

Book Review

Nobie Stone, *Genesis One and Lessons From Space*, revised edition, January, 2017, Warren Christian Apologetics Center, 2017, 174 pp. ISBN: 978-1-936548-25-5. \$19.99.

Nobie Stone produced a revised edition of his book *Genesis One and Lessons From Space* as a response to critics of his first edition. However, in the revised edition, he does not correct the many problems/errors that were expressed in the first edition. Instead, he defends or repeats these errors.

In the Authors Preface, Stone states some of the reasons for the revision. First, he indicates new information about water on Mars and new pictures of Pluto are now available to his readers. Second, he indicates that he desires to explain passages of Scripture that have been misinterpreted. As this review progresses, consideration will be given to some of these changes and other changes revealed.

Stone adds an “Authors Preface” to the revised edition. In this preface, he makes the claim that both Scripture and observations of nature are of equal weight. He affirms that one can use observations of nature to interpret the Scriptures. Later, in the book, he will refute this claim and consequently contradict himself by saying there is no absolute truth in science (“science cannot make absolute claims” p. 2). Based upon Stone’s own definition of science, he is not comparing truth with truth. He is comparing absolute, infallible truth (Scripture) with probabilities (science). Stone is saying that we can use observations of science which are never absolute truth to interpret Scripture which is always absolute truth. This is false. Stone never says that we should use Scripture to interpret science. This shows his bias toward science and why he really weights evolutionary science against Scripture in Genesis chapter one regarding the age of the universe, the earth and humankind.

He also states in the Authors’ Preface that when interpreting the Scriptures more easily understood passages should be given priority over difficult passages (p. x). While this is true, Stone does not consistently apply this rule. If he did, he would use Exodus 20:11 and Ex. 31:17 to help in determining the meaning of the days of creation in Genesis 1. The Scriptures are the final authority, not observations of science. Stone states, “Today, in a failure to recognize these limitations, many are making absolute claims—something that, by definition, science cannot do—and are extending science into areas far beyond its logical boundaries” (p. 2). Stone should heed his own warning.

Stone references John Lennox with regard to Galileo and the fixed earth vs. moving earth controversy centuries ago (p. x, Author’s Preface). He cites Lennox on p. 72 of the revised edition whereas in the first edition, **he never cites Lennox**. John Lennox is an Oxford mathematician who has written a book on Genesis one (*Seven Days that Divide the World*) which Stone agrees with for the most part (see his favorable review of Lennox’s book in *Sufficient Evidence* published by the Warren Christian Apologetics Center). Stone uses other ideas from Lennox’s work and never cites Lennox. For instance, the main concept that Stone argues for in his book is that the days of Genesis One could be 24 hour periods separated by eons of time (progressive creationism). This concept is also expressed by Lennox in his book. While other individuals may also hold to this view, it is certain that Stone has read Lennox’s work and expresses the same view as Lennox regarding the interpretation of the “days” of Genesis One. Why cite Lennox with regard to one point and omit citing him on other points? Did Stone

originate this interpretation of Genesis One? Lennox's work was published many years before Stone's work (2011 vs. 2014 for Stone's work).

