

DETAILS



Dawn

A Proton's Tale of All That Came to Be

September 20, 2022 | \$22, 192 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0566-8

"In this wonderfully creative and imaginative account, a proton tells the story of both science and faith from beginning to end. This new and refreshing perspective keeps the reader engaged from start to finish—the story of the universe in a style we encounter for the very first time. A gripping read and recommended for readers of any age."

Denis Alexander, emeritus director of the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge University

Discover the Wonder of the Cosmos

This is an adventure that began almost fourteen billion years ago, one that so often threatened to fail. It's truly a miracle I'm still here. Despite everything, I wouldn't have wanted to miss one second of it. And the best is yet to come.

With the help of an extraordinary narrator, you're invited to discover the wonder and drama of the history of the cosmos. In this story we follow the journey of one proton who comes into existence at the beginning of creation and makes it all the way through history to today. By becoming a part of atoms and molecules that turn up at some of the universe's most important moments, our friend Proton witnesses emerging galaxies, the origin of life, its evolution into a wild diversity of life forms, the first human beings, the birth and life of Jesus, the beginnings of the Christian church, all the way up to the present day. Through it all, the mysterious, seemingly unbelievable plans of the Creator continue to unfold. . . .

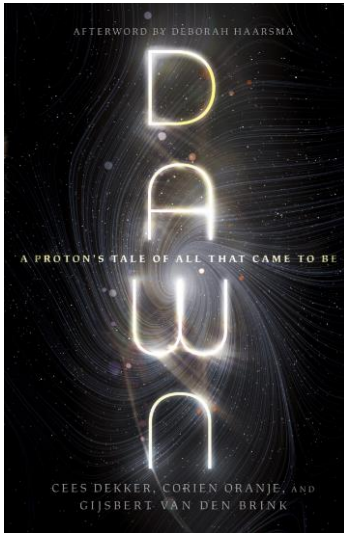
Combining its authors' mind-bending scientific knowledge, storytelling skills, and insights from theology, *Dawn* provides a fresh look at the fundamentals of cosmology, evolutionary biology, and the good news of God in one overarching adventure—in the form of a gripping story. Readers who love both science and Scripture will discover an engaging, thought-provoking tale that reminds us we each have a big place in God's plan of creation—even if we're very, very small.



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TALKING POINTS



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The Story of the Universe Told by a Proton

"This is a remarkable book combining good science, rich and childlike imagination, and deeply grounded creational theology. The story of the universe told by a proton! Who comes up with that? It's great for children, and adults won't be able to resist it!"

—W. Ross Hastings, Sangwoo Youtong Chee Professor of Theology at Regent College

What is the story behind *Dawn*? How did you come together to write on this particular topic through the genre of fiction?

Describe the basic storyline and premise of *Dawn*.

How does *Dawn* raise discussions around topics like the origin of the universe, evolution, creation, Adam and Eve, and more?

How does the story of *Dawn* challenge or encourage one's faith in terms of how the universe came into being?

How important is it for one's faith if the universe came into being in a different way than he or she might have thought before?

How does *Dawn* deal with the subjects of suffering and death? Why is this hard for some to accept?

How do you tackle the subject of evolution in the storyline? What questions do you hope to raise for readers around the topic of evolution?

What questions do you raise around the story of Adam and Eve? Why is it important to think through the story of Adam and Eve as we understand it, and maybe think of it in another way?

You describe the incarnation as the "inverted Big Bang." What do you mean by that?

Some tend to think that science and faith are at odds with each other. How would you respond to them?

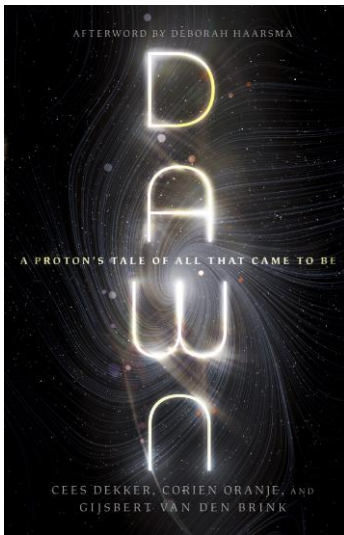
To what extent does science play a role in our belief in the God of the Bible?



