Creation/Evolution: The Issues and the Evidence
Ideas for the '80s

It wasn’t unexpected that the best answer to the question raised in the January Parson to Parson column came from a person who is presently active in a pastoral role. Some of the ideas that sound wonderful in a classroom or an editorial office are not so practical in the parish. After thirteen years in pastoral work, I did departmental ministry for eleven years. I have now spent the past four years in pastoral work and enjoy being a pastor as much today as I did in the ’60s. But I’ve learned that what I did as a pastor then may not work best today. Give us answers from someone who dealt with the problem last week or last month, not someone who “walked on water” ten or fifteen years ago. Give us more ideas for the ’80s.—Seventh-day Adventist Church, Nebraska.

What this pastor calls for is what we want the Parson to Parson column to be characterized by. We hope active pastors will write from their experience in answer to the questions that have been raised by others actively engaged in ministry. We do note that three of the four responses published in January came from men currently pastoring. The fourth was from one who is in constant contact with pastors and church members in working situations.—Editors.

Striking contrast

The clear, honest, scientific analysis of Warren H. Johns’s article “Controversy Over Paleomagnetic Dating” (January, 1984) stands in striking contrast to the pseudoscience manufactured in the name of creationism by the vigorous obscurantist wing of the creationist movement. As a believer in both creation and the inerrancy of Scripture, I cringe at the damage done to the credibility of evangelical Christianity by some in this area.—Baptist Church, Michigan.

Warren H. Johns deserves extraordinary commendation for his courageous, clearly written feature on paleomagnetic dating. He has made a much-needed contribution to a scientific creationism that avoids alienating the informed scientific community.

Proponents of the geomagnetic decay model for the age of the earth seem to be unaware that this model precludes an interpretation of radiocarbon dates that is reasonable and consistent with chronological data in the Bible. Organic remains that can be classified confidently as burials from the catastrophe described in Genesis 6-8 have a radiocarbon age in excess of fifty thousand years. The current global radiocarbon production rate, if maintained over five thousand years, would accumulate between only 45 and 67 percent of the present world radiocarbon inventory. As Johns pointed out, a geomagnetic field continuously decreasing as time goes forward would be associated with an increasing radiocarbon production rate. To account for a radiocarbon increase from essentially zero to the present world inventory within five thousand years, it is necessary to postulate that the global radiocarbon production rate over significant portions of the past has been greater than at present, as required by the geomagnetic decay model. Thus, in attempting to give “scientific” proof for a young-earth concept, the geomagnetic decay model introduces overwhelming difficulties for the more important task of developing an interpretation of radiocarbon dates that is both scientifically sound and consistent with Biblical data.—Seventh-day Adventist Church, California.

Hebrews and celibacy

Kit Watts’s concern for the inclusion of singles in church life is laudable (“Single Is Biblical,” January, 1984). We Jews are also endeavoring to meet the special needs of singles within institutions that have traditionally been geared toward couples and families. But in her attempt to explain why the New Testament’s view of single life is different from that of the Hebrew Scriptures, Ms. Watts completely misses the point and, in so doing, implicitly slurs the Jewish religion.

Jews do not marry and have children for the purpose of producing a potential Messiah, as the article states. We marry for love and we have children so that we can pass on our love and way of life to a new generation. Yes, there is a basic contradiction between the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament on the subject of marriage, but it has nothing to do with eschatology. It has to do with sex. Judaism has always regarded the sexual instinct as a divine gift and marriage as the proper context for its enjoyment. In contrast, Paul seems to have viewed sex as an inherently sinful impulse and marriage as a mere concession to human frailty. The Church Fathers thus elevated celibacy as an ideal way of life, while the rabbis deprecated it as unnatural and unhealthy.

If Ms. Watts wishes to advocate celibacy (under the euphemism of the “single lifestyle”) as a way to spiritual perfection, that is her privilege. But she should not delude herself as to the reasons that others have chosen a different route.—Jewish Synagogue, New York.

I disagree with Kit Watts (January, 1984) that staying single was considered heresy or was regarded as a waste and a tragedy in the Old Testament. Actually, the O.T. is replete with significant examples of singles who provide positive role models for Christian singles today.

Isaac chose to remain single until 40 years of age, unusual in his era. Other singles include Elijah, Elisha, Daniel, and Jeremiah. In fact, God specifically commanded Jeremiah not to marry (Jer. 16:1-4). Single is Biblical in both Old and New Testaments.—Seventh-day Adventist Church, Maryland.

As ministers, administrators, and nominating committees, we have often excluded the talents of singles and the contribution they could make to our entire church program. Many times we have focused on a segment of our congregation and excluded the single, the nonmember, the teenager. I hope we don’t file away the challenge Kit Watts has brought—if by filing, we mean forgetting.—Seventh-day Adventist Church, California.
Darwin’s Revolution/5. Richard D. Tkachuck, in recounting the history of the rise of Darwinism, analyzes the reasons why Darwin was able to capture the thinking of the Western world so rapidly.

Creation, Evolution, or Other Views?/7. Ariel A. Roth explains why he as a scientist has chosen divine creation as an explanation of origins after examining a wide spectrum of ideas from Creation to naturalistic evolution.

Evidences for Creation/10. Harold G. Coffin provides scientific support for the activities that took place during each of the six days of Creation week and gives reasons why Creation is a better explanation of these activities than is evolution.

Evidences for a Worldwide Flood/12. Ariel A. Roth. Although modern geology does not recognize the existence of a worldwide catastrophe such as the Biblical deluge, it is making allowance for more catastrophism in the geological record than it used to.

Evolution Confronts Christianity/14. While admitting that Darwinian theory may have several aspects that are true, Warren H. Johns and David C. James point out some central areas in Christian teaching that are incompatible with Darwinism.

Major Objections to Creation and How We Answer Them/18. A candid look at some of the major problem areas in applying the Genesis account to the geological record.

In Search of the Silver Bullet/23. Richard D. Tkachuck.


Sermons From Psalms/26. Hans K. LaRonndelle. Both Luther and Calvin used the book of Psalms as their main source for sermons. Today there is an urgent need for more preaching from the Psalms.
From the Editor

Does it really matter?

Why give nearly an entire issue to the question of how life began? We're here, and we need to get on with the business of living. Does the Creation-evolution debate touch us where we actually live today?

This issue of MINISTRY focuses on a cardinal doctrine held and taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout its history. We believe "that the first thirty-five verses of the book of Genesis contain a valid, factual account of literal events that occurred during seven consecutive rotations of Planet Earth—the Creation week. This interpretation places within Creation week the origin of the parent stock for all organisms supported by the planet and also the origin of the physical circumstances on which the continuing life of this parent stock depends."—The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 46.

The creationist's model of earth's history includes the concepts that our planet was modified as a result of the Fall and that its surface was radically transformed in a post-Creation, universal flood. We are fully aware that this belief places us at odds with the widely held evolutionary model.

Several points need to be emphasized in our discussion of this most important subject. Serious reflection on these matters, in my opinion, reveals that turning from the Biblical account of a literal creation, fall, and flood and accepting the spontaneous origin of life and its slow development over hundreds of millions of years has far greater theological implications than most Christians recognize.

In the contemporary Christian world, theistic evolution has been promoted by numerous scholars and religious leaders. Theistic evolution suggests that God used natural selection, operating over long periods of time to develop life on our earth. This Christian humanistic model differs from the basic atheistic evolutionary model mainly in its introduction of God—the evolutionary principles and time frame are essentially the same. Obviously, this model avoids tension with the scientific community. But it must be evaluated on the basis of the authority and testimony of the Scriptures.

People generally overlook the fact that the verification of any model of origins lies beyond the scope of scientific procedure. Empirical evidence for the origin of the universe, and specifically our planet with its varied forms of life, is absolutely nonexistent! Although the available evidence can be interpreted in support of a particular model of origins, in the final analysis one must have faith to accept any of the models offered.

We believe that Scripture teaches a fiat creation and that there is logical and reasonable evidence, although not proof, that justifies taking the Biblical record literally. Seventh-day Adventist sponsorship of the Geoscience Research Institute witnesses to the strength of our commitment to this teaching. (For more on the founding of the Geoscience Research Institute, its purposes, and the importance of Creation to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, see MINISTRY, June, 1983.) The members of this institute, who all hold doctorates in various scientific disciplines, spend their full time in research, writing, and lecturing on creationism. As far as I know, ours is the only Christian church that supports such an entity. We feel it is money well spent, since the work relates directly to a most important doctrine of Scripture.

In fact, nothing in the Bible is more basic than its claim that God is the Creator. The Scriptures begin with the simple statement "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Then follow the details of a creation that took place in a six-day period. Some may speculate about the length of time involved in the Genesis narrative, but one cannot do so when it comes to the details and specific time given in the fourth commandment. The statement "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is" (Ex. 20:11) makes sense only in the framework of a literal six-day Creation week, with a seventh-day Sabbath memorial of Creation. It is most significant that God's arbitrary use of seven days for the Creation week is the only satisfactory explanation for the weekly cycle we have today.

As to the importance of Creation, a quick survey of texts reveals that the Scriptures identify His creation of the heavens, earth, and mankind as that which marks the difference between the true God and the plethora of false gods, and establishes Him as authoritative in contrast to them. (See Isa. 40:25, 26; 42:5; 43:1; 44:6-21; 45:8-12, 18; Jonah 1:9; Acts 17:22-26.)

On earth our Lord displayed His magnificent creative power in restoring health to diseased bodies, sight to blind eyes, and life to dead beings. It was the same life-giving voice that brought the world into existence, that also made men who were physically and spiritually dead come to life!

That same Person will speak again—and create a new heaven and a new earth when He returns the second time (see 2 Peter 3:10-13). This climactic event will not take eons of time. No evolutionary process will be involved in the restoration of all things to their Edenic beauty. It will be a repeat performance of the original creation. The resurrection of the righteous dead magnificently demonstrates that God needs little time to re-create. They will be raised "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (see 1 Cor. 15:51-54). If there is a "fiat creation" of life at the end-time, why couldn't there have been a "fiat creation" at the beginning of time?

Does it really matter? Many questions will have to remain unanswered, but we believe this special issue demonstrates that credible scientific evidence does exist to support the historicity of Genesis. How one views the origin of life has an impact on how he views life itself. It does matter.—J.R.S.
Darwin's revolution

Darwin did not burst upon an unsuspecting world with his idea of natural selection as the mechanism by which species evolved. Careful observations had been going on for decades. His book caught the public eye (and sold out in a single day) because of an increasing discontent with the Biblical view of origins and a worldwide destruction by flood. Readers either accepted his ideas eagerly or unswervingly opposed him. by Richard D. Tkachuck

History is replete with individuals who have changed the course of human events through discovery of new lands, through invention, political activity, or by force of arms. The list of those who have significantly rewoven the fabric of human society and history through the introduction of an idea is much smaller.

Religious philosophers such as Christ and Mohammed, the political ideologist Marx, and the scientists Sigmund Freud and Charles Darwin all presented ideas that caused major disruptions in the thought processes of men and forever changed the world.

For an idea to gain almost universal acceptance it must answer major internal dissatisfactions with the current world view. Darwin did not propose his theory of descent with modification to a world that placidly accepted the concept of a Creator God. Long before Darwin wrote The Origin of Species, major discontent had arisen with the view that the diversity of plant and animal life and all the earth's geologic structure could be adequately contained in the Creation and Flood stories given in the first chapters of Genesis.

Until the beginning of the 1700s the vast majority of individuals in the Western world wholeheartedly accepted the concept of Biblical creation and a universal flood. The church's grip on the intellectual activities of scholars was not yet fully loosened, even though the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation had jarred men from the dogmatism of earlier centuries. Allegiance to Christian faith was nearly universal throughout European civilizations, although the level of piety had certainly diminished when compared with that of the Reformers and their immediate followers.

Science was beginning to bloom. Nature was increasingly being observed independently of theology, and attempts were made to place the observations into a more secular context or overview. Carolus Linnaeus classified the plants and animals in Northern Europe and by 1735 published a major work containing examples from all over the world. Life-forms were arranged in a hierarchical manner based on similarities in form. Thus, for example, animals with backbones were separated from those without backbones, and each group was then assigned a number of subdivisions.

These forays into the realms of modern science were not fully divested of Biblical trappings. The concept now known as natural theology still was a dominant force in the interpretation of the biotic world. This view placed man at the center of God's creation and relegated the rest of the natural world to a role of servitude for man's ease and pleasure. In its extreme application, for example, rabbits were thought to have little white tails to provide the hunter with a more visible target!