Also, in the Author's Preface, Stone attempts to make the interpretation of Genesis One a matter of indifference. Here is his dismissive statement, "We have similar conflict today between "young Earthers" and "old Earthers." Again, the issue is not a matter of salvation" (p. x). The notion that we can give any interpretation to Genesis One that we desire because it is not a salvation issue is false for the following reasons. Genesis One is foundational to our understanding of how the universe and everything in it came to be. This includes human beings. Genesis One is foundational to the doctrine of Creation as revealed by God. To deny what God said that God did is to make God a liar (God is the one speaking in Exodus 20:11). This is blasphemy not just "another interpretation." To deny what God said that God did is unbelief. Unbelief is not an innocent matter. It is an attack on the veracity of the Scriptures. The only being that was present at the beginning of all things was God and God has revealed to us what He did. Stone's attempt to compromise with the theory of evolution forces him to wrest the Scriptures to his own destruction (damnation). This is a salvation issue! Stone attacks the deity of Jesus Christ and His Messiahship by making the changes that he does in Genesis One. By changing the time of the beginning of the universe, the beginning of the earth, the beginning of life forms and the beginning of mankind (John Lennox has each of these beginning at a different time), Stone destroys the entire chronology of the Bible. The chronology of the Bible is interwoven with the genealogy of Jesus Christ. The story of redemption begins before the foundation of the world. Adam and Eve are clearly placed at the beginning of all things (Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6) by Jesus. Evolutionists claim that man has been on the earth for 200,000 years or less. This evolutionary chronology cannot fit Bible chronology. Based on Bible chronology man has been on the earth a little more than 6,000 years. In Luke 3, the genealogy of Christ is traced back to Adam, the first human being that God created. The genealogy of Jesus Christ is an evidence of His deity and His Messiahship. From Adam to the time of Christ's crucifixion, 4075 years pass. It is impossible to harmonize the evolutionary chronology with the biblical chronology without destroying the entire biblical chronology. Interestingly, Stone states that Moses wrote about Abraham 3500 years ago indicating that he accepts at least part of the Bible's chronology (p. 38). Does he believe that Moses lived 2500 years after Adam was created? Stone pays lip service to inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures (p. 7) and then shows that his heart is far from what the Scriptures teach. Is a doctrine that denies the doctrine of creation as revealed by God, calls God a liar, manifests unbelief, attacks the veracity of the Scriptures and destroys the Messiahship of Jesus Christ a matter of indifference? Please remember that this book by Nobie Stone was published by the Warren Christian Apologetics Center. This work is a direct contradiction of the stated purpose for the WCAC. The reality is that the WCAC is now **advancing** and **normalizing** theistic evolution worldwide. We cannot accept such contradiction and hypocrisy in an apologetics center. The WCAC is unqualified from receiving any support from Christians and New Testament churches. Anyone who supports them is also **complicit** in the advancement of theistic evolution worldwide.

The following observations will be made chapter by chapter.

In Chapter One, Stone addresses by way of introduction the question, "Why investigate the evidence?" Stone identifies some of the limitations of science. He makes a distinction between scientism (faith in science, blind trust in science, p. 1) and science ("not a worldview but a tool with which to understand the world" p. 2). He states, "Science deals exclusively with phenomena that can either be observed with our senses (sight, touch, hearing, etc.) or logically

be extrapolated from those sensory observations” (p. 2). Stone states that science cannot address questions of why, in terms of intelligent motivation, since these types of questions are not physical. Stone also limits science regarding “single-occurrence phenomena (beginnings, miracles) since they, by definition, are not repeatable and, therefore, cannot be studied under controlled conditions” (p. 2). Stone eliminated science (not scientism) from a consideration of beginnings. Yet, he told us earlier that we can use observations from science to interpret the Scriptures (Authors Preface). He said that equal weight should be given to the observations of nature and the Scriptures. Stone believes that he can use observations from nature to modify our understanding of the days of Genesis chapter one. This is just one of many contradictions Stone makes in the book.

Stone indicates on page 5 that all scriptural quotations are from the NIV (New International Version). This translation is highly questionable with regard to many passages pertaining to the gospel of Christ.

Also on page 5, Stone reveals that by the time he had finished undergraduate studies, “I had become a full-fledged agnostic with respect to the existence of God.” Stone has not jettisoned his agnosticism completely. He is still a mitigated skeptic and a probabilist. He affirms that we cannot know anything absolutely (p. 19). Stone repeats in the revision many of the same mistakes that he made in the first edition. This is truly a sad observation. Stone had the opportunity to correct many of the errors in science, logic, and theology that he made in the first edition, but he did not do so. This brings up a question about his integrity in dealing with the truth.

