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My neighbor claims to be an atheist. After successful service as an engineer for Philips Corporation, he left his native Holland and taught science for 25 years at the University of California. A modest man, he doesn't say much about accomplishments, but he has pictures of himself with many Nobel prize winners. He authored a very technical book on magnetism.

Since I have absolutely no scientific training, I asked him a question involving creation. Doctor, my Bible says, God said, Let there be light; and there was light (Gen 1:3). What is light?

My neighbor smiled. You're asking, What is light? No one really knows for sure. He went on to explain: We talk about light waves and light particles, but we have a limited knowledge of light.

In a recent article, another author agrees: Scientists don't fully understand what light is or what it can do (Joel Achenbach, *The Power of Light*, *National Geographic*, October 2001, p. 5).

I said to my neighbor, My reason for asking about light is that the Bible tells us God made light on the first day, then waited until the fourth day to create the sun, moon, and stars.

His response came quickly. You need light in order to make the sun, moon, stars, or anything else. Light is a tool, light is energy, light is power. What this long-time University professor said next surprised me. Evolution is a theory. The nice thing about theories is they can be changed and they are usually changed frequently. He added, I want to keep an open mind.

I'm praying he will keep his mind open to the truth of creation. That's what this issue of Adventists Affirm is about. Articles are written by men and women who believe the Bible account of a literal creation in six days. We believe that God is light (1 Jn 1:5, NKJV throughout this article).

Understanding what God made on the first day gives me a new sense of His amazing power. Light reveals the world to us. Body and soul crave it. Light sets our biological clocks. It triggers in our brains the sensations of color. Light feeds us, supplying the energy for our plants to grow. It inspires us with special effects like rainbows and sunsets. Light gives us life-changing tools, from incandescent bulbs to lasers and fiber optics (Achenbach, p. 5).

The same author quotes George Gilder: I believe that light was made by God for communications (p. 26). Achenbach concludes, Light permeates our reality at every scale of existence. Its an amazing tool, a carrier of beauty, a giver of life (p. 29).

Jesus, the source of both physical and spiritual light, declares, I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life (Jn 8:12). Christ is the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world. He was in the world, and the
world was made through Him (Jn 1:9, 10).

I have a question for my friends who want to harmonize science and Scripture by making the six days of creation symbolic of long periods of time. If creation week is symbolic, what about the second coming of Jesus and the resurrection? If it took a long period of time for God to bring man out of the dust of the earth in the beginning, how long will it take for Jesus to recreate us at the resurrection? A million years? A hundred thousand years? Either way, the millennium would be long gone before angels could take us up to the cloud to meet Jesus.

God has a better plan. Jesus will call, the trumpet will sound. The dead will rise in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor 15:52). Its instantaneous. And if Jesus can do this, He had no problem doing what He says He did during creation week. The Creator wrote on stone with His own finger, For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them (Ex 20:11).

Jesus says, I am . . . the truth (Jn 14:6). If creation took thousands or millions of years, He would have told us. I dont understand how He did it in six days, but I believe it. The miracle of light, what Jesus created on the first day, helps me believe.

Laser light! I open a file and click a mouse. Particles of toner move around inside my laser printer. Out comes a perfect picture of my wife. This technology now can even form three dimensional objects like hulls of boats. Likewise, the Creator of light knows exactly how to form humans from particles of dust. His power will raise the dead at the glorious second coming. He gave us the Sabbath to help us remember His power.

In This Issue. All of our authors this time are new to the pages of Adventists Affirm. We welcome them, grateful for their faithful, helpful insights.

We begin, as usual, with a Bible study article. Dr. Randall Young, a professor at the Theological Seminary at Andrews University, presents little-known evidence showing the harmony between Genesis 1 and some puzzling statements in Genesis 2. Where some have thought there was a contradiction, he reveals the unity.

Dr. Ariel Roth, an author and the long-time Director of the General Conferences Geoscience Research Institute, wrote Adventism and the Challenges to Creation. Dr. Roth helps us understand these challenges and shows why we should not accept alternatives to Bible creation.

Dr. William Shea, formerly a professor at the Theological Seminary at Andrews University and recently retired from the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference, looks at the Bible text for evidence showing the creation account found in Genesis is talking about literal 24-hour days. Be sure to read, How Long Was the Creation Week?

The late Dr. Frank L. Marsh, well known for his writings on creationism, gives solid reasons in The Conflict Over Origins why the Bible believer need not be intimidated by science. His companion article, Evolution and the Bible shows that there is no middle ground when it comes to our belief in Creation.

Dr. Earl Aagaard, of Pacific Union Colleges biology department, wrote The Importance of the Intelligent Design Theory for Seventh-day Adventists. He invites us to vaccinate ourselves against all seductive materialistic influences and to make it abundantly clear that we accept the Bible account of Creation as true.

Walter Veith, Ph. D., heads the zoology department at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. In My Difficult Journey, you will thrill at how God worked miracle after miracle in leading him and his family to Bible truth.

Patricia Guthrie, a physicians wife, home schools her four children. Her thoughtful article, Creation: A Revelation of Gods Love, views creation science and Gods plan to save the human race in the light of the cross and the Sabbath.
After reading the Time magazine cover story, How Apes Became Human (Time, July 23, 2001), James R. Schaffer responded, We have two choices: the speculations of anthropologists or the Book of Genesis. Both are beyond proof (Letters, Time, August 13, 2001).

Proof? No. Evidence? Yes! You see it every time you look in the mirror. God created man in His own image; . . . male and female He created them (Gen 1:27). God will bless us as we ADVENTISTS AFFIRM His creation and stay ready for the soon coming of Jesus.
Does Genesis 2 have a different creation story from Genesis 1?

Even to the casual reader, the conclusion of the first chapter of Genesis gives the impression of a completed creation:

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done (Gen 1:31-2:3, NIV throughout this article).

Some readers, then, have been perplexed by several verses in the following chapter that appear to list four things that God had not yet created. After Genesis 2:4 restates that the Lord God had finished making the earth and the heavens, verse 5 goes on to say that He had not yet made: (1) the shrub of the field; (2) the plant of the field; (3) rain on the earth; and (4) a man to work the ground. Does not chapter 1 clearly depict the creation of man and plants prior to the end of that first week of Creation? Does chapter 2 contradict chapter 1?

Some critical Bible scholars have tried to explain these differences by claiming that different parts of Genesis were written by different authors at different times. We can't deal here with all the claims of the historical critics concerning the first two chapters of Genesis. A number of scholars have examined the various arguments claiming that two or more authors or sources are behind the composition of Genesis 1 and 2, and have not found them compelling.¹

Multiple Authors?

The idea that Genesis was written by multiple authors rather than by Moses raises a lot of questions. Those who accept these ideas also usually doubt the divine inspiration of the Bible as a whole and the historicity of the Genesis Creation account. This critical view of a non-inspired, non-Mosaic authorship of Genesis has certainly not been the traditional view of either Jews or Christians. Bible-believing Christians point out that the apostles and Christ refer frequently to various portions of Genesis as divinely-inspired Scripture (see, for example, Rom 4:17; Gal 3:8; Heb 4:4; Jms 2:23).

Especially interesting is Jesus' comment to the Pharisees about the permissibility of divorce (Mt 19; Mk 10). Jesus asked, What did Moses command you? (Mk 10:3). When they replied by quoting Deuteronomy 24:1-4, Jesus countered by quoting from Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 (Mt 19:4, 5; Mk 10:6-9). Clearly, Jesus' counter-argument was based on the assumption that Moses authored these passages; otherwise His argument would have been devoid of authority.
From our pioneers onward, Adventists have believed that Moses was the author of Genesis. Ellen G. White wrote that while Moses sojourned in Midian, here, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the book of Genesis (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 251). Based on both the internal evidence of Scripture, including the inferred and explicit testimony of the apostles and Jesus, as well as the understanding of Ellen White and the pioneers, the overwhelming majority of Adventists have been reluctant to adopt a critical view that would deny Moses God-inspired authorship of Genesis, including the first two chapters.

But what does one do, then, with the apparent contradictions that critical scholars attribute to different authors or sources? I believe that by taking a closer look at the text we can find answers to these troubling questions.

A Closer Look

Anyone who carefully reads the first chapter of Genesis can readily see that the account of the seven days of creation does not really end at verse 31 of chapter 1. Rather, the description of God’s activities during this first week of the world’s history actually continues into the first few verses of chapter 2. The chapter and verse divisions were not provided by the original authors of the biblical text; rather, they were inserted much later and often divide the text in an arbitrary fashion. Indeed, to compensate for this arbitrary division, many modern English translations indicate where the actual, natural break occurs by placing a gap or a heading between 2:4a and 2:4b right in the middle of this verse!

The theme of chapter 2, therefore, properly begins at 2:4. As noted above, the first point this new section makes is that there were four things that did not yet exist after God had completed the earth and the heavens: the shrub of the field, the plant of the field, rain, and the man to work the soil. How is it that these four things did not yet exist after God announced His creation complete? Are these things, especially the plants and man, somehow different from those mentioned in chapter 1? If so, how and why did these things come into existence? The answer to these questions is the point of chapter 2.

