

Darkness Was Upon The Face of The Deep

by Jim Schicatano

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep... (Gen. 1:1-2 NIV)

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. (Gen. 1:1-2 KJV)

Many Creationists incorrectly place the sun's creation on the Fourth Creation Day. Consequently, they attribute darkness on our young world to the sun's absence. Darkness did shroud the early Earth, just as the Bible states. However, the darkness was not the results of the sun's absence, but rather the thickness of the impenetrable, primordial atmosphere.

Over four billion years ago, the Earth's atmosphere consisted primarily of carbon dioxide, methane, ammonia, water vapor, and hydrogen sulfide. It was a lethal mixture that could not support most life as we know it today. Several processes, including outgassing, formed the atmosphere. Outgassing occurred with the release of gasses trapped beneath the Earth's molten surface. Volcanic activity was a major source of outgassing. In addition, the large rocks from space that pummeled our young world often contained gasses.

Gravity also played an integral role in the atmosphere's formation. In its earliest stages, the Earth was a molten, thick liquid, undergoing tremendous, violent, surface upheavals. Before the rock had cooled and hardened, the heavier materials such as iron, which formed the planet's core, descended to the interior of the Earth. Conversely, the lighter elements rose to the surface. Gasses, which were the lightest molecules, formed the atmosphere around the planet.

The impenetrable, thick atmosphere shrouded the surface of our planet from the light of the sun for millions of years. Over time, however, the atmosphere began to dissipate and the sun's rays finally extended to the surface of our world. Millions of additional years would pass before the atmosphere became transparent as it is today.:

There are other theories that attempt to explain the darkness mentioned in this Biblical verse. The primary theory, as I have mentioned, is that the sun had not yet been created. Another popular interpretation defines the darkness as being "evil." This particular

explanation supports other theories that perceive the entire Creation Story as being allegorical as opposed to the more common literal interpretation. While such a metaphorical translation might be permissible, Bible scholars do not generally accept it. Darkness may be a reference to evil, however, the darkness stated in Genesis 1:2 is best understood as the absence of light.

The Bible does not specifically state what produced the darkness that blanketed the young Earth. We have turned to science to reveal one possible answer. Using science to explain Biblical mysteries does not remove God from the process. God was there from the very beginning. Perhaps the more we understand about our own creation the more we will understand about the Deity responsible for it.