

“Framed by the Word of God”: An introduction

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PERIODICALLY a Special Issue of *The Testimony* has been devoted to current science and its relationship to the Bible and its teaching. It might seem unnecessary or even perverse to spend this amount of space discussing matters which are not strictly within the sphere of Biblical studies. Yet it is very clear that at the beginning of the twenty-first century many people now consider that science has completely displaced the Word of God as the source of all rational explanations of the origin of the universe, and of life. The effect of this is all too familiar in declining church attendances and the widespread flouting in society of the moral principles pronounced by God in the Bible.

It therefore becomes wholly appropriate, in a publication devoted to “the study and defence of the Holy Scripture”, that these issues should be considered regularly. This is particularly important because our young people today, through the state education systems in most countries, are bombarded with the godless propaganda of atheistic materialism, based upon the Theory of Evolution, which is taught as ‘scientific fact’.

The previous Science Special Issue was produced in 1983, and was the work of a single author.¹ On this occasion a number of Christadelphians with experience or specific training in various scientific fields have been invited to contribute articles on subjects of their choice, and which relate to the issue of Divine Creation versus evolution as conflicting explanations of the origins of the living world. In addition, a number of articles from past issues of *The Testimony* have been reprinted to complement the main items with some additional topics. The principle objectives of all the articles that are presented in these pages are twofold:

- 1 To demonstrate that many scientific discoveries encourage our belief in the God of the Bible as Creator (that is, the evidence of design and purpose);
- 2 To show the inadequacies and deficiencies of the theory of evolution in its various forms.

The Creation record

All of the contributors to this issue are convinced that the universe and all living things in it have come into existence by Divine command, and that the record of Creation in the Bible is true. However, as with interpretations of prophecy, there are various understandings of what the Creation record in Genesis is telling us, since clearly it was not written using modern scientific terminology, but in a form that could be understood by people of all ages. Thus some members of our community believe that the entire Creation occurred in six literal days, around six thousand years ago. Others share views similar to those of Brother John Thomas² that the present order of living things was created in six days upon an already ancient earth. Still others hold that the six days of Genesis 1 were days during which God revealed the Creation to Moses, or represent longer epochs of time, corresponding to the geological ages of conventional science. Some or all of these views are discernible in these articles.

The fact that these differing views can all be held by sincere believers suggests that there exists no objective way of proving which is correct. The remote past can only be investigated by examining its scattered remains and then seeking to interpret them; the interpretation will inevitably depend upon the already existing world-view of the interpreter. For example, the evidence which seems to show the antiquity of the earth’s

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1. *Creation Versus Evolution*, Arthur Gibson, July 1983.
 2. “The *duration* of the earth’s revolutions around the sun previous to the work of the first day is not revealed: but the evidences produced by the strata of our globe show that the period was long continued . . . The six days of Genesis were unquestionably six diurnal revolutions of the earth upon its axis . . . Six days of ordinary length were ample time for Omnipotence, with all the powers of the universe at command, to re-form the earth, and to place the few animals upon it necessary for the beginning of a new order of things upon the globe” (*Elpis Israel*, fifteenth edition [2000], pp. 11-13).

strata can be viewed either as demonstrating actual great age or as being the result of the creation by God of the *appearance* of age; there is no certain way of distinguishing between them.

Fashions in science

Furthermore, scientists are themselves divided on many of these issues. Fashions in science swing between one position and another over the decades. Thus Darwinism developed in an era when catastrophism (as in the Flood) had been rejected and replaced by uniformitarianism, the belief that all past changes can be explained by processes still observable today. Currently, however, catastrophism is coming back into vogue, being widely accepted, for example, as the cause of the extinction of the dinosaurs.³ Serious consideration is even being given to ways of preventing a possible future catastrophic collision of an asteroid with the earth, which could destroy all life.

We therefore do well to avoid dogmatism on matters that are ultimately within the realm of things known for certain only by the Almighty Himself. In His own words: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding" (Job 38:4). The important thing for us to focus upon is that there is just far too much evidence of order and design in the universe, both in its physical laws and the extreme complexity of all living things, for everything to be simply the result of blind chance. There has to be an originator, a Creator, Who is the God of the Bible, and this is what His Word proclaims.

God as Creator

It is often not appreciated, even by the true believers in Jesus Christ, just how central to the hope of the gospel is the doctrine that God is the Creator. His absolute authority over all things, including man, arises from the fact that He is their Maker: "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! . . . Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? . . . I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even My hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded" (Isa. 45:9,12). In fact the number of references and allusions to the Creation in the Bible is large, and certainly not restricted simply to the early chapters of Genesis (see the [table](#) opposite).