Another view in science supposedly supported by Scripture was the concept of fixity of species. Before the explorations of the New World, the Far East, and the African continent, it was generally thought that the animals in Europe were identical in form to those that came off Noah's ark. But with the arrival of seemingly boatloads of specimens from lands afar, it soon was realized that the ark had not been large enough to contain them all. Comparison of similar forms from all over the earth made the idea that all had come from the Creator's hand difficult to believe.

The possibility that change in species
Long before Darwin, major discontent had arisen with the view that the diversity of plant and animal life could be adequately contained in the Creation and Flood stories given in the first chapters of Genesis.

could occur was resisted by those who viewed nature as being perfect. To allow an organism to change in form or function to a better adapted state was, in essence, to say that God's original creation was imperfect. This concept approached blasphemy and was obviously unacceptable. If change occurred in animals and plants, it was always in a degenerative direction. These benighted forms, of course, were not successful and subsequently became extinct, leaving the perfect forms made by the Creator's hand.

The infant science of geology also played a significant role in allowing world opinion to pivot around Darwin's ideas. At first all the geologic formations were attributed to the work of a single universal deluge. However, examination of ancient cultures buried by sedimentary processes encouraged the conclusion that perhaps other natural processes were responsible for laying down the geologic formations. Sediments flowing into the seas, volcanism and its resultant changes on the landscape, wind, the movement of ice, and other physical forces all provided naturalistic alternatives to the Biblical account.

Fossils of organisms not presently living on earth were attributed by some to artifacts or to the work of the devil in his efforts to confuse man. By Darwin's time most recognized that these fossils were indeed remains of extinct organisms. This type of evidence resulted in the conclusion that geologic processes in the natural world were far too slow to account for the formation of the then-known strata in a time period of less than ten thousand years. Estimates of the length of earth history soon moved into the range of millions of years.

With the discovery of distinctive fossils in layers, along with other sets of distinctive fossils in surrounding layers, the concept of multiple catastrophes developed. Although God was still retained as Creator, the Biblical account of a single creative event was abandoned in favor of multiple creations and multiple catastrophes. No longer was the Biblical flood story accepted literally.

Thus, Darwin came on the scene at a time of significant discontent with the Biblical view of origins and the destruction of the world by a single universal flood.

Darwin's early years were engaged in the study of natural history. Scholarly attempts at medicine and theology proved unfruitful. His first and only love was the world of nature. An energetic and careful observer, he soon gained the notice of several leading natural historians who further encouraged him in his pursuits. When given the opportunity to be the biologist on a five-year voyage around the world, he accepted eagerly. This experience proved to be the turning point in Darwin's view of the world.

Darwin began the voyage still hoping to see the hand of God in nature. Concerned with growing evidence for change in the natural world, he first attempted to correlate these with the Biblical account. However, as diversity multiplied upon diversity, it soon became obvious that change was indeed possible. By the time he reached the Galapagos Islands the concept that species arise from other species was fixed in his mind.

Upon his return to England, Darwin began a series of studies to determine how much change is possible in the natural world. Extensive examination of accomplishments by breeders of domestic animals demonstrated that significant morphological change was possible. From these observations he postulated that nature could also select for certain characteristics.

Darwin differed from previous scholars in several ways. First, he recognized that each individual varied from other individuals in a species group. On the bases of size, color, the rate of movement, or a host of other characteristics, all showed variation within the group. No two individuals were the same. Each would respond differently to an environmental change. Some would have advantages based on inherited characteristics. Those that preferentially survived would pass on these "successful" characteristics to their progeny. Thus, slowly, over long periods of time, the species would evolve into something different.

Darwin also recognized that the reproductive capacity of individual organisms far exceeded what was needed to maintain a stable population. (In order for a population of sexually reproducing animals to be maintained at a constant number, there must be, on the average, only two surviving progeny. If reproductive rates are greater than this, the population will increase.) Yet, as Darwin looked about him, he saw that in general the population levels of animals and plants remained relatively constant.

With these two ideas in mind, all that was needed was a catalyst to blend them into a new theory. This catalyst came in the form of a book written by Thomas Malthus on human population controls. Malthus noted that while the reproductive capacity of humans was great, the ability to produce food was not. For example, if every family had four children, the population would double in a generation. Food production would be unable to advance at the same rate. Malthus resolved this dilemma by noting that famine, wars, disease, etc., provided natural checks against population growth.

At last Darwin had a mechanism for the process that he later called natural selection. It was obvious to him that if a population with all its variabilities was situated in a limiting environment, only those that had adaptive advantage would survive. The survivors would be slightly different from those of the past generation.

Darwin was correct in assuming that species could change. But if species could change a little, is it fair to say that given enough time, one can extrapolate the evolutionary scheme from single-celled animals to man himself?

Darwin came to these conclusions and conducted extensive research in all aspects of his theory for the next twenty years. When he realized that Alfred Wallace was about to publish similar conclusions, he was spurred to activity (Continued on page 11)
Creation, evolution, or other views?

The choice is not merely God or nature. Between divine creation and naturalistic evolution lie a number of intermediate positions that attempt to bring about some accommodation. Is this possible? The author summarizes these positions and their implications for both science and Scripture. — by Ariel A. Roth

The controversy between Creation and evolution is more than just the comparison of two strongly contrasting views. Misunderstanding of the many intermediate views between Creation and evolution is also part of the conflict. Below I shall evaluate a few of the commonly accepted views, beginning with the Biblical model and ending with purely naturalistic evolution.

This article assumes that truth is to be found in both nature and the Bible. Science, which is an explanation of nature, has been gratifyingly successful. Also, the Bible has demonstrated a high degree of historical validation and has endured for millennia as a respected guide for life.

Creation. According to the most direct reading of Scripture, Creation occurred in six literal days, with a short period of time (compared to the geologic time scale) between Creation and the Flood. No life existed on earth prior to Creation (Gen. 1:2) and possibly no earth (soft-gap theory). A universal flood lasting one year was the major catastrophe that has produced most of the fossiliferous sedimentary layers of the earth's surface. The sequential arrangement of these layers forms what is known as the geologic column.

This model fits well with the Bible and the significant degree of design and orderliness that is found in nature. It explains the problem of the origin of life-forms and the evidence of catastrophism found in the rock layers of the earth. It disagrees with several scientific interpretations that specify long ages, especially radiometric dating, rate of cooling of magmatic bodies, rate of fossil reef formation, and rate of growth of successive fossil forests.

The Gap Theory (Custance, 1970; Fields, 1976), also called "Ruin and Restoration." According to this concept, God created life on this earth in the distant past. However, He destroyed that life after a judgment upon Satan. The Scofield Reference Bible presents this view in connection with Genesis 1:2 (1917 ed.) and with Isaiah 45:18 (1967 ed.), which can seem to imply that the earth must have become a waste place (ruined) subsequent to an ancient creation not described in Genesis.

The model accommodates some of the scientific interpretations that suggest a long time period for life on earth. However, most individuals are dissatisfied with the concept because it has inadequate scriptural and scientific support. If there had been a gap following a ruin, a distinct blank period in the fossil record should be evident on a worldwide basis prior to a subsequent creation, but there is no evidence of this.

Progressive Creation (Gedney, 1950, pp. 45-50; Ramm, 1956, pp. 112, 215; Fields, 1976, pp. 165-179). The "Day-Age Theory," in which each day of Creation represents long ages, can also be fitted into this model. In this scheme God performed multiple creation events over long periods of time. The degree of progression from bottom to top in the fossil record reflects the degrees of progress in creative acts.

The model fits both the evidence of gaps between fossil kinds which support creation and the idea of long ages for the geologic column. Neither science nor Scripture suggests this model directly; hence, the basic idea itself lacks authoritative support and is difficult to test. It contradicts a contiguous six-day, all-inclusive creation, though God remains the Creator of all things. The presence of
Rejection of the creation model harms more than the book of Genesis; it poses a threat to God’s integrity and questions the reliability of Scripture as a whole.

Predation (for example, the large, flesh-eating dinosaur *Tyrannosaurus rex*) early in the fossil record places evil before the advent of man. This negates the Genesis story of a good Creator and Creation followed by the Fall of man and subsequent spread of evil in the world. Such a creator as is brought to view in this theory would not be the God described in the Bible.

**Theistic Evolution (Ramm, 1956, p. 113; Key, 1959, pp. 21, 22).** Marsh (1950, pp. 53, 54) calls this “teleological evolution.” Modifications of this view placing special emphasis on the creation and nature of man have been proposed by Teilhard de Chardin (1966, p. 63) and Bube (1971). The latter calls his idea “Biblical evolutionism.” Theistic evolution holds that God directed some of the continuous progress of evolution from simple to complex over long periods of time.

The idea adapts fairly easily to many concepts of the general theory of evolution and still permits God’s involvement. He is available to bridge some of the difficulties of evolution, such as the problem of the origin of life, the gaps between fossil types, development of the higher mental characteristics of man, etc. But this model also has problems: The gaps between fossil kinds do not suggest a continuous process of evolution. It is also demeaning to the all-powerful Creator described in the Bible to use the crutch of evolution in order to produce advanced forms of life. The multiple “errors” represented by the numerous extinct kinds of organisms and the slow progress and competition implied in an evolutionary model challenge God’s creative power, knowledge, and goodness. Competition seems uncharacteristic of the God who does not forget the sparrow (Luke 12:6) and whose ideal for life includes the wolf and the lamb living peacefully together (Isa. 11:6; 65:25). As in the case for progressive creation, we also have the appearance of evil in nature before the fall of man—a logical difficulty.

**God at the beginning only (Klotz, 1970, p. 477).** A few authors call this “theistic evolution.” In this view God began life, then naturalistic evolution proceeded without His help. This model solves the question of the origin of life on earth, which is perhaps the most difficult problem for evolution (Bonner, 1962).

Later, naturalistic processes produced advanced forms of life. The problems of theistic evolution apply here also, along with the problems of naturalistic evolution without God’s help. For instance, how would inept, intermediate stages survive competition while changing from one functional type to another in a system of survival of the fittest? The forelimb of an organism evolving into a wing (to make a bird) in its inept, intermediate stage would not provide the necessary survival required by evolution. An intermediate stage which is neither a good organ for running nor for flying would be eliminated by competition.

**Naturalistic Evolution (Ramm, 1956, p. 113), also called “evolution,” “atheistic evolution” (Key, 1959, p. 20), or “mechanistic evolution” (Marsh, 1950, p. 53).** According to naturalistic evolution, life and its advanced forms developed strictly through the operation of natural law.

This idea suits those who limit the concept of reality to tangible, natural laws. No intelligent design or supernaturalism is involved. Important questions remain unanswered: How do complex life systems originate on earth without a designer? How do inept, intermediate forms survive the competition of naturalistic evolution? How can the gaps between the fossil kinds be bridged? How could man’s higher characteristics such as free will, morality, consciousness, and love originate in a purely mechanistic system?

Space does not permit the discussion of other models such as the devil experimenting on earth prior to Creation, life in various forms originating from outer space, pantheistic evolution, and deistic evolution. There is no paucity of ideas to consider.

**The relationship of these theories to the Bible.** The intermediate interpretations lack good Biblical support. They suggest progress, while the Bible speaks of degeneration (compare Romans 8:22 to Genesis 1:31). The involvement of some concept of God is often their only serious link to Scripture. The Bible describes a short Creation period (Genesis 1 and 2) of six literal days a few thousand years ago, producing all the basic forms of life. Long ages are not suggested for this process. Also, the original earth was empty and dark (chap. 1:2). Since light is necessary for many of the life-forms found throughout the fossil record, an extended period for the development of advanced forms before Creation week is not entertained.

Those who adopt intermediate views between Creation and naturalistic evolution often assume the first part of Genesis to be allegorical. They must also assume the same for other scriptural references to this early part. Not only is Moses, who wrote the book of Genesis, being questioned by these views. God, who dictated the fourth commandment (Ex. 20:11), Christ and the apostle Paul, who referred to the Genesis account of origins (Matt. 19:4 and 1 Cor. 15:45) are also doubted. The apostle Peter’s description (2 Peter 3:3-6) corresponds to Genesis. Hence these ideas question the reliability of Scripture as a whole.

Intermediate interpretations and naturalistic evolution challenge God’s integrity. Would God state in the fourth commandment (Ex. 20:11) that He created all in six days if He had not? If so, He would not be the God described in the Bible—the God who speaks the truth, declares what is right (Isa. 45:19), and never tells falsehoods (Titus 1:2). Rejection of the Creation model harms more than the book of Genesis; it poses a threat to God’s integrity. The conflict is resolved either with the Creation model or by a non-Biblical view of God. It is seldom realized that a significant amount of time for any part of the fossil record precludes the concept of an all-inclusive, six-day creation as given in Genesis 1 and 2 and Exodus 20:11.
Since the popularization of the theory of evolution during the past century many denominations have in some way accommodated to various ideas of the progressive development of life over long ages.

