



Abraham's Gate at Tel Dan

## Good Creator, Bad World?

One of the biggest philosophical challenges that we face with creation is aligning our observations of death with the goodness of God as recorded in the Bible. On the 6th day of creation, “God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31) Yet we see death and destruction—which the Bible says is the result of sin (Genesis 3). Evolution teaches that death and extinction is the *means* of creation—making this view incompatible with the Biblical account of a perfect creation.

## We're still searching...

When we peel back the layers of the earth through archaeology, we uncover many answers — glimpses into ancient civilizations, lost cities, and forgotten stories. Yet with every discovery, we also unearth new questions. It's the same when we explore the origins of life and the universe. Science and Scripture reveal strong evidence for design and purpose, but challenges remain — like interpreting radiometric dating results that suggest an ancient earth, or grappling with distant starlight and the ordering of the fossil record. These mysteries invite humility, reminding us that our understanding is still unfolding. Yet through it all, the Bible lights our path, assuring us that behind every question stands a faithful Creator.

# ANCIENT WORLDS *of the* BIBLE

Study Guide 3

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## Peeling Back the Layers

At the northern tip of Israel, near the lush springs of the Jordan, rises Tel Dan — a mound of earth that seems quiet and unremarkable at first glance. But as archaeologists peeled back its layers, they uncovered a world long buried: ancient Canaanite walls, Israelite temples, and even a remarkable gateway dating back four thousand years. Known today as the Abraham Gate, it connects directly to the story of Genesis 14:14, where Abram, hearing that his nephew Lot had been taken captive, “armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants... and pursued them as far as Dan.”

Layer by layer, Tel Dan reveals that what seemed like myth was grounded in history. And just like Tel Dan, our own lives have layers — recent memories lying atop forgotten wounds, old dreams buried beneath hardened habits. Yet when we allow God to work, He gently peels back these layers, uncovering the beautiful purpose He placed in us from the beginning.

In many ways, the earth itself tells a similar story. Geologists once claimed that its layers disproved the Bible. But as understanding has deepened, evidence increasingly points to sudden, cataclysmic events — great floods, rapid formations — fitting perfectly with the creation account. Just as the stones at Tel Dan confirm Abraham's world, so the rocks of the earth confirm God's Word.

Before sin and sorrow, God crafted us — fearfully and wonderfully made. And in Christ, He invites us back to the beauty He first designed.

## Questions for Reflection & Discussion

### Designed by a Creator

When we look closely at the world around us — from the stars above to the cells within — we find overwhelming evidence of design. Science itself points us to the fingerprints of a Creator.

Consider these amazing truths:

- **Fine-Tuning of the Universe:**  
The laws of physics are incredibly precise — perfectly balanced to allow life. This precision speaks of a wise Designer.
- **Information in DNA:**  
Inside every living cell is a complex code, far more advanced than any human technology. Information always points back to an intelligent source.
- **Irreducible Complexity:**  
Some biological systems need every part to function. They could not have evolved step-by-step, but show the careful planning of a Master Engineer.
- **The Mystery of Life's Origin:**  
After decades of research, scientists still cannot explain how life could arise by chance. Life's beginning bears the marks of God's creative hand.
- **The Privileged Planet:**  
Earth is uniquely suited not only for life but for discovery — a place designed for us to live and to explore God's creation.

#### The Bible reminds us:

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork."  
(Psalm 19:1)

Today, whether we gaze at the stars or study the smallest cell, let's remember: We are not accidents. We are part of God's beautiful design!

**SCRIPTURE:** "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works..." Psalm 139:14

**REFLECTION:** When you realize that you were especially created by God, how does that affect your view of yourself? How does that impact the way you want to live your life in the future?

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**EXPERIENCE:** What has been the most interesting study or experience that has helped you answer this question of origins? Perhaps reading a book, watching a documentary, or taking a trip?

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**QUESTION:** How do you personally see the relationship between science and the Bible, particularly in relation to this question of Creation versus Evolution, and the Bible account of the flood? Do you think science is in conflict with the Bible or in agreement?

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**QUESTION:** Do you think there is life on other planets in the universe? How would that change the way you see yourself, our world, and the message of the Bible?

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**RESPONSE:** Do you want to love the God who created this world and formed you in His image?

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