

**Due dates:**     **Friday, May 12:** first draft (three copies, word-processed)  
                          **Tuesday, May 16:** revised draft.

**Length:**           3 – 5 pages, with a maximum of 5. This is based on 12-point font, double-spaced, Times New Roman, which yields about 300 words for a full page. Please do number your pages.

The aim of almost all writing is to get the reader to see or feel or accept something. This is true for both religious writing and scientific writing. The writers of the Noah chapters in Genesis want you to *see* (among other things) that God bases his treatment of humans on their behavior. The authors of scientific work on the Black Sea Flood want you to *see* that a catastrophic deluge occurred in the Black Sea region more than 7,000 years ago, turning a smaller freshwater lake surrounded by fertile farmland into a larger saltwater body now called the Black Sea. In this context, to *see* is to *accept*.

Scientists and biblical writers rely on different methods of getting their readers to see and accept what the writers want them to see and accept. They use different methods of validation and different methods of presentation. Your essay is to examine the methods used by each kind of writer. You may concentrate on the method of validation or on the method of presentation; or you may deal with both validation and presentation; the two get pretty intertwined anyway. Your essay should be structured as follows:

- A. In an opening section, state a thesis about how religious and scientific writers each validate and/or present their ideas.
  
- B. In the second section of your essay, state something that the Biblical writers want their readers to see and accept about God, the Israelites, relations between God and the Israelites, or something else related to these topics. It must be based on class readings after Genesis; it may also bring in other Bible readings. ***It could be one of the statements in the table below, or you may construct a statement of your own.*** Then analyze how the writers validate – another word might be “demonstrate” – the “truth” of their statement and/or how they present their idea in a way that helps the reader see and accept it.
  
- C. In the third section of your essay, do the same thing with Ward and Brownlee or Paul Davies. In their case, you should begin with one of their actual statements. ***It could be one of the statements in the table below, or you may construct a statement of your own.*** Then analyze how the statement is validated and/or presented so as to get a reader to see and accept it. To do this with a scientific observation, determine by what method(s) (e.g., radiocarbon dating, X-ray spectroscopy, etc.) did scientists eventually deduce that statement? How was this method instrumental in allowing the statement to be made? You must include at least one scientist’s name. Note that you may have to find some outside reading to help summarize their argument; they may assume some connection is obvious when it is not to you. In talking about how the validation is presented, summarize the Ward and Brownlee or the Davies argument in support of the point. Pay special attention to where their argument begins (usually an observation or a previous theory) and the chain of reasoning that follows. Note that you may have to find some outside reading to help summarize their argument; they may assume some connection is obvious when it is not to you.

D. In a concluding section of your essay, summarize the conclusions in the body of the essay and show how they support your opening thesis. If possible, go a bit beyond mere summary to reflect on the difference between science and religion as ways of “knowing.” But do this only if your reflections are well grounded in fact and logic.

*In evaluating and grading this essay, we will use the same criteria used for Essay 1. Do review them. Ask us for a copy if you cannot find them.*

**Possible statements for use in Essay 2. Again, you may choose one from each column, or you may construct one of your own:**

<b>Bible</b>	<b>Science</b>
<b>God operates in and through human history.</b>	“Just over the past 500 million years, for example, the length of the Earth’s day has increased by about 10 percent because of the Moon.” (Ward and Brownlee, 28)
<b>God’s love and care for the Israelite nation is infinite.</b>	“Yes, the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuel such as coal, gas and oil has increased 30 percent since the start of the Industrial Revolution.” (Ward and Brownlee, 72)
<b>God cares about both the ritual and the ethical.</b>	“The Burgess Shale tells us that animals did not gradually appear on the planet, but did so in an explosion of new life.” (Ward and Brownlee, 122)
<b>God can be both <i>amazingly</i> wrathful and <i>amazingly</i> forgiving.</b>	”It is clear that M31 is heading our way at a speed of over 300 kilometers a second, or 720,000 miles per hour.” (Ward and Brownlee, 151)
<b>Faithfulness to God will bring amazing rewards.</b>	The formation of a new supercontinent will result in the stagnation of the ocean (no mixing between surface waters and deep waters). (Ward and Brownlee, 94)
<b>To save the Israelites, God has done things whose saving purpose was not always clear at the time.</b>	The Sun is growing brighter as the solar system ages. (Ward and Brownlee, 104)
<b>God’s relations with the Israelites has changed over time.</b>	The universe has a limited life span. (Davies, 18)
	A supernova (the explosion at the end of the life of a massive star, results in the formation of a neutron star. (Davies, 44)