that *all matter is vibration*. The Psalmist saw it first.

## Dabar and Logos — A Word Study

The Hebrew word translated «word» in Genesis 1 (the implicit speech of *vayomer Elohim*, «and God said») is **dabar**. It means *word*, but more broadly it means *utterance*, *speech-act*, or even simply *matter* in the sense of «a thing said or done.» The Greek word the Septuagint translators chose for this in many key passages is **logos** — the same word John 1 uses for Christ. Crucially, *dabar* is not tied to a particular language. Zetting puts the point memorably: «*Just as a guitar or bassoon doesn't speak Russian or English, God's utterances in their purest form are not specific to language as we know it. They are sounds and utterances consisting of particular vibrational patterns and frequencies.*» The biblical vocabulary for divine speech was, all along, the vocabulary of *vibration*. The Hebrew prophets did not have to know about string theory to describe a world in which sound is the deep grammar of being.

## The Logos Made Flesh

John 1 takes the doctrine to its highest point. *In the beginning was the Word* — the Word that Genesis records God speaking, the Word by which Psalm 33 says the heavens were made — *and the Word was God*. The Word was not a tool God used; the Word was God himself. Then in verse 14: *and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*. The eternal vibration that holds the universe in being took on a physical body, a vocal cord, a breath, a tongue. The Logos who spoke creation walked into creation to speak again — and what he said calmed storms, raised the dead, and forgave sins. The same Word.

## 'He Upholds the Universe By the Word of His Power'

Hebrews 1:3 uses a present active participle: *pherôn te ta panta* — *continuously carrying all things*. Creation is not a single past event after which the universe runs on its own; creation is *sustained*, moment by moment, by the ongoing speech of the Logos. If God stopped speaking, the vibration

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would cease, and the universe would simply fall silent — not destroyed by some force, but ceasing to exist for lack of the Word that holds it in being. The fact that you can read this sentence is a fact about a Word currently being spoken.

## The Conductor and the Symphony

Zetting closes his chapter on vibration with a question string theorists have been quietly avoiding: *if the universe is a symphony, where is the conductor?* Physicists love the musical analogy when describing strings. A French horn vibrates one way, a guitar another; together they form a symphony. But the analogy has an awkward implication: *instruments do not play themselves*. A piano string at rest is silent. Someone has to pluck it. If physics has discovered that the universe is a cosmic symphony, then physics has discovered — without meaning to — the fingerprints of a Composer. Zetting's words: «*Musical instruments imply the existence of a player that plays the notes. I've racked my brain for another analogy that does not lead to this conclusion. I can't think of one.*» Scripture has named the Conductor for three thousand years. His name is given in John 1:1.

### THE CONVERGENCE

**The universe is a sustained Word.** String theory says all matter is, at the bottom, vibrating strings of energy. Cymatics demonstrates, in any kitchen, that frequencies shape matter into ordered form. Tesla said the secrets of the universe lie in *energy, frequency and vibration*. Scripture says all matter was made by — and is held together by — the Word of God, the *dabar* that is not bound to any human tongue but is itself the vibrational pattern from which creation took form. The two descriptions are not competitors; they are the same description from two angles. The Logos spoke; reality vibrated into being; the Logos continues to speak; reality continues to vibrate. Musical instruments imply a musician; the cosmic symphony implies a Composer. This is the central lesson of the series, the central claim of the gospel, and the central fact about the world.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it change for you to imagine the universe as a song God is currently singing?
2. Genesis 1 records God speaking ten times in the creation account. Why *speech*, do you think — rather than thought, or simply will?
3. Psalm 33:6 pairs «word» with «breath of his mouth.» What is the significance of pairing these two?

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4. John 1:14 says «the Word became flesh.» If the Word is the principle by which all matter exists, what does it mean that this Word took on matter?
5. Hebrews 1:3 says Christ is *continuously carrying* all things. Sit with that verb for a moment. If he stopped, the universe would stop. How does that change how you walk into the next hour?
6. If you are made in the image of a God who creates by *speech*, what are your own words doing in the world?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Father, you spoke and the universe vibrated into being. You speak and it is sustained, moment by moment, breath by breath. You spoke the prophets, you spoke the law, you spoke the gospel — and then you spoke your Son, the Word made flesh, dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We marvel that the song you began in Genesis 1 has never stopped. We thank you that we are not noise but music in your singing. Tune our lives to your key. Teach our words to be like your words — honest, life-giving, true, creative. And as your Son sustains the universe with the word of his power, sustain us today in your love. Through Jesus Christ, the Logos in whom we live and move and have our being.*  
**Amen.**

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WEEK 9 OF 12

## Additional Dimensions and the Heavenly Realms

*M-theory's ten dimensions — and Paul caught up to the third heaven*

### THE BIG IDEA

We live in four dimensions: length, width, depth, and time. String theory's mathematics requires **ten dimensions (or eleven in M-theory)** for the equations to work. The extra dimensions, on the leading account, are *curled up* — folded so tightly into every point of space that we never directly perceive them. Scripture has always spoken of dimensions of reality we do not perceive: multiple *heavens*, *heavenly places*, the third heaven Paul was caught up to. The physics does not *prove* the heavenly realms, but it removes any scientific basis for dismissing them.