The relationship of scientific data to the various interpretations. The multiplicity of models prevents the formulation of a simple general statement. Conclusions depend partially on one's definition of science. Science is usually considered to be explanations about nature. Traditionally, science has not always excluded God or the supernatural. Many of the founders of modern science were seeking explanations about God's creation and principles He had incorporated therein. During the past century science has emphasized naturalism, excluding God and the supernatural.

Many scientists see tension between an omnipotent God, who can overrule the laws of nature, and science which seeks for consistent explanations within established laws. Therefore, a scientist is expected to seek naturalistic explanations that exclude God. But supernatural explanations actually are a part of reality, such an exclusion would be erroneous. The tension between God and science is not as serious as envisioned above. Both God and science can coexist, especially when we are dealing with the noncapricious God described in the Bible and if science is viewed as a search for explanations based on the consistency that God placed in nature. God and science need not be mutually exclusive.

The difference between Creation and the other views given above could be tested by the amount of time required in each for the formation of the geologic column. The other views propose a long time for this; Creation does not. Some interpretations of scientific data (for example, radiometric dating and the dating of large magmatic bodies) suggest long ages; other data (for example, catastrophe and the paucity of time-dependent erosional features expected at so-called long time gaps—paraconformities) suggest a brief period for life on earth.

The relationship of these models to drifting patterns of thought. The influence of the intermediate views between Creation and evolution on the beliefs of many Christian churches has been considerable. Since the popularization of the theory of evolution during the past century many denominations have in some way accommodated to various ideas of the progressive development of life over long ages.

Richard Niebuhr (1957, pp. 19, 20) has outlined the traditional history of a religious group. After being organized by the original reformers, the character of the sect changes as a new generation of children is born. This new generation rarely has the fervor of its fathers who fashioned their convictions in the heat of the conflict. Succeeding generations find isolation from the world more difficult. Wealth and culture accrue as compromise of the original purposes brings in the usual churchy type of morals. Soon the group changes from the originally intended instrument for reform to a more placid social group. Managerial requirements increasingly distract the church's religious purposes.

This traditional sociological pattern of drifting away from the Bible (and too often its God) is also illustrated in Biblical history, where repeatedly God had to use drastic means to reverse the trend. The Genesis flood, the long sojourn of the Israelites in the desert, and the Babylonian captivity illustrate the difficulty but importance of resisting such trends.

Modern educational institutions also illustrate this tendency to drift. A large number of institutions of higher learning in the United States (for example, Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Brown, Rutgers, Dartmouth, The University of Southern California, Auburn University, Boston University, Wichita State University, Wesleyan University) began primarily as religious institutions but are no longer church-related.

The patterns of drifting described above appear, unfortunately, to be trends away from God. Gradual and sometimes barely perceptible drifting is disturbing to those concerned with unchanging truth. Drifting from one position to a slightly different one, and so on, can be unconscious. The intermediate models illustrate how one could slowly and almost imperceptibly drift from a belief in a Creator to atheism. The path can be a facile way to destroy the Bible and God—painlessly.

Conclusions. I believe that creation by a God who established the laws of science and who revealed history in Scripture is the most satisfying model of origins and is best supported by the reality around us. The variety of interpretations given above show how one can gradually change from a belief in creation as described in the Bible to a naturalistic evolution. Some sociological factors favor a trend in this direction. I hope that efforts will be made to go in the opposite direction—closer to God. Man's most important relationship is with his God, and we should do all we can to encourage this.

Selected Bibliography
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* References given describe these various compromise theories and include both proponents and opponents of the views listed.
Evidences for creation

The rich dimensions of human life, both physically and in those areas that penetrate to the essence of what life is about, reveal something about the Designer. No one was around at the origin of life, so all theories about it are really not susceptible to proof. But we can find evidences for the different ideas about origins. Creation by a divine Creator is the only theory that takes into account all that life is. □ by Harold G. Coffin

The creation of the earth and its living things was a series of unique acts. Although the actual work of Creation can be neither observed nor reproduced in the laboratory, much evidence of such creative activity exists; evidence that can be handled by the methods of science.

Created objects convey information about their creator. Even an arrowhead or a scraper, crude as it may be, shows design and reveals something about its maker. Living organisms with almost infinite complexity reveal much more.

Out of the great number of evidences of design that could be selected, this article deals with only a few as they relate to the simple but majestic statements of Creation in the first chapter of Genesis.

Day one

"And God said, Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3).

When God spoke light into existence darkness fell back defeated. Never since Creation week has light failed. Every morning, if the sky is clear, the horizon slowly intensifies from crimson to yellow until the whole east is glorious. The sun is about to begin its arc across the dome of the heavens. There always is hope, even in the polar regions, for another rising of the sun, for the return of light, even as there is always hope and expectation for another spring. Light is the vehicle by which most information reaches us. It allows us to be three dimensional, to bridge space, to touch distance, and to expand perception beyond our immediate circle.

Day two

"And God said, Let there be a firmament" (Gen. 1:6).

Take a deep breath. What is this essential, invisible substance called air? It is mostly nitrogen and oxygen. Small amounts of other substances such as water vapor, carbon dioxide, and argon are also present. We might have to breathe less often or less deeply if the oxygen, now 21 percent of air, were 50 percent. But with that much oxygen the earth would become a tinderbox. Any fire would burn furiously and explosively. Lightning would ignite whole forests so quickly no one could escape. With less oxygen, campers would have much more trouble getting a fire started than they already have on a cold, damp morning! Large changes in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the air also would disrupt the delicate balance and would have far-reaching negative ramifications for both animals and plants.

Day three

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth . . . the fruit tree" (Gen. 1:11).

An unusual tree, almost a sacred object that has survived because of special care, the ginkgo lives in temple gardens in China and Japan. Ginkgo leaves are truly distinctive, being unlike other tree leaves and highly diagnostic. They appear like miniature Japanese fans. Both the fossil and living ginkgo trees have these characteristic leaves. Ancestors with leaves intermediate between ginkgo and other trees are unknown.

Such an absence of intermediate forms is common to plants in general. On the third day God spoke different kinds of plants into existence and they have remained distinct ever since. Only variation within these basic kinds has occurred.

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To have the ability to perceive and respond to sound stimuli is one thing, but to enjoy music is another. Where in the cold, cruel world of evolution and survival of the fittest does humor fit?

**Day four**

“And God said, Let there be lights” (Gen. 1:14).

Recently I stepped out into a fresh, crisp, spring morning and pondered the origin of the beauty and order around me. Are the rising sun, the fresh air, and the green hillsides only the results of undirected chance? Somehow this explanation is not satisfying; it does not ring true. All my common sense wells up to refute this idea.

This sun is just the right distance from the earth. If it were farther away, life would freeze and become impossible. If it were closer, summer heat would be intolerable. All life would burn up and turn to dust.

The earth is also precisely adjusted to receive heat from the sun. If it rotated on its axis more slowly or rapidly, living things would find life difficult or impossible. Imagine a hot summer day ten times (or even two times) longer than our present twenty-four-hour days. What did not burn up during the long scorching day would freeze in the seemingly endless night.

**Day five**

“And God created great whales” (Gen. 1:21).

Whales are mammals that maintain their body temperatures, breathe air, and nurse their young. Their uniqueness is not limited to size (largest animals, past or present) but includes amazing adaptations to a marine environment.

According to evolutionary theory, animals moved from the sea (fish) to the land (amphibians and reptiles) and some moved back again to the sea (marine mammals) during their evolutionary development. The amount of necessary evolution from land ancestors to marine whales is profound. Numerous steps would be required. If such evolution actually happened during several millions of years, these steps should be seen in the fossil record. After more than one hundred years of intensive fossil collecting all over the world, almost nothing is seen to support such an evolutionary development. Whales are well known in the fossil record and have typical whale characteristics. They do not qualify as connecting links to land animals.

**Day six**

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the . . . creeping thing” (Gen. 1:24).

The turtle has enlarged ribs fused together to produce bony shields. All other vertebrates (animals with a backbone) have the rib cage located internally between the shoulder and hip girdles. The fore and hind limbs attach to the body framework outside the rib cage. The turtle, however, has its shoulder and hip girdles inside the rib cage.

According to the general theory of evolution, a series of intermediates leading to this unusual skeletal arrangement should have evolved in the past history of turtles. But these intermediates are unknown in the fossil record. Many fossil turtles have been found, but from their first appearance they are turtles with their characteristic external bony framework.

This example is only one of many that illustrate the paucity of connecting links in the fossil record, a situation that speaks in favor of the creation of the major forms of living things and against the gradual evolving of organisms from simple to complex. (See pages 18-22 for a further discussion of horses, birds, and man.)

“And God said, Let us make man in our image” (Gen. 1:26).

Man was the crowning work of Creation. Man’s mind is his unique creation, placing him far above any of the animals. But the magnificence of the human mind lies above tools or technology. It shows best in that which is above necessity. Why do we appreciate the glory of a sunrise or the beauty of a tree? The myriad faces of the pantries, the intricate designs of the butterflies, the pastel shades of the evening sky, all add to our happiness.

To have the ability to perceive and respond to sound stimuli is one thing, but to enjoy music is another. We enjoy a cat rubbing against our legs and feeling the softness of its fur. We relish the fragrance of the lilac bushes in the backyard or the refreshing stimulus of a pine forest. We could survive without taste, but what we would lose! Where in the cold, cruel world of evolution and survival of the fittest does humor fit? Life is much more than raw survival. It is seeing and understanding. It is hearing and enjoying. But most of all, life is the touch of a hand, the caring look, the world of love. Yes, most of all, life is love.

“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31).

**Darwin’s . . .**

From page 6 and in a matter of months tripled the size of his 20-year-old manuscript and sent it to press. When published in 1859, it sold out in a single day!

The reactions to Darwin’s book were immediate and extreme. On one side, many in the scientific community grasped his concepts with eagerness and became evangelical in their promotion. On the other extreme, the general public, many clergy, and not a few scientists, while not disturbed over the idea that species could change, became very exercised over its implications. Many saw in Darwin’s theory an attack on the Biblical record, the concept of inspiration, the nature of man, and subsequently the salvation process.

By the time the next generation came along Darwinism had won a large percentage of the scientific community. Proponents of creationism were largely found among the evangelical clergy. This situation remained much the same until the mid-twentieth century, when a small number of scientists within the scientific community began to agitate for a creationist hearing. This confrontation with the established scientific community has increased in intensity, as can now be seen in the news media, political scenes, and the courts.
Evidences for a worldwide flood

Some of the data in the rocks pose problems for one who believes in a literal worldwide flood such as described in Genesis. Such problems need to be recognized. Yet the rocks also present a number of difficulties to the one who believes a worldwide flood never happened. In fact, some features can hardly be explained apart from a water catastrophe of a magnitude greater than anything experienced in modern times. □ by Ariel A. Roth

The flood described in Genesis was a worldwide event (Hasel, 1975) that destroyed terrestrial life. Most of the fossiliferous strata of the earth probably resulted from that flood, since the Bible suggests little else that would account for these extensive layers and allows little time for their formation either before or after the Flood.

If there was such an event as a worldwide flood, one would expect the rocks on the surface of the earth to give some indication of it. This article will discuss several lines of evidence that support this concept.

**Trend towards catastrophism**

The past decade has witnessed a basic change in geological thinking from the concept of small, slow changes over long periods of time to rapid catastrophism. The geological community is not adopting the concept of a universal flood, but new catastrophic interpretations fit well with the concept of a worldwide catastrophe as described in Genesis. A recent summary of advances in sedimentology in the leading geological news journal concludes, “The profound role of major storms throughout geologic history is becoming increasingly recognized” (Nummendal, 1982). The evidence for these storms is the same kind of evidence one would also expect from a flood as described in Genesis.

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Worldwide flood models do not call for water to cover the highest present mountains, which are assumed to have risen mostly since the Flood.

Distribution of marine sediments

The thickness of the sediments on the continents averages about 1.5 kilometers (.93 miles) and is about five times that of the sediments on the floor of the oceans. It is surprising that about half of the sediments on the continents are of oceanic origin. They contain marine fossils and often marine types of sediments including limestone and limy shale. What is so much marine material of oceanic origin doing on the continents!

A worldwide flood would better explain this abundance than would no flood. Of course, many geologists explain it by assuming that the continents in the past were at a lower level, permitting inundation by the sea. This may be precisely what a worldwide flood was all about. Worldwide flood models do not call for water to cover the highest present mountains, which are assumed to have risen mostly since the Flood.

