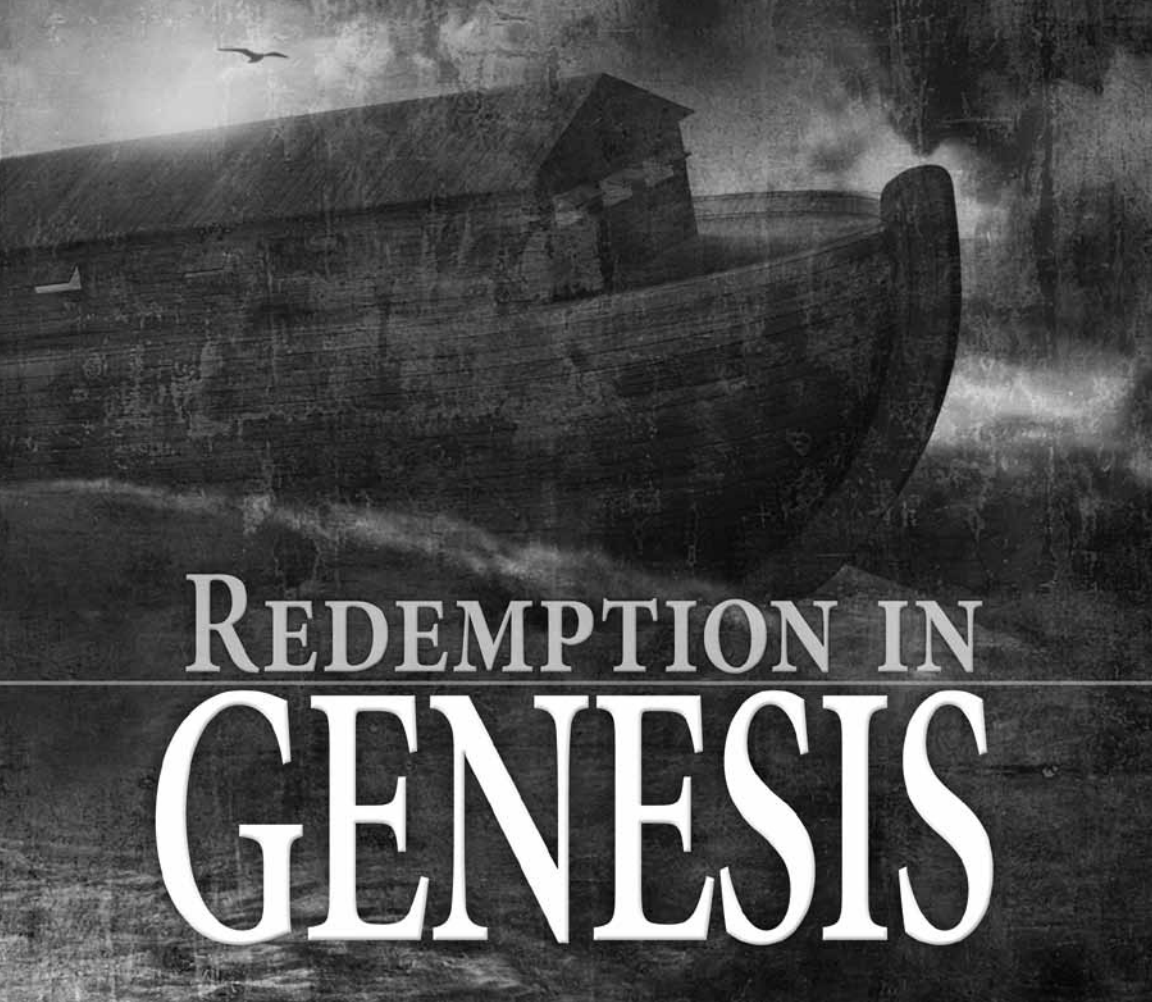


REDEMPTION IN
GENESIS



REDEMPTION IN GENESIS

THE CROSSROADS OF FAITH AND REASON

JOHN S. NIXON



Pacific Press® Publishing Association
Nampa, Idaho
Oshawa, Ontario, Canada
www.pacificpress.com

Cover design by Gerald Lee Monks
Cover design resources from dreamstime.com
Inside design by Aaron Troia

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data:

Nixon, John S., 1954-

Redemption in Genesis : the crossroads of faith and reason / John S. Nixon.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 13: 978-0-8163-2505-4 (pbk.)