Newtonian physics works in three dimensions of space (length, width, depth) plus one of time, for a four-dimensional spacetime. Einstein's general relativity confirmed and refined this picture. For most of us, four dimensions is intuitive enough that we don't notice it; it is just *the way things are*.

But string theory's mathematics will not work in four dimensions. The equations require ten dimensions of spacetime to be consistent. M-theory, the broader framework that unifies several string theories, requires eleven. Where are the extra six or seven dimensions? The leading proposal, developed by Kaluza, Klein, and refined by string theorists, is that they are *compactified* — curled up at every point of space into structures so small (on the order of the Planck length,  $10^{-35}$  meters) that no instrument we have built or could imagine building can directly detect them. The extra dimensions are there, the theory says, but they are folded out of view.

If string theory is correct, reality has *more* structure than our senses report. There are dimensions you cannot walk to, directions you cannot point in, layers of the world you cannot even *imagine* from inside four-dimensional experience. And once again, scripture has been describing exactly such a world for thousands of years.

### SCRIPTURE

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## 2 Corinthians 12:2–4 · Caught Up to the Third Heaven

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>2</sup>οἶδα ἄνθρωπον ἐν Χριστῷ πρὸ ἐτῶν δεκατεσσάρων· εἶτε ἐν σώματι οὐκ οἶδα, εἶτε ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος οὐκ οἶδα, ὁ Θεὸς οἶδεν· ἀρπαγέντα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ. <sup>3</sup>καὶ οἶδα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνθρωπον... <sup>4</sup>ὅτι ἤρπαγεν εἰς τὸν παράδεισον καὶ ἤκουσεν ἄρρητα ῥήματα, ἃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἀνθρώπῳ λαλῆσαι.

### English Standard Version

<sup>2</sup>I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven — whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. <sup>3</sup>And I know that this man... <sup>4</sup>was caught up into paradise and heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.

## 1 Kings 8:27 · Heaven and the Highest Heaven

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

ὅτι εἰ ἀληθῶς κατοικήσει ὁ Θεὸς μετὰ ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς; εἰ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ οὐκ ἀρκέσουσί σοι, καὶ πῶς ὁ οἶκος οὗτος, ὃν ὠκοδόμησα τῷ ὀνόματί σου;

### English Standard Version

But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!

## Ephesians 6:12 · Heavenly Places

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῖν ἡ πάλη πρὸς αἷμα καὶ σάρκα, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὰς ἀρχάς, πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας, πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις.

### English Standard Version

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

## Hebrews 4:14 · Passed Through the Heavens

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

Ἔχοντες οὖν ἀρχιερέα μέγαν, διεληλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, κρατῶμεν τῆς ὁμολογίας.

### English Standard Version

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

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## Genesis 28:12 · Jacob's Ladder — A Portal Between Dimensions

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

καὶ ἐνυπνιάσθη, καὶ ἰδοὺ κλίμαξ ἐστηριγμένη ἐν τῇ γῆ, ἧς ἡ κεφαλὴ ἀφικνεῖτο εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀνέβαινον καὶ κατέβαινον ἐπ' αὐτῆς.

### English Standard Version

And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it!

## Revelation 4:1–2 · A Door Standing Open in Heaven

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>1</sup>Μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ θύρα ἀνεωγμένη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἡ φωνὴ ἡ πρώτη, ἣν ἤκουσα ὡς σάλπιγγος λαλοῦσης μετ' ἐμοῦ, λέγουσα· ἀνάβα ὦδε... <sup>2</sup>καὶ εὐθέως ἐγενόμην ἐν Πνεύματι, καὶ ἰδοὺ θρόνος ἔκειτο ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ...

### English Standard Version

<sup>1</sup>After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here...' <sup>2</sup>At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven...