Unique, widespread deposits

The widespread nature of unique sedimentary deposits with land-derived fossils on the continents is evidence of catastrophic activity for which there are no contemporary analogs. An outstanding example is the Triassic fossil-wood-bearing Shinarump conglomerate, a member of the Chinle formation found in the Southwestern United States. This conglomerate, which occasionally passes into a coarse sandstone, is usually less than 30 meters (100 feet) thick, but is spread as an almost continuous unit over nearly 250,000 square kilometers (100,000 square miles) (Gregory, 1950). It suggests that forces much greater than those existing at present were necessary to spread such a unique deposit over so wide an area. That local sedimentary activities, as claimed by some, should produce such continuity is extremely difficult to imagine. Any ordinary valley or canyon would have broken this continuity. Basal conglomerates and other units found in many other geologic formations present the same evidence. It is difficult to conceive of such transport forces that would not have worldwide implications.

Turbidites

The new turbidite concept of numerous rapid underwater mudflows fits in very well with a catastrophe such as the Genesis flood. These mudflows can travel as far as 1,000 miles, sometimes at rates of more than 50 miles per hour, may be up to 60 feet thick, and can spread over 40,000 square miles. Only time will tell what proportions of the sediments of the earth will eventually be identified as turbidites. Dott (1963) mentions "some what less than 50 percent" turbidites for some sediments in the Ventura Basin in California. In a section from Devonian through Eocene in the Northwestern United States, he estimates 30 percent as graded turbidites. More and more deposits of a turbidite type are being described as this concept takes its triumphal course through sedimentological reinterpretation.

A single turbidite does not support the concept of a worldwide flood, but their abundance very much does. The increasing number of deposits on the continents that are being identified as turbidites indicates underwater activity on a scale that would be expected in a worldwide flood and is not at all representative of present sedimentary patterns on the continents.

Paucity of erosional features at assumed time gaps

Frequently within the sedimentary layers of the earth, parts of the geologic column are missing. These usually represent millions to hundreds of millions of years according to the standard geologic time scale. Some of these missing portions can extend over major portions of continents. If these gaps were caused by erosion at these assumed time gaps, they should show the effects of time; otherwise, these layers were deposited rapidly, as expected, in a worldwide flood. True gaps should have a great deal of erosion that would be preserved under later deposition.

The almost complete absence of major erosional features (for example, the irregular topography now seen on the surface of the earth) in many such gaps suggests little time between periods of sedimentation. This would be predicted by a worldwide flood. A few fossil canyons exist (e.g., Cohen, 1976), but their almost universal absence in ancient sediments, compared to the present abundance of canyons over the surface of the earth, supports the concept of rapid deposition of sediments in the past with little time for erosion. Incidentally, a fossil canyon does not disprove flood activity. Erosion is expected during a flood, but the significant absence of erosion at these assumed time gaps indicates a short period of time, as expected during a worldwide flood. These gaps are common.

Conclusions

In summary, a fair amount of evidence supports the concept of a worldwide flood. The evidence for catastrophism, the abundance of marine sediments and turbidites on the continents, the more widespread distribution of unique terrestrial sedimentary deposits in the past than at the present, and the lack of time-dependent erosion features at proposed time gaps—when all are put together they produce a rather cogent argument for a worldwide flood. Of course, creationists are fully aware that some data present problems for a flood model, but what is presented here should not be neglected. Facts don’t cease to exist because they are ignored.

Selected Bibliography


Evolution confronts Christianity

Charles Darwin’s publication of Origin of Species precipitated a still-ongoing confrontation of two major theories of origins. Many churches and individual Christians have come to accept some modification of the evolutionary theory. Others are not comfortable with this accommodation both because of the Scriptures’ indication of a recent creation by divine fiat and because of evolution’s impact on the theological implications of the Bible.

The following article begins with a look at what constitutes the evolutionary theory, indicates the inconsistency of the principles underlying it with the basic principles of Christianity, and then discusses how it relates to some of the Christian doctrines. □ by Warren H. Johns and David C. James

Evolutionary theory probably has as many different varieties as Heinz has products! Today the two major types of evolutionary thought are “phyletic gradualism” and “punctuated equilibrium.” The basic difference is whether evolution has occurred slowly, as in the former, or rapidly, as in the latter. While some

creationists feel that punctuated equilibrium is one step closer to creationism because of its emphasis on sudden, dramatic changes in the history of life, nonetheless it requires a history of some three billion years and a process of chance to bring life from a simple one-celled stage to its present multicellular complexity.

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In dealing with evolution’s compatibility with Christianity, we will first summarize evolution according to its four major tenets as explained in Darwin’s Origin of Species.

1. Descent with modification. All living organisms, whether plant or animal, reproduce new generations that are different from their parent generations. No two living things are exactly identical, just as no two snowflakes are exactly alike.

2. Overproduction. Most living organisms reproduce far more offspring than will grow to maturity. For example, only a small fraction of the acorns produced by an oak tree will ever sprout into oak seedlings, and only a fraction of these seedlings will ever reach a mature, acorn-bearing stage.

3. Struggle for existence. The whole world of nature is characterized as a continual battle for survival. Organisms are competing with one another for the same space and the same food supplies. Since the food supplies are finite, some
If man's development has been along an evolutionary continuum from morally unaccountable animal ancestors to his present state, at what juncture did he become accountable?

organisms will die of malnourishment, and others will themselves become food for hungry organisms.

4. Survival of the fittest. Since living things produce more offspring than will ever reach maturity and since there is a constant struggle for existence, it follows that those organisms which are better adapted to their environment and its pressures will survive. The competitive edge is given to those which have inherited such variation as to give them an advantage in this fierce struggle.

All four of these tenets were combined by Charles Darwin—the first scientist to do so—into the one package that he called "natural selection." (Thus he titled his book On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection.) Just as agriculturists can increase the survivability of their livestock by artificial breeding, or selection, so nature improves its plant and animal species constantly through a process of natural selection.

Is natural selection compatible with Christianity? The answer is both Yes and No. We find no theological difficulty with the first two tenets of natural selection: descent with modification and overproduction. These self-evident facts of the natural world are in harmony with principles inscribed on the fabric of nature by the Creator Himself. We do find problems with the last two tenets. We cannot deny that there is a struggle for existence, but Darwin failed to acknowledge the root cause of this struggle—the presence of sin and evil in the world. He failed to realize that this struggle is not natural but unnatural (Gen. 3:14-19; Rom. 8:20-22); as the parable puts it, "An enemy hath done this" (Matt. 13:28). Evolution involves a principle of competition in the struggle for existence, whereas Christianity is based upon the principle of love—in its truest form, self-sacrifice—which entails sharing with one's neighbors, and even with one's enemies, the elements necessary for survival (John 15:13; Acts 20:35; Rom. 12:20). Self-preservation is not intrinsically wrong, but when it is not accompanied by self-sacrifice it becomes an evil no different from that which called for the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Eze. 16:49).

Likewise, the concept of "the survival of the fittest" may at first appear to be an innocuous description of everyday occurrences, but it certainly contradicts the Biblical descriptions of the principles upon which Christianity is based. Divine concern for and intervention on behalf of the handicapped upsets what appears to be the natural order. One's inherent fitness does not determine one's survivability; one's relationship to God does (see Matt. 5:3; Luke 4:18; 14:21; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 2 Cor. 12:10).

But evolution not only touches upon the general principles underlying Christianity; it also has implications, directly or indirectly, for all the Christian doctrines. We turn now to consider its bearing on specific doctrines.

The nature of man

Genesis 1 and 2 link man's creation with the creation of the world and particularly with the animals, and yet these accounts also make a very definite separation. The statement that man was created in the image of God highlights this separation. Creation in the image of God distinguishes man from the animals, which otherwise might be thought of in very similar terms, and tells something of the Biblical concept of the nature of man. The Bible depicts man as created with a degree of intelligence and a spiritual nature that made possible a high level of communication with God. He also had free moral agency, a conscience, and accountability for his actions, words, and even thoughts and motives. And, importantly, the Creation accounts imply that man as originally created was immortal, although this immortality was conditional. Death was not part of the world scheme but came as a result of man's fall (Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1-4, 22).

But if man originated from an even relatively continuous stream of evolutionary development, the clear separation from the higher animals we have noted above is destroyed. At what point in man's evolution would he have taken on the image of God? When would he have reached a level at which he could communicate with God, and, more importantly, when would morality have become important? When would he have had a conscience and accountability? At what point would God have indicated or decided that all life forms in man's family tree up to that point would not be eligible for eternal life, and all life forms after it would be—or will all life forms be resurrected to eternal life?

Some have tried to solve this kind of problem by postulating that at some point in man's evolution he was given an eternal soul, and that with this came his spiritual nature and potentialities. But the Scriptures portray man as a holistic being. The spiritual side of his nature has not been "laid on" him but is an integral part of his being. (See for example, Robert M. Johnston, "After Death: Resurrection or Immortality?" MINISTRY, September, 1983.) The dualistic understanding of man comes from the same source—ancient Greek thought—in which the concept of evolutionary development first appeared.

Evolution pictures successful life forms as relatively complete beings that function adequately in their environment. And man would be classed as one of these successful life forms. But the Biblical portrayal of man certainly varies greatly from this. Because he has spiritual components in his makeup, and because of the effect of the Fall and his own personal sins on this aspect of his nature, he cannot fairly be said to be a whole being or to be functioning adequately. Paul paints a pessimistic portrait of the human race apart from God (for example, Romans 1, 2) and even goes so far as to say that men apart from Christ are dead (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13). Hardly an indication that they are functioning adequately! There is a basic and very real disjunction between evolutionary and Biblical thought here.

The Creation accounts also stress man's dominion over and stewardship of the earth and all of the life upon it. ("Dominion over" does not necessarily
If death is not the result of sin but rather a natural part of the process by which God creates, then salvation from sin and its results does not necessarily mean salvation from death.

Adding to the difficulty, the Bible pictures death as the product of sin. One man’s disobedience brought it upon all (Rom. 5:12, 19-21). But the evolutionary scheme depends upon a continuous stream of deaths from the time the first living organism came into existence. Death then becomes part of the screening process that results in the development of new life forms and growth in complexity. Rather than being the result of sin—a negative quantity—it serves as part of the creation process. Death does not follow from man’s sin but precedes his existence by millions of years.

Whether one accepts Creation or evolution affects one’s understanding of salvation also. In an indirect manner, it touches upon the doctrine of salvation in that one’s concept of sin and its results (particularly death) affect one’s concept of salvation. If death is not the result of kind of immaterial soul—being taken to heaven at his death (again, see Johnston’s article referred to above), allowing for a continuing evolution on the earth. Rather, the Biblical picture is of a complete destruction of this earth and a re-creation, which is related to the original creation. Man then lives in the ideal, “restored to original condition” earth (see Rev. 21:1-5; Isa. 65:17-25; 66:22; Rom. 8:18-23; 2 Peter 3:7-13). The pattern is not of an ongoing world with the righteous individually taken off to Paradise. Rather it is one of Paradise created, lost, and finally restored through God’s gracious and omnipotent activity.

Evolution and the Sabbath

Marriage and the Sabbath are the two institutions which man carried with him when he sorrowfully left the perfection of

When society considers man to be merely a sophisticated animal with a simian ancestry, then it devalues marriage.

sin but rather a natural part of the process by which God creates, then salvation from sin and its results does not necessarily mean salvation from death.
I f we believe that the earth and all life therein came into existence through a slow, gradualistic process, then we are likely to reject any view suggesting a sudden, catastrophic end of the world.

The Sabbath memorializes a literal Creation week. (That the Bible considers the days of the creation week to be literal is indicated by its use of ordinal numbers with the Hebrew word for day, yom, in Genesis 1. Whenever this word is preceded by an ordinal number in the Old Testament, it refers to a twenty-four-hour period. See, for example, Numbers 7.) The Sabbath reminds us of our creatureliness, as products of a literal creation at the hand of God, and that our lives are measured by time, in contrast to God's timelessness. Both of these facts of our existence serve to turn us to God. But evolution challenges both a clear belief in our creatureliness and the Sabbath. In doing so, it weakens modern man's realization of his need for God.

Evolution and eschatology

Parallel to the trend of making the seven days of Creation vague and indefinite is a trend that renders the events at the end of the world vague and indefinite. Just as most scholars treat the opening chapters of Genesis as mythological, many scholars treat the book of Revelation as totally symbolic without any fulfillment within historical events. It is possible that the revolution in geological thinking in the past two hundred years has had an impact here. Modern geology is said by some to have begun when James Hutton introduced uniformitarianism to the Royal Society in 1785. He ended his speech to that group with these famous words: "The result, therefore, of our inquiry is that we see no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end." Granted, Hutton was not denying that the universe, or our own cosmos, must have had a beginning and will have an end, but the principle he introduced has had the effect of exploding the Biblical concept of a definite beginning and end.