ISBN 10: 0-8163-2505-7 (pbk.)

1. Bible. O.T. Genesis I-XXII—Theology. 2. Seventh-day Adventists—Doctrines. I. Title.

BS1235.52.N59 2011

222'.1106—dc23

2011040551

DEDICATION

To Januwoina my love, so faithful

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PREFACE

On the road to Emmaus, Jesus talked with two of His disciples about things He would explain more fully when He spoke to all of them. His talk with those two was the first Christian Bible study. What He said cast new light on the events of the weekend that had been so discouraging to His followers. Jesus explained that His suffering and death were not failures of God’s will, but fulfillments of Bible prophecy. “Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” (Luke 24:26). Luke records, in words that create in every believer a hunger for a deeper knowledge of truth, what happened next: “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (verse 27, KJV).

With these words, Jesus revealed a new method of interpreting Scripture; a method based on the heart of the gospel—His life, death, and resurrection. With Christ as the interpretive key, Bible students could unlock passages of Scripture* and find in them meaning they couldn’t have seen before His coming. The apostles used this hermeneutic in their writings—as illustrated in this passage in which the apostle Paul admonishes God’s people to persevere in the faith:

* The Old Testament then—it was the only Bible they had at that time—but the whole Bible now.

I don't want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground. In the cloud and in the sea, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses. All of them ate the same spiritual food, and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and *that rock was Christ* (1 Corinthians 10:1–4, NLT; emphasis added).

According to Christ, the “new” meaning provided by this kind of reinterpretation of the Old Testament wasn't really new. The shadows and symbols present in the Old Testament were fully unfolded in the kingdom of God that Christ came to proclaim. The Old Testament prophets who were looking for the Messiah exemplified the attributes of Christ in ways even they didn't fully understand. Through them we see how it is that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled all righteousness by exhibiting all the graces of God in every stage of His life. He is the ultimate meaning of Eden's lamb, of Noah's ark, of Sodom's destruction, of Abraham's ram in the thicket and more.

However, we must realize that our search for the glory of Christ anywhere in Scripture always comes at a price. In the light of His self-revelation, to know Jesus better is to know ourselves better. When we see Him clearly, we see ourselves with increasing clarity, and we suffer by comparison. We discover our beauty is vain, our strengths are weaknesses, and our self-confidence is unwarranted. The revelation of Christ casts our cultural values and our self-esteem into judgment and forces us to choose between His beauty and our self-image. We see the tension between Christ-awareness and self-awareness in the many challenges our Lord presented to His followers as He chastened them again and again for their spiritual blindness, their stubbornness, and their undue pride.

Through this book, I mean to present those same challenges to believers today, calling into question the predominant values of the culture in which we live—a culture that, in the context of the end time, we must scrutinize more thoroughly. In a world where the prophecies of the last days are fast fulfilling year by year, Christ calls His church to a high state of vigilance lest it be taken unawares and

fall prey to the enemy's final, overmastering deception that, if it were possible, would deceive the very elect (Matthew 24:24).

In the pages that follow, we will look for Jesus in the stories told in the first book of the Bible, beginning in places where His presence is hidden. We will search out hints of Him and His attributes in shadows and symbols, in metaphors and figures of speech, and, most of all, in the lives of the men and women of yore—believers in the true God, who walked and talked and lived and died in the days before the Messiah came to earth. Through the clarifying lens of Christ, we will see redemption anew as that which calls us to self-abandonment and deeper reliance on Him. We will view redemption from back to front as well as from front to back; from last to first as well as from first to last.

It is my hope that this book will help you to develop an eye more practiced at seeing Christ where He is not overtly shown but where His presence resides nonetheless. Our experience with Him will be all the sweeter for having searched Him out and brought Him forth from the murky shadows and cryptic symbols of Genesis into the clear and glorious light of revelation.