## Acts 7:55–56 · Stephen Sees Heaven Opened

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>55</sup>ὑπάρχων δὲ πλήρης Πνεύματος Ἁγίου, ἀτενίσας εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, εἶδε δόξαν Θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦν ἐστῶτα ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ, <sup>56</sup>καὶ εἶπεν· ἰδοὺ θεωρῶ τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἀνεωγμένους.

### English Standard Version

<sup>55</sup>But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup>And he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened.'

## Hebrews 13:2 · Entertaining Angels Unawares

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

τῆς φιλοξενίας μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθε· διὰ ταύτης γὰρ ἔλαθόν τινες ξενίσαντες ἀγγέλους.

### English Standard Version

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### Jacob's Ladder — The Bible's Most Vivid Dimension-Portal

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Genesis 28:12 is, after the careful reading Zetting invites in chapter 7, a stunning passage. Jacob lies down to sleep at Bethel with a stone for a pillow. He dreams. And what he sees is not a metaphor but an opening — a *ladder* (Hebrew *sullam*; LXX *klimax*) set on the earth, its top reaching into heaven, *and the angels of God ascending and descending on it*. Two things are remarkable. First, the traffic is two-way: angels are coming *down* from the higher dimension as well as going back up. Second, Jesus quotes this passage to Nathanael in John 1:51 and applies it to *himself*: *you shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man*. Christ is the Ladder — the personal door through which the higher dimension touches ours. If string theory's extra dimensions are real, then Genesis 28 and Revelation 4 and Acts 7 are descriptions of moments when those dimensions briefly opened to human view.

## The Biblical 'Heavens' (Plural)

The Hebrew word translated «heaven» (*shamayim*) is grammatically plural. The Greek *ouranoi* is also frequently plural in the New Testament. Scripture speaks of *heaven and the highest heaven* (1 Kings 8:27), *heavens* through which Christ has passed (Heb 4:14), and Paul's *third heaven* (2 Cor 12:2). Christian tradition has long understood multiple layers: the atmospheric heaven (where birds fly), the stellar heaven (where stars wheel), and the heavenly realm of God's throne. Modern physics does not give us a one-to-one map between these and string theory's extra dimensions; it simply removes the modern objection that *only four dimensions exist*. If physics now admits seven extra dimensions are mathematically necessary, the door is wide open for the biblical claim that reality has more structure than our senses report.

## Compactification and Why You Don't See It

The standard physics answer to *where are the extra dimensions?* is the analogy of a garden hose. From a distance, a hose looks one-dimensional — just a line stretching across the lawn. Up close, you can see the second dimension wrapped around it (the circumference). At every point of the hose's length, there is a tiny circular dimension. If you were an ant on the hose, both dimensions would be obvious. If you were a human standing in the doorway, only the length would register. String theory says the universe is like that, but with seven extra circular (and more complex) dimensions wrapped around every point of spacetime — so small that nothing we have can «see» them. They are there. They explain a great deal of the mathematics that does work. They are just invisible.

## What Daniel Saw Behind the Curtain

Daniel 10 records a remarkable scene. The prophet has been fasting and praying for three weeks; an angel finally arrives and explains the delay: *The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me* (Dan 10:13). Spiritual conflict, in a dimension we do not see, with consequences in a kingdom we do see. Paul's «heavenly places» in Ephesians 6 work the same way. The world has more dimensions than our eyes reach. Some of those dimensions are crowded.

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## THE CONVERGENCE

Modern string theory requires extra dimensions for its mathematics to work. Scripture has always spoken of multiple heavens, heavenly places, and realities behind the curtain of our four-dimensional perception. The physics does not *prove* the biblical heavens, but it dissolves the modern objection that *only four dimensions can exist*. The world is structurally richer than our senses report — in both books.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. When you read «heaven» in the Bible, do you usually think singular or plural? Does the biblical plural change how you imagine it?
2. Paul was caught up to the «third heaven.» What do you think he experienced that he was not permitted to describe?
3. If string theory requires ten dimensions, what does that suggest about the limits of our common-sense intuitions about «reality»?
4. Ephesians 6:12 says our struggle is in the «heavenly places.» What does that change about how you understand spiritual warfare?
5. Daniel 10 shows a delay in the heavenly realm affecting events on earth. Have you ever sensed that something larger than the visible was at work in your circumstances? Tell the story.