Basically there are two possibilities as to how the end of all things can take place: (1) it could be sudden, catastrophic, and supernatural; or (2) it could be a gradual transition through natural events into a spiritual kingdom. Some of Jesus' sayings appear to support one scenario and some the other. The gradualistic, nearly imperceptible entry of the kingdom is described in these words: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20, 21). But one has only to read a few verses further to find the opposite description: "For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day" (verse 24). The gradualistic view of the kingdom's entry is best applied to the work of the gospel within human hearts; thus Christ had already established the kingdom in His Day. But the future establishment of the kingdom in all its glory is to be a worldwide, catastrophic event accompanied by fire that removes all traces of sin and serves as a prelude to a new act of creation by the divine Creator (see Matt. 24:35-39; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2 Peter 3:7-10; Rev. 6:12-17; 21:1-8).

Generally the way we interpret the opening chapters of Genesis will be the way in which we interpret the book of Revelation. The two books are linked together by a golden thread, and it is not without significance that the Lord describes Himself as "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending" (Rev. 1:8). If we believe that the earth and all life therein came into existence through a very slow, gradualistic process called evolution, then we are likely to reject any view suggesting a sudden, catastrophic end of the world and a miraculous beginning of a new world. But the whole emphasis of the eschatological portions of the New Testament is upon the suddenness of the Second Advent, and the book of Revelation ends on that note: "Behold, I come quickly" (chap. 22:12). The course of human history is brought to a close by supernatural intervention. And if it is true that the end will take place with suddenness and with supernatural activity, then we are fully justified in believing that life originated in just as abrupt and supernatural a manner. The basis for believing that Christ can radically transform this sin-scarred planet and remove all traces of evil is that He is both Redeemer and Creator. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (chap. 4:11).
Major objections to Creation and how we answer them

A number of scientific interpretations conflict with the Creation account as depicted in Genesis. The major ones are briefly considered here. For some there are good answers; for others, not. In this article, the staff of the Geoscience Research Institute candidly present the most serious objections raised against the creationist position. The reader ought to be aware, however, that the scientific evidence for Creation cannot be adequately evaluated on the basis of objections only.

1 Genesis and evolution actually agree

In an attempt to harmonize the Bible with views of origins popularly defended as scientific, many people assert that the first chapter of Genesis is basically in agreement with the modern concept of evolutionary development from incipient life to man. Such attempts at harmonization come under the classifications of "theistic evolution" and "progressive creation."

Progressive creation endeavors to avoid the difficulty of time by proposing six long (millions of years) periods of relative stasis punctuated by direct divine intervention in six literal twenty-four-hour days. Theistic evolution treats the Genesis text as a metaphor with time significance only to the extent of portraying six succeeding epochs of gradual evolutionary development.

Both progressive creation and gradualistic theistic evolution have difficulty with the progression of events given by Moses. The standard evolutionary model, based on theoretical constraints and the fossil sequence, sees life beginning in the sea, with gradual differentiation into the plant and animal kingdoms. Modern land vegetation does not appear until after extensive development of marine plant life. According to Genesis, life began on land with fully developed vegetation of all types appearing two days before animals inhabited the ocean. In the Genesis narrative, birds and fish appear simultaneously, while in the current evolutionary scenario birds were not developed until about 400 million years after complex marine animals were in existence.

Thus it may be confidently asserted that progressive creation and theistic evolution models for the development of life are irreconcilable with a direct, grammatical-historical reading of the Biblical account of Creation.

2 The problem of radiometric dating

One of the most effective challenges to a direct, grammatical-historical interpretation of the first eleven chapters of Genesis is provided by radiometric dating. Creationist literature is at its worst in its attempts to deal with this challenge.

Many individuals expect scientific evidence to independently support the Bible since both natural phenomena and inspired testimony are revelations of God who is truthful and consistent. That this is not necessarily so becomes
Eohippus should not be included in a progression of horses.
The rest of the horses, even if they represented a valid evolutionary series, do not illustrate major evolution.

The horse, perhaps more than any other example, has been used to illustrate evolution. The series of horses from small to large, from several-toed to one-toed, as illustrated in books and in museums has been impressive. Yet even this prime exhibit has broken down under careful scrutiny.

The “dawn horse” (Eohippus) was first named Hyracotherium and placed in the hyrax order. This classification is still valid. The hyrax, a cat-sized animal that lives in the Near East and Africa, is somewhat generalized, resembling groundhogs, pigs, rabbits, guinea pigs, etc. Depending on which parts are compared. When the horse evolutionary series was being pieced together, Hyracotherium was renamed Eohippus and placed at the beginning of the series. For more than fifty years this evolutionary sequence has appeared with little change in textbooks and in museum displays. That it was an incorrect oversimplification became clear, however, soon after it was outlined. Note this statement written twenty-three years ago by a well-known scientist and writer: “There was a time when the existing fossils of the horses seemed to indicate a straight-line evolution from small to large, from doglike to horselike, from animals with simple grinding teeth to animals with the complicated cusps of the modern horse. It looked straight-line—like the links of a chain. But not for long. As more fossils were uncovered, the chain splayed out into the usual phylogenetic net, and it was all too apparent that evolution had not been in a straight line at all, but that (to consider size only) horses had now grown taller, now shorter, with the passage of time. Unfortunately, before the picture was completely clear, an exhibit of horses as an example of orthogenesis had been set up at the American Museum of Natural History, photographed, and much reproduced in elementary textbooks (where it is still being reprinted today).”—Garrett Hardin, Nature and Man’s Fate (New York: Mentor Books, 1961) pp. 225, 226.

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Eohippus should not be included in a progression of horses. The rest of the horses, even if they represented a valid straight-line evolutionary series, do not illustrate major evolution. They neither arose from, nor developed into, non-horses. Creationists accept change within basic kinds of animals. They insist that changes bridging families and higher classificational categories are unsupported by evidences from either ancient or modern organisms. The horse series that was supposed to supply the evidence for major evolutionary change can now be seen to be, instead, only another example of microevolution.

The evolution of man

Much has been said about the evolution of man. Many books have been written on the topic. It is a difficult subject to handle briefly.

There are only two well-known and well-authenticated types of ancient man—Neanderthal man and Cro-Magnon man. In more recent years the picture of Neanderthal man has been changed because of evidence that the original skeleton that served as a model was misshapen by osteoarthritis and rickets! Neanderthal man has been inaccurately portrayed for many years as a brutish, beastlike human. Excavations in Iraq (Shanidar Cave) have revealed that handicapped members of the Neanderthal society survived to old age. Neanderthal man had a cranial capacity equal to that of modern man. Cro-Magnon man was apparently physically superior to modern man and also does not qualify as a connecting link between ape and man.

The interesting fossil remains being discovered in Africa are surrounded by much controversy. Some paleoanthropologists (those who study ancient man) believe that they are fossil remains of prehumans, whereas others say that they are merely the remains of bipedal apes. Some think that the creatures walked upright like little men, while others feel they swung through the trees. Fierce
Could the Grand Canyon have been cut down rapidly by a catastrophic event? Some evidence, such as huge blocks of the Redwall formation having slid down the canyon, suggest this.

arguments over the interpretation of the various finds make objective evaluation difficult. Anthropologists often think their own finds are the missing link while denying the importance of what their colleagues have found. Until more specimens are located and more information is available, it is difficult to come to any reliable conclusions.

The eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980 tore out many trees and deposited them on the slopes, in the river valleys, and in floating rafts in Spirit Lake at the base of the mountain. Mount St. Helens provides a modern model of what may have happened in the past to produce the petrified forests of Yellowstone. Many of the trees that have been torn out have come to rest in an upright position as in Yellowstone.

Coral reefs represent the largest structures on earth that are built mainly by organisms. Because of the present usual slow rate of growth of these reefs it is frequently asserted that they cannot be accounted for in the few thousand years of time since Creation suggested by the Bible. It would take more than one hundred thousand years to build our largest reefs, according to some commonly accepted estimates.

On the other hand, some measurements on record suggest reef growth rates several orders of magnitude higher than usually assumed (see Origins, vol. 6, no. 2, 1979). Some factors that may have contributed to faster reef growth in the past are: (1) reduced ultraviolet light inhibition at depth; (2) trapping of sediments by reefs; (3) increase in temperature; and (4) more favorable nutritional factors.

The Yellowstone petrified forests

The petrified forests of Yellowstone, consisting of many sequential levels, are said to have taken many thousands of years for successive growth and burial by volcanic mud slides. Research during the past fifteen summers reveals many features that are distinct from that of a normal growing forest and its humus-covered floor. If these trees did not grow in their present locations, they must have been transported from elsewhere.

The eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980 tore out many trees and deposited them on the slopes, in the river valleys, and in floating rafts in Spirit Lake at the base of the mountain. Mount St. Helens provides a modern model of what may have happened in the past to produce the petrified forests of Yellowstone. Many of the trees that have been torn out have come to rest in an upright position as in Yellowstone.

The fossil sequence argues against creation

Many paleontologists feel that the fossil sequence found in the layers of the earth represents the strongest evidence available for evolution. This is because organisms classified as simpler are found in the lower portions of the fossil record. For instance, from bottom to top, the first appearance of most major vertebrate classes—fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals—is in a general evolutionary sequence. On the other hand, the invertebrates, which form about 95 percent of the fossil animal kinds, do not present a meaningful evolutionary sequence.

The general evolutionary sequence of the vertebrate fossils can be valid only if one assumes vast amounts of time for its formation. Creationists have other explanations. The ecological zonation theory proposes that those organisms living at lower levels were the first to become buried by the flood, while those living higher were destroyed later as the floodwaters gradually rose to higher levels. This theory suggests that the vertical distribution of the pre-Flood ecology was similar to the fossil record with the invertebrates and fishes at lower levels, then amphibians, reptiles, and mammals, thus producing a sequence compatible with present ecology but differs in many details.

Other factors used to explain the fossil sequence include gravitational sorting (the more dense organisms sinking deeper and faster during the flood), locomotion (the more motile organisms escaping to the highest levels during the flood), and the flotation characteristics of the dead organisms. Doubtless these factors would be significant in a limited way during the flood, but it is highly doubtful that any one factor alone can explain the complete sequence of fossils. Probably at least a combination of original ecological distribution, sorting, locomotion, and flotation was involved.
The creationist considers the monotremes to be a created kind. If one can make this assumption, then one can accept that Archaeopteryx may also have been a created group now extinct.

9 The Australian problem

Of the questions that are posed to creationists, one of the most frequent involves the fact that marsupials (pouched animals such as the kangaroo, wallaby, and the wombat) are found almost exclusively in Australia. There are about six families of Australian marsupials ranging in size from seven-foot-tall kangaroos to marsupial mice barely an inch long. Yet Australia has no native forms of land animals comparable to the large herbivorous animals, carnivores, or rodents found on the rest of the continents. In fact, with one exception, no other animal families found on the other continents are native to Australia.

The one exception is an indigenous group of placental mammals related to the old-world rats and mice. These were in Australia long before man introduced the rabbit, the dingo, and, of course, his domestic animals.

As one views the marsupials in Australia, he is struck by the structural similarities between them and placental mammals which occupy similar habitats in other parts of the world. Australia has marsupial carnivores, marsupial moles, and other forms occupying ecological niches similar to those of their placental equivalents.

The creationist must ask: If all these marsupials came off the ark and migrated to Australia, how were the small mouse-like forms able to reach Australia ahead of large placentals that now inhabit nearby regions in the Malay peninsula—e.g., deer, elephant, large cats, and assorted primates? At present the creationist has no convincing explanation for the current distribution of marsupials. Looking only at this problem one would have to admit that the evolutionary paradigm is more successful. On the other hand, the fossil record of marsupials does not support an evolutionary origin. If one looks at the total picture, the creationist view still maintains an advantage.

10 Does micro-evolution prove macroevolution?

Basic to the theory of evolution is the concept that one species, with enough time, can give rise to another species. In proposing this idea, Darwin postulated that environment was the agent that, over time, selected the most fit. Those that survived passed along their genes to the next generation, and gradually new structures, behaviors, etc., came into place.

Darwin was, of course, correct in stating that it is possible for one species to evolve into something different within the kind. But was he correct to imply that this process could be carried on indefinitely so that one could start with a single-celled organism and eventually produce a complex form such as man?

