

It is a pleasure and a joy to be here at the launch of this wonderful film

One of the film's great virtues is that it invites us to live imaginatively in the world that we live in scientifically, to frame a cosmology that actually is true of the cosmos.

In that context, the film gives an account of the rise of symbolic consciousness, including writing and the art.

But I noticed that in this account there was you might call a fruitful absence: God was not prominently mentioned.

So that left me wondering what God's role, if any, was in the new story.

Clearly this is not a small subject, but permit me to offer two thoughts.

It's often said that science and religious belief are not contradictory, and I agree.

Yet the rise of science did plainly land a blow on one traditional aspect of faith: superstition.

Science offered unparalleled way of ascertaining what is physically true, also meaning historically true.

This was a blow, for instance, if not to God the creator then to the story of Genesis, and to other cosmologies. After Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, it got a lot harder to literally believe that the world was created in six days. That story might remain meaningful - it surely does - but it stopped being true - a clear loss.

Humanity thus lost a kind of wonderful freedom, the freedom to make things up.

Science confined truth to what was actually, ascertainably true, and a whole zoology of creatures and gods crashed to the ground.

They were expelled from the hall of truth and had to find some other abode - in "stories," in "narrative," in meaning.

The movie steps into the breach. You might say that it begins to make restitution for the loss imposed on the imagination by the rise of science.

And what of God? The film does not offer a substitute for God. But it does speak to our craving for *meaning* in universe that otherwise merely *is*.