Furthermore, the power that was demonstrated in the Creation, when "the Spirit of God

moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2), is repeatedly seen at work in the remainder of the Scriptures. The angel Gabriel is certainly alluding to the Creation record when he declares to Mary that the conception of the Son of God in her womb would take place when "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall *overshadow* thee" (Lk. 1:35). This creative work of the Holy Spirit is also evident in the miracles recorded in Scripture, which can frequently be regarded as examples of ongoing works of creation, that is of events unique in nature (for example, the sun standing still, a storm instantly subsiding) or so greatly accelerated as to constitute creation (for example, turning water into wine, multiplying loaves, instantaneous healing).

Above all, it is *resurrection* that demonstrates the creative power of God, for to raise the dead is in essence the same process as to create man in the first place. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the centrepiece of the gospel message (Acts 13:32-34), was truly a mighty work of creation. The well-known and oft-quoted passage in Psalm 139 concerning the marvels of the human body finds its deepest meaning as a description of the resurrection of Jesus: "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made . . . My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed, and in Your book they all were written" (vv. 14-16, NKJV). Creative activity is, then, a fundamental attribute of God through His Spirit,⁴ inseparable from the other familiar aspects of His character, such as love, mercy, justice and truth.

The scientific endeavour

It is possible to view science as an activity which forms part of God's commandment to the man He had created to "replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion . . ." (Gen. 1:28; cf. Ps. 8:4-8). Viewed in this way, science is a wholly legitimate attempt to understand and appreciate the nature and operation of the infinitely varied works of God, which give Him glory. And it is clear that many scientists, including some of the greatest, have pursued their studies and their

3. See "[What happened to the dinosaurs?](#)", p. 186.

4. This aspect of God's Spirit is discussed in "[The Spirit of God—the basis of all things](#)", p. 176.

The Creation in Scripture

Gen.	1:1ff	In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth
	2:4ff	. . . in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens
	5:1	In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him
	6:6	And it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth
Ex.	20:11	For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth
Deut.	4:32	. . . since the day that God created man upon the earth
2 Kgs.	19:15	O LORD God of Israel . . . Thou hast made heaven and earth
Neh.	9:6	Thou hast made heaven . . . the earth, and all things that are therein
Job	38:4ff	Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Ps.	8:3	When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers . . .
	19:1	The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork
	24:1,2	The earth is the LORD'S . . . For He hath founded it . . .
	33:6	By the word of the LORD were the heavens made . . .
	50:10	For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills
	89:11	The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine . . . Thou hast founded them
	90:2	Before . . . Thou hadst formed the earth and the world . . .
	94:9	He That planted the ear, shall He not hear? He That formed the eye . . . not see?
	95:5	The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land
	102:25	Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth . . .
	104:2ff	Who stretchest out the heavens . . . Who laid the foundations of the earth . . .
	115:15	Ye are blessed of the LORD Which made heaven and earth
	119:73	Thy hands have made me and fashioned me
	119:90	Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth
	124:8	Our help is in the name of the LORD, Who made heaven and earth
	136:5ff	To Him That by wisdom made the heavens . . . That stretched out the earth
	139:14	I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made
	146:5,6	. . . the LORD his God: Which made heaven, and the earth, the sea . . .
	147:4,5	He telleth the number of the stars . . . His understanding is infinite
	148:3ff	Sun and moon . . . stars . . . He commanded, and they were created
Prov.	3:19	The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding . . . the heavens
	8:27ff	When He prepared the heavens, I [wisdom] was there . . .
Isa.	37:16	O LORD of hosts . . . Thou hast made heaven and earth
	40:26	Lift up your eyes on high, and behold Who hath created these things . . .
	42:5	Thus saith God the LORD, He that created the heavens . . . spread forth the earth
	45:12	I have made the earth, and created man upon it . . . have stretched out the heavens
	45:18	. . . the LORD That created the heavens . . . formed the earth . . . He created it not in vain
	48:13	Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth . . . spanned the heavens
	51:13	. . . the LORD thy maker, That hath stretched forth the heavens . . .