## CLOSING PRAYER

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12-Week Study · A Quantum Case For God

*Lord of heaven and the highest heaven, you fill all dimensions, perceived and unperceived. You have made a world that is far richer than what our five senses report. Forgive us when we have imagined the seen world to be all there is. Make us alert to the unseen — both the angels who minister and the powers we wrestle. Clothe us in your armor today. And bring us at last to the dimensions Paul could not put into words, where we shall see you face to face. Through Jesus Christ our great high priest, who has passed through the heavens. **Amen.***

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WEEK 10 OF 12

## Time and the Eternal God

*Relativity, spacetime, and the God who inhabits eternity*

### THE BIG IDEA

Time, Einstein showed, is not absolute. It runs slower for fast-moving observers and slower in stronger gravitational fields. Two clocks that started together can end up disagreeing if one has traveled differently. Time is a *dimension*, woven with the three of space into a single fabric called spacetime. Scripture has always insisted that God is not in time at all — that he *inhabits eternity*, that one day is as a thousand years to him, that he is the Alpha and the Omega, the *I AM*.

Until the early twentieth century, time was assumed to be absolute. There was one universal clock; everyone, everywhere, agreed on what time it was. Einstein's special relativity (1905) and general relativity (1915) destroyed that assumption. Time, it turns out, runs differently for different observers depending on their motion and their position in a gravitational field.

This is not a thought experiment; it is engineering. Your GPS satellites have to be corrected for relativistic effects every day, or your phone's location would drift by several miles within hours. The clocks on those satellites tick *faster* than the clocks on the ground — by approximately 38 microseconds per day — because they are in weaker gravity. Time is real, but it is not absolute. It is a dimension woven into the same fabric as the three spatial dimensions, a fabric Einstein called **spacetime**.

If time itself is a created dimension — part of the structure of the universe rather than an absolute background against which the universe runs — then time itself *began* at the Big Bang. Augustine had said as much, fifteen hundred years earlier. God did not create the universe *in* time; he created time *with* the universe. God is therefore not *in* time at all. He is on the outside of every clock. Scripture has been telling us this from Moses to John.

### SCRIPTURE

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## Isaiah 57:15 · He Who Inhabits Eternity

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

Τάδε λέγει Κύριος ὁ Ὑψιστος, ὁ ἐν ὑψηλοῖς κατοικῶν τὸν αἰῶνα, Ἅγιος ἐν ἀγίοις ὄνομα αὐτῶ...

English Standard Version

For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit.'

## Psalms 89:4 LXX (= Ps 90:4) · A Thousand Years As One Day

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

ὅτι χίλια ἔτη ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς σου ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα ἢ ἐχθές ἥτις διήλθε, καὶ φυλακὴ ἐν νυκτί.

English Standard Version

For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.

## 2 Peter 3:8 · One Day Is As a Thousand Years

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

Ἐν δὲ τοῦτο μὴ λανθανέτω ὑμᾶς, ἀγαπητοί, ὅτι μία ἡμέρα παρὰ Κυρίῳ ὡς χίλια ἔτη, καὶ χίλια ἔτη ὡς ἡμέρα μία.

English Standard Version

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

## John 8:58 · Before Abraham Was, I AM

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί.

English Standard Version

Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.'

## Revelation 1:8 · The Alpha and the Omega

Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος, λέγει Κύριος ὁ Θεός, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ παντοκράτωρ.

English Standard Version

I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

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## Exodus 3:13–14 · I AM Has Sent Me

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>13</sup>καὶ εἶπε Μωυσῆς πρὸς τὸν Θεόν... τί ἐρῶ πρὸς αὐτούς; <sup>14</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεὸς πρὸς Μωυσὴν λέγων· ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν· καὶ εἶπεν· οὕτως ἐρεῖς τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ· ὁ ὢν ἀπέσταλκέ με πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

### English Standard Version

<sup>13</sup>Then Moses said to God... 'what shall I say to them?' <sup>14</sup>God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you.'

## 1 Timothy 1:17 · The King Eternal

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

τῷ δὲ βασιλεῖ τῶν αἰώνων, ἀφθάρτῳ, ἀοράτῳ, μόνῳ σοφῷ Θεῷ, τιμῇ καὶ δόξῃ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων· ἀμήν.

### English Standard Version

To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

## Hebrews 13:8 · The Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς χθὲς καὶ σήμερον ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.

### English Standard Version

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### 'I AM' in Greek — The Tense That Has No Tense (Continued)

When Moses asks God for his name at the burning bush, God answers *ehyeh asher ehyeh*, which the Septuagint translates *ego eimi ho on* — *I am the one who is*. The verb has no past, no future, no tense at all in the ordinary sense. It is pure present being. A thousand years later Jesus picks up the same name in John 8:58 (*before Abraham was, I AM*) and his hearers pick up stones. They understand exactly what he is claiming. The name *I AM* is the divine signature of the One who stands outside the clock. Hebrews 13:8 carries the same name forward: *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever* — not because he doesn't change with time, but because, for him, there is no *with time*. He is the King of the ages (1 Tim 1:17), not the king *within* them.