John S. Nixon
November 2011

FAITHFUL REASONING

INTRODUCTION

I call the method of interpreting Scripture that I use in this book “faithful reasoning.” I’ve given it that name because while reason as a way of knowing is essential to our understanding, in the study of the things of God we can rely on it only when it is submitted to the authority of faith, a superior way of knowing. Many writers have made reason the standard by which they evaluate faith, so that reason either validates faith’s conclusions or it shows them to be unreliable. However, I assume that reason must be validated by faith rather than the reverse. Since God is the source of all knowledge and faith is essential to pleasing Him (see Hebrews 11:6), even reason suggests that faith must take precedence.

Because it is true that theology transcends the natural realm while secular science limits itself to nature, science can never be the criterion by which faith is judged. Certainly, nature reveals its Creator: the heavens show God’s glory, and the world makes His invisible qualities known (Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20). But since God is not limited to His creation, science and reason cannot disclose all that He wants us to know about Him. That is why in all of the things of God, faith must have priority as “the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1, NKJV). Then faith’s reasonableness becomes clear—but only to the one who first believes (John 7:17).

As believers, we don’t limit ourselves to just two options, as if we

have to choose either the rational or the irrational. Rather, we acknowledge the existence of another category peculiar to the spiritual realm, that of the superrational. The existence of a superrational reality means that there are truths that fall into a category that isn't logical but isn't illogical either. There are truths that possess the characteristics of logic—they are sensible, clear, and based on sound reasoning—yet that break through the boundaries of what is quantifiable and explainable. They reach beyond the limits of logic.

The virgin birth of Jesus is an example of the superrational. The biological process of childbirth is clear; it occurs the same way in every case. The sperm and egg unite to form the zygote. The zygote divides and becomes an embryo. The embryo implants in the uterine wall and begins to develop organs—brain, heart, spinal cord, and so on. There are scientifically measurable effects, observable occurrences, and countable stages. The process is logical. But when Mary asked the angel how she would become pregnant since she had never been with a man, the angel didn't give her a biological explanation. Instead, he said, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). When we read the Bible's story, we know we are dealing with something outside of normal biology and beyond the limits of logic. It is inexplicable to our science, but it did take place. Therefore, it isn't irrational.

It is in this realm of the superrational that we find the knowledge of the infinite God. It is reasonable, but it isn't limited to human reason. And in the exploration of what God reveals concerning Himself in Scripture as well as in nature, the disciplines of faith and reason harmonize into a coherent oneness that glorifies God, who is Creator of both.*

THE DOMINANT INFLUENCE

During the period in which modern European philosophy was born, what now is called the Enlightenment, Western culture changed

* Alister E. McGrath references the expression coined by Anselm of Canterbury that states the priority of faith over reason, "faith seeking understanding." McGrath adds that while faith comes before understanding, the content of faith is nevertheless rational. See *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 50.

significantly. The scientific discoveries made during the eighteenth century and the consequent advances in technology convinced many that science was the key to all knowledge. Science and the scientific method became the dominant influence on Western civilization, surpassing the influence of religion and the church. Because the influential members of society now preferred truth that was rational, demonstrable, and accessible to all, divine revelation was discounted as a source of truth. As a result, the term *fact* was used only regarding matters that could be demonstrated scientifically, and the teachings of religion were categorized as mere beliefs. This period saw the triumph of critical rationality at the expense of religious dogmatism.

The thinking of that time brought a new epistemology into being, one that considered any proposition not based on empirical evidence to be inferior. Many people came to regard science as the standard of truth and reason as the light of the world. That period saw the birth of the belief that human progress was inevitable, and people concluded that given enough time, humanity would solve all its problems through the application of rational thought and the methods of science. Ever since then, at least in the West, people have assumed that faith and reason are incompatible and belong to different realms of knowledge. They acknowledge religion to belong to the domain of faith, and consign the material world entirely to the province of reason. Theology was the method of the former, and science the method of the latter, and the proponents of one way of thinking tended to doubt the legitimacy of the other—if they didn't dismiss it altogether.

In this book, I challenge that approach, arguing that not only are the two ways of knowing compatible, they are in fact indispensable to each other. The God who said through Isaiah, "Come now, let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18), is the same Divine Person who said through the writer of Hebrews, "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith and reason are interrelated and interdependent, and they cooperate in the search for truth. Theologians don't attempt to negate rationality or the validity of science and the scientific method. Empiricism has a good track record, yielding positive results in many fields of endeavor: the advances in medicine and technology being prominent examples. But the study of God, His nature and His acts,

clearly shows that human analysis alone cannot discover all relevant truths. The power of reason can never discover ultimate truth. The world doesn't explain how it came to be; only the Creator Himself can tell us who we are and why we're here, and this He does through revelation, not through empiricism.