Terms for Vegetation

Although most scholars who have studied the first two chapters of Genesis appear to have assumed that the words and phrases for plants or vegetation used in Genesis 1:11, 12 and Genesis 2:5 carry the same meaning, the fact is that the Hebrew words used in these two chapters are not the same! Genesis 1:11, 12 actually reads, Let the earth produce vegetation [Heb. deshe], seed-bearing plants [esev mazry zera], and fruit-bearing fruit trees [ets pry oseh pry] with seed according to its kind. Genesis 2:5, on the other hand, reads that prior to man’s creation there was no shrub of the field (siah hassadeh), and no plant of the field (esev hassadeh) had yet sprung up. Even those who cannot read Hebrew can see that the words used in the two chapters are not identical. But do the Hebrew botanical expressions siah hassadeh and esev hassadeh mean the same thing as the expressions that occur in Genesis 1:11, 12?

Over the years, many commentators have assumed so. **Different.** However, a closer reading of the text reveals that the botanical terms of Genesis 1:11, 12 and Genesis 2:5 do not have the identical meaning. The word siah, shrub, appears in only three passages in the Hebrew Bible (Genesis 2:5, 21:15, and Job 30:4, 7), while the full expression siah hassadeh, shrub of the field, is unique, appearing only in Genesis 2:5. The contexts of both Genesis 21:15 and Job 30:4, 7 make it clear that the siah is a plant adapted to dry or desert environments. As such, it is most likely a spiny or thorny plant.

According to Michael Zohary, an Israeli botanist, there are more than seventy species of spiny plants that grow among the flora of Israel; more than twenty of these are mentioned in Scripture. These plants, while essential to the fragile ecosystems of dry desert regions, are generally classified as intrusive, obnoxious plants by farmers. They are not the type of plant that a farmer of the ancient Near East would deliberately cultivate in his garden, nor were these plants likely included among the species when God planted the garden east in Eden, filling it with every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food (Gen 2:9). Thus, one of the plants that did not yet exist at the beginning of the narrative of Genesis 2:4b was the thorny xerophyte—the agriculturists’ bane. What point is Genesis making here, then? To better
understand, we first go on to the next plant that was not yet the plant of the field.

**Plant of the Field**

While the other botanical term in Genesis 2, *esev* (plant), is fairly common in the Hebrew text, it appears in the full expression *esev hassadeh* (plant of the field) only in Genesis 2:5 and Genesis 3:18. In Genesis 3:18 plants of the field are specifically designated as the food Adam will have to eat as a result of his sin; they come about directly by mans painful toil and by the sweat of [his] brow (NIV). In other words, plants of the field are those plants that are specifically produced by the labor by which man was burdened because of his fall into sin. As one scholar has pointed out, These species did not exist, or were not found in the form known to us until after Adams transgression, and it was in consequence of his fall that they came into the world and received their present form.3

**Grains.** The fact that Genesis 3:19 explicitly states that these plants were used to make bread indicates that the expression plants of the field specifically refers to wheat, barley, and other well-known grains of the Middle East. Raising such crops requires tilling the ground, another feature of these plants that is specifically mentioned in the text.

Taken together, then, these two botanical termsshrub of the field and plant of the fieldcompass not the entire plant kingdom, but rather, that part of the plant kingdom the cultivator is particularly concerned with: food crops and weeds.

**No Man to Till the Ground**

The necessity of mans labor in the production of the plant of the field leads to another item that did not yet exist: a man to till the ground. Again, some scholars have assumed that Genesis 2:5b contradicts chapter 1 because, while the first chapter depicts the creation of man on day six, Genesis 2:5b seems to imply that God had not yet made man after the earth and heavens were made. However, this over-simplified reading of the text ignores the critical modifier to till the ground.

It is important to note that in Genesis 1:26-30, God did not create man to work the ground. Rather, he was to rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground (v. 26).

**Cursed.** A man who works the ground does not come into view until after Adams fall. Then, because of Adams sin, God tells him, Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it [the ground] all the days of your life (Gen 3:17). Thus, like the plant of the field of Genesis 2:5, the man to work the ground does not come into existence until after the Fall, as a direct result of sin. Note also in this connection that Cain, the first murderer, is described as one who worked the soil.

Genesis 2:5b, therefore, is not saying that no man yet existed after God had made the earth and heavens. Rather, it is saying that no sinful man (i.e., one who must work the ground for food) yet existed. Such a man would not exist until after the Fall, an event that is not discussed until chapter 3. Genesis 2, then, sets the stage for what comes later in Genesis 3.

Some have pointed out that in Genesis 2:15, pre-Fall man was to work the garden, and thus, they say, Genesis 2:5b simply anticipates the activity described in this later verse. Indeed, the Hebrew word for work is the same in both verses (*eved*). However, working a garden is not the same as working the ground. Whereas the English word garden evokes images of neatly hoed rows of carrots, radishes, turnips, etc., the Hebrew word for garden (*gan*) is not restricted to this. In fact, people in the ancient Near East did not think very highly of vegetable gardening.4 The Old Testament itself provides only one reference (1 Kgs 21:2) to a vegetable garden (*gan yaraq*). The ancient Hebrew *gan* (usually translated as garden) was generally understood to be an enclosed, non-irrigated fruit tree orchard or vineyard and was considered a possession of great value. Even though both orchard and field cultivation are very labor intensive initially, once an orchard matures it provides a high, stable yield for a minimum amount of labor. Field cultivation, on the other hand, required continued intensive labor each year. So people
considered healthy, mature orchards a prize possession.

**Orchard.** That the Garden of Eden was a fruit tree orchard is clear from Genesis 2:9, which specifically mentions that it contained all kinds of trees that were good for food. When ancient Israelites heard or read that God gave Adam a *gan* or orchard, they recognized this as a truly wonderful gift, suitable even for a king.

Finally, we should remember that Genesis 3 explicitly associates working the ground with the entrance of sin. Rather than working in the garden God had provided and eating the fruits of its trees, sinful man must now obtain his subsistence by the sweat of his brow through the working of the ground.

**Rain**

One other thing that Genesis 2:5b says did not yet exist after God finished the earth and the heavens is rain. Following the same pattern established for the three previous categories, we may logically assume that rain does not make its appearance until after the entrance of sin. This is indeed the case. However, unlike the other three items that appear immediately after man's fall, the Bible does not mention rain until Genesis 7:4, 12, at the commencement of the Flood. The context, though, clearly indicates that rain also comes as a consequence of sin.

Although the thorny shrubs, cultivated plants, and the need for cultivation were immediate judgments brought upon mankind for their sin, God permitted human beings to continue living. The final judgment of rain comes only after man's condition worsens to the point that God regrets giving them this second chance and determines to destroy the rebellious members of the race. Rain makes its entrance into the world not as a water source for agriculture but as an agent of God's judgment.

**Summary**

A careful reading of the text reveals that chapter 2 does not offer a Creation account that contradicts chapter 1. Rather, the introductory verses in chapter 2 explain the origin of four things that were not part of the original Creation described in chapter 1: (1) thorns, (2) agriculture, (3) cultivation/irrigation, and (4) rain. Chapter 2 informs the reader that each of these things resulted directly from the entrance of sin. Genesis 3:17, 18 introduces thorns, plants requiring cultivation, and a human race that must work the ground for its food as curses or judgments immediately after the Fall. Although the Bible does not mention it until the Flood, rain also comes as a consequence of sin.

**Bridge.** Thus, rather than contradicting chapter 1, these early verses in chapter 2 actually serve as a bridge between the perfect Creation of chapter 1 and the introduction of sin into the world in chapter 3. Genesis 2:4b-6 essentially asks the ancient Hebrews how these four undesirable elements of their lives—the need to deal with thorny plants, the annual uncertainty and hard work of the grain crop, the need to undertake the physically demanding plowing of the ground, and the dependence on the uncertain, but essential, life-giving rain—came to be part of humanity's lot.

After posing this vexing question, beginning in 2:7 the text proceeds to answer it by recapping in more detail the creation of the man whose sin would result in the four things that were *not yet*. The remainder of chapter 2 thus leads naturally and directly into chapter 3, which describes the Fall and explains exactly how things got the way they are now. This account continues right through to the Flood story.

The alleged contradictions between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2:4b-7 do not demonstrate different authors for these chapters, for in fact the passages do not conflict. These verses actually tend to support the unified and integrated nature of the early chapters of Genesis.

**Notes**


4. Borowski cites a couple of texts in support of this conclusion. The first is Proverbs 15:17, which reads, Better is a meal of vegetables [aruhat yaraq] where love is than fatted ox and hatred with it. The second is the story of Daniel, wherein the impression is given that vegetables were not considered as nutritious as other foodstuffs. Borowski suggests that the underdeveloped state of horticulture may be behind the Israelite attitude that held vegetables in low regard. See O. Borowski, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1987), p. 101. See also D. Hopkins, *The Highlands of Canaan* (Sheffield, England: Almond Press, 1985), p. 243.