### Augustine Knew

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In *Confessions* Book XI, Augustine wrestled with the question, *What was God doing before he created the world?* His answer is one of the most important sentences in theology: *the question is malformed, because «before» presupposes time, and time itself is a creature. God did not exist in time before he created. God created time.* Fifteen centuries later, Einstein's general relativity made the same point in equations: time is part of the structure of the universe, not an independent backdrop. Augustine got there first — by attending closely to the doctrine of creation.

## I AM — The Tense That Has No Tense

When Jesus says *before Abraham was, I am*, he deliberately collapses the past tense Abraham would have occupied (*genes-thai*, «to come to be») with the present tense reserved for God (*ego eimi*, «I AM» — the divine name from Exodus 3:14). The Jewish hearers understood exactly what he was claiming and picked up stones to kill him. Jesus is saying: *I do not live on the timeline you live on. I am the one whose name is «I AM» — the eternal present.* Revelation 1:8 says the same thing in different words: *the one who is and who was and who is to come.* Three tenses, one being.

## Living Inside a Created Clock

If time is part of the created order, then God's promises about the future are not predictions made from inside the timeline (he might be wrong) but reports from outside the timeline (he cannot be wrong). His «forever» is not *a very long time*; it is *not time at all*. Eternity is not «time stretched out forever.» It is the fullness of being God who does not have to wait for anything. When scripture says God has loved you with an everlasting love (Jer 31:3), it is not saying the love started a very long time ago. It is saying the love does not have a starting moment at all, because God does not have starting moments.

### THE CONVERGENCE

Modern physics has demonstrated that time is a dimension — part of the created structure of spacetime, not an absolute backdrop. Scripture has always said God is not *in* time. He inhabits eternity (Isa 57:15). To him a thousand years is one day (Ps 90:4). His Son says *before Abraham was, I AM*. Augustine knew this in the fifth century. Einstein confirmed it in the twentieth. The Bible has been saying it since Exodus 3.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Does it change anything for you that time itself is a created thing — that God did not exist in time before creating?

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2. Read Revelation 1:8 aloud. What does it mean to you that God is «the one who is and who was and who is to come»?
3. If God is not in time, can he hurry? Can he be late? What does that mean for your prayers about urgent matters?
4. What promises of God have felt slow to you? In light of 2 Peter 3:8, what might be a more honest way to read God's timing?
5. If Jesus is the *I AM* — the eternal present — what does it mean that he became flesh and entered the timeline with us?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Eternal God, the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, you are not slowed by our delays or rushed by our urgencies. With you a thousand years are as a day, and a day as a thousand years. Forgive us when we have grown impatient with your timing, when we have suspected you of being late, when we have tried to make the universe move on our clock. Teach us to wait well. Teach us to trust the One who declares the end from the beginning, who promises that his Word will not return void, and whose Son became flesh in time so that we might pass through time into the life that has no end. Through Jesus Christ, the Alpha and the Omega. **Amen.***

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WEEK 11 OF 12

## Making Sense of It All — Genesis Reconciled

*The order of creation and the harmony of the two books*

### THE BIG IDEA

The classic objection to Genesis is that its order of creation (heavens and earth, light, sky, dry land, plants, sun, fish and birds, animals, humans) does not match the scientific order (energy, four forces, stars, galaxies, planets, primitive life, and so on). After ten weeks of physics, we can see that the objection is shallower than it looks. Four classical readings of Genesis 1 — *day-age*, *framework*, *cosmic temple*, and *literal six-day* — each handle the data better than the modern critic admits. None requires the believer to surrender either book.

We promised in week three to come back to this. The genuine tension between the Genesis order of creation and the scientific timeline is the single most-cited reason intelligent people claim Genesis and science cannot both be true. The criticism deserves a serious answer.

The first thing to note is that the Genesis 1 narrative is not a textbook of stellar nucleosynthesis. It is a theological text, ancient Near Eastern in its idiom, addressed first to a people leaving Egypt. To read it as if it were a chronological lab notebook is to ignore both the genre and the audience. Augustine warned about this in the 4th century: forcing Genesis into the shape of a modern science text both abuses scripture and embarrasses the church in the eyes of pagans who actually know the science.

But ignoring the question is not an answer either. Honest Christians for two thousand years have proposed several ways to read Genesis 1 that take both books seriously. We summarize the four most influential.