We must remember that we reason in a fallen world, with minds that are finite and subject to sin. The only completely trustworthy science we have is the science of salvation as revealed in the Word of God. Reason alone cannot answer the questions of life because something unreasonable has come in and infected everything.

"We look at life through the eyes of reason and say that if a person will control his instincts and educate himself, he can produce a life that will slowly evolve into the life of God. But as we continue on through life, we find the presence of something which we have not yet taken into account, namely sin. . . . Sin has made the foundation of our thinking unpredictable, uncontrollable, and irrational."¹

Think for a moment about how completely ludicrous the experience of Job was—how far from reasonable. How could a man lose everything he had in one day? Think of the absurdity of how it all came about—his oxen were stolen, his sheep incinerated, his camels carried off, his children crushed, and other than the four who survived to bring their master the disastrous news, all his servants died as well! Had Job relied on his faculties of reason to deal with what had become of his life, he would have taken his wife's advice, which, under the circumstances, made sense. "Clearly," she said, "God has abandoned you and you are doomed, so be done with it: curse Him now and die!"

The questioning of Job's integrity by his three friends was also reasonable. If God is just and loving and powerful and all-wise, then Job must have done something awful to have deserved what he was suffering. Yet Job's friends were all mistaken—every one of them. There were factors that reason couldn't account for; things the human eye couldn't see. God was up to something that neither Job, his wife, nor his friends could perceive. There were greater issues at stake than any of them could have imagined.

But Job was a faith giant. He didn't need to know all that was going on in order to maintain his integrity. He trusted God even regarding those things he couldn't explain—not because they made sense to

him, but because he knew that God was bigger than he could comprehend, and that was all he needed to know. Notice his final confession:

“Surely I spoke of things I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me to know. . . .
My ears had heard of you
but now my eyes have seen you.
Therefore I despise myself
and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:3, 5).

In the story of Job, we see how crisis reveals the ascendancy of faith over reason, how it stretches reason beyond the limits of finite human understanding. Reason may be arrogant and sure of itself. Faith is always humble, teachable, and ready to admit that some things happen only by the providence of God.

VIEWS OF THE BIBLICAL RECORD

A critical issue in all of this is how one views the biblical record. Is it just another ancient document to be studied scientifically, or is it the unique expression of the thoughts of God, written down by human writers who were inspired by the Holy Spirit? If the former is true, then faith must be governed by reason. If the latter is true, then it is essential to our understanding that reason be subordinate to divine revelation.

Christian faith has its own method, which by Western standards can only be called unscientific. It isn't objective or limited to the material world and the laboratory. It says that, ultimately, knowing God is a matter of belief—either we choose to trust God and take Him at His word as the Spirit makes it plain to us, or we choose to rely on a system that we control, in which we attempt to verify truth by our own processes.

In writing this book, I have attempted to follow four basic guidelines. Faithful reasoning requires that we

1. *humbly acknowledge the limits of human reason.* Our application of the laws of logic won't necessarily enable us to answer every question we face (Job 11:7, 8).
2. *maintain consistent faithfulness to God.* The One who calls us

to reason is ever beyond the limits of our thinking (Isaiah 40:13, 14). However, He reveals Himself to those who have committed themselves to Him.

3. *offer complete obedience to God.* The only reasonable response of a creature to its Creator is total compliance (Matthew 28:20). God reveals Himself to those who have committed themselves to obey Him.
4. *give priority to faith.* Faith can work where rational explanations flounder (Hebrews 11:13).

If we're honest and courageous, we'll admit that we must give up any idea of discovering truth by our own devices. We'll see that limiting ourselves to a rationalistic approach—relying solely on logical deduction and the laws of cause and effect—is too restrictive. That approach cannot provide answers to the ultimate questions. If we will put our faith in God to the point of a vulnerability that allows us to accept our own limitations, we'll find wisdom and understanding in a new experience of self-abandonment and total dependence on the illumination of the Holy Spirit. “When we are intimately connected with God, He guides our common sense so that faith directs our reasoning instead of logic, which is limited and unreliable.”²

There is another order of knowledge—one not based on rationalism or the empirical method—that opens the door to eternal truth. It comes to us not by an act of intellect, but by an act of God. Its entryway is repentance and humility before the All-knowing One who condescends to anoint us with wisdom when we come to Him in simple faith. The door to this knowledge is open.