Stone’s main thesis: “If there is a good, all-knowing and all-powerful God, and if this God is the architect, builder, and sustainer of all nature, and if the Bible is the inspired word of this God, then what the Bible has to say about nature must be consistent with what we observe in nature” (p. 7). Let’s consider this statement in light of what Stone believes. First, Stone does not believe that you can prove that God exists, or that the Bible is the word of God or that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (see p. 17, “It must be stated at the outset that we are not going to attempt to rigorously prove the existence of God, or that Jesus of Nazareth is His son (sic) or that the Bible is His inspired word. This we cannot do—but this situation is not unique.” The logical argument made above is called “modus ponens.” The problem with it is that the consequent does not follow from the antecedents. Stone admits that he cannot prove the premises stated in the antecedents. Consequently, he cannot affirm the consequent. Another problem with the logic of this deductive argument (which type of argument Stone states is rare), is that the consequent does not follow from the antecedents. In the consequent, Stone interjects “observations from nature” which he does not prove in the antecedent to be true. Observations from nature may or may not be true. Stone has not proven that all observations in nature are true. As a matter of fact, he affirms that the universe is expanding which has been falsified. This is now *old news* and Stone should have corrected this from the mistake he made in the first edition. Instead, he repeats the false science in the revised edition. He had time to catch this mistake and correct it. Either he did not take the time to do his homework or he still believes the false science.

Stone makes yet another contradictory statement on page 7, “...therefore, likely, that there will always be apparent conflicts between observation and revelation.” Earlier, Stone said that Scripture and observations in science are of equal weight.

On page 7, Stone remarks that dark matter and dark energy constitute 96 percent of the material universe and that we presently know almost nothing about either of them. Dark matter and dark energy are theoretical concepts based on the materialistic Big Bang theory (see the

Glossary, pp. 146-147). If the Big Bang theory is false, then dark matter and dark energy are false. Stone betrays his belief in the Big Bang theory. John Lennox actually uses the Big Bang theory as the explanation of Genesis 1:1-2 from the standpoint of physics. It seems Stone also holds this view.

In chapter two, Stone examines the nature of faith. He defines “blind faith” as belief without evidence or question (p. 9). He affirms that believers are to use their minds. He states that God has never required blind faith. He believes that evidence was provided in every case where man was asked to believe (p. 12). What was the type of evidence given by God? The examples given by Stone are all miraculous. Then, Stone makes this remark, “We can, therefore, conclude that *faith and reason are not mutually exclusive; faith begins with reason—rooted in experience that satisfies the mind—and then goes beyond reason.*” Stone clearly affirms that the evidence can take us only so far. Then, we must make the leap of faith. Stone made the same statement in the first edition. Later, on p. 16, he affirms that our faith is based upon the testimony of those who witnessed His coming. If this is so, then our faith is based upon the eyewitness testimony of those who saw the miracles that Jesus performed. Faith is never disconnected from the evidence given in God’s Word. God’s infallible word is the foundation of our faith.

In chapter three, Stone addresses the subject of the meaning of reason. Stone states, “Clearly, the arrangement of the propositions is such that if the two premises are true, then the conclusion must be true. However, it is important to note that deductive logic deals only with the relationship between the premises and conclusion of an argument, which concerns their order and language. The truth of the premises (or more precisely, the probability that the premises are true) must be determined by other means such as observation or scientific experiment” (p. 18). Stone reveals his definition of truth in this statement. Truth is “the probability that the premises are true.” Truth is not absolute. Stone has affirmed that science does not make absolute claims (p. 2). The observations of science therefore are mere probabilities. This is why the observations of science cannot be equal with the infallible, absolute truth of God’s Word (DS) but, Stone affirms that they are equal (Authors Preface). Every explicit statement in the Bible is true (absolute, infallible truth-DS). The statement given above proves that Stone is a probabilist.

Stone continues his discussion of reasoning, and remarks concerning inductive reasoning, “The more common type of reasoning, by which premises for deduction may be established, is based on the inductive form of argument which does not prove its conclusion absolutely, but rather, indicates what is probably true. It may be highly probable, but not absolute” (p. 18). Inductive reasoning results in probable truth not absolute truth. Whenever you put both of these statements together the result is that deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning produce only probable truth. We cannot know anything in an absolute sense according to Stone. This is a false view. Every explicit statement in the Bible is absolute truth (John 8:32). This is also why Stone states that faith begins with reason and then goes beyond reason (see above). Stone affirms the leap of faith.