### SCRIPTURE

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## Genesis 1:1–5 · Day One

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>1</sup>Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν. <sup>2</sup>Ἡ δὲ γῆ ἦν ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος, καὶ σκότος ἐπάνω τῆς ἀβύσσου, καὶ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἐπεφέρετο ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος. <sup>3</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· γενηθήτω φῶς· καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς. <sup>4</sup>καὶ εἶδεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸ φῶς, ὅτι καλόν... <sup>5</sup>καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸ φῶς ἡμέραν...

### English Standard Version

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup>And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good... <sup>5</sup>God called the light Day...

## Colossians 1:15–17 · The Image of the Invisible God

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>15</sup>ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, <sup>16</sup>ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα, τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὀρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα... τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται. <sup>17</sup>καὶ αὐτός ἐστι πρὸ πάντων καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν.

### English Standard Version

<sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup>For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible... all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### Reading 1: Six Literal Days (Young-Earth Creationism)

Holds that Genesis 1 describes six consecutive 24-hour days roughly 6,000-10,000 years ago. The scientific appearance of an old universe is, on this view, explainable by a created universe that began with «mature» features (light already in transit from distant stars; rock strata already laid down). Faithful believers hold this view. The challenge is that the scientific consensus on stellar distances, radiometric dating, and the cosmic microwave background all converge on a 13.8-billion-year age, which the young-earth view must explain as either misread data or supernatural appearance-of-age. Most Christian scientists find that explanatory burden very heavy.

### Reading 2: The Day-Age View

The Hebrew word *yom* («day») can mean a 24-hour day, the daylight portion of a day, or an indefinite period (as in «the day of the LORD»). The day-age view reads each of the six «days» as a long epoch, and points to the fact that the seventh day — God's rest — is described as continuing (Heb 4:9-10),

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suggesting at least one Genesis day is not 24 hours. The Genesis order on this reading roughly tracks the scientific order: light, then atmosphere/oceans, then land/vegetation, then heavenly bodies fully visible, then sea/air life, then land life and humans. Plant life on day three before the sun on day four is explained as the sun's heavy cloud-cover finally clearing on day four.

## Reading 3: The Framework View

Reads Genesis 1 as a literary *framework* rather than a chronological log. Notice the structure: days 1-3 are *forming* (light/dark, sea/sky, land/vegetation); days 4-6 are *filling* (sun and stars, fish and birds, animals and humans). Day 4 fills day 1; day 5 fills day 2; day 6 fills day 3. The structure is *theological poetry*, teaching that God formed and then filled, with no claim to chronological order. On this reading the question «does Genesis match the scientific order?» is malformed; Genesis was never claiming to give an order.

## Reading 4: The Cosmic Temple View (John Walton)

Old Testament scholar John Walton has argued (in *The Lost World of Genesis One*) that Genesis 1 describes the *functional inauguration* of the cosmos as God's temple, not the material creation of physical objects. In the ancient Near East, «to create» (Hebrew *bara*) meant to assign function and purpose. Genesis 1 is the seven-day inauguration ceremony of the cosmic temple, with day seven being the day God takes up his throne in the temple he has built. The material origin of the universe (the Big Bang and billions of years of formation) is not what Genesis 1 was ever about. This reading harmonizes Genesis with science by recognizing they are answering different questions.

## What Pleasant Springs Affirms

Pleasant Springs Church takes no formal position among the four readings. We hold, with the church across centuries, that **God did indeed create the heavens and the earth, that he did so by his spoken Word, that humanity is the image-bearing pinnacle of his creation, and that the Genesis account is true.** The mechanism by which all of that happened — six 24-hour days, six long ages, a literary framework, or a temple inauguration — is a question on which faithful Christians disagree, and we make room for that disagreement. What we do not make room for is the claim that the two books contradict. They do not. They speak in different idioms, address different questions, and — when read carefully — harmonize.

### THE CONVERGENCE

The classic objection — «Genesis says six days, science says 13.8 billion years» — assumes Genesis 1 is making a scientific chronological claim. Four classical readings show this assumption is questionable. The same Author wrote both books. They cannot ultimately contradict. The honest believer reads each carefully and trusts the convergence.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Which of the four readings of Genesis 1 did you grow up with? Which do you find most compelling now, and why?
2. Augustine warned that forcing Genesis into a scientific straitjacket embarrasses the church before pagans who know better. Have you ever seen this happen?
3. Why might the framework view be especially attractive to a Hebrew audience that would have heard the parallelism immediately?
4. Colossians 1:15–17 says all things were created «through» Christ and «for» him. How does that reframe the whole question of *how* creation happened?
5. What is one place in your spiritual life where you have been forcing the data of either book and need to relax your grip?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Lord, you wrote two books. We have so often read them badly — wresting the one to attack the other, or surrendering one to save the other. Forgive us. Teach us to read both with care, humility, and a long memory. Help us hold our convictions with courage and our uncertainties with grace. Whatever the mechanism by which you formed the heavens and the earth, we worship you as their Maker, and we adore the Son through whom and for whom all things were made and in whom all things hold together. **Amen.***