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EXCERPT



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Beginnings

I was born during a messy runaway frenzy. Collisions. Chaos. Flying objects.

Perhaps you should compare it to a fireworks factory kindled by a spark. Explosions that followed each other at furious speed. The heat. The pressure. You could call it a cyclone, a raging EF5 tornado that took nothing and no one into account, and in which everything and everyone was flung away and destroyed.

"Behind you," someone yelled. I couldn't escape; I was pushed and thrown in every direction. To my consternation, I noticed that another newborn proton that had been floating beside me a moment ago, was blown away, far out of reach. There went another, and another. Everything spun, turned, dove, and crossed paths at lightning speed.

"Do you know what's going on?" a voice called out.

"I have no idea," I answered. I whirled helplessly while projectiles flew past me on all sides. Around me, time and space exploded. There was nothing I could do to protect myself, to take myself out of the line of fire. A safe place was nowhere to be found.

I must have lost consciousness at some point. When I woke up, I heard voices. It sounded like they were not far from where I was, but I couldn't see anything.

"How terrible," said the one voice.

"That was disturbing indeed," said the other voice.

"Disturbing?" The first voice sounded indignant. "It was way more than disturbing. It was a disaster. A slaughter! No one is left. Everything is destroyed! Everything and everyone."

I did not understand much of this conversation, but it was clear that the speakers thought they were the only ones left.

"And what about you and me?" the first voice asked.

"We're the only ones!"

"Not at all."

"Hello," I called out cautiously.

The two voices fell silent.

"Hello," I said again. "Is there anybody out there?"

"Who are you?" the first voice asked.

"I'm Proton," I replied.

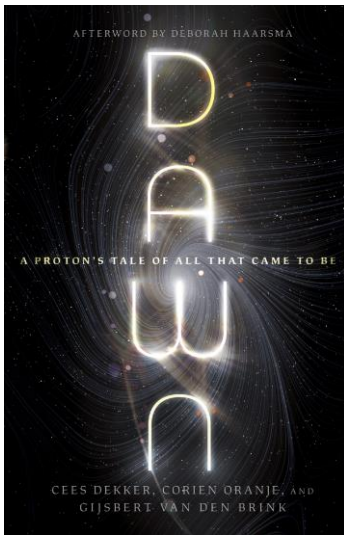
"I told you!" the other voice said triumphantly. "Ha! I told you we were not alone. Hey, Proton, my name is Kalon. That faint-hearted friend of mine is Achaton."



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"What's happening?" I asked. "What's the problem?"

"He is new here," said the voice that had introduced himself as Kalon. "We have to tell him about it."

The two strangers told me about the past, about the beginning of time and space many eons ago. They told me about someone they called the Creator and to whom I apparently owed my existence. It was a bizarre story, and I found it hard to believe.

"Previously, nothing existed," said Kalon. "Nothing at all. No matter. No energy. No time. No space."

"There was the Creator," said Achaton.

Kalon laughed. "Well, of course the Creator was there. He was always there. He thought of a plan to make something; something grand, something exceptional, something . . ."

". . . spectacular!" cried Achaton. "Honestly, Proton, you wouldn't believe this!"

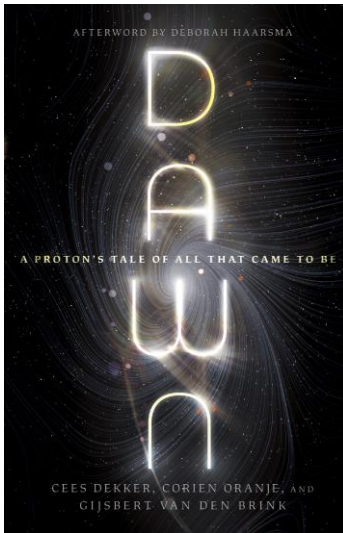
—Taken from chapter one, "Beginnings"



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Restarting with Abram

Thousands of years later we were part of a sheep, a complete world in itself, with billions of cells, each cell a crowded city. We lived in a cell in the outermost part of the skin. One day the sheep was slaughtered, the intestines were removed, and the hide was pulled off and scraped clean. The hide was tanned in a mixture of water and oak bark and hung out to dry in the warm breeze. Then we were taken, along with other hides, to the walled-in courtyard of a large stone house and thrown onto a pile.