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	65:17	For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth
	66:1	Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool
Jer.	10:12	He hath made the earth by His power . . . stretched out the heavens . . .
	27:5	I have made the earth, the man and the beast . . . by My great power . . .
	31:35	Thus saith the LORD, Which giveth the sun . . . by day . . . the moon . . . by night
	32:17	Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power . . .
	51:15	He hath made the earth by His power . . . stretched out the heaven . . .
Amos	4:13	He That formeth the mountains . . . The LORD . . . is His name
Mt.	11:25	I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth
	19:4	He Which made them at the beginning made them male and female
Mk.	10:6	But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female
	13:19	. . . from the beginning of the creation which God created
Jno.	1:1	In the beginning was the Word . . .
Acts	4:24	Lord, Thou art God, Which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea . . .
	14:15	. . . turn . . . unto the living God, Which made heaven, and earth, and the sea . . .
	17:24ff	God That made the world and all things therein . . . is Lord of heaven and earth
Rom.	1:20	For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen . . .
1 Cor.	11:7ff	For a man . . . is the image and glory of God . . . Neither . . . created for the woman
	15:45	The first man Adam was made a living soul . . .
2 Cor.	4:6	For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness . . .
1 Tim.	2:13	For Adam was first formed, then Eve
	4:3	. . . meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving
Heb.	1:10	Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth . . .
	4:4	And God did rest the seventh day from all His works
	11:3	Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God
2 Pet.	3:5	. . . by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water . . .
	3:13	. . . we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth . . .
Rev.	2:7	. . . the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God
	4:11	Thou art worthy, O Lord . . . for Thou hast created all things . . . for Thy pleasure
	10:6	. . . by Him That liveth for ever and ever, Who created heaven . . . and the earth
	14:7	. . . worship Him That made heaven, and earth, and the sea . . .
	21:1,5	And I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . . And He . . . said, Behold I make all things new

Notes:

- 1 This is not an exhaustive list but does include seventy of the most direct references to the Creation in Scripture.
- 2 Some of the references to 'the heavens and the earth' undoubtedly relate to God's creation of the nation of Israel as His people (as also in Deut. 32:1; Isa. 1:2; Jer. 2:12), but are included here because they use terms derived from the original Creation as recorded in Genesis.
- 3 A number of the references apply to the *new* creation in the Lord Jesus Christ; these have also been included since, again, they employ 'creation language' based upon the Genesis record.

interest in the created world with that perspective. Certainly this is true of the contributors to this issue of *The Testimony*.

Many of the discoveries in science and technology have been utilised for ends that are beneficial to mankind, for instance in improving the living conditions of large numbers of people, in reducing the effects of disease, even in aiding the dissemination of the Word of God through printing and easier travel. In contrast, many of the findings of science have been used for the most evil purposes, particularly in the development of ever more efficient weapons of war, in cynical pollution of the environment and in the diffusion of grossly immoral material around the world.

Regrettably, however, since the so-called Age of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, science has increasingly been used as a source of naturalistic explanations, which dispense with God, for the existence of the universe and everything in it. And that has brought about the current situation, in which science appears to be wholly dedicated to an atheistic and humanistic philosophy.

Partly this is due to the stranglehold that the scientific establishments in the developed countries have achieved over the media, so that dissenting views are rarely heard, and extreme pressure is put onto publishing houses not to print books questioning the Darwinian orthodoxy.⁵ One would hardly gather from the major TV networks or the scientific journals that many scientists continue to believe in God the Creator and to view the knowledge that they gain from their researches as giving honour to His Name. We can only encourage those young believers in Jesus Christ who might consider pursuing a scientific career to approach it in the same spirit, while recognising that they will be operating in an environment which largely denies the existence, or at least the power, of the One we serve.

Scientific 'laws' and the Creator

It is remarkable that so many highly intelligent scientists seem to imagine that by developing general laws which describe the behaviour of matter or of living organisms they have somehow explained *why* they behave in this or that way. Each time a mathematical law is proposed which provides an explanation of a particular phenomenon, then, it is said, there is no further need to invoke the Deity to explain it. And so, as

many atheistic scientists see it, God is no longer 'necessary' at all as an explanation of the universe.⁶ Yet it is clear from the history of science that 'laws' are not immutable and regularly have to be modified or replaced as new data become available. And simply to define a law does nothing to explain why it exists. Einstein's famous equation, $e=mc^2$, describes the relationship between mass (m), energy (e) and the speed of light (c), and led to the development of nuclear energy and the atom bomb. But although the concepts of energy and mass are very useful, and appear in many physical laws, no scientist actually knows what energy is,⁷ or why matter possesses the property we call mass.⁸

In reality the vast range of scientific discoveries in the past two centuries has provided more evidence for the existence of God than the accumulated sum of knowledge from all previous ages, outside of the Word of God itself. Just a handful of recent advances are discussed in this issue, but they all give testimony to the wisdom and power of the Creator. If the Apostle Paul, writing to the Romans around A.D. 55, could say, "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (1:20), how much more meaningful must his words be at the beginning of the twenty-first century!