While perhaps a majority of creationists will say that some change is possible, they will also state that there are limits to change. Here the creationists stand on firmer ground in the conflict with evolution. The fossil record is clearly incompatible with a gradualistic view of species formation. There are indeed gaps between major groups of organisms.

Evolutionary apologists have claimed until recently that the intermediates have been lost. Recently the proponents of “punctuated equilibrium” have admitted the reality of the gaps but have proposed that these gaps represent times of very rapid speciation in which new structures appeared in but a twinkie of evolutionary time, leaving little or no traces in the fossil record.

The evidence for evolution between major groups is strikingly lacking.

11 Is Archaeopteryx a missing link?

It has been noted above that transitional forms between two basic kinds are absent. A possible exception to this general rule is Archaeopteryx—a creature that shares characteristics between two major animal groups—the birds and reptiles. Indeed, until the true nature of the organism was known, several fossils belonging to this group were classified as small dinosaurs.

According to evolutionary thinking, birds evolved from earlier reptilian ancestors. Archaeopteryx resembles lizards in having teeth set in sockets, less fusion of the vertebrae, a long, bony tail from which feathers arise (tail feathers in birds arise from over a single bone), three wing bones homologous to the digits in lizards, a small sternum, and no air sacs in the bones. On the other hand, Archaeopteryx had feathers like those of modern birds, a large brain case, a skeletal structure specialized for flying, and fully developed wings. Thus it does appear to be a genuine intermediate. But could it also represent a group of extinct organisms that shared certain characteristics of both groups?

Archaeopteryx is not alone in sharing characteristics of two groups. The monotremes (duck-billed platypus and the spiny anteater) can perhaps help us better understand Archaeopteryx. Monotremes lay and incubate eggs, but then nurse the young. Structurally, some of their bones even resemble those of lizards. The creationist considers the monotremes to be a created kind. If one can make this assumption, it should not be difficult to accept that Archaeopteryx may also have been a created group now extinct.

12 Evaporites

An evaporite is a sediment deposited from an aqueous solution as a result of extensive or total evaporation of the water.

One evaporite deposit of anhydrite (calcium sulphate) found in the Permian “Delaware Basin” is 762 meters thick. A simplistic model has been postulated that such a deposit represents the salt in a
When confronted by time issues such as those provided by evaporites and cooling rates, we must be willing to admit that we may not have all the data or understand the issues completely.

column of sea water 1,544 kilometers deep. To produce such a deposit from evaporation alone would require almost one million years of constant evaporation at the rate of two meters of water a year. Fossils found in the evaporite deposit compound the time problem for those who believe in a short chronology for life on this earth.

The answer to such a dilemma must be found in models for deposition other than evaporation. Some such models do exist. However, it must be recognized that the evaporite problem is so complex that any model proposed is very involved and may not give as satisfactory an answer as one would desire.

13 Basalt cooling rates

A lizard lies on a small rock in the cool desert night. Why? Because the rock is slowly giving off the heat energy it absorbed from the previous day’s sun. Imagine the length of time that the same rock would radiate heat immediately after solidification from a molten state. A lot of heat energy would be stored in that rock, and the lizard could spend a very long time in the cold before the rock would cool down to a comfortable temperature.

Imagine now that instead of a small rock in the desert we are interested in a rock the size of Half Dome in Yosemite National Park, and the length of time required for such a rock to cool from a molten state. The length of time becomes almost too large to comprehend, and yet we haven’t even started to consider the rest of Yosemite Valley, let alone the other granite and basalt formations around the world!

It has been postulated that tens of thousands of years would be necessary for major batholiths, like Half Dome, to cool if a simple convection model were used for heat loss. A greater concern arises when we attempt to calculate the time necessary for the solidification and cooling of extensive mountain ranges such as the Sierra Nevada in California.

When confronted by time issues such as those provided by evaporites and cooling rates, we must be willing to admit that we may not have all the data or understand the issues completely. In such situations it is best to reserve judgment regarding conclusions that may be currently postulated.

14 By what authority?

When a series of lectures is to be given on an important subject by an unknown individual, one of the first questions you ask yourself is: Does this individual speak from an authoritative position or is he a crackpot? Knowingly or unknowingly, we are constantly making value judgments concerning individuals who state a position or give information. This is especially true regarding controversial subjects.

The subject of origins brings out some of the strongest challenges to authority. Evolutionists offer demonstrable scientific evidence and the interpretation of such evidence. Creationists offer the assertions of the Bible supplemented by scientific evidence of design.

Any attempt to use science in determining the origin of life must, by definition, presuppose creation because science operates from the data of experience. Creation cannot be the object of experience because it is the precondition of experience!

Creation stands beyond the limits of human experience, resting at the interface between man’s faith and God. Any inquiry into origins must, then, be an inquiry into the nature and character of God. Since Scripture is the only reliable authority on God, the Scriptural record, elaborated by experimentation and observation, presents the most authoritative position on origins.

Recommended reading

From page 32

Wysong, R. L. 1976. The Creation-Evolution Controversy. Inquiry Press, Midland, Michigan. 455 pages. A comprehensive treatment of scientific creationism as it stands today. While the author exhibits an ultraconservative Biblical preference, he endeavors to present a fair treatment of contrasting evolutionary and creationist views. Extraordinarily well illustrated; clear, straightforward style; extensive documentation. The treatment of geology, geochemistry, and radiometric dating is principally based on uncritical borrowing from previous creationist literature and does not compare favorably with the manner in which philosophy, molecular biology, and genetics are handled.

Journals

Acts and Facts Impact Series. Published by the Institute for Creation Research, 2100 Greenfield Drive, El Cajon, California 92021. Published as a part of Acts and Facts, a newsletter of the Institute for Creation Research, the Impact Series presents a monthly discussion of a particular topic in the creation-evolution controversy.

Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation. An attempt to bridge the gap between science and religion from the standpoint of liberal Christianity and evolution.

Origins. Published by the Geoscience Research Institute, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California 92350. A biannual publication that discusses scientific and theological aspects of the Creation-evolution controversy. Written for pastors, theologians, and scientists. (See ad on page 31.)
In search of the silver bullet

Can't creationists come up with some evidence so spectacular and overwhelming that evolutionists will be forced to watch their theories crumple into a heap? Such a search is futile, says the author, and may lead to something less than objectivity. © by Richard D. Tkachuck

In fictional literature, the demise of some dangerous foes can be accomplished only by silver bullets. The same metaphor has been used in the search for a cancer cure. The implication is that every threat can be brought to a rapid and complete end by destroying one vital spot.

Creationists over the years have searched for silver bullets in their attacks on evolutionary models. The reasoning goes as follows: If one can make a finding so spectacular and convincing that no conceivable explanation other than the Flood and/or Creation is possible, then the mighty evolutionary giant will abruptly crumple into a heap. Over the years, several silver bullets have been supposedly found, and a subsequent fusillade has been directed at the evolutionary foe.

The most notable of these is the purported finding of fossil human footprints alongside dinosaur footprints. Since the dinosaurs became extinct some 60 million years ago, according to standard geological thinking, and humans evolved only 2-3 million years ago, the presence of human and dinosaur footprints together in the same geologic layer would, of course, destroy any presently held evolutionary scheme.

Just how good is the evidence for the above? Unfortunately, in the opinion of many fully committed creationists, not good at all. There are some large dinosaur tracks alongside the trackway of a smaller bipedal animal. The smaller, supposedly human prints are indistinct, badly eroded, and could equally well or better be interpreted as eroded footprints of a three-toed dinosaur. In a creationist movie filmed at the Paluxy River site in Texas, footprints were enhanced with oil to make clearer photographs. Unfortunately, artistic license was great and created an impression of fact where only speculation existed.

Another silver bullet shot from the guns of creationists concerns the finding of angiosperm (flowering plants) pollen in Precambrian shales. According to evolutionary interpretation, flowering plants did not evolve until the middle of the geologic column, while so-called primitive plants held sway at the bottom. The discovery of angiosperm pollen in the lowermost layers would indeed cause serious damage to the evolutionary model, for the fossils of plants capable of producing such pollen are found only in the upper portions of the column, hundreds of millions of presumed years later.

When rock samples taken from the original collection sites were examined, using very careful methods to exclude the possibility of contamination, no pollen was found. It appears that the original description of pollen from the lower layers of the Grand Canyon was the result of contaminated samples.

The purported finding of Noah's ark is yet another round fired in support of a Biblical model. While there are enough reported sightings to stimulate one's thinking and interest, the evidence has been less convincing. Several pieces of wood from Ararat have been advanced as proof that the ark exists. When submitted to carbon-14 dating, they dated near the ninth century A.D.

The search for the silver bullet is laudable. In my opinion, however, it is probably a futile attempt. A personal incident may illustrate.

While in graduate school I met a faculty member who had once taken a very conservative Biblical view of Creation and the Flood, but later abandoned it for a view currently popular with evolutionists. I wanted to know what had caused the shift in models of origins and a complete loss of faith in the Bible. He stated that he did not see much sense in certain Biblical constraints on moral behavior and that the evolutionary view was more logical. I asked how he'd respond to definite proof for the Biblical view.
Shepherdess • Elinor Wilson

The stature seekers

Even in the religious world, and even among ministerial families, status rather than stature can easily become the goal. If we want to indulge ambition, Scripture encourages us to seek stature to the fullest.

Elinor Wilson, author of this month's Shepherdess feature, is the wife of a minister who has functioned in many roles—pastor, treasurer, departmental secretary, missionary, administrator, and since 1979 president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Like many ministers' wives, she has had to adapt with grace to these changing assignments and residences. A certified elementary school teacher, she has served in classrooms from Cairo, Egypt, to Takoma Park, Maryland! But she readily admits that her foremost accomplishment in life has been the training and rearing of her two children, Ted and Shirley. Now she enjoys three grandchildren and being a full-time homemaker.

In a world that seems to be totally absorbed in the selfish pursuit of position, Elinor encourages us to be "stature seekers," not "status seekers." And she practices what she preaches! These thoughts were shared first with the ladies at the 1982 Annual Council held in Manila. But they are so appropriate to all of us that they deserve a wider circulation.—Marie Spangler.

Serendipity is a five-syllable word that means finding something valuable or agreeable that you didn't seek or expect to find. Well, in going through a book recently, I found something I didn't expect—something valuable and something I needed. A chapter heading in Dr. G. T. Anderson's book Striking God's Battlefield struck me as important and valuable. "Status or Stature," it read.

Although closely related words, coming from similar Latin roots, status and stature have developed to have very different meanings today. Generally we think of status as having a negative connotation. Status involves judging ourselves with reference to, or by comparison with, others. Stature, on the other hand, means judging ourselves with reference to certain fixed standards. And of course, as Christians, our stature depends on our likeness to the standard Jesus Christ has set. The apostle Paul set forth this fact so clearly when he wrote to the Ephesians: "So shall we all at last attain to the unity inherent in our faith and our knowledge of the Son of God ... measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ" (chap. 4:13, N.E.B.).

Vance Packard, in his best-seller The Status Seekers, portrayed this all-too-prevalent activity as a game people play with houses, furniture, clothes, automobiles, clubs, education, et cetera. These things become a means to build individual prestige. Some even pull churches into the status game with a materialistic scale of values and begin to measure religious success by the size of building, the amount of the annual budget, or the number of members. Different things gain importance as status symbols in different parts of the world, but the game is the same. Packard points out that in a certain section of the American Midwest, television antennas once seemed to be the status symbol. The most conspicuous feature of the landscape in this area was the array of towering television antennas, some on tripods reaching more than fifty feet into the sky! Oddly enough, those houses on high ground had TV towers just as tall as those on low ground. The really ironic aspect of the whole situation was that all of these houses could get adequate television reception with ten-foot antennas. The additional height of forty or fifty feet was simply a status symbol.

As religious leaders and spouses of religious leaders, are we ever guilty of falling into this status trap? Do we, because of position or office, try to claim a little extra prestige? A few special favors? Because we are the wives of leaders, do we feel that gives us status? Or do we covet, rather, stature by comparing ourselves to Christ and seeing how closely we reflect His likeness?

More than 1,900 years ago Jesus had something important to say about status seeking. Both in His life and in His teaching, He dealt with this human temptation and weakness. Sometimes His comments seemed to reveal a touch of humorous irony. Noticing all of the prestige-consciousness that surrounded Him and those who were avidly in search of status, especially among religious leaders and their families, Jesus gave words of advice to guests at a wedding when He noticed how they were choosing the best seats. "When you are invited to a wedding reception, don't sit down in the best seat. It might happen that a more distinguished man than you has also been invited. Then your host might say, "I am afraid you must give up your seat for this man." And then, with considerable embarrassment, you will have to sit in the humblest place. No, when you are invited, go and take your seat in an inconspicuous place, so that when your host comes in he may say to you, "Come on, my dear fellow, we have a much better seat than this for you."