I wrote this book to encourage those who are striving to live their lives by faith as they learn better, day by day, what it means to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. It is my intent to help believers who are trying to make decisions that honor God and improve their lives, even if those decisions at times seem unreasonable. Whether or not I reach this worthwhile and lofty goal in the pages that follow, the reader must decide.

May God's Spirit “open the eyes of our hearts” as we seek to know all that Heaven would reveal through the Written Word, always pointing to the Word made flesh.

CHRIST AND CREATION

CHAPTER 1

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

—*Genesis 1:3*

As soon as we begin to read the biblical account of Creation, we know that we aren't reading science—not our science anyway. The first act of Creation immediately challenges us to make decisions about faith, about what we will choose as the foundational principle of our personal belief systems.

The fundamental axiom of reason in Greek philosophy—"out of nothing, nothing comes"—led to the conclusion that since there was an ordered universe, matter must always have existed. Matter is eternal, and the universe consists of *cosmos* constructed out of *chaos*—form imposed on matter. In other words, God was less a Creator than an Architect who gave form to what already existed.¹

This principle, now foundational to Western thought, directly contradicts the opening declaration of Scripture, "God spoke and it was done." Only one of these propositions can be true: either matter is eternal or God made all things out of nothing. And logic alone can't determine which one is correct. The acceptance of this fact—that human reasoning can't discover the truth on its own—is essential to settling the question of origins. According to Scripture, the truth of Creation is not based on scientific proof at all. The letter to the Hebrews states the central issue in these words: "*By faith* we understand that the universe was formed at God's command" (Hebrews 11:3; emphasis added).

Science is a reliable guide for understanding things as they are, but it can't tell us why things are as they are.² Neither secular science nor Christian theology can tell what happened on this planet before humans existed. Both disciplines build their cases on unproven assumptions. Scientists, beginning with what already exists, reason from effect to cause, believing that careful analysis and logical deduction always lead to the truth eventually. Christians put faith in the Word of God to bridge the gaps that human reason alone can't span, trusting that they can accept its assertions as truth though they will never be able to prove them scientifically.

The most critical issue in the question of origins is the beginning of humankind, the creatures who hold dominion over the earth. Either human beings came into existence randomly and developed gradually through many stages of evolution or they were created purposefully and made complete in the image of God. I take the position that in the natural world governed by cause and effect, if the effect is the material universe, the cause is not eternal matter or preformed microscopic entities. The cause is God. No matter who or how many debate it, Genesis' depiction of the origin of humankind is true: "The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7, KJV).

CREATION AND SCIENCE

"The Evolution Wars," an article published in the August 10, 2005, issue of *Time* magazine, documented some of the public debate regarding what should be taught in the classrooms of public schools concerning origins. It quoted then president George W. Bush as saying he believed teachers should present intelligent design alongside evolution so students would know both sides of the issue.³

The response of the scientific community, swift and decided, ranged from merely disturbed to completely outraged. Said Mike Paddilla, president of the National Science Teachers Association: "It is simply not fair to present pseudoscience to students in the science classroom. . . . Nonscientific viewpoints have little value in increasing students' knowledge of the natural world."⁴ An opinion piece published in the *Winston-Salem Journal* said, "There is a fundamental dif-

ference between the theories of evolution and intelligent design. Evolution is science; its tenets have been hammered out over one hundred fifty years through the scientific process of observation and experimentation. Intelligent design is theology. It is not science.”⁵ Even President Bush’s own science advisor, John Marburger, disagreed with his boss, saying, “ ‘Evolution is the cornerstone of modern biology,’ ” and “ ‘intelligent design is not a scientific concept.’ ”⁶ But the editors of *Science-Week* stated their opposition in the most volatile terms of all. They called creationism blasphemy and accused creationists of being primitive thinkers who “believe the Earth is as flat as a pancake, a few thousand years old, and resting on the backs of four giant elephants.”⁷

Underlying Marburger’s objections was a theme that appeared again and again in the opposition to teaching intelligent design in the classroom: any explanation of origins that isn’t “scientific” is, for that reason alone, disqualified. The logic behind the arguments as well as the spirit in which they were given, reflects the values of a culture that has become scientized in almost every field of endeavor, including theology. Now, in order to be considered factual, a proposition must be scientifically verifiable.