Stone also states, “The truth of the Scriptures, the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth and, yes, even the very existence of God should be scrutinized, tested, and accepted or rejected on the same basis as everything else that confronts us in life, on the basis of the available evidence and the conclusion it most strongly supports” (p. 19). The “same basis” that Stone refers to is the inductive method of reasoning which is only probably true and never absolutely true. This is why Stone affirms that we cannot prove absolutely that God exists, or that Jesus is the Son of God or that the Bible is the Word of God (p. 17). Interestingly, the stated position of Stone

contradicts the stated position of Thomas Warren for which the Warren Christian Apologetics Center was named. The publication of this work by the WCAC would have been strongly opposed by Thomas Warren on the grounds that it teaches fatal error (see the *Warren-Flew Debate* where Thomas Warren affirmed the proposition, “I know that God exists”). Thomas Warren was as strongly opposed to agnosticism as to atheism.

Stone continues to affirm an agnostic position, “. . .it was pointed out that our ability to determine absolute proof is rare because of our inability to know that any proposition is universally true with absolute certainty (going forward, we use “true” in the sense of being rationally acceptable)” (p. 20). Stone affirms that we cannot know that God exists in an absolute sense. Stone states, “Herein lies the problem with deductive logic. It generally must be based on a priori knowledge (our existing knowledge base) and rarely, if ever, is that knowledge base universal and absolute” (p. 21). What about the Scriptures as a knowledge base? (Stone contradicts himself on this point. See p. 4, “Conversely, if God is, and if the Bible is the word of God, as it claims to be, then there is a higher purpose in life; there are absolutes; there is right and wrong. . .”). Additionally, the quotation given above changes the meaning of truth. Stone affirms that “true” is *rationally acceptable* information. If we apply this definition to God’s word, then God’s word is not infallible, absolute information, but is only probably true. Stone has abandoned objective truth. Truth is that which conforms to reality as God defines reality. God’s word states the way things really are and this applies to the origins of the universe and man. We might also ask, “Rationally acceptable to whom?” The phrase “rationally acceptable” makes truth subjective. This is a fatal error.

Then, on page 21, Stone states that truth relates to our experiences. He illustrates what he means by saying that dogs do not have wings. Then he says, “we arrived at this truth based on our experience.” Here, Stone defines truth as anchored in objective reality. Stone is revealing many different definitions of truth. This is also a fatal error.

On page 24, Stone states, “Gravity, beginnings, time, infinity, and God, on the other hand, are entities that do not submit easily to our observational or rational abilities. At the most basic level, we must simply accept—not only in religion, but in science also.” Stone is affirming that in the absence of absolute evidence, we must make a leap of faith. This leap of faith is blind faith. Consequently, Stone has contradicted himself again. Earlier, he affirmed that God has not asked us to accept anything on blind faith.

Stone affirms in the revised edition what he affirmed in the first edition regarding miracles. He states that if miracles became common, then they would cease to be miracles (p. 24). When Jesus was upon the earth, He performed hundreds of miracles in three and a half years. After seeing many miracles, the next one would not be common! Observation or experience would not change the miraculous into the common. The contrast between the miraculous and the common exists because of the difference between the supernatural and the natural. Both the supernatural and the natural can be verified through the senses.

On page 34, Stone states, “. . .human mind, emotions, e.g. mind, love, thought, value, judgments, decisions etc. not subject to the laws of physics and chemistry and cannot be detected by the senses, and yet, they are real.” When Stone uses the word *real* does he mean true? Is this something we know absolutely or only probably?

Chapter four examines Genesis 1 and the Cosmos. Stone gives a time statement on p. 38, “To Abraham, 3,500 years ago. . .” and “Did Moses make a mistake when he recorded this account of Abraham’s encounter with God?” Regarding biblical chronology, it seems that Stone is in agreement with the biblical chronology back to the time of Moses (1500 years before

Christ). Does he believe that there is 2500 years between Adam and Moses? This is the time span according to biblical chronology. By changing the interpretation of the days of creation in Genesis 1, Stone destroys biblical chronology. Yet, here, he affirms part of it.