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WEEK 12 OF 12

## Living in a Spoken World

*Application — speak life, agree with what God has spoken*

### THE BIG IDEA

If the universe is a sustained Word, then we — image-bearers of the speaking God — are not noise but music in his song. Our own speech, on this account, is not trivial. Words of life build up; words of death tear down. Walking with the Logos means agreeing with what he has spoken — about us, about each other, about the world, about himself. Eleven weeks of physics and theology come down to this: **what will you say with the breath he gave you?**

Eleven weeks behind us. We have looked at the Big Bang and Genesis 1:1, at QED and the omnipresence of God, at wave-particle duality and the unseen realities, at entanglement and the body of Christ, at the quantum eraser and divine omniscience, at vibrating strings and the spoken Word, at extra dimensions and the heavenly realms, at time and the eternal God, and at the four faithful readings of Genesis. Each week has been a different angle on the same central claim: **God speaks; reality answers.**

This last week is application. Physics is interesting, theology is essential, but information that does not change the way you walk into next Tuesday is information you have not really received. So we ask: *If we live in a spoken world, what does it mean to live well in it?* The biblical answer is simple and uncomfortable. We were made in the image of a speaking God. We are little speakers within the great speaking. Our words matter.

### SCRIPTURE

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## Genesis 1:26–27 · In Our Image

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>26</sup>καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός· ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν... <sup>27</sup>καὶ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, κατ' εἰκόνα Θεοῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτόν, ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς.

### English Standard Version

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...' <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

## Proverbs 18:21 · Death and Life in the Tongue

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

θάνατος καὶ ζωὴ ἐν χειρὶ γλώσσης, οἱ δὲ κρατοῦντες αὐτῆς ἔδονται τοὺς καρπούς αὐτῆς.

### English Standard Version

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

## Ephesians 4:29 · Words That Build Up

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

πᾶς λόγος σαπρὸς ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν μὴ ἐκπορευέσθω, ἀλλ' εἴ τις ἀγαθὸς πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας, ἵνα δῶ χάριν τοῖς ἀκούουσι.

### English Standard Version

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

## James 3:5–6, 9–10 · The Tongue Is a Fire

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

<sup>5</sup>οὕτω καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα μικρὸν μέλος ἐστὶ καὶ μεγαλαυχεῖ. Ἴδου ὀλίγον πῦρ ἠλίκην ὕλην ἀνάπτει... <sup>9</sup>ἐν αὐτῇ εὐλογοῦμεν τὸν Θεὸν καὶ πατέρα, καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ καταρώμεθα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς καθ' ὁμοίωσιν Θεοῦ γεγονότας· <sup>10</sup>ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ στόματος ἐξέρχεται εὐλογία καὶ κατάρα. οὐ χρή, ἀδελφοί μου, ταῦτα οὕτω γίνεσθαι.

### English Standard Version

<sup>5</sup>So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!... <sup>9</sup>With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. <sup>10</sup>From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

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## Colossians 1:17 · In Him All Things Hold Together

### Septuagint (LXX) / Greek New Testament

καὶ αὐτός ἐστι πρὸ πάντων καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν.

### English Standard Version

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

## THE BIBLICAL CASE

### Image-Bearers of the Speaking God

Genesis 1:26 says God made humanity in his image. The image is many things, but one of them is unmistakable: God speaks, and we are the only creature on the planet that speaks back. Animals communicate; only humans *linguistically symbolize*. The image of God in us includes our tongue. If the universe is a sustained Word, then we are little speakers participating in that speaking. We do not create matter with our mouths, but we create realities with them — covenants, promises, blessings, curses, marriages, songs, prayers, stories, lies, truth.

### Speak Life

Proverbs 18:21 is one of the most underestimated verses in scripture. *Death and life are in the power of the tongue*. Not *death and life are influenced by the tongue*; they are *in* it. James 3 puts it even more starkly: with the same mouth we bless God and curse people made in his image, and this *ought not to be so*. After eleven weeks of appreciating that the world is sustained by the speech of God, the application to our own speech is not optional. We were made to bless. To use the tongue for anything else is to use it against the grain of creation.

