

Preface

I always wanted to understand the world. I always wanted to understand how things *worked*. I was interested in science from the very beginning. I made the electrical circuits, built the simple radios and looked through the microscope at one-celled creatures. I had a simple telescope for a while. I started to follow leading-edge science, especially physics. Physics is the really basic science. It deals with time and space and matter and how it moves. How did the matter get here? How does it move around? How can you use the laws of physics to build interesting things? Were there more people out there somewhere in space and wouldn't it be fun to explore all those places? Were those UFOs real? And what about ghosts and spirits and the human soul? What about mind reading and knowing about the future? Were these things really possible? Was there a spiritual world that science would eventually be able to study?

Now I also thought God was out there. I sensed Him in the background and in the beauty of nature. And I was sure He was a nice guy. A sensible guy. But then what I was hearing in the Catholic church I had to go to as a child did not make any sense. For instance, there was Noah's flood. The world was covered by a huge flood and all those animals fit into one tiny ark? That wasn't possible so that didn't make any sense. Then where did the water come from? Where did it go? I couldn't imagine any good answers to those problems. Then there was the matter of original sin from Adam and Eve. Why should anyone get a black mark against them for what Adam and Eve did? Why would getting sprinkled with

THE HAUNTED MANSION

water as a baby take it away? And as for me, I just showed up here on this world and I was never told what the rules were. Why should I be held guilty for breaking the rules when I was never even told what the rules were? This didn't make any sense. I thought this wasn't fair at all. Since I thought God was a nice guy I figured He'd never throw people into Hell or even purgatory (an idea that the Catholic Church came up with). This didn't make any sense. Then why would God give people only a limited amount of time on Earth before tossing them into Hell? Why not give them all the time in the world to get it right, that is to come around to behaving properly? Then what the heck was holy water? Water is water. Two hydrogens, one oxygen. End of story. So all the stuff I was finding in religion, well Catholic religion did not make sense. I assumed that other Christian denominations were basically the same. So I was finding out that religion did not make sense. I concluded that science made sense and religion didn't. Science was also fixing the world up and religion was doing nothing but confusing people. Science was the answer to the world's problems.

But I still thought God was out there and I still thought He was a nice guy so I set out to find the truth about Him and what we were doing in this world. I set out to find answers that *made sense*. I checked out what Plato wrote about the after-life. I looked at near-death experiences. I looked at psychic phenomena, Oriental religions and reincarnation. Reincarnation seemed to make a lot of sense. Rather than having God toss the bad guys into Hell after one lifetime, why not keep on giving them more chances to become good guys? Wouldn't everyone eventually get it right and live happily ever after in some happy, heavenly world?

After years of searching I eventually ran into an explanation of Christianity that did make sense. It came from some of Hal Lindsey's books, *The Late Great Planet Earth* and *There's a New World Coming*. These books had to do with Bible prophecy and I was certainly interested in what would happen in the future. The future of the world based on Bible prophecies was interesting but I really liked his explanation of Christianity. It turned out to be

PREFACE

much different than the Catholicism I was raised on. I became a Christian because of this. At this point I still did not have all the explanations I needed. There were science/Bible issues that still had to be resolved. You know, evolution vs. creation, young Earth vs. old Earth. I had theological issues that needed to be resolved as well, like shouldn't God be fair to everyone including all those people throughout history who never heard about Jesus? And how could God toss anybody into Hell? Well, I thought and felt I was heading in the right direction and eventually I would get it all figured out.

Many of the explanations of Christianity that I needed actually came about because of a new perspective on the universe that comes from modern physics. Using this perspective you can prove the existence of a Creator. Using this perspective you can do away with evolution by chance and therefore atheism in a single stroke. Using this perspective you can make a good argument for the existence of a human soul. Using this perspective I *finally* found a satisfactory interpretation of the creation account in Genesis Chapter 1. All the other interpretations of Genesis 1 I've ever seen have always had flaws. As far as I can tell this interpretation using modern physics is original with me. *So it is unlikely that you've ever seen this interpretation anywhere before!* Using this new perspective from modern physics you can also deal with other problems that come up in Christianity such as the idea of original sin.

