Yesterday I started detailing some of the contradictions and historical or scientific problems with the Old Testament that I started to find when I was a graduate at Princeton Seminary, starting to examine the Bible not as the inerrant revelation from God Almighty but as a more human book that could indeed have mistakes in it. The account I gave of these problems was lifted straight from my textbook: The Bible: A Historical and Literary Introduction. There’s a reason for that. The problems I found early on in my more scholarly investigation of the Bible have stuck with me and continue to strike me as some of the truly most important ones, and therefore the ones most appropriate to introduce to college students themselves reading the Bible critically for the first time.

This is a second and final post on the same topic: a few more comments on a few more problems that strike me as completely irreconcileable, once a person admits that there can indeed be problems in the Bible. Again, this is excerpted from my textbook. Afterward I have a few reflections on how such problems affected my Christian faith.

These kinds of differences suggested to scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that Genesis 1-3 was not providing one account composed by one author at one time, but two different accounts composed by two different authors at two different times – with different interests, understandings of the deity, and views about what happened when humans were created.

Moreover, and just as important, the literary inconsistencies of Genesis are not unique to these two chapters. On the contrary, there are such problems scattered throughout the book. You can see this for yourself simply by ...

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Finding Problems in the Old Testament