(Luke 14:8-10, Phillips).†

Another time Jesus talked about spiritual leaders, and His words may have some application for those of us who are in similar positions today.

"Be on your guard against these scribes who love to walk about in long robes and to be greeted respectfully in public and to have the front seats in the synagogue and the best places at dinner-parties! These are the men who grow fat on widows' property and cover up what they are doing by making lengthy prayers" (Mark 12:38-40, Phillips).
These were revolutionary words! Few seemed to understand the concept of true humility presented by Jesus (see Matt. 20:25-28). Even today most of us probably ignore this particular teaching, or at least neglect to act on it. What Jesus really does in this passage is to negate our own accepted standards and values and contradict our human way of thinking.

Frequently we are on display because we are the pastor’s wife or the conference administrator’s wife, and as a result we become the object of discussion. It is easy for a gulf to develop between us and the people. Often we get to the place that we expect preferential treatment because of who we are. There is great danger that we become status seekers rather than stature seekers. For example, if a change comes in our work or in the work of our husband that we feel is not quite so important as the former work, we feel rejected and shattered. Instead of rejoicing and thanking God for the opportunity of serving Him in whatever capacity we may, our human tendency is to become bitter at a loss of “status.”

But I think Jesus was trying to tell us more in these passages. I am concerned about the feelings of superiority that develop within the church—superiority and perhaps discrimination—based upon race, or language, or culture, or color, or perhaps upon economic status or age. I like the message of that little song we teach our children in Sabbath school: “Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world; brown and yellow, black and white, all are precious in His sight.” And I plead with you that we all eliminate any feelings of superiority or discrimination based on these human standards that we sometimes use to give earthly status rather than measuring our stature against the beautiful and spotless character of our Lord. When we love Jesus, we will love each other, and then everyone will be precious in our sight, just as we teach our children to sing.

Our Lord expects us to set an example, to be models of patience, humility, love, and Christian grace. We are to be an inspiration to the people in our churches whom we serve. We must show a concern for the whole family of God. Who are better qualified than women and mothers for the special task and privilege of keeping the spiritual family together? Perhaps we can understand some of these things even better than men do! Let us tactfully remind our husband-leaders of these great principles of Christ’s kingdom.

The apostle James gave very special emphasis to our Lord’s teaching and made a practical application of some of these principles when he wrote, “Don’t ever attempt, my brothers, to combine snobbiness with faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ! Suppose one man comes into your meeting well-dressed and with a gold ring on his finger, and another man, obviously poor, arrives in shabby clothes. If you pay special attention to the well-dressed man by saying, ‘Please sit here—it’s an excellent seat,’ and say to the poor man, ‘You stand over there, or if you must sit, sit on the floor by my feet,’ doesn’t that prove that you are making class-distinctions in your mind, and setting yourselves up to assess a man’s quality from wrong motives?” (James 2:1-4, Phillips).

I’m glad to be a part of the family of God! A family made up of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, where we can be one in Christ. With differences? Yes! But with feelings of being superior or more important than others? No! We must stay close to Christ and to each other. We must pray for each other and, as the inspired apostle says, in honor prefer one another (Rom. 12:10).

We need not be concerned with status. But we must be ever so concerned that we grow and mature until we are satisfied with nothing less than the full stature of Christ.


Sermons from Psalms

We read from the Psalms at hospital bedsides, at weddings, and at funerals. We use them devotionally and we even sing some of them. But we rarely preach from them. And the reason, the author suggests, is because we don’t really understand them. Here’s how you can get into preaching from the Psalms in a way that will make them mean something to the people in your pews.

Toward Better Preaching

Hans K. LaRondelle

Before the Psalms can be applied sermonically to the church today, a responsible exegesis of the texts must be undertaken; that is, each psalm must be understood first in its own religious-historical setting in the life and worship of ancient Israel. This calls for the exercise of grammatical and historical exegesis. But it also calls for a theological exegesis in which persons and events are related to Yahweh and His covenants with Israel. The persecutors of the Israel of God are, theologically speaking, the enemies of Yahweh. The selected bibliography appearing at the end of this article will suggest books that can help you in preparing sermons from the Psalms.

In order to choose preaching material intelligently from among the 150 psalms and to know what message each contains, one should be acquainted with the basic classifications. An excellent review is given by Lawrence E. Toombs, “The Psalms,” in The Interpreter’s One-Volume Commentary on the Bible (C. M. Laymon, ed.), pages 253-261.

Liturgical style of the Psalms

It is presently widely accepted that a close connection existed between the Psalms and the public worship services in the Temple of Jerusalem. Many songs apparently were composed as sacred poems for special religious festivals. Others seem to have been adapted later for cultic worship. This worship function gave the Psalms a more general character, or style, that made them useful for worship by the saints of all times, especially by Christians in their private devotions and public church services.

This liturgical use of the Psalms also gave them a well-ordered structure. N. Ridderbos describes the intellectual arrangement of these poems: “Praying, to the psalmists, is not an uncontrolled effusion of their emotions. As pleading advocates they place a variety of well-arranged grounds of pleading before the Lord as the royal judge. Thus they build a firm foundation on which they can stand to make known to the Lord their hearts’ desires.”—DePsalmen, Vol. I (1962), p. 25. (My own translation.)

Three main classes of psalms are generally recognized: hymns or songs of praise; songs of thanksgiving; and laments or prayers of supplication. Smaller divisions are classified as royal psalms, wisdom psalms, entrance liturgies, pilgrim songs, penitential psalms, imprecatory psalms, et cetera. Some laments deserve special attention, for they contain confessions of innocence, even oaths of integrity and righteousness (Psalms 7; 26). These so-called psalms of innocence, these confessions of righteousness or perfection or blamelessness, can easily be misunderstood as legalistic assertions of self-righteousness. It is of crucial importance to recognize that the actual life setting of such laments is the cultic setting of a sacral lawsuit. The falsely accused Israelite seeks help from God in His sanctuary, vindication of his righteous cause through a priestly oracle in the Temple (see Ex. 22:7-12; Deut. 17:8-12; I Kings 8:31, 32; Ps. 26:6, 7). Lawrence Toombs presents a helpful reconstruction of this cultic ritual in The Interpreter’s One-Volume Commentary, page 257. For an extensive theological analysis of the terms perfection, or blamelessness, and righteousness in the Psalms, see H. K. LaRondelle, Perfection and Perfectionism, third edition (Andrews

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Before the Psalms can be applied sermonically to the church today, a responsible exegesis of the texts must be undertaken; each psalm must be understood first in its own religious-historical setting.

Basic theological theme of the Psalms

The most fundamental theme of the Psalms is the sharp distinction between the righteous and the wicked (see Psalm 1). For these poets, only two kinds of people stand before God; they see only two kinds of existence and only two eternal destinies. How are these defined or determined? The answer is, not by moral conduct, but by the religious root. This was determined by the priestly declaration in connection with the sacramental act of atonement in the temple of God. Moral or immoral life in Israel was considered to be, not the ultimate root of existence, but rather the consequence of the presence or absence of a living connection with the soul with God. Religious life is the very taproot of moral life in the Hebrew faith. A living connection with Yahweh, the covenant God, is not the result of any moral virtue or human achievement. Salvation is offered as a gracious gift of divine election. The sanctuary offers divine forgiveness of sin through the priestly ministry of the blood of the sin offerings. This atoning blood was explicitly provided by God Himself for Israel (see Lev. 17:11).

The Psalms never presuppose that a spiritual Israelite can live in moral perfection without God's daily atoning grace (see Ps. 141:1-3; 51:7, 17-19; 130:3, 4; 143:2). On the contrary, the Psalms reveal the need for the Lord's continual forgiving and keeping grace (Ps. 19:12, 13). Who are the righteous ones? Those who seek God in His temple, who long for His saving righteousness and His transforming grace, those who trust and obey Him wholeheartedly; in short, those who live in the religious "fear of Yahweh." They manifest their saving knowledge of God in an upright, just, and holy relationship with their fellow Israelites (see Leviticus 19; Psalms 15; 24).

The wicked ones—found also among the covenant people—are those who do not live out this redemptive sanctuary experience. They lack the motivating principle of love and gratitude to the Lord. Yet they are not neutral, religiously speaking. They are spiritually imatical to Israel's God, to His covenant, and to the theocratic king. This animosity is revealed in a life of systematic evil doing: violence, arrogance, lying, flattering, and plotting against the righteous ones (see Ps. 5:4-10; 11:2). The wicked are ultimately characterized, not by their immorality, but by their irreligiosity as the deepest cause of their social conduct (Ps. 14:1; 36:1-4). Accordingly, the Psalms intend to exalt, not man's ethical attributes, but rather his morality in indissoluble connection with its Source and with men's ultimate destiny (Psalms 1; 16; 37; 73).

Basic to the Psalms, therefore, is the "fear of the Lord," the saving and sanctifying knowledge of the Holy One (cf. Prov. 9:10). This knowledge is offered and experienced in God's sanctuary, where the supernatural Shekinah glory resided in the Most Holy Place. The designations righteous and wicked must be understood in the light of Israel's sanctuary theology. The righteous are not the self-righteous or those who have nearly attained to sinless perfection, but are repentant believers who have been declared righteous (justified) by the gracious word of the Levitical priest.

If the preacher wants to meet the spiritual needs of his church members today, he cannot find in the Bible a more suitable source of light and consolation than in the Psalms.

Typological approach of the Psalms

Both Luther and Calvin considered the book of Psalms as their primary sermon source. Calvin reportedly chose to preach on Sunday evenings exclusively from the Psalms and the New Testament. He recognized in the drama of these poems his own conversion story, including the betrayals and persecutions he had experienced. The Psalter became to him the special book of consolation. Calvin initiated the custom of singing from the Psalms in the reformed worship services, to incite the saints to lift up their hearts to God and to inspire more deeply their praises to God's glory.

On what hermeneutical basis did Luther and Calvin correctly apply Israel's liturgical Psalms to the believers in Christ? On the basis of the New Testament witness that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah of prophecy and of the Psalms. (For an extensive outworking of this Christological principle of interpreting the Psalms, see H. K. LaRondelle, The Israel of God in Prophecy: Principles of Prophetic Interpretation [Andrews University Monograph, Vol. III, 1983], Studies in Religion, chapters 4-51.)

Calvin followed the grammatical and historical method of exegesis more systematically than did Luther. He did not assume that the Psalms contained verbal predictions of Christ, but rather he saw in the Psalms indirect Messianic promises, detected only in the light of the New Testament, according to the guidelines of Biblical typology. The Christian can sing the psalms of Israel therefore with deeper understanding and with greater appreciation in the light of Jesus Christ.

We must realize that the theological correspondence of a type and its antitype is valid only with regard to their essential characteristics. Christ as the antitype is always greater, more glorious, and perfectly sinless. This constant comparison of two witnesses—the type in the Psalms and Christ's experience as the antitype—brings into the sermon the convincing power of the Holy Spirit with additional strength. It requires a preparatory study and a lively sketch, as far as possible, of the original, historical life setting of the Psalms in Israel's worship before the preacher moves on to the New Testament applications of the particular psalm and finally to the present-day meaning.

Expository preaching from the Psalms requires this concrete historical movement from the times of the Old Testament to the days of Christ and of the apostolic church. This approach pre-
Only when the congregation detects Christ and the gospel in the Psalms can we consider our task to be accomplished. Then the church of Jesus Christ can be seen at the center of all the Psalms.

vents the preaching from becoming abstract or moralizing. It presents God’s ways with real people who had the same basic problems and needs we have today. God’s messages to His people in the ancient past must then be transformed by the cross and the resurrection of Christ into new-covenant messages for the church today. Only when the congregation detects Christ and the saving gospel in the Psalms can we consider our task to be accomplished. Then also the church of Christ Jesus can be seen at the center of all the psalms. This is the challenge that never ends, because the book of Psalms is the inexhaustible fountain of light and wisdom about Israel’s Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Homiletical use of the Psalms
Summarizing how one approaches the book of Psalms homiletically, first, choose that class, or type, of psalms that basically suits the needs of your church now. Study the chosen psalm as a whole and make an analysis of the structure of the psalm as a total unit. Then write down in sequence the essential points of the thought units, or sections, of the psalm, after you have gone through it verse by verse with the help of at least two or three commentaries. Relate each point theologically to Israel as covenant people and to her Lord. Next, search out where and in what way Christ and the New Testament apply the psalm, or establish how the psalm relates in its essentials to Christ and the apostolic church. Relate Israel to the church of Jesus Christ, and the enemies of Israel to the enemies of Christ. Finally, apply the message to the church’s final conflict in the drama of the ages. Let the good news of God’s victorious love for man and the world and His grace to us in Christ stand out above all. Let the final call be always “Praise the Lord.”