Civil libertarians would no doubt have raised the issue of the separation of church and state, but that was not the concern of the scientific community. Their objections to President Bush’s statement were based solely on the idea that creationism is religion and not science, as though the two had nothing to do with each other, or at least that one could be complete without the other. In his book *Reason in the Balance*, Phillip E. Johnson describes this cultural bias: “Science is by far our most reliable source of knowledge, [so, in our culture] whatever conflicts with scientific knowledge is [considered] effectively false, and whatever is in principle closed to scientific investigation is effectively unreal. We might say that any supernatural reality or nonscientific knowledge is ‘immaterial,’ meaning both that it is not based on matter and that it is of no concern to us.”⁸

If the human mind is capable of both confession and rationality, it is reasonable to think that there must be a basic coherence between what is believable and what is logical, though we may not always be able to see it. I suggest that there is a way for theology and science to work together harmoniously, but only if theology takes the lead.

Faith, which is an indispensable tool of finite beings, is the foundation of both Christian theology and secular science. Because of our creaturely limitations, in both the material and the spiritual realms, we must rely on the constancy and dependability of things we can't control. Everything in the world of matter depends on gravity, and everything in the realm of faith depends on grace. But as long as science limits itself to the realm of matter and doesn't admit the existence of a spiritual realm, faith and reason will move in different directions; and believers will have to decide which to follow. When the two don't agree, each person must determine which way of knowing he or she will allow to have the ascendancy and which they will permit to languish so the other may flourish.

It is important, even mandatory, for intelligent creatures of an Intelligent Creator to have an intelligent understanding of that Creator and of His works. The Word of God doesn't present its truths in an unreasoned manner, but it does assert truths that extend beyond human powers of reason. The universe we experience through our limited perception has a fullness that only God knows. This suggests a priority of faith over reason since our only access to the truth that is beyond our reach is through belief in the One who alone is able to reveal the unknown.

The Genesis record is the foundation of cosmology, the starting point from which we begin our investigation. In Scripture, there's no mystery to the origin of life. That Divine Book unambiguously declares life to be the work of the Master Designer. It proclaims from the start the absolute sovereignty of the Creator God as the only Maker of heaven and earth. Creation is the sovereign act of God *ex nihilo*, "out of nothing."

But to say that Creation is beyond the scope of science is not to say that the Creation story is itself irrational. The human mind has been ordered by God in accordance with the order of the universe. Therefore, the way in which the world came to be is reasonable, but as one writer put it, "only to that reason which is open to truth that is beyond reason."⁹ In other words, when freed from the limited assumptions of human science and placed under the tutelage of faith, we possess the capacity to see the reasonableness of creation "out of nothing." The Creation story is rational, but when the question of origins

is limited to the scope of human reason alone, it seems irrational. In that case, the creating of all the various life-forms is misconstrued as an automatic process apart from a Creator, and God is considered to be a bystander in His own universe—a notion that is itself irrational. At times the results of our scientific experiments appear to contradict Scripture's teaching of creation out of nothing. But that doesn't prove that the biblical account is wrong; it only shows that the truth doesn't always conform to our limited understanding.

SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

The suggestion that life has evolved on its own to produce the complicated creatures we see—and are—raises some important questions: How does the concept of a spontaneous creation reflect on the Creator? If the world came into existence by accident and without purpose, what relationship should—or even can—God have with human beings? Is there any room for a sovereign God?

It is legitimate to evaluate a system of belief by the moral framework that comes with it, or, more to the point, by its relationship to God. What good is any belief system that doesn't lead to the true God? This was the substance of Paul's indictment of Greek wisdom (Acts 17:16–23). Christians, including Christian scientists, must never overlook what Darwinian theory does to Jesus Christ. Darwinists must ask themselves whether Christ is still the Living Word who was with God and was God from the beginning (John 1:1, 2). They must ask themselves if He still is the One by whom and for whom all things were created, and in whom all things hold together (Colossians 1:16, 17). If God didn't originate the universe or bring to completion the work He started, then what kind of God is He? Is He really God at all?