5. Thus, I believe that scholars like Kikawada and Quinn, Kitchen, and others (see note 1) are on the right track in seeing all of Genesis 1-11 as a single literary unit.

6. For a good overview of these issues and a similar conclusion, see F. D. Nichol, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, Genesis to Deuteronomy* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1953), pp. 201-203.

Adventism and the Challenges to Creation

Ariel A. Roth
Retired Director, Geoscience Research Institute
Author, Origins: Linking Science and Scripture

How shall we relate to current conflicts over origins?

The newspaper headlines read "Creationism Is Scientific Prostitution." I had heard a prominent scientist make this exact statement the day before, but I was surprised that such an accusation should make the headlines. I was in New Orleans attending the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America, and of special interest to me were two symposia on creation and geology.

The statement quoted above came from a professor of geology at Oregon State University. Other statements from noted scientists included: creationists are "as crooked as a three-dollar bill" and they "intentionally and cynically mislead well-intentioned citizens." "Biblical catastrophism is dishonest, nasty." Creationism is the "tyranny of a well organized and strongly motivated minority," "erroneous pseudo-science they pass off as scholarship," "a ruse," and one "should not let science fall to the fraud of creationists."

This was not your usual scientific meeting presentation. The emotionalism I saw far exceeded that of ordinary scientific discussion. Gone was the image of the white-coat-clad, cool, calm, calculating, objective scientist.

Scant Acceptance. Lest we creationists settle smugly into self-righteousness, I should note that these scientists were reporting on a number of well-documented errors made by creationists. It is not that difficult to find significant errors in any broad area of science. What had especially irritated these scientists was a Gallup poll of adults in the United States taken two months earlier that showed how few were accepting the evolutionary model that life came about by itself. The same poll has been taken during the last two decades, and the results indicate a consistent preference for the creation of humans by God within the last 10,000 years (44-47%) as compared to an evolutionary process over millions of years where no God is involved (9-12%). A significant group (37-40%) believes that God has guided the development of humans over millions of years (see table at right).

Scientists at these symposia discussed why so few were following them. Some suggested poor teaching. In my opinion this was not the problem. More important was the fact that they had a weak product to sell. It is difficult for many to believe that all of the universe's amenities for life, and the complexities of life itself, just happened by themselves.

Warfare. The Gallup poll demonstrates the ongoing warfare between science and the Bible—one of the greatest intellectual battles of all time, and especially during the last two centuries. Science advocates evolution, sometimes called naturalistic evolution, which postulates that life developed on earth, all by itself, without God, gradually, over billions of years. The Bible, on the other hand, suggests creation, also called biblical creation or recent creation, in which
God created life in a six-day period a few thousand years ago. The Seventh-day Adventist church has a special concern about this matter, both because of our belief that the Bible is the Word of God and because our Sabbath is based on a day of rest that followed a six-day creation by God. Science’s evolutionary model negates both of these tenets.

How has our church been affected by this conflict of views? What are some of the solutions that have been proposed? How do these measure up to the evidence, both in nature and in Scripture?

**Discussion of Origins Within Adventism**

Our early church pioneers were not especially concerned about the burgeoning theory of evolution. Sometimes they discussed it, but usually they simply dismissed it as invalid. They were more concerned about the Bible, its prophecies, and carrying the gospel to all the world. Ellen G. White occasionally referred to evolution; she considered it, and ideas that life developed over eons of time, as incorrect and even harmful. In the first half of the last century, pioneer Adventist scientists such as George McCready Price, Harold Clark, and Frank L. Marsh helped steer the church away from any evolutionary ideas, all affirming that God had created life on earth in six days a few thousand years ago.

However, by the middle of the 20th century some Adventist science teachers had some concerns, especially about radiometric dating and the fossil record. At their suggestion, in 1958 the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists organized what became the Geoscience Research Institute. It was not long before some scientists at the Institute started suggesting, subtly at first, and later more openly, that life had existed on earth for a much longer time than the few thousand years suggested in the Bible. Other scientists at the Institute felt that the scientific data could be reinterpreted otherwise, and indeed some data suggested a much briefer period than the millions of years that science was claiming. This discussion among scientists in the church has continued ever since then.

**Scientists.** For Adventists, the main issue is not especially about whether evolution or creation is correct. Most Adventist scientists do not accept the main tenets of evolution. The real question is whether life developed gradually over millions of years, or whether life was created by God in six days a few thousand years ago as the Bible indicates.

A survey of Adventist college-level science teachers in North America taken in 1994 found that nearly two-thirds believe in a six day creation. More than two-thirds of those who believe in a six day creation think it occurred less than 10,000 years ago, while the rest opt for a six day creation between 10,000 and 100,000 years ago. Only 18.2% opt for life having developed by God’s activity over millions of years, while a few have other ideas.

Almost two-thirds of the scientists believe that most fossils result from the biblical flood. This great worldwide Genesis flood is a crucial point in the discussion, because that flood is the way one can reconcile the sequence of fossils found in the crust of the earth with a six day creation. Instead of the fossils having been laid down gradually over millions of years, as evolution postulates, the creation view proposes that most fossils resulted from burial of animals and plants during the year-long Genesis flood.

**Theologians.** We do not have a survey of the thinking of Adventist theologians in North America on this question. In some of our institutions most of them would support a six-day creation while in others almost all would side against the concept. Sometimes the discussion on this issue is friendly, and sometimes it generates more heat than light. Most of the debates participants are sincere and concerned scholars who evaluate science and the Bible in different ways.

Unfortunately, in some cases emotions have been so strong that participants have compromised the truth, both in oral and written argumentation. In my opinion, the discussion would profit from a greater willingness on the part of some Adventist scholars to be more open to alternatives to traditional scientific interpretations. Science repeatedly reverses its views. Today’s dogma can be tomorrow’s heresy.
Books. Recently an unusual number of books on this topic have been published within the broad Adventist sphere of influence. I know of at least ten within the last five years. Nine of these strongly support the biblical model of a recent creation. Of special note is the book *In Six Days: Why 50 Scientists Choose to Believe in Creation*, which validates the fact that one can be a scientist and also believe in creation. The most comprehensive book in the list is *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture*, which is, or soon will be, available in fifteen translations, including Chinese and Russian. These translations are being published largely by Adventist publishing houses and reflect the depth of interest within the church in the relation of science to the Bible.

Adventism's rank and file are not greatly troubled regarding the validity of the Bible and its creation account. They generally accept the Bible as the Word of God. The church focuses on evangelizing the world, and membership is growing at an unprecedented, almost unbelievable, rate.

However, not all is well. Questions arise about the truthfulness of the Bible and its creation account, especially in some of our advanced educational institutions. This is more important for Adventism than would seem so at first, because Adventist beliefs are largely maintained or changed in our influential advanced educational institutions.

Alternatives to Creation

While many view the battle between science and the Bible as a conflict between creation and evolution, the issue is complicated by important views that try to reconcile one to the other by accepting and rejecting parts of each. These intermediate views, popular in many mainline Christian churches, figure largely in contemporary Christianity's debate about origins. In these intermediate models you can still have a personal God and yet have life develop over millions of years, as evolution asserts.

A variety of such models has been proposed. The two most prominent ones are progressive creation and theistic evolution. Recently a new movement called intelligent design has appeared. Its focus is very much on the scientific evidence for the existence of a designer. This movement's parameters are broad enough to incorporate theistic evolution, progressive creation, and many other such views.

**Progressive Creation.** This model assumes that God performed many different creation events over many millions of years. Within this model, some try to interpret the days of creation as vast periods of time (the day-age interpretation), but the order for the various kinds of fossils we find on earth does not at all match the Genesis sequence of the creation events (Gen 1:9-29). Still, those who hold this view interpret the limited degree of progression from simple to complex in ascending through the fossil layers of the earth as degrees of progression in God's creative acts.

The progressive creation model faces a number of problems:

Neither the data of nature nor the Bible suggests directly that creation occurred this way. The idea itself lacks support from any good source of evidence.

The model disallows the Bible's concept of a six-day, all-inclusive creation as given in Genesis and the Ten Commandments.

In the progressive creation model, the presence of fierce predators long before the creation of man such as the 50-foot, flesh-eating dinosaur *Tyrannosaurus rex* negates the Genesis account of a good Creator and a perfect creation. Here we have evil, in the form of predation, before the fall of humanity and the consequences of sin (Gen 3:14-19). This challenges not only the Genesis account of beginnings; in the New Testament, the apostle Paul attests that evil originated with man's transgression (Rom 5:12-19).

Progressive creation also implies many errors or failures by God over long periods of time. Thousands of important groups of plants and animals at various levels in the fossil record are...
not now living on the earth's surface. Why would a loving, all-knowing God create so many forms of life, just to have them die out? Again, in the progressive creation model, this occurred long before the advent of man, his fall, and the consequences of sin on nature as reported in Scripture. Progressive creation raises this question without providing a good explanation. One can imagine a God who would create by this method, but this would not be the kind of God portrayed in the Bible, whose creation is described as "very good" (Gen 1:31). The explanation for these extinct organisms that harmonizes with Scripture is the worldwide flood brought on as a result of human wickedness.