Models of selected psalms
Psalm 1 counts as one of the simplest among all the inspired songs. It serves very well as the first of a series of psalm sermons.

This psalm may be seen as perfectly fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:1-10), and therefore also in those who are “in Christ” (Rom. 8:1). Jesus endorsed the idea of two exclusive destinies (Matt. 7:13, 14). The apocalyptic dimension of the final judgment may be discerned in the two eternal destinies as projected into the future in Psalm 1:5, 6.

Psalm 2 deals with the other pillar of Israel’s faith: the theocratic king and God’s sovereign rulership over the world. This royal psalm may have been entitled “A Psalm About All Nations” or “The Truth About Armageddon!” In its primary sense, according to literary and historical exegesis, this psalm relates to King David as the “anointed one” of the Lord (verse 2). Illustrations should be taken from 2 Samuel 5 and 8 to describe the conspiracy of the surrounding nations who planned to revolt against Vindication of the Falsely Accused.” It is a prayer of supplication by David during the time he was falsely accused of having robbed a fellow Israelite. He takes his case directly to the supreme court of justice, to the priestly judge in the sanctuary, as prescribed by Moses in Deuteronomy 17:8-12. The following structure can be deduced from the content: (1) David’s supplication for deliverance from his enemies (verses 1, 2); (2) David’s passionate plea of innocence before God regarding the accusation of Cush (verses 3-5); (3) an appeal to the righteous God for intervention on David’s behalf against the violence of the wicked (verses 6-9); (4) assurance to Israel that God’s judgment will ultimately vindicate the righteous ones (verses 10-13); (5) God’s secret law of retribution: evil inflicts its own punishment (verses 14-16); and (6) the pledge...
The Hebrew concept of perfection does not denote a static characteristic of man or God in isolation from each other, but rather a perfect relationship between both, a perfection in action.

to thank the Lord for exercising His righteousness (verse 17).

In this historical context, David's confession of his "righteousness" (verse 8) clearly does not mean a boast in self-righteousness. The petition of Psalm 7:9 is of great comfort to all who are unjustly persecuted.

One may connect the psalm also with Christ's own rejection and crucifixion. Christ's resurrection is then God's vindication of Jesus' innocence. The cross of Christ meant at the same time Satan's defeat (John 12:31-33). True Christians may find in the cross and resurrection of Christ the supreme guarantee of their vindication by Christ. Thus, they have a superior motive to praise God.

Psalm 19 consists of two distinct parts that relate to each other by way of progression in the praise of God's virtues. Part one (verses 1-6) is a doxology to God as Creator; part two (verses 7-14) is a praise of God as Redeemer. The two parts belong together because God is at once the Creator and the Redeemer. Nature and Torah (Holy Scripture) are different kinds of revelation given by God to man. Saving knowledge, however, comes not from nature but from Scripture alone.

The first part acknowledges God's general revelation of His divine power to all men (cf. Rom. 1:20); the second part unfolds God's special revelation to Israel as His covenant people. In Psalm 19:1-6 nature is personified poetically (the sun is "like a bridegroom . . . , like a champion rejoicing to run his course," [verse 5, N.I.V.]), yet nature is not deified as in the pagan mythologies of the neighboring countries. Thus the first section contains a theological polemic against the idolizing of sun and stars among the Gentiles.

In part two the psalmist goes on to praise the redeeming qualities of the Torah that God gave to Israel. It is of vital importance to explain to the audience the Hebrew concept of Torah as divine teaching, which includes both grace and law, as revealed in Israel's sanctuary. Scholars declare unanimously that to translate Torah as "law" is too narrow. Church members who are generally unaware of this broader meaning often have the mistaken idea that references to law in Psalms 1:19; 119 are legalistic in their outlook.

The Hebrew concept of perfection (see Ps. 19:7), or blamelessness, is not spelled out fully either. It does not denote a static characteristic of man or God in isolation from each other, but rather it denotes a perfect relationship between both, a perfection in action. This is the Biblical perfection of the Torah! The convicting power of the Torah is further developed in verses 12 and 13. David now begins to realize not only the joy of the Torah but also its infinite moral claims. First he pleads for forgiving grace, or justification (verse 12). Then he follows this up immediately with a prayer for sanctifying grace (verse 13). For Christians, also, it is essential to be not only pardoned but also kept by the power of God (1 John 5:18).

The New Testament offers the grace of God in Jesus Christ. In Christ we receive justification and sanctification. Consequently, whoever rejects the Son of God rejects life itself (verse 12). The inescapable question is "How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?" (Heb. 2:3, N.I.V.).

In search of the . . .

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flood story. He in turn asked what sort of proof I might submit. I proposed the finding of Noah's ark on a mountaintop, complete with all that was necessary to keep animals alive for a long period of time. He felt this would be no proof because the structure on the mountain could have been built by some people as a shrine to a mythical story maintained in their cultural heritage.

From this and other similar incidents, I learned that evidence is a highly subjective item and is always subordinate to one's worldview.

Thus the search for the silver bullet is bound to be elusive and perhaps ultimately futile. The Lord Himself once said that even if the dead were raised to life it would not be enough to change some minds (Luke 16:31).

In the area of origins, decisions based on views more fundamental than those that can be derived from science will cause us to interpret the natural world in some particular manner. Einstein supposedly said that it is our theories that determine the results of our experiments. Paraphrased, one might say that it is our worldview and our perception of how the Divine has interacted with the mortal that will determine how we interpret the natural world about us.
Have you ever wondered how you could find the time, energy, and personnel to add church growth programs to your already packed schedule? And have you been concerned as to what will become of the members you already have if you concentrate your resources on outreach? Wouldn’t it be great if someone offered a church growth approach based on activities already part of your church program—an approach that not only attracted new members but also stabilized them and kept them growing and satisfied?

Andrews University's Institute of Church Ministry presents Church Growth Seminar IV—“Church Growth Through Preaching and Discipling.” This five-day-long seminar, comprised of plenary sessions and workshops, will help you build your church and stabilize your members by sharpening these major parts of your church’s ministry. After all, you win and hold members by offering something really worthwhile, by doing well what a church should do.

**Plenary sessions speakers and topics**

Sunday-Thursday: Floyd Bresee, a director of continuing education for ministers—“Preaching Skills Workshop.” (Dr. Bresee developed the preaching course currently being featured in MINISTRY.)

Monday: Robert C. Connor, ministerial director and evangelist in the Great Lakes area—“Building a Church Through Evangelistic Preaching.”

Tuesday, Wednesday: David Siefert, pastor of the Big Valley Grace Community church in Modesto, California, and coauthor of The Complete Book of Church Growth—“Disciplemaking—Key to Church Growth.”

Thursday: Ron Halvorsen, pastor of the Takoma Park, Maryland, Seventh-day Adventist church and noted public evangelist—“Building a Church Through Preaching.”

(Besides these plenary sessions, Church Growth Seminar IV gives you a choice among several workshops offered in the afternoons.)

Seminar fee is $85; $125 with academic credit. (Group rates are available. And spouses may attend free.)

Accommodations and meals are readily available in the area. If you wish to stay on campus, write Student Housing, at Andrews University.

**Church Growth Seminar IV**

August 26-30, 1984

Institute of Church Ministry
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104
(616) 471-3575
Origins

A must for your reading list and church library

Origins is one of the few professional journals in the United States devoted to creationism. Here are a few past topics:

- The genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11.
- The search for Noah's ark.
- Purported angiosperm pollen from the Precambrian.
- Space missions to Venus and Jupiter.
- Teaching of creationism in public schools.
- Problems with radiometric dating, especially C-14.
- Fossil footprints in the Grand Canyon.

Origins is published by a group of professional scientists with advanced academic degrees and has a proven track record of success, having just completed its tenth year of publication. Published twice a year, Origins costs only $4 for an annual subscription. You can't afford to be without it!

Now you can go on a geoscience tour!

Until this year, attendance at a geoscience field course has been by invitation only. Now, for the first time, the full September 22, 1984, tour and instruction will be open to general registration.

The three-week two-thousand-mile traveling school, Directed Studies in Science and Religion, will allow participants to examine firsthand the scientific evidences supporting a worldwide catastrophe by water, and Creation as the origin of the earth and living organisms. Tour members will see both the major conflicts and the areas of harmony between science and Scripture. Lectures will cover the geologic column, the lack of evolutionary connecting links in the fossil record, evidences of past catastrophic activity, and methods of dating organic and inorganic matter.

Dr. Harold G. Coffin, of the Geoscience Research Institute, Loma Linda, California, will guide the tour, assisted by other members of the institute and lecturers from Andrews and Loma Linda universities. The itinerary begins in Montana. Wyoming areas include Yellowstone National Park, Dead Indian Pass, the Bighorn Mountains, and Wind River Canyon. In Utah the tour will visit Dinosaur National Monument, the Castle Gate coal area, San Rafael Swell, Dead Horse Point, and Bryce Canyon National Park. After a weekend at the north rim of the Grand Canyon in Arizona, the field course will conclude at Zion National Park.

The registration fee for the tour is $160 (those enrolling for academic credit must pay an additional $15). Participants are responsible for their own food and transportation to and from the tour area and during the tour. Travel will be caravan style, so the number of automobiles and participants must be limited. Tents, camp trailers, motor homes, etc., will be necessary for night accommodations. Applications must be received before July 15.

For more information, write: Harold G. Coffin, Geoscience Research Institute, Loma Linda, California 92350. Or call: (714) 824-4348.

Bible lands tour

You can participate in a guided tour of Biblical sites in Greece and Turkey, August 5-27, 1984. Led by Dr. Werner Vyhmeister, of Andrews University, the itinerary will include Athens, Delphi, Corinth, Thessalonica, Berea, Philippi, Patmos, the seven churches of Revelation, Hierapolis, Colossae, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Tarsus, ancient Hittite sites, Ankara, Istanbul, and other locations.

The cost of the three-week tour is $1,985 from New York. Detailed itineraries and tour details can be obtained from Dr. Vyhmeister, 209 Ridge Avenue, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103. Phone: (616) 473-6109.
Recommended reading

For those who might wish to read further in the topics dealt with in this special issue on geoscience, the Recommended Reading page this month carries the following annotated list of selected references on topics related to creationism. The list has been prepared by Geoscience Research Institute members R. H. Brown, K. Ching, R. D. Tkachuck, and C. L. Webster. A more comprehensive listing may be obtained by writing directly to the Geoscience Research Institute, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California 92350.

Please note: Neither the Geoscience Research Institute nor MINISTRY distributes these reference materials. Each item must be obtained from the individual publisher.

Articles


Books


Kung, Hans. 1981. Does God Exist? An Answer for Today. Random House, New York. 839 pages. A liberal Catholic theologian discusses philosophical trends along with their proponents (for example, Descartes, Hegel, Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud) throughout history that have contributed to the rise of modern atheism and that lead logically to nihilism. He shows that, while scientific proofs for God are not possible, it is possible to believe in God, and that this belief in God, especially the Christian God, provides a more rational way of life than do the alternatives. There is a danger that the reader will become bogged down in the terminology and the sheer volume of words.

Little, Paul E. 1968. Know Why You Believe. Revised edition. Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois. 110 pages. Brief answers to some of the major questions and objections raised against Christianity. The first seven chapters are directed toward bases for belief in God and in the Bible. Further chapters answer questions of God's actions in this world, that is, miracles, science and religion, and the existence of suffering and evil.

McDowell, Josh, and Don Stewart. 1981. Reasons Why Skeptics Ought to Consider Christianity. Here's Life Publishers, Inc., San Bernardino, California. 249 pages. Discusses theories of inspiration and interpretation of the Bible, different versions, and questions about the Noachian flood and the ark. Especially pages 93-220 discuss objections and questions commonly raised by evolutionists as reasons to deny Creation, such as geodating methods and the problem of time. Particularly helpful is an extensive bibliography.


Webber, Robert E. 1981. The Secular Saint. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 219 pages. Most Christians are forced to live in two worlds—the regular business world and the otherworldly. The author examines traditional models used by Christians to adapt to conflicts between the two, defines man's role as a cultural agent, and then describes a model that allows the Christian to live in both worlds simultaneously without a sense of conflicting loyalties. Using the Bible to support his statements, the author strongly advocates liberation theology and involvement in rightsing social injustices.

(Continued on page 22)