

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE A COSMIC DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

The lights dimmed, and the spectacle of the laser show commenced. In sizzling light and rumbling sound, the beginning of everything was represented, as if by a witness. The explosive expansion of the universe resulting from the “big bang” was described in the customary way, followed by speculation that one day the expansion may reverse, the universe collapse in on itself, and form the “big crunch”! The picture is funny; and so is the tendency to assume that the “big bang” theory must be true; and similarly how “evolution” has a strong grip on the scientific community, though the theory itself is rather unscientific.

How does life begin? What is the beginning of life?

With words rather than sound and light, I want to present “*a cosmic drama in three acts*”.

Act 1 – In the Beginning

The curtains open on the creation described in Genesis 1. As it unfolds, we see that Man is different from the animals. He’s not just a clever ape, but is created with a different quality of life. In Genesis 1:28, man is commissioned to rule. God did not so commission apes or dolphins or pigs—only mankind. Intelligence is not the issue. The issue is that man, unlike the animals, is “*made in the image of God*”.

Man is given freedom in the Garden, but with the necessary test. There is one tree from which he must not eat (Gen 2:16,17). And the promised consequence for choosing to disobey is “*you will surely die*”, or more literally, “*dying, you shall die*”. Man did disobey the command (Gen 3) and sure enough, he began to die. The effects of this were not confined to man himself. The whole universe apparently began to wind down like a clock from this point. Man now has a *need*, and the need is for *life*—because he’s dying by degrees.

Every man and woman on earth today is descended from Adam, and every one is an inheritor of Adam’s fallen nature, which we simply call “human nature”. We’re so accustomed to it that we know nothing else. But it wasn’t how God *designed* us to be.

The curtains close, and the scene shifts, zipping through the years of Scripture, all the way to 1 Corinthians 15.

Act 2 – On the Cross

It’s several thousand years later, and Jesus is on the cross. God hadn’t abandoned His fallen creation. God prepared for many years, in words and in history, and when the time had fully come, the Saviour came.

Jesus was *not* from Adam—He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. He was born as a man, but the only one *not* to have a fallen human nature.

So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. 1 Cor 15:45-49 NIV

Jesus is called the “Last Adam” and the “Second Man”. God wrapped up all the aspects of the Adam race, put them on Jesus the Last Adam and crucified Him. But He raised Him again as the Second Man, the representative head of a whole new species of man, who love the Lord. In Him, we are co-crucified, co-buried and co-raised—made alive in Christ Jesus. “*For as in*

Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." (1 Cor 15:22 NIV). All are *in Adam*, not all are *in Christ*. But all who are *in Christ* will be made alive! Therefore we need to be *in Christ*!

The pivotal verse as the acts change is 2 Corinthians 5:17 *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"* NIV

Act 3, Scene 1 — In the Earth Today

The man is walking about in AD 2003 — he's 21st century man. Maybe he's in a mess: subject to addictions; plagued by relationship difficulties; crippled by financial problems; running from criminal proceedings. Or maybe he's "successful" and enjoying life—a happy sinner. Whichever he is, or anything in between, what he calls "life" is not *real* life—it's only *delayed death*. For in his humanity, it's still true that *"dying, he shall die"*.

He hears the Gospel, responds in faith and places his trust in Jesus. There's a beginning of *life*. He's transformed, out of Adam's race and into the new creation life of Jesus Christ the Second Man. He may look the same in the mirror, and in the short term his personality may be largely unaffected. But on the inside is all the vitality of spiritual life! In a future day, it will be outward and obvious. Now it's more inward and spiritual, but no less *real*. It's a wonderful new beginning—the beginning of *life*.

The curtains remain open, but as the scene-shifters do their work, let's review: man has a need and the need is for *life*; that life is available in Jesus Christ the Second Man; we enter into it as new creations as we respond in faith to the gospel.

Now we're ready for the next scene. The time period is the same.

Act 3, Scene 2 — In the heart and mind of a believer

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 2 Cor 4:6,7 NIV

In Genesis, God shines His light into His creation—"Let there be light". In the *new* creation, He makes His light shine in our *hearts*. It's *new* creation *life*, not old creation revitalised! Yet so often we simply take "believing in Jesus" on board. The Adam life *ends* as new life begins (see 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20; Col 3:3).

Then something goes wrong—something negative happens, or we slip up, or blow it, or don't feel like it. And we're not sure if God *likes* us anymore. We think we've lost our salvation or our faith. We think if we're not *doing* all the spiritual things, we're not spiritual. But there's one thing that has not changed: the new creation life of God is still beating in you, and, if you'll let it, flowing through you!

We have magnificent *treasure* in our unimpressive *jar of clay*. We get so focused on the drab ordinariness of the clay jar that we forget that it's not just that God's light lit up our jar once and it looked so much nicer, but that we have that light—the light of life—in the *inside*!

You may have got up late, forgotten the Word, missed your prayer time (*"What prayer time?"*!). You may feel too busy, too distracted, or totally disorganised. But it's not primarily about what *you* do or don't do. The new creation life of God is in you! You're in Christ, and a new creation still! I'm not saying don't care how you act and live. I'm saying that at a deeper level, God's life is powerfully in you—all you have to do is yield to it.

It's not just that *you* believe now. You're a new creation, the old has gone and the new has come. You're changed, you're different, and you'll never be the same again. You're alive in a

way you weren't alive before. You've personally experienced the "Cosmic Drama". Your need has been met, your shortfall resolved. You have found the beginning of life!

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