

HIGHER RMPS



RPQ Unit: Origins

I hope this finds you well and safe and I'm super excited to begin working with our new Higher class in August! We will begin by initially addressing philosophical and religious arguments surrounding the creation of the universe.

In preparation for this I have put together the following recommended reading and tasks.

INTRODUCTION: WHERE DID IT ALL COME FROM?

Life, the universe, everything...

This question has been taxing the most brilliant minds for centuries. Ever since we (humanity), has had the opportunity and ability to think we have been struck by the complexity and beauty of nature and what we see around us. Rudolf Otto (a German theologian) gave this feeling a phrase the 'Numinous' describes where people are struck with a sense of mystery and awe when people, for example, gaze at the stars or consider the vastness of the universe. This experience could also occur when people are overcome with a sense of beauty and wonder of nature and may also occur when someone is struck by their own sense of helplessness in a tragic situation. Otto stated that it was:

'The feeling of 'something uncanny', 'eerie', or 'weird'.
It is the feeling which in the mind of primeval man, forms the starting point for the entire religious development in history.'

These thoughts for many people are the basis for humankind's belief in God: that there is something beyond the physical senses leading people to search for meaning and purpose in

their lives. These questions essentially are asking questions about 'why' and religions including Christianity have sought to answer the 'why' questions, they are known as 'ultimate questions' and they seek to answer the existential questions of life e.g. 'why are we here?'

This distinction is crucial to our understanding of the physical world. The question you or I ask will depend on the response we get.

EXAMPLE:

- How do you make a cup of tea?
- Why do you make a cup of tea?

We get **DIFFERENT** answers when we ask different questions - we can think of questions like tools that we use to accomplish a task. When we use the **HOW** question we want to find out specific information and we realise that there is usually a right way and a wrong way. We might disagree on the **METHOD** of making a cup of tea to our taste but essentially we need boiling water (usually about 100 degrees C - be careful if you are making a cup of tea at high altitude as it will not taste the same...). This water needs to be poured onto tealeaves/teabag. You can then add milk, lemon, sugar, etc. to your own taste. Job done!

If we then ask **WHY** did you make a cup of tea you will get a number of different answers - **ALL** of which can be correct because the **WHY** question is looking for **MEANING** and **PURPOSE**.

DIFFERENT QUESTIONS FOR DIFFERENT ANSWERS.



Back to the original question...

Where did 'it' all come from?

Simply put if you ask 'How... did it get here?' Then you'd expect to get answers that address this.

If you ask 'Why... is it here?' then you'd expect to get others...

SOURCE: "We had the sky up there, all speckled with stars, and we used to lay on our backs and look up at them, and discuss about whether they was made or only just happened."

Mark Twain: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

Was it made or did it just happen? You may, or may not actually care... However, when it comes to your assessments and exam you will care deeply!

ACTIVITIES & TASKS:

1. In your own words explain why we get different answers depending on the questions we ask.
2. Have you ever had a sense of something 'other' which has caused you to question the meaning and purpose of life - give a brief description of this... OR Why do you think people look for meaning and purpose in life... is this a futile exercise?
3. Made... Happened...? What do you think? Ask those around you to give you their opinion and the reasons why they think this.
4. Does it ultimately matter what answers people give to the question 'Was it made or did it just happen?' - Give reasons why...

It is crucial that you have a really sound knowledge of scriptural references and this being the case I would like you to ensure that you have **fully read Genesis chapter one.**

This will be one of our main sources and it is vital. By the end of the session you will know it inside out and back to front!

For further information or updates please do not hesitate to contact me via the following:

EMAIL: GW15HERNONEMMALOUISE@GLOW.SCH.UK

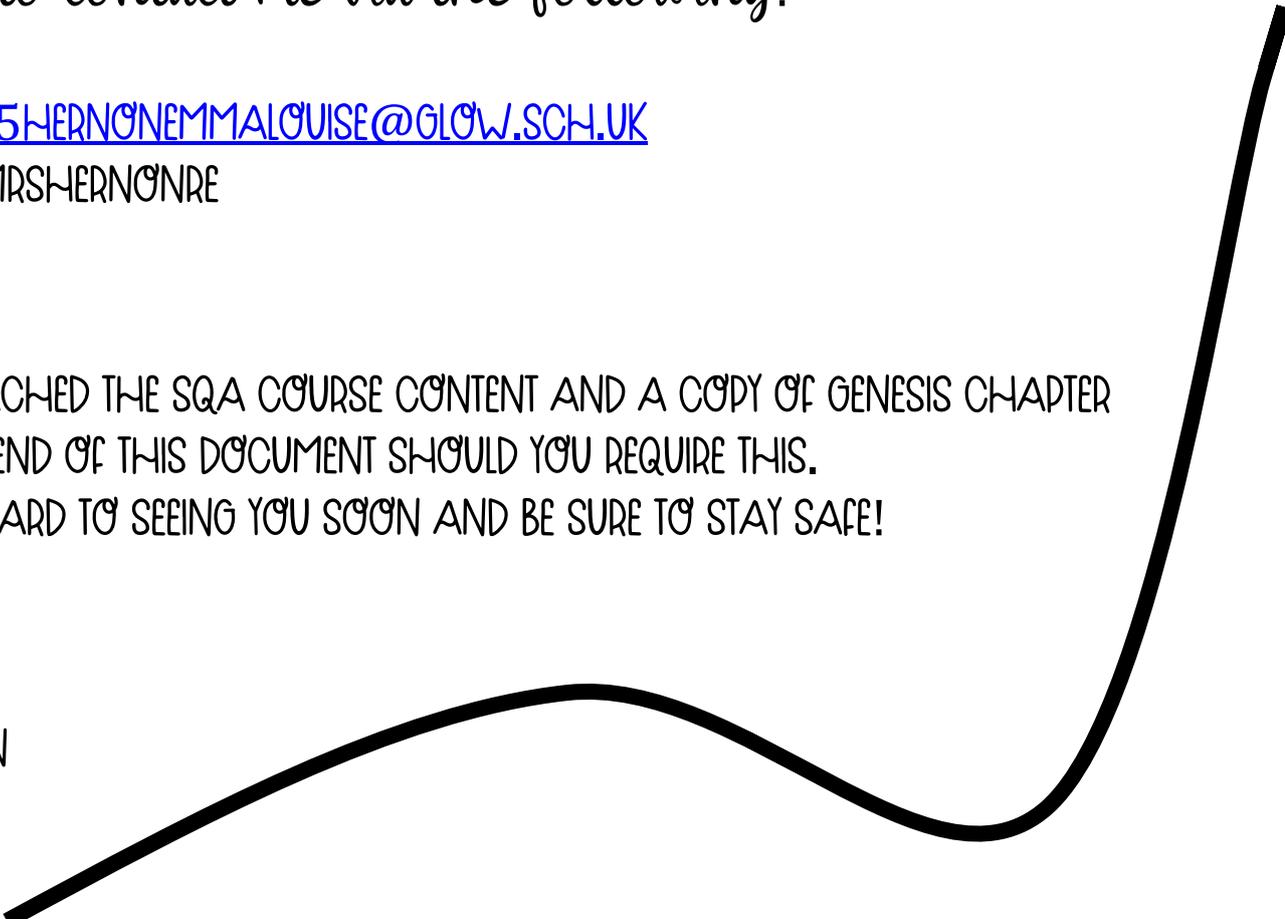
TWITTER: @MRSHERNONRE

I HAVE ATTACHED THE SQA COURSE CONTENT AND A COPY OF GENESIS CHAPTER ONE AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD YOU REQUIRE THIS.

I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU SOON AND BE SURE TO STAY SAFE!

TAKE CARE,

MRS HERNON



Genesis Chapter One:

- [1:1] In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth,
[1:2] the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.
[1:3] Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.
[1:4] And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.
[1:5] God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.
[1:6] And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters."
[1:7] So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so.
[1:8] God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.
[1:9] And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so.
[1:10] God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.
[1:11] Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so.
[1:12] The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good.
[1:13] And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.
[1:14] And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years,
[1:15] and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so.
[1:16] God made the two great lights - the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night - and the stars.
[1:17] God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth,
[1:18] to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.
[1:19] And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.
[1:20] And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky."
[1:21] So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good.
[1:22] God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."
[1:23] And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.
[1:24] And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so.

[1:25] God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

[1:26] Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

[1:27] So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

[1:28] God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

[1:29] God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.

[1:30] And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.

[1:31] God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

SQA Course Content:



- Was the universe and life created?
- How does religion explain the origins of the universe and of life?
- What evidence does religion use to support these explanations?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of evidence/explanations?
- How does science explain the origins of the universe and of life?
- What evidence does science use to support these explanations?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of evidence/explanations?
- Can religious and scientific views on origins be compatible?