The implications of this question extend beyond cosmology. If the origin of human life was totally impersonal, if God wasn't involved, then there is no objective morality, no standard by which all people in every age can be judged. There is only a morality built upon unstable human authority, which may change from culture to culture and era to era and even from person to person. Scripture points to Creation as the sign of God's authority—as what sets Him apart from all other beings as the One to be worshiped and obeyed. His sovereign rule, His immutability and eternity, His wisdom, love, knowledge, and

understanding distinguish Him as the One who is above all (Psalms 74:13–17; 102:25–27; 136:5–9). It’s because God created the material universe and the creatures that inhabit it that He is worthy of worship and obedience (Revelation 14:7), and no science must be permitted to rob Him of His glory.

All of this is not to deny the important contributions science makes when it is in its proper sphere. Creationism doesn’t mean that science must be dislodged from its place in the material world. On the contrary, science is indispensable to human comprehension and control of planet Earth. As Ellen White observed, “God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world in the discoveries in science.”¹⁰

Science is a light in which all humanity has been privileged to walk as we advance farther and farther along the path of understanding the world over which God has given us dominion. But science didn’t bring itself into existence. It, too, is a creation. “And it is a confusion of order to make the original derivative and the derivative original.”¹¹ We have exaggerated the authority of science by treating empiricism as though it had no limits, as though it were the only reliable way of knowing. Our worship of the scientific method with its observing, analyzing, experimenting, speculating, and calculating, has inclined us to accept scientific conclusions as undeniable facts even when they directly contradict the Word of God. To quote a plaque said to have hung on the wall of Albert Einstein’s office at Princeton University, “Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts.”¹²

One author has labeled our scientific assumptions a reflection of our intellectual pride and excessive ambition. “In our arrogance we spurn the knowledge that there is any reality we cannot see in a telescope or microscope, or any truth that cannot be reduced to a rational system.”¹³ Intellectualism often brings with it an air of aloofness, a sense of superiority, and a contempt for simple things. In the early days of the Sophists, the withering effect of intellectualism on the social structure became a cause for concern. It is said that the old men mourned the passing of domestic simplicity and fidelity and the substitution instead of the pursuit of pleasure and wealth unchecked by religious restraint. Historian Will Durant wrote that it “did not make men modest, as it should, but disposed every man to consider himself

the measure of all things. Every clever youth could now feel himself fit to sit in judgment upon the moral code of his people, reject it if he could not understand and approve it, and then be free to rationalize his desire as the virtue of an emancipated soul.”¹⁴ The scientific method flatters us by accommodating our inclinations to trust in the authority of our own opinions.

Science is one of the tools through which we exercise our God-given dominion, but we must remember that it is the Lord God who was the Creator; in bringing the universe into existence, He was sovereign and acted alone. The dominion of humankind over the earth is a gift, not an achievement. It implies stewardship, not ownership (Genesis 1:28–30). God hasn’t given us every power that exists, nor has He revealed to us everything there is to know. God has reserved some things to Himself so that we might in humility remember our place as His children in a relationship based on faith. Ellen White has pointed out the peril of forgetting this truth, reminding us that there are things at stake in the quest for knowledge that have consequences beyond the natural world.

One of the greatest evils that attends the quest for knowledge, the investigations of science, is the disposition to exalt human reasoning above its true value and its proper sphere. Many attempt to judge of the Creator and His works by their own imperfect knowledge of science. They endeavor to determine the nature and attributes and prerogatives of God, and indulge in speculative theories concerning the Infinite One. Those who engage in this line of study are treading upon forbidden ground. Their research will yield no valuable results and can be pursued only at the peril of the soul.¹⁵

God didn’t begin to build and then leave His work unfinished, like the man of Luke 14:30, who didn’t study his project carefully enough before he started it. God no more left Creation to be completed by natural causes than He left Redemption to be completed by human works. When the atonement was completed at the cross, Jesus cried, “It is finished!” and when Creation was concluded on the sixth day, God said “it was very good” (John 19:30; Genesis 1:31).

In the final analysis, the truth of Creation is not a postulate but a principle. It is not a theory but a conviction. It is not a deduction but