

WRONG EXPECTATIONS

By His Eminence, Metropolitan Ephraim

Some people complain that the Bible is not "scientifically true" in the account of the creation of the world. However, before people make such statements, they should consider a couple of points.

First of all, who was God's audience when He was revealing how the world was created? A tribe of simple nomads, recent slaves, most of whom probably could not read or write — people wandering around in the desert of Sinai many, many millennia ago. What could you tell a people like this? If you tried to describe the universe to them in terms of quasars, black holes, atoms, spiraling galaxies, you'd be wasting your time. They'd think you were out of your mind.

It's as if you were trying to explain the workings of an internal combustion engine to a tribe of Australian aborigines who had never heard of or seen an automobile. You could try to explain everything to them until you were blue in the face, and absolutely nothing would penetrate their Stone Age minds.

Where would you begin? With gasoline? What is it, anyway? Why does it explode if exposed to fire? What are the pistons? The valves? The spark plugs? The carburetor?

And then, there's another matter to consider. Which "science" are you going to teach them in any case? The science of Ancient Egypt? The science of Ancient Greece? The science of the Middle Ages? Of the 18th century? The 19th? The 20th?

All these "sciences" differ from one another, and, in fact, our own science of the early 21st century is different from all the previous ones, and is changing all the time! That's what science is all about, is it not? Future generations will, no doubt, find our own science quite humorous. So which one would you prefer to find in the Bible?

And this brings us to the third point: is *this* what the Bible is all about anyway? Is it meant to be a science textbook? If you're interested in learning more about how the Orthodox Christian Church understands the Holy Scriptures and deals with these issues, stay tuned.

With God's help, a study concerning this very matter will soon appear on our HOMB website (www.homb.org). The name of this paper is:

RATIONALISM AND FUNDAMENTALISM
— The Two Banes of Western Theology —