### Agree With What God Has Spoken

The deepest spiritual discipline of the Christian life is learning to *agree* with what God has spoken — about himself (he is good), about the world (it is fallen but redeemable), about other people (they bear his image), and about you (you are loved, you are called, you are being made new). Most Christian struggle is at root a refusal to agree with something God has said. Most Christian peace is found by quietly agreeing again. The Greek word translated *confess* (*homologeô*) literally means *to say the same thing as*. Confession is agreement. To live well in a spoken world is to spend your days saying back what God has already said.

### And Now, the Sending

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You are not noise. You are music in his singing. Your words have weight in a universe sustained by his Word. Walk into the next twelve weeks of your life remembering that the Logos who holds your atoms in place is also the Logos who has spoken his pleasure over you in Christ. Speak life. Bless your enemies. Tell the truth. Sing to the Lord with all your heart. And when you preach the gospel to any creature, remember: *the same word that holds the brick wall together is the word that holds the universe together is the word that has come to save you.* Speak that word.

## THE CONVERGENCE

Eleven weeks of quantum physics — from the Big Bang to vibrating strings to extra dimensions to time — have all pointed to the same fact: the universe is a sustained Word. Week twelve's application is the only honest one: **say back what God has said.** Agree with him. Speak life. Bless. Tell the truth. You are an image-bearer of the speaking God in a universe held together by his speech. Live like it.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Looking back across the twelve weeks, which lesson lodged in you most deeply? Why?
2. Where in your life is your tongue being used *against* the grain of creation right now? What would repentance look like?
3. What is one specific thing God has spoken (in scripture or in your life) that you are struggling to *agree* with right now?
4. Who in your life needs you to speak life over them this week? What specifically would that sound like?
5. James 3 says we cannot bless God and curse people in the same breath. Where do you most need to repent of inconsistency in your speech?
6. If you were going to share *one* insight from these twelve weeks with a non-Christian friend, what would it be?
7. Pray Colossians 1:17 over your day, every day, for the next week. Report back to your small group on what changes.

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## CLOSING PRAYER

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*Lord of the spoken universe, you are still speaking. The atoms in this room are sustained by your Word as we pray. The galaxies are sustained by your Word as we pray. The cells dividing in the wombs of expectant mothers are sustained by your Word as we pray. We marvel that you have made us in your image — speaking creatures within your speaking world. Forgive every word we have spoken that has cursed instead of blessed, that has torn down instead of built up, that has lied instead of told the truth. Set a guard over our mouths, Lord; keep watch over the door of our lips. Make us agreement-singers with your eternal song. Send us out from these twelve weeks speaking life over every soul you put in our path, until the day you call us home and we hear, at last, the Word of welcome from your own lips: well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your Lord. Through Jesus Christ, the Logos in whom all things hold together. **Amen.***

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## SOURCES & FURTHER READING

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- Lawrence Krauss, *A Universe from Nothing*. Free Press, 2012. (Read critically.)

### Further reading in the theology of creation:

- John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*. IVP Academic, 2009.
- C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*. Macmillan, 1947.
- Alister McGrath, *A Fine-Tuned Universe*. Westminster John Knox, 2009.
- Augustine, *Confessions*, Books XI–XIII (on time and creation).
- Athanasius, *On the Incarnation* (on the Logos and creation).

### Scripture editions used:

- Septuagint Greek text: *Septuaginta* (Rahlfs-Hanhart, ed.). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.
- Greek New Testament: Nestle–Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th ed. 2012.
- English text: *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*. ESV Text Edition, 2016. Crossway.
- Pleasant Springs Church standard: present LXX or GNT Greek alongside ESV English for every citation.

### Related Pleasant Springs studies:

- *Feynman and the Glory of God* — [ps-church.com/discipleship/feynman-and-the-glory-of-god](http://ps-church.com/discipleship/feynman-and-the-glory-of-god)
- *Malachi to Revelation* series — [ps-church.com/discipleship/malachi-to-revelation](http://ps-church.com/discipleship/malachi-to-revelation)
- *The Soul, Hell, and the Supreme Ethic of Love* — [ps-church.com/discipleship/soul-and-hell](http://ps-church.com/discipleship/soul-and-hell)

# Pleasant Springs Church

*12-Week Study · A Quantum Case For God*

- *What Does God Want?* series (after Heiser) — [ps-church.com/discipleship/what-does-god-want](https://ps-church.com/discipleship/what-does-god-want)
- *Septuagint (LXX) & ESV Bible Study* — [ps-church.com/bible-study-lxx-esv](https://ps-church.com/bible-study-lxx-esv)

*Compiled for Pleasant Springs Church, Pinson, Tennessee. The book of nature and the book of scripture, read together, declare the same Author.*