Theistic Evolution. The theistic evolution model associates God with a continuous process of evolutionary development from simple to complex over many millions of years, with evolution a paramount part of the process. The idea fits fairly well with many concepts of the general theory of evolution while still permitting God's activity. God is available to bridge some of the difficult barriers that evolution faces.

The model, however, faces some serious difficulties:

The problems we noted above for progressive creation also apply to theistic evolution.

In addition, the missing links between the major fossil groups suggest that no continuous evolutionary process ever occurred. Where we would expect thousands of evolutionary intermediates, especially between the major groups of organisms, virtually none are found that can be considered valid.

The model is demeaning to God. In contrast to the all-powerful Creator described in the Bible, this God uses the crutch of evolution to produce advanced forms. An evolutionary model implies slow progress and competition, but these challenge God's creative power, knowledge, and goodness. Survival of only the fittest by competition and the death of the weak, as proposed for the evolutionary model, seems especially out of character with the God of the Bible who has concern for the sinner (Isa 44:21, 22), does not forget the sparrow (Lk 12:6), and whose ideal for life includes the lion and the lamb living peacefully together (Isa 11:6; 65:25).

Relation to Scientific Data

The evolutionary model, as accepted by science, faces serious scientific problems. While evolutionists suggest some answers, these are unsatisfactory, and the problems persist. Especially noteworthy are:

How could living forms, which even at their simplest level are very complex, arise all by themselves?

How could complex organisms or systems gradually evolve from simple ones? Random evolutionary changes have no foresight to plan ahead, and survival of the fittest would eliminate the intermediate forms because they could not function and would be useless until all the necessary parts had evolved. The very mechanism which Charles Darwin proposed for evolution would actually interfere with the gradual development of complex biological systems.

The gaps or "missing links" between the major fossil groups suggests that evolution never occurred.

In several ways, a significant body of geologic data suggests that the long geological eons proposed for evolution and the deposition of the earth's sedimentary layers did not occur. For instance, the present rate of erosion of the continents by rain and rivers is so fast that, if the earth had existed for as long as geologists claim, we should have no continents left by now. They would have disappeared in less than just one percent of their proposed geologic age. Evolution needs all the time it can muster for the highly improbable events it postulates, and the billions of years suggested are totally inadequate, yet the rate of erosion of the continents suggests that much less time was available.
When we look at the arrangement of fossils in the layers of the earth's crust from the perspective of long geological ages, we see a very strange thing. During the first 5/6 of the assumed evolutionary time (i.e., 3,000 million years), virtually no evolution took place. Organisms are essentially still in the one-cell stage over that entire period of time. Then suddenly, in less than 1/35 of evolutionary time (less than 100 million years), practically all the major groups of animals appear. Plants also appear quickly but a little less suddenly. Evolutionists call this sudden appearance of animals the *Cambrian explosion* and acknowledge the problem. This pattern does not fit what we should expect from a gradual ongoing evolutionary process. The pattern fits better with creation. In that model the Cambrian explosion represents the marine organisms buried in the lowest seas during the great Genesis flood.9

To all this we can add the new evidence for the fine-tuning of the universe. That evidence points to a number of physical constants that are essential to our universe's existence and that are so precise that they must have been designed by some intelligent mind. All of these things make one wonder how the data of nature can point so well towards God, while scientists keep pointing away from Him. How long can scientists keep on pretending that there is no God?

Mixed Scientific Picture. In poorly-authenticated views such as theistic evolution and progressive creation, which are intermediate between naturalistic evolution and biblical creation, one finds a mixed picture regarding the scientific data. Some of the problems listed above for evolution, such as the data that challenge the long geological ages, also apply to both theistic evolution and progressive creation. The existence of gaps or missing links between major fossil groups favors both the biblical creation and progressive creation models, because one would expect missing links in both models. However, the same data challenge both naturalistic evolution and theistic evolution, where missing links are not expected.

Challenges to Creation. The most serious challenges that the creation model faces from science are:

A general increase in complexity of fossil types as one ascends through the layers of the earth's crust. Evolutionists consider this as evidence for evolutionary progression over time. One creationist explanation for this is that it reflects the distribution of organisms before the Genesis flood. The gradually rising waters of the flood buried these organisms sequentially, in order. Today's distribution of organisms on the earth, with microorganisms in the deep rocks in the lowest position, marine organisms in the oceans in an intermediate position, and the most advanced on land higher up, reflects some of this general increase in complexity. In other words, the pattern of increased complexity of fossils is not due to evolution but to the effects of the flood on the organisms in their natural distribution.10

Radiometric dating methods such as potassium-argon and carbon-14 often give dates far beyond a biblical time frame. These methods are complex and involve many exceptions and assumptions. The dates obtained are subject to some valid reevaluation when the Genesis flood is taken into account.11 We would expect such a flood to change some of the parameters associated with these complex dating methods.

Many of the scientific problems of evolution, and the evidence for design referred to above, provide scientific support for the biblical creation model. The new trend in geology, called *neo-catastrophism*, interprets a significant portion of the geologic layers as a result of rapid catastrophic deposition.12 This is scientific evidence that especially supports the biblical model of a worldwide flood.13

Relation to the Bible

The only model that fits the Bible is that of a recent creation by God in six days. The Bible has only one model of creation. Nowhere do we find suggestions that life developed over eons of time. In this respect the biblical creation model stands in stark contrast to models such as naturalistic evolution, theistic evolution, or progressive creation. Ellen White also supports only the biblical model of origins.14 The question of the amount of time for the development of life on earth is a major difference between biblical creation and the other leading models that
propose millions or billions of years for the gradual development of life.

**Allegory or History?** Those who adopt one of the views intermediate between creation and evolution often assume that the creation and flood accounts in the first part of Genesis (Genesis 1-11) are allegorical. Such an approach undermines the Bible as a whole because, either directly or by implication, the leading Bible personalities refer to the first part of Genesis as factual history and not allegory. Their testimony supports the truthfulness of the biblical account of beginnings. Peter, Paul, Christ, and God are among those in Scripture who in various ways authenticate the truthfulness of the creation and flood accounts. In the most direct words we have from Him, written with His own finger (Ex 31:18), God Himself states in the Ten Commandments that we should keep the Sabbath holy because He created all in six days (Ex 20:11).

If you believe in the biblical account of beginnings, you are in the good company of Peter, Paul, Christ, and God. It would be a strange kind of God who would create over millions of years and then ask human beings to keep holy the seventh-day Sabbath as a memorial of His creating all in six days. Repeatedly Scripture tells us that the God of the Bible always speaks the truth and detests lying. As God, He could order that the Sabbath be kept for a variety of other reasons. It would likewise be a strange God who for millennia would allow His prophets to misrepresent the all-important story of beginnings, only to wait for Charles Darwin and others to present the correct view.

There does not seem to be any way to reconcile the biblical account of beginnings with the long geological ages proposed in models like naturalistic evolution, theistic evolution, and progressive creation.

**Some Implications**

**Eroded Beliefs, Membership.** Views lying somewhere between biblical creation and naturalistic evolution have profoundly influenced the beliefs of many Christian churches. Since the theory of evolution became popular more than a century ago, many religious denominations have adopted various ideas of life's progressive development over many millions of years. It is disappointing to see churches that once placed a high priority on biblical truth eventually abandon their position, yet it occurs, often slowly and insidiously.

Loss of membership often accompanies erosion of beliefs. In recent years the mainline churches in the United States who no longer believe in the biblical account of creation and many other traditional biblical concepts have lost millions of members, while the more conservative evangelical churches have grown rapidly. It is particularly difficult to convince people that Christianity is for real when churches consider the Bible to be in error, especially with respect to the important question of origins.

Drifting away from the Bible and God is a common sociological pattern, repeatedly illustrated in biblical history. Over and over again, God had to use drastic means to reverse such trends. Incidents such as the Genesis flood, the Israelites long sojourn in the desert, and the Babylonian captivity depict how difficult but important it is to resist such pressures.

**Educational Drift.** Modern educational institutions also reflect the same tendency to drift. A large number of institutions of higher learning in the United States (such as Auburn University, Boston University, Brown, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, Rutgers, Tufts, the University of Southern California, Wesleyan University, Wichita State University, and Yale) began as religious institutions but have moved well down the path of secularization and are no longer church-related. It is significant that (at least to this writer's knowledge) no institution which began as secular has become religious. Here also the trend seems to be away from God.

This is not entirely surprising. As long as the dominant climate of scholarly pursuits is secular, we can expect this to happen. Without special efforts to counter these trends, we must expect drifting. Public educational institutions, and many private ones, no longer condone, let alone encourage, religious commitment. Throughout history, the pattern of gradually sliding away from God illustrates how one can easily and imperceptibly amble from a belief in a recent
creation by God to a naturalistic evolutionary model where there is no God. Adventism needs to be especially wary of such insidious trends.