"Where are we?" I asked.

"They call this place Ur," said a proton from a dust particle that came floating by.

"That doesn't tell me anything," I said. "Where's that?"

I got no answer. My attention was drawn to a man and a boy who walked together into the courtyard.

"So many sheepskins!" cried the boy. "What are we going to do with them, Uncle Abram? Is this going to be a new carpet?"

"No," said Abram. "We're going to have them made into tents. Big tents."

"What do we need tents for? Don't we have a house?"

"We're going to move. I'm organizing everything. I don't know exactly where we are going yet, but I have become convinced that we will be shown the way to a better place. Maybe we'll have a house there again, but while we're on our way, we'll sleep in tents."

The boy frowned. "Are we going to leave Ur? That's dangerous, isn't it? Can Sin still help us when we're in that other land? And the other gods?"

"We'll take them with us, Lot. Don't worry. Their images are powerful, and they'll protect us on the way."

"Are all of us going?" the boy asked. "With the whole family? Is grandfather Arpachshad coming too? I'm going to ask him." He walked inside. "Grandpa! Are you coming with us to Canaan?"

"He's sleeping, Lot," said a woman's voice. "Let him be. Oh no, that's so annoying. Now you've done it. He's awake."

"Ah, the days of yesteryear," said a trembling elderly voice. "The days my father told us about. The days of the big flood. Water, as far as the eye could see. It came up out of the earth. It came down from heaven. Forty days, forty nights. Sea everywhere. Not one human being that survived. Not one. Only my parents and the animals they had with them on their boat."

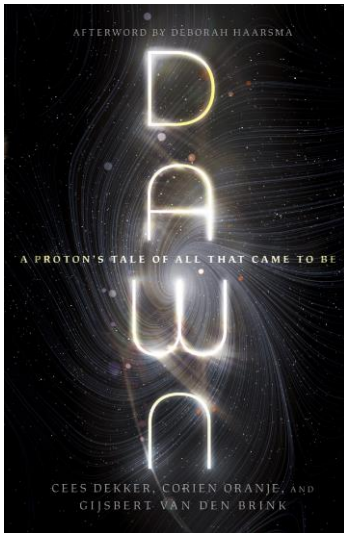
"Are you telling the stories of long ago again, Grandfather?" asked the woman. Her voice was gentle. "Here, drink some wine. Lot, please go outside."



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The voice of the old man rose. "And when you see the bow in the clouds," he said, "then think of what I have promised today. Never again shall . . ."

"Shh, don't worry, Grandfather. That's not good for you. You're safe. Do you want something to eat, perhaps? I have bread, soaked in goat's milk. I'll help you. Lot, away with you, and close the door behind you."

The boy stomped into the courtyard looking annoyed. "My mom doesn't even allow me to ask him a question!"

"I think she's right, Lot," said Abram. "My grandfather Arpachshad lives in the past. He's not going to come with us. He's going to stay here with some servants who'll take care of him."

"But . . . why?"

"He's too weak, Lot, and much too old. He's ready for his last journey. Not long from now he will go on his way to the country from which no one returns—the underworld, where every person, rich or poor, good or evil, awaits the same dark destiny."

"Wait a minute," I said, when Abram and his nephew had left the courtyard. We were still lying in the sun against the little wall. "Is the man saying that there's a god with the name Sin, who can protect him?"

"That's what he was talking about," said Aris, "and about the images that he's going to take along on his journey."

"Remarkable," I said.

I didn't know that they call the Creator Sin nowadays."

"If you ask me," said Solon, "they have no idea who the Creator is. They've invented their own gods."

A couple of months later, now part of a tent, we were loaded onto the back of a camel and taken on a months-long journey westward. During the days we saw little because we were bundled up and packed. We felt only the moving and shaking of the camel transporting us. But when we were unpacked and set up, we saw endless sandy plains, rocks, hills, and once in a while a green oasis where we would stay for a couple of days. We saw the sun set behind the hills, and at night we saw thousands of stars move on their paths through the heavens. At dawn we saw the moon and stars fade, and we marveled at how the Creator brought color back into the world every morning.

—Taken from chapter thirteen, "Restart"



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