From pages 38 to 52, Stone gives a tour of the cosmos. These pages are full of scientific information about the sun, the distance between planets, the stars, etc. Is this scientific information true or only probably true?

On p. 52, Stone begins an exploration of how it (the universe) all began. He states two possibilities: (1) The Big Bang theory; and (2) Creation by God. Stone states, "Science until recently argued that the universe had no beginning—it was eternal (p. 52-53). This was referred to as the Static Universe model. Then, it was discovered that the universe was expanding. Science modified the theory and changed to the eternal Oscillating Universe model (p. 53). Now, science have found that the universe is not only expanding but it is accelerating. It is expanding at an increasing rate. "This observation, along with a detailed mapping of the predicted Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB), by the Cosmic Background Explorer (COBE) mission in 1990-1992, has forced science to discard the previous Eternal Universe models all together, and as a result, in the last 20 years or so, science has come around to what the revealed Scriptures told us 3,500 years earlier: the universe is not eternal—it had a beginning" (p. 53). Several observations need to be made about this quotation. First, the theories of science are continually in a state of flux or change. How could anyone use this type of science to interpret Scripture? Second, Stone again makes reference to the writings of Moses 1500 years before Christ. Does he believe in evolutionary chronology or not? He affirms evolutionary chronology in this same chapter! Third, the science to which he refers (CMB) has now been falsified. This fact was pointed out in the review by this author of Stone's first edition. The universe is not expanding (see Space.com and Reason and Revelation). The so-called gravitational waves were merely cosmic dust that was incorrectly interpreted by scientists. This fact is an embarrassment to Stone's scholarship. The expanding universe theory has gone up in "dust." Stone goes on to state, "If the universe is expanding, and we clearly see that it is..." (p. 53). Does Stone know this absolutely or only probably?

Stone then examines the next two possibilities: (1) the universe created itself from nothing or (2) the universe was created by something or someone (p. 53). Stone rejects the first option and affirms the second. However, in his explanation of the Big Bang Theory, he says that the theory leaves the question of the origin of matter unresolved (pp. 56-57). He states, "The first issue is that the theory does not account for what initiated the whole process" (p. 56). Stone goes on to state an even weightier problem with the Big Bang Theory, it "appears to violate some of the most fundamental laws of nature" (p. 57). These laws are: (1) The Law of Cause and Effect; (2) the First Law of Thermodynamics; and (3) The Second Law of Thermodynamics. Stone remarks, "These physical relationships are called laws because they have been observed over and over throughout the modern scientific era. They have been tested under every conceivable set of conditions, and they have never been observed to fail—not once" (p. 57). Are these laws truth or are they merely probabilities? Stone remarks, "...science is an evolving understanding of the workings of nature, and the current best understanding should never be considered absolute" (p. 56).

Stone affirms, "...the evidence of the Big Bang Theory does not necessarily conflict with the creation account given in Genesis, as will be discussed in the following section" (p. 56). Stone affirms along with John Lennox, that the Big Bang Theory is the scientific explanation (the explanation from physics) for Genesis 1:1. The difference Stone and Lennox bring to the

explanation of the Big Bang is that they are willing to interject God into the process as the initiator and designer of the universe. Thus, both men synthesize the creation account with the Big Bang theory and by definition this is called Theistic Evolution.

On p. 64, for the third time, Stone references the writings of Moses and dates them at 3500 years ago. He makes this reference with regard to the affirmation that time was created in the beginning. The “beginning” of Gen. 1:1 is the beginning of time. John Lennox has the beginning of the universe, the beginning of the earth, the beginning of life and the beginning of human beings all given at different times. Evolutionists give the beginning of the universe at nearly 14 billion years ago. The beginning of the earth is given at 4 to 5 billion years ago. The beginning of human life is given at 200,000 years ago. Stone agrees that creation was a process and that the days of Genesis 1 could possibly be 24-hour days separated by eons (billions) of years. This concept is called “progressive creationism.” The theory is advanced as a compromise between the Genesis account of creation and the evolutionary chronology advanced by the Big Bang Theory. Consequently, Nobie Stone is a theistic evolutionist.