Conclusions

Adventism is facing some of the same sociological pressures that have brought other churches to give up belief in biblical creation. However, one of the problems facing those who reject the biblical model is their failure to provide a more authenticated model than creation or an adequate substitute for the Bible as the Word of God. It is becoming increasingly clear that for two centuries science has led us down an evolutionary pathway that is becoming less and less tenable. Has science also led us down an erroneous pathway about the amount of time life has been on earth? Some of the scientific data that challenge the long geological ages is hard to explain away.

Makes Sense. When I look at both the Bible and the data from nature, the creation model makes much more sense to me than the other proposed models. The Seventh-day Adventist church has a particularly important creation message for this time. The first angels message urges the worship of the Creator. The seventh-day Sabbath, essentially our most distinctive doctrine, is founded on a seven-day creation week.

Our confidence that the Bible is the Word of God does not allow for such alternatives to creation as progressive creation, theistic evolution, or naturalistic evolution. We should not yield to fruitless speculation. As "the people of the Book," we have a special opportunity and responsibility to represent the whole Bible, including its creation message, to a world that is adrift on the great question of how life began here on earth.

NOTES


2. For some examples, see Chapters 13 and 15 in Ariel A. Roth, Origins: Linking Science and Scripture (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1998).


7. For numerous references to some of the literature and for an evaluation of a number of these models, see the following by Ariel A. Roth: Chapter 21 in Origins: Linking Science and Scripture.

8. For discussion of these problems, see Chapters 4-8, 11, 13, and 15 in Ariel A. Roth, *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture* (see Note 2 above).

9. See Note 6 above.

10. For a comprehensive discussion of this and other explanations for the fossil sequence in a creation context, see Chapter 10 in Ariel A. Roth, *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture* (see Note 2 above).


12. See Chapters 12, 13 and 15 in Ariel A. Roth, *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture* (see Note 2 above).


14. See, for example, *Education*, p. 128.

15. See 1 Peter 3: 20; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:3-6; Romans 5:12-14; 1 Corinthians 11:8; 15:22, 45; 1 Timothy 2:13, 14; Hebrews 11:4-7; Matthew 19:4-6; 24:37, 38; Mark 10:6; Luke 17:26, 27; Isaiah 54:9; Exodus 20:11; 31:17.

My Difficult Journey

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How God led a university professor from evolution to Creation.

"Your mother will go to hell," my religion teacher repeated over and over. "She will be tormented forever and ever." Right then I decided, If there is a God, I hate Him. How can a God of love punish a faithful mother like mine? By age 10, I was a confirmed atheist. For me, God did not exist.

My strict Roman Catholic father planned to enter the priesthood until he fell in love with a lovely young German Lutheran mother. Before Vatican II, Catholics had looked on Lutherans as lost and excluded from heaven, but my parents never once argued about religion. My father promised to raise his children Catholic and mother accepted this.

When I was almost 8, tragedy struck. Doctors diagnosed my mother with cancer and gave her two to four months to live. With strong faith and determination she lasted more than four years. During these most miserable years of my life, I watched my mother suffer through numerous operations and painful radiation. Like most young boys I felt very attached to my mother. Why does God let her suffer like this? I questioned.

I attended a German Lutheran School in South Africa. Since my father pledged to raise me Catholic, the school arranged for me and other children with Roman Catholic parents to receive religious instruction from a nun who came to our school daily. The Sister assigned to my class proved overzealous for her religion. For a boy watching his mother die, it proved a disaster.

"It's so sad your mother is a Protestant who will never see the kingdom of heaven," she would tell me. "Your mother will suffer in hell forever." My dying mother has enough suffering, I thought. How can a God of love make her suffer more?

I attended church every Sunday with my father and did all the things good Roman Catholics do. But having a nun continually harp about my mother going to hell made me increasingly resentful. One day I became so angry, I took my catechism, tore it up, and threw it at her. In unkind language, I told her exactly what she could do with her God.

Expelled. Immediately I was expelled from her class. Soon I got in trouble with another teacher and was thrown out of his class, too. I became defiant, speaking disrespectfully, skipping classes, even throwing pine cones at my teachers! An impossible child, I never told my parents that I acted like a little monster at school. And they never found out.

When my beloved mother died shortly after I turned 12, my father remarried. My stepmother found me totally impossible. Problems increased at home and at school. Finally, the school asked me to leave. My parents decided it best to send me away from home to a trade school.
Thats when I woke up. No way, I thought. This is not for me. I lived in several places before persuading relatives to send me to another school where I started doing well.

After completing high school I attended the University of Cape Town where I majored in zoology. This school, founded as a religious university, still had a school of theology, but its science faculty were incredibly secular. They championed evolution.

Evolution Solution. Every class had an evolutionary basis. I learned the whole evolution theory very quickly. This is the answer to my problem, I rejoiced. My mothers not burning in hell. There is no hell. There is no heaven. There is no God! My professors included brilliant men whose work on the evolution of human skulls had been sent to museums around the world.

On weekends and holidays, I went to the home of my college roommate. Here I met his very attractive sister. I convinced her that she would make a much better roommate than her brother, and we married.

I was an atheist, but my wife had been raised in an entirely different environment. Her father, a news reporter, had extensively investigated occult occurrences in Africa. At first he believed the supernatural to be a big joke. Then at one séance an unseen arm grabbed him. As he delved more and more into the occult, strange things began happening in his home. He had a cane that used to go walking by itself. Dishes flew through the house and smashed into the wall. A small child went to bed and its shoes came stepping through the house. He wrote books on African witchcraft and the New Age. Later, his influence would haunt us.

Teaching. After we married, I earned my doctorate in zoology studies and got hired as a lecturer. Then I received an appointment as senior lecturer at Stellenbosch University. My whole life revolved around evolution. I taught evolution. I based my research on evolution. As a philologist, I studied evolutionary literature. God did not exist. If anyone dared mention Him, something inside me would burn like fire.

During one lecture on evolution to 300 freshmen, a young girl stood up. "Excuse me," she said. "What you are saying, Dr. Veith, is a lie. God created the heaven and the earth in six days. He is the Creator of the Universe."

I exploded, tearing into this young woman like you cant imagine. She finally sat down and cried. Job well done, I thought. Students left impressed with my eloquence in proving how ridiculous it is to believe in creation.

Back in my office, I sat at my desk elated, but not for long. A small voice in the back of my mind began to torment me. "Youre mean! How could you attack and humiliate a girl like this?" My conscience wouldnt let me go. I felt really bad.

By now, my wife was pregnant with our third child, and my father-in-law moved into an apartment next to our home. His influence and relationship with the occult seemed to bring problems. My wife spent her entire pregnancy in and out of the hospital. We believed she would die. Finally, she gave birth to a baby boy.

Dream. One night after bringing our child home, I dreamt I was being strangled. I woke up at 2 a.m., perspiring profusely, my heart pounding like someone was beating a drum inside my chest. Immediately in the next room, our baby screamed as if he were being murdered. My wife and I ran to his bed and picked him up.

"Why is this baby shaking so violently?" I asked. My wife exclaimed, "Hes got a very high fever! I think hes going to die!" We rushed our little one to the hospital where they put him in a cooling unit and started IVs. His life was "touch and go" for many agonizing hours. When the fever finally broke, we took him home.

It was uncanny. Less than four weeks passed and precisely at 2 a.m., I again awoke and shouted to my wife, "I just dreamed I was being strangled!" Instantly in the next room our
baby screamed. His temperature soared and then he went unconscious. We feared he would die before we got medical help. Back at the hospital doctors and nurses worked feverishly to keep him alive.

**Possessed.** This happened at least eight times—so frequently, in fact, that the hospital kept the cooling unit ready for our arrival. Doctors could not explain to us what was wrong. On one occasion, the doctor said, “This is incredible. Your boy is less than one year old and it took four adults to hold him down. He must be possessed.”

Even a hardened atheist begins to think when the same thing happens for weeks and months on end. These two events must be connected. Sitting next to my son in the hospital, I reviewed the whole situation. There appears to be no medical help. Doctors have no remedy. Where can I find a solution to our baby's problem? Is this related to my terrible dreams or influenced by my father-in-law's delving into the occult?

I thought of the Roman Catholic Church and its power over demons. *I'm going back to my old church and ask for help,* I determined.

At the church the next day, I found a not-so-sober priest with a bottle of brandy. I walked up and said, "I'm a Roman Catholic, but I don't attend church any more."

He looked at me, "So what's your problem?"

"I'm a scientist and an atheist." Stammering, I continued, "I really don't know what to say. We've been having very strange happenings in our home."

"Hold on!" he stopped me. "I don't want anything to do with this. It's not my field. Give me your name and number and someone will get back to you."

I soon got a call from another priest who sounded very sophisticated. "Come and meet me at the monastery," he invited.

**Impressive.** I hurried to meet him. *What an impressive man,* I thought. I accepted his invitation to sit down. His kind eyes looked right at me. "You have a problem in your home."