The new creation

It is clear from Scripture that the creative activity of God is by no means finished, but that His purpose is to be accomplished in a new creation, a creation of the Spirit, which is to be realised as the Kingdom of God on the earth. Repeatedly in the New Testament parallels are drawn between

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5. See the preface to *Shattering the Myths of Darwinism*, Richard Milton, US edition, 1997.
 6. So, for example, Stephen Hawking, in his best-selling *A Brief History of Time* (1985) concludes: "So long as the universe had a beginning, we could suppose it had a creator. But if the universe is really completely self-contained, having no boundary or edge, it would have neither beginning nor end: it would simply be. What place, then, for a creator?" (pp. 140-1).
 7. The dictionary definition of energy, "The capacity of a body or system to do work", merely points up the ignorance of what it actually is.
 8. According to current theories, the masses of the fundamental particles of which matter is composed are predicted to be due to the exchange between them of a field particle known as the Higgs boson, which is yet to be discovered.

Adam and Christ,⁹ each being seen as the beginning of a new order of creation. The resurrection of Jesus, referred to above, is presented in the New Testament as the very beginning of that new creation, for “He is the image of the invisible God, the *firstborn* over all creation. For by him all things were created. . . who is the beginning, the *firstborn* from the dead” (Col. 1:15-18, NKJV). And Jesus says of himself: “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, *the beginning of the creation of God*” (Rev. 3:14).

Furthermore, those who are in Christ, who have been baptized into his death and resurrection, are themselves caught up into this new order of things: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a *new creation*; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17, NKJV). All who will be raised from the dead and, having been justified by faith, receive the incomparable gift of eternal life, will truly be incorporated into God’s new creation in Jesus

Christ. They will be parts of the “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness”, which the Creator will establish for His own pleasure: “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people” (2 Pet. 3:13; Isa. 65:17-19).

At that time those who have puzzled and wondered at the mysteries and marvels of this present creation may hope to share the supreme privilege of knowing and understanding all that the Creator in His own wisdom has performed. And that will be a science study course beyond compare!

9. See, for example, Rom. 5:15-19; 1 Cor. 15:22,45; 2 Cor. 4:4, *cf.* Gen. 1:26; Eph. 5:30-32, *cf.* Gen. 2:23,24; Phil. 2:5-9, *cf.* Gen. 3:4-6.

The Two Books and the history of science

Stephen Snobelen

GOD HAS revealed Himself in both His Word and His Works. The first of these two revelations is the most familiar to us. Scripture is ‘God-breathed’ (the literal meaning of “given by inspiration of God”) and provides for the believer “doctrine”, “reproof”, “correction” and “instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16). But God has also made Himself known through His creation of the natural world. Although this second revelation does not offer detailed instruction about God, nature nevertheless does teach us, through its evident design, that there is a Creator. Moreover, when we compare the Book of Scripture with the ‘Book’ of Nature, it becomes clear that the Designer is none other than the God of the Bible. There is a fundamental unity between the Two Books.

The Two Books linked

But there is more. Not only does nature confirm that the Bible is right to speak of a Creator God, but our understanding of nature also reinforces other, more specific Scriptural truths. Thus the unity of design in creation implies a *single* Crea-

tor, which in turn upholds the monotheism of the Bible against the polytheism of paganism. Similarly, the Bible’s teaching on the mortality of human and animal life is perfectly consistent with what the natural world reveals about the inevitable processes of organic decay and dissolution that tragically afflict all life in this dispensation. Even the regular rhythms of night and day and the seasons, along with the appearance of the rainbow—all too often taken for granted—present a continuous testimony to God’s immutability and unchanging faithfulness, which in turn guarantee His other promises (Gen. 1:14; 8:22; 9:12-17; Jer. 31:35-37; 33:20-26).

Several more characteristics of God are displayed in creation as well, including His love and care for us, made manifest in His provision of food from both earth and field (Gen. 1:29,30). The magnificence and grandeur of creation reveal the enormous extent of God’s glory (Isa. 40:12-28)—so much so that the many features of creation are said, in a metaphorical manner, to praise and glorify the Lord (Ps. 148). The stunningly rich beauty of creation, and the requisite