Of course science and especially physics are not easy subjects for most people so the details of how physics produces this new view of reality are tucked away in an appendix for those people who want to know more. You can also find an explanation of the physics in various popular science books on physics such as Brian Greene's book *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time and the Texture of Reality*,¹ or in the PBS/NOVA video, *The Fabric of the Cosmos: The Illusion of Time*² based on Greene's book. (Greene does not deal with the implications of the physics and how they relate to the Bible however.) For people who have trouble with science there is an

¹[Greene 2005].

²[Greene 2011].

analogy that makes things clear without the science. The analogy is based on an amusement park ride such as the haunted mansion ride at Disneyworld. Even so, the new perspective takes a bit of getting used to. It does not agree with “common sense”. Nevertheless, the science points you straight to this new perspective.

There is still another, even greater short-cut to understanding the physics if you’re already a Christian. It is very common for theologians to say that God sees the future and it is just as real as the present and God still sees the past that we think has disappeared. In effect, modern physics due to Einstein simply tells us that the theologians’ view is correct. The past, present and future are all out there and they are all equally real. We are not able to see it all the way God can, but still, that IS the way the world IS.

The science only shows that there must be a Creator but it does not show that the God of the Bible is the Creator. However in various places throughout the book you can see how certain statements in the Bible are consistent with the new perspective from modern physics. Because the usual interpretations of the Bible, especially Genesis 1 are wrong, people have been going around saying that science has proved the Bible wrong. But when the text is viewed from the perspective you get from modern physics what you actually find is that the Bible has proved that science is right! God had it all right before science came along! Science has just caught up!

So there is the science aspect of this book that is very important but then there is a second major issue that this book covers. This book presents the Biblical view of the world in a form that highly-rational modern people can understand. Christians often don’t understand what is going on in modern culture. When Christians send missionaries up the Amazon river or to some other out-of-the-way part of the world, they know that they need to learn the local language and culture and then translate the Bible into terms that the local people can understand. *But Christians don’t realize that modern people in Western cultures are just as alien as the natives up the Amazon river. The traditional Christian way of explaining things just does not work for them.* The traditional explanations

PREFACE

Christians use leave modern, rational people with the impression that Christianity is nonsense.

One of the problems for modern people is that many of the explanations you find in the Bible are poetic and this makes them very beautiful. They touch the heart and soul. Touching the heart and soul is a major reason why God explains things in the Bible the way He does. Once you understand what is going on you can really appreciate the beauty of the traditional poetic form. Until you get to that point there are two problems with the traditional poetic form. First, *it doesn't seem to make any sense*. To modern people it sounds like gibberish, it sounds like mumbo-jumbo. Why should anyone bother to try and figure out stuff that doesn't make any sense? Atheists, in particular, ABSOLUTELY LOVE to give you interpretations of statements in the Bible that make it all sound like nonsense.

Second, the poetic approach used in the Bible makes it pretty easy for people to misinterpret what God has to say. This has led to all sorts of differences among Christians and this leads to the many denominations that you find in Christianity. So a nuts-and-bolts explanation of the Bible is needed not just for unbelievers but also for Christians as well!

Then, many of the statements you find in the Bible are simply stated as "laws". These laws are given without an explanation. For instance, God says that "the penalty for sin is death". Christians typically fall back on quoting laws such as this but they can't give you an explanation as to why they make sense and why they are fair. A Christian is liable to tell you something like "God said it, I believe it, that's it." *Modern people just can't accept these ideas that are JUST given without an explanation*. They need an explanation at a nuts-and-bolts level. That is, they need to know where the law comes from and why it makes sense. This book does that. It explains all those givens that Christians take for granted and can't explain.

This book, then, came about because I really wanted to understand the world. It contains the answers that I found. Answers

THE HAUNTED MANSION

that *make sense*. Answers that show that the Bible *makes sense*. Answers that explain why life on Earth can be so hard, so bad, so frustrating and so seemingly unfair. Answers that show you that people are never going to fix up the world through education, philosophy, politics, economics, science or any other ideas that people can come up with. *Answers that can put you on the road to a better life!*

More information on this book and Christianity can be found at: basicchristianityformodernpeople.com .