"How do you know this?" I demanded. "I've never told anyone."

"Never mind how I know," he said. "The problem is so severe, it will take the highest levels of action to get rid of it. We will have to say a mass in your home."

He continued, "It's illegal to say mass in a private home without permission from the Bishop, but don't worry. I already have permission."

He showed me a letter. It was signed by the Bishop authorizing him to say mass in my house. *How can this be?* I puzzled. *I haven't told him anything. He knows my problem and everything is already arranged."

"Fair enough," I said. "You may come to my home and do whatever you need to do." I continued, "You need to know I'm an atheist and haven't been to church for years."

"You won't be an atheist anymore. What about your wife?"

"She's not even Catholic," I replied. "She's Dutch Reformed."

"That's no problem," he assured me.

**Exorcism.** When he arrived at our home, my wife was just as impressed as I. The priest asked us to take him through the house. He stopped in our baby's room. "This is the worst room in your house," he said, "but we have to exorcize your entire home. Please bring me some water."
To the water he added "holy salt" and made the sign of the cross in the water with the salt. With his bowl of "holy water" he went throughout the house, making the sign of the cross above each window and door.

This priest told me he had a ring, a relic from a saint potent in exorcizing. He started saying the mass and every pet in our house came running and sat down. Wow! This is really weird, I thought. What's going on?

After the mass, he gave me amulets from Lourdes and told me to put one over each of our childrens beds. Before leaving, he took off his ordination cross, handed it to me and said, "Put this on your babys bed. I hate it when the devil destroys little children."

My wife and I were anxious for night to come so we could see what would happen. Normally our child cried terribly when we put him to bed. Hed go into a fetal position and start hitting the sides of his crib. Now he rolled over on his back, started making happy "goo-goo" sounds and fell asleep. For the first time in his life he slept through the night. Then the next night, the next week, the next month. And I had no more nightmares.

How does a hard-nosed atheistic scientist react to this? What am I going to do? The church has solved a major problem in our home. Will I keep saying, "There is no God?" Do I have a responsibility to this God? My wife and I wrestled with this for months.

Finally I said, "Look dear, I have no choice. Im going back to church." But even while going to church, I asked myself, Do I really believe in God? Im not sure.

Carpenter. One day I decided to remodel our kitchen. I asked a German carpenter to come and do the work. When he came, I noticed his cars bumper sticker which read: "My boss is a Carpenter." After we agreed for him to do the work, he said, "By the way, I walk with the Lord."

I looked him in the eye. "You walk with the Lord? I just want a kitchen. Is that O.K.?" He said, "O.K., but I can give you this," and he handed me a pamphlet. I took it and stuck it in a drawer.

In the meantime, I attended church every Sunday. I asked the priest about evolution and creation. He said, "Everyone knows we exist through evolution." Wonderful, I thought. I can continue with evolution and believe in God, too. I began to feel very comfortable.

Questions. As I read the catechism, I became puzzled. Why does God want the same ritual over and over? The weekly celebration of the Eucharist began to trouble me. Why do they say the same prayers and celebrate the same ritual over and over? The doctrine of transubstantiation boggled my mind. Does the priest really have power to change the bread and wine into the true body of Christ?

Once, I walked into the Catholic church and sat alone in a pew near the back. A little red light blinked on a box, meaning the host or wafer was inside. It hit me. They have God locked up in that box. At my church, the host or wafer was kept in a box.

This made me irritated and even angry. But God must be here! I struggled. Look at the changes in my home. We have peace. My wife is even willing to convert to Catholicism. Id called the priest to come to our house so she could join his church, but he always seemed to be busy.

I tried to pray. "Where are you, God? I dont know You." Sitting there in a pew with no one around, I finally said, "O.K., God, if You truly exist, You must show me." Feeling better, I got up and hurried home. Rummaging through a drawer, I pulled out the pamphlet left by the German carpenter a year before. I laughed when I thought about his "walking with the Lord."

Commandments. The pamphlet had three columns displaying the biblical version, the Lutheran version, and the Catholic version of the Ten Commandments. It explained how the Roman Church changed Gods law, giving Bible texts to show how it was changed. This is
garbage, I thought. Its pure rubbish.

We had lots of catechisms around. I grabbed one and discovered the commandments exactly as the Catholic version in the pamphlet. I called my wife. "Please bring me a Bible!"

"I dont think we have one," she said. I remembered a box of books in our garage, given to us by an old lady. Little old ladies usually have a Bible, I thought. Sure enough, I found a Bible. I turned to Exodus 20. The Ten Commandments were different from those in the catechism. This really puzzled me. I phoned the carpenter. "Remember you installed a kitchen for me last year?"

"Yes," he said. "I dont know why, but Ive been trying to call you all day."

"Please come over," I invited.

My Bible and catechism were open to the commandments when he came. I met him with a question. "Why are they so different?"

**Bible Study.** He took me to the prophecies of Daniel 7. We studied until almost 3 a.m. He came back the next day and the next. In three days we went all the way through Daniel and Revelation. He showed me all the historic facts about kings, kingdoms, and the rise of the papacy. Interesting, I thought, but I dont believe a word of it. Mulling it over, I decided to resolve this by finding it out for myself.

At the universitys theology and history departments, I checked out all the material I could find. It didnt take long to discover that what the carpenter had shown me from the Bible about Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome, followed by ten European kingdoms, was really true. The big shocker came when I realized that historically, the little horn of Daniel 7 could be none other than the Roman Catholic Church.

Wanting to be sure, I even researched the view that the little horn represents Antiochus IV Epiphanes. But it didnt fit the Scripture criteria. In order to be fair, I called my priest. "I have an issue I want to talk over with you," I said. "Please come to my home."

He sat with my wife and me while we looked at the prophetic chapters in Daniel. "Its clear," I explained. "The Bible predicted a power would rise and attempt to change Gods commandments."

My priest looked at us and said, "I cant talk with you on this issue because Im not into Scripture." Stunned by his response, I thought, Youre a priest and not into Scripture? He continued, "The church has specialists who study prophecy, but it doesnt make any sense to me." Then he simply got up, excused himself, and left.

I invited ministers from other churches to my home. Every time we got to the little horn, they said, "Its Antiochus Epiphanes." Id stand up and say, "Gentleman, it cant be, because the little horn arose after Rome. It cant be in Greek times." Soon, theyd all get up and go, leaving me more convinced than ever. The little horn power has to be the Church of Rome.

**Dilemma.** This left me with a tremendous dilemma. Should I keep attending church on Sunday when Bible prophecy portrays the Roman Church as working against Christ? Even worse, the carpenter started talking about the Sabbath. He went through all the Sabbath texts.

"This is ridiculous," I said. "How can you keep a commandment that says the Lord created the heavens, the earth, and the sea in only six days? Its a fact of science. Everything came into existence through evolution over millions of years."

My carpenter friend smiled, "No, not evolution. God created everything." The face of the freshman girl popped into my mind. I turned toward the carpenter. "Friend, what you are saying about a six-day creation is absolute rubbish."
"Wait," he said. "I'll prove to you that creation is true."

"O.K., you try," I responded.

He tried. The next day he came with a big pile of books on creation and handed them to me. Every time I finished a lecture at the university, I'd go back to my office and go through his books. When I returned them he asked, "What do you think?"

"Garbage," I said. He didn't argue. He just brought me another pile of books. After looking at these, I returned them. "They're so unscientific," I stated. "I cannot accept the confusing material published in your books. You belong to the Flat Earth Society."

Every time he said, "God is the Creator," I'd kill him with science. I had all the terminology. I was an evolutionist. I'd been trained to wipe out anyone who dared to suggest that God had anything to do with our existence.

The poor carpenter, frustrated with me, finally said, "I don't have a problem with creation. You have the problem. You solve it."

**Personal Quest.** This put the ball in my court. I studied the Bible like you can't imagine. I wore out a copy in just two months and had to throw it away. My wife said, "This Sabbath idea is stupid. It makes no sense."

One day the secretary of my department handed me a thick pile of documents. A quick look in a spare moment revealed it was written against the Sabbath and Seventh-day Adventists. This amazed me because no one knew we struggled over the Sabbath issue. My colleagues were all atheists. I'd never admit to thinking about religion.

Still wrestling with evolution, I gave the material to my wife. "You go through this," I said. "Maybe there's a way out for us." While I grappled with creation, she struggled with the Sabbath.

Completing the material, my wife said, "This document has convinced me the Sabbath is right. I've gone through every statement and put it next to the Bible. Every time it turns out to be the word of man against what God's Word clearly teaches." A document against the Sabbath proved to her that the Sabbath is the day for Christians to keep.

"This is a major problem for me," I told her. "I'm not keeping a day holy for a six-day creation when everyone knows it took at least six billion years."

Struggling over the Sabbath and creation, I finally prayed, "O.K., God. If You exist and there is something wrong with the evolution theory I believe and teach, You must show me."

**Answer to Prayer.** Our university housed the largest evolution-based library in the southern hemisphere. I went there and signed out a book. A colleague stopped me on the way out. "Wait," he said. "Why are you taking this? There's a brand new edition." We went back in the library, and I checked out the newer version.

I began reading the books together, page by page. The old edition said there is a major problem with cetaceans or whales because they appeared suddenly in the fossil record fully formed. The new edition used a lot of scientific terminology and said cetaceans have an ancient origin evolving from one to another.

I went through evolutionary model after model. The old edition always admitted to unresolved difficulties while the new version never admitted to a problem. *There's something fishy here,* I thought. It seemed like a miracle happened every time I went to the library. One book would say one thing and another the exact opposite.

Day and night I kept thinking about this. Teaching genetics at the time, I started making a list of problems to be solved if evolution were true. My list grew so fast it stunned me. I discovered enormous problems.
Problems Again. As we continued to study, our baby, now a toddler, began having problems again. One night at 2 a.m. I had the same old dream about being strangled. I woke up with a jerk. In the next room the child screamed. He ran a high fever, but we were able to get things under control. This is too strange, I thought.

My carpenter friend listened patiently as I told him some of what was going on. "Don't worry," he said. "Well pray for you." The problem stopped. The carpenter had asked people to set their alarms, get up at 2 a.m., and pray for a family they didn't know. Word got around that we were having peace again and one lady decided not to get up and pray. That night I had my dream and the child screamed.

Thinking back on this, I realize that God didn't need the prayer of that one individual, but there was a lesson that would become very important to me. God wants unity and He wants His people to stand together. The next night the lady set her alarm. God answered the prayer of people we'd never seen. No more nightmares for me, and our boy began acting like a little angel.

Decision. We reached the point where I said, "I can't sit on the fence forever. I've checked the meaning of Hebrew and Greek words with university professors. I've verified historic facts. I've discovered evolution to be an unproven theory. I've examined Bible prophecies. I've studied what other churches said. There's no way out." I told my family, "We're going to keep the Sabbath and start attending the Seventh-day Adventist church."

My wife burst into tears the first time she saw Adventists. "They look so different. They eat strange food. I want my old lifestyle back." I thought, What a weird church. I'd been going to mass wearing a T-shirt and jeans. Yuck, I thought. Adventist men wear suits and ties.

The Holy Spirit reached deep into my mind. "Here you are worshiping on Sabbath and still teaching evolution." I knew in my heart that I had to make a change. I prepared a lecture on genetics showing evolution to be impossible.

Two weeks later I was asked to lead a postgraduate discussion on evolution. My mind filled with fear. Do I go into this lecture pretending to be what I am not or do I stand up for what I now believe? I'll lose face with all my colleagues. My new friends at the Adventist church seemed less weird and promised to pray for me.

Showdown. At this affair I faced all the graduate students and the entire staff. I began the lecture and went through the whole gene system highlighting every problem I'd discovered at that stage of my research. At the end I stated emphatically, "Therefore evolution is not possible!"

You could have heard a pin drop. Then all hell broke loose. One colleague turned blood red and started screaming at me. When things quieted down, a young woman, an honor student, stood up. Turning toward her professors, she said, "When I came to this university, I believed in God and had a relationship with Him. I had a good life. Now I believe nothing. You've robbed me of my faith and my life is falling apart. Dr. V eith's lecture this afternoon shows you've been misleading me."

Can you imagine what happened? They held a special meeting and voted that the basis for all teaching must be evolution. This was the end for me. My life was worthless in terms of scientific credibility. I turned in my resignation.

The head of the department confronted me. "You can't just resign. You're a popular teacher and most of the postgraduate students are under your supervision."

The rector of the university called me in and we talked for a long time. "What if you decided not to rock the boat any more? We could promote you to a professorship." Ideas bounced in my head. What a temptation. I'd be one of the youngest professors.

I looked at him and said, "Sir, the price is too high. I must leave my teaching."
"It's your decision," he said. "By the way, who do you think has the truth?"

I answered, "The Bible has the truth."

"No, I want to know who you think has the truth."

I hedged. "It's those people who meet at Helderberg College."

"That's not what I'm asking you. What denomination has the truth?"

He asked me three times. In the back of my mind I could hear a cock crowing. "Sir, the Seventh-day Adventist church teaches the truth."

I thought, "I'm a dead man," expecting a tirade from the rector. He simply said, "Thank you very much. Congratulations on your choice. I hope things go well for you."

**Blessings.** Having resigned, I put my house up for sale. The first man who walked in bought it. He paid the price. No haggling, nothing. We took the money and bought a dairy farm. My wife and I planned to make it a place to witness.

We planted wheat and it grew so high, farmers from the entire district came to look. They said, "A university man like you must know something we don't."

"No," I said. "We were doing exactly what you do." In the back of my mind I imagined, *It's because we were walking with the Lord.* I figured, *Now that we are Christians, everything will go just great.* Little did I realize the lessons God would soon teach me.

Besides money from the sale of the house, I inherited some from my father. We invested it all and I even took out loans to make sure we had the best farm around.

**Disasters.** Then a huge flock of birds flew in. They ignored all the farms around with short wheat and made my tall wheat their home. They ate and ate and ate until my wheat was nothing but stubble. A big source of expected income had just vanished.

Economic sanctions followed and the economy of South Africa was destroyed. Interest rates of 3 and 4% shot up as high as 28%. Loans that had been a cinch to pay became a nightmare. I cried out, "God, how can you do this to me? The birds ate my wheat. I have no way to support myself. My scientific credibility is gone. I can't go back to my old job. I'm finished."

It got worse. We lost both of our cars in major accidents. All I had now was the farm and more debt than the farm was worth. My wife became terribly depressed. We kept asking ourselves, *Have we done the right thing? Is this how God deals with those who love Him?* We sat down as a family and talked things over.

**An Offer.** We were struggling when the priest called the same one who had impressed us so much. "Why are you calling?" I asked.

"You know your father died. He's having terrific problems in purgatory."

"How do you know?" I asked. I studied the state of the dead and believed what the Bible teaches about sleeping in the grave until the resurrection.

He said, "Nuns who stay in a monastery and never see the outside world told me. Your father is in trouble because of you. You'd better get back to church and have masses said so his problem will go away."

I considered the priest to be a sincere man but very deceived, so I responded, "Thank you very much for the information." I put the phone down, thinking, *Sorry, devil, you're too late.*

I believe that when the priest said mass in our home and our child got better, it was a ruse. The devil told the demons to step back and allow our child to relax and we would be snared. It
happened. We went back to the Catholic Church. When we started studying the Bible, our boy had problems again. After we made our decision truly to follow Jesus, our troubled child became the sweetest, most spiritual little boy you can imagine.

God had led us to His truth, yet I couldn’t understand, "Why are we without money and on the verge of losing the farm?" ostracized by my university friends, I was the laughing stock of the academic world with no chance of going back to my old job. Without money and with no food on the table, our family knelt down together claiming every promise in the Bible.

**Promises.** "Lord," I prayed, "You have promised to care for our needs. You promised that the children of the righteous will not be begging bread." We actually written down all the promises. I continued praying, "Lord, we believe these promises are for us. Please don’t leave us with no money and no food. May Your will be done."

Our lives were in God’s hands and we slept well. I answered the phone the next morning. A professor from another university spoke with urgency. "We have a teacher who is taking an emergency leave for one year. Will you come and take his classes?"

"What about my belief in creation? I won’t be teaching evolution."

"Who cares?" he said. "Just stick to science. Were in a jam and need a replacement. Will you come?"

"That would be great. When do I start?"

"It’ll take about three months to go through all the committees."

"Thank you," I said and put the phone down.

*Nice try, God, I thought. In three months I’ll be dead. My family will starve to death.*

Twenty minutes later I answered the phone again. The same professor was on the line. He said, "I went to the rector’s office to request your service and start the ball rolling. He said, I don’t have time for committees. Let me sign the authorization right now. You can have this man come tomorrow."

"So when do I start?"

It was Thursday. He said, "Monday."

**Solutions.** *Wow!* I thought. *A thousand problems to solve in one weekend. Its impossible!* I turned to my wife. "I’ve got a job at the University of the Western Cape," I exclaimed. "Its only for a year, but something will work out after that."

"Great," she said, "Whos going to take care of the farm? The cows?"

"That worries me too, but God has given us one solution. He can work out a solution for that, too." We knelt down to pray, "Lord, you know we are bankrupt. We don’t have money to hire someone to take care of the farm. Please help us find a way out of our problem."

We had hardly finished praying when there was a loud knock at the door. We opened the door and met a young couple from Zimbabwe. I invited them in and we listened intently. "Were Seventh-day Adventists and lost our job on a farm for not working on Sabbath. We are looking for a place to live."

"Would you like to live here and work on this farm?"

"Sure," he said. "But I cant pay you anything."

"Its O.K., we just need a place to live."
"I'd like to have you take care of the dairy. You can sell the milk and whatever you earn is yours." They agreed and I figured I could pay interest on my loans out of my salary.

In 24 hours God had solved our problem. We had a family to care for the farm and I had a job at a university. We still had no food, no money to buy gas to move, and no place to live. In the next few days God worked miracle after miracle to supply every need. We found a place to live where we didn't have to pay rent until the end of the month. We enrolled our children in church school at Helderberg College.

A few weeks after I went back to teaching, an Adventist businessman who heard my story called. "We want to send you overseas so you can go on a Bible science tour led by Dr. Ariel Roth of the Geoscience Research Institute at Loma Linda," he said. "You'll get to visit many sites and see evidence to confirm your belief in the biblical account of the flood and creation."

"It's impossible," I said. "I've just started a new job and I can't go and ask for six weeks off. No way!" But soon riots broke out at the university. My country was in chaos, with riots everywhere. The rector of the university ordered the school closed.

I went to my department head. "What shall I do now?"

He looked at me. "Go to the moon for all I care. Go away and don't come back for six weeks."

The timing was perfect. I went on the Geoscience tour and began developing my own series of lectures on creation.

Back at the university, not one but several senior professors died, creating a number of vacancies. I worked hard to start a big postgraduate school and my name came up to fill an important position. The search committee narrowed it down to me and a professor from Cambridge University.

I learned later that someone said, "You can't appoint Veith. He's too controversial. He has strange ideas." But following the student riots, it had become fashionable to be against the establishment. Another professor asked, "You mean he goes against what they teach at Stellenbosch? That's a plus!" I got the job.

**Gods Doing.** This is how God placed me in my position. I'm a professor and head of the Zoology department in a secular university. I teach creationism. In human terms, it's impossible to imagine, but God placed me here and He can keep me here as long as He desires. When the door closes, He will find something better for me to do.

The Creator of the universe has shown me how to live. He died on the cross to save me from my sin. He's coming back to take me home with Him. The Holy Spirit has led my family step by step into God's truth. He wants to lead you, too. Take your stand for Christ. Do what is right. Have faith in Him, and He will fulfill every one of His promises.

You may visit Dr. Walter Veith's website: [www.amazingdiscoveries.org](http://www.amazingdiscoveries.org)
The Conflict Over Origins

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Recent controversy in the United States over the teaching of "creation science" in the public schools has renewed public interest in the question of the origin of our planet and its life-forms. The public media describe the events as a conflict between science and religion. But is it really so? Is the controversy between creation and evolutionary teachings really a choice between unprovable religious dogma and hard scientific fact? To answer that question, we need to be clear about two things: first, the nature of the origins problem itself, and second, the nature of the evidences we bring to bear on the question.

The Origins Problem

If the problem of the origin of living forms were of the same nature as that of the shape of the earth, careful scientists would have solved it long before this. But there is a very great difference between the problem of the shape and motions of our earth and that of the origin of plants and animals. The shape of the earth is a present condition which we can test, measure, and demonstrate scientifically. Likewise, we can examine its motions as an astronomical body. Because the earth is now round and is now moving, we can study its shape and motions in a scientific manner.

But the problem of the origin of living forms is of an entirely different nature. Basic types of plants and animals are not right now appearing, either by evolution or special creation. Hence, neither evolution nor special creation of basic types can be demonstrated today in the laboratory. Furthermore, this has been true as far back as authentic records extend. No human being has ever witnessed the emergence of a basic type of plant or animal life.

Scientists, then, who assert today that evolution of new basic types is as completely demonstrated as is the shape of our earth are completely wrong. If they would be truthful, they would have to say, "We cannot prove in the laboratory that evolution of new basic types has occurred or is occurring, but we believe such to be the case." Likewise, believers in the Bible account of origins will not be able to prove that it happened in that manner, though they may find much evidence for their belief.

The Nature of Evidence

Adherents of both the evolutionary and the creationist views need to remember the nature of the evidence that bears upon origins. A careful, open-minded student of the subject will find, perhaps to his amazement, that of the long list of evidences set forth to prove that evolution has occurred, not one item is coercive in quality.

What do we mean by coercive? Evidence quite generally can be placed in one of two
categories. Either it is more or less coercive, or it is more or less persuasive. Coercive evidence admits of only one interpretation; persuasive evidence may point the researcher toward a certain conclusion, but it does not rule out other interpretations.

A good illustration of coercive evidence is found in the proof that our earth is round. Even before we had satellites orbiting the earth and photographs taken from the moon, there was just no other reasonable explanation of such phenomena as the appearance first of the tops of mountains when an observer approaches land from the ocean, or of the fact that if a world traveler will proceed in one direction he will eventually arrive back at the point from which he started. Because such evidence can be interpreted reasonably only by assuming that the earth is round, we say the evidence is coercive.

By contrast, every item on the list of evidences for evolution is of a very different sort. For example, let us take the order of the fossils in the rock layers. It is an observable fact that generally, wherever several fossil-bearing layers of sandstone, shale, limestone, and the like are found in contact with one another in an undisturbed vertical relationship, the fossils in the lower layers are of simpler animals (such as brachiopods and trilobites) than those in the higher layers, which may be reptiles or even mammals. Evolutionists proclaim this natural order of the fossils as one of the most powerful evidences that complex animals evolved from simpler animals. They consider it to be quite coercive in quality.

However, the careful student will see clearly that the order of the fossils does not constitute coercive evidence for evolution, since this arrangement could have occurred without evolution entering the picture whatsoever. A universal flood, as described in Genesis 6-8, could have produced the same results in a world upon which every kind of animal was living at the same time.

We read in Genesis that the Noachian Flood did not come as one great overwhelming tidal wave, but instead rose gradually over a period of about six weeks before it crested some twenty feet above the highest pre-Flood mountain. The waters were very tempestuous as they gradually crept higher and higher.

Animals such as brachiopods and trilobites, which could not flee from the boisterous waters, were covered with sediment first. The more complex creatures which could retreat to higher ground did so and were finally buried in layers above the trilobites. The powerful animals and those that were agile climbed above the noisy, tumultuous waves as long as high hills and mountains were available. But they were eventually overwhelmed and became entombed in the upper layers or were left dead upon the surface when the Flood retreated. It would have been a most unnatural and strange thing if one of the huge brontosaurs had permitted itself to be entombed with the trilobites in some low spot at the first onslaught of the flood waters.

Thus the present order of the fossils is not coercive for evolution or for special creation. For one who has strong faith in evolution, the fossil order, simple to complex, can be explained "reasonably and logically" by evolution. But likewise, the person who has strong faith in special creation sees the same arrangement explained "reasonably and logically" by the Flood. The believer in one doctrine may storm and rave about the strength of his own position and deride the supposed extreme weakness and even absurdity of the position of the other school of thought, but the fact remains that the evidence is subjective and capable of explanation from more than one point of view.

So the sincere student of origins must recognize that neither evolution nor special creation can be demonstrated. They are not continuing processes, else we could demonstrate one or the other. Variation is everywhere manifest today, but variation is not evolution. In order for evolution to occur, new basic types must appear. A hundred years of careful study has revealed that variation can do no more than erect new breeds or races or clusters within a basic type already on hand.

The controversies that we see today over origins are not, therefore, truly conflicts between proven scientific facts and religious speculations, but between two different statements of faith, neither of which is subject to proof in the full scientific sense. Belief in long ages of
evolution, though supported (its adherents claim) by overwhelming scientific data, still requires faith, for its processes cannot be observed or duplicated today, and its evidences are not scientifically coercive.

Among what evolutionists consider to be their strongest evidence for organic evolution is what they call "the order of fossils in the rocks from simple upward to the complex and specialized." However, the situation which actually results here was pointed out long ago by Austin H. Clark, a prominent evolutionist (at one time a curator in the National Museum):

"When we examine a series of fossils of any age, we may pick out one and say with confidence, this is a crustacean or a starfish, or a brachiopod, or an annelid, or any other type of creature as the case may be.

"Since all the fossils are determinable as members of their respective groups by the application of definitions of those groups drawn up from and based entirely on living types, and since none of these definitions of the phyla or major groups of animals need be in any way altered or expanded to include the fossils, it naturally follows that throughout the fossil record these major groups have remained essentially unchanged. This means that the interrelationships between them likewise have remained unchanged.

"Strange as it may seem, the animals of the very earliest fauna of which our knowledge is sufficient to enable us to speak with confidence, the fauna of the Cambrian period, were singularly similar to the animals of the present day."

Here is very strong evidence (coercive, possibly) encountered every time a fossil is picked up, from Cambrian (earliest) to recent, and its identification sought. Is there any wonder that this fossil situation is not noised abroad today? Most evolutionists are not aware that the scientific evidence here is actually all for special creation.

The believer in the Bible account of the origin of life need not be intimidated by claims that his belief conflicts with the established findings of science. Science is powerless to prove anything about the origin of the basic types of plants and animals. It still requires an act of faith from its adherents, even as belief in the Bibles accounts requires faith. Though we do not have answers to every question, we may place our faith in the Word of God without sacrificing the intellect He has given us. If even an evolutionist must choose to believe his doctrine, why should we not choose to believe the word of the One in whom we have trusted for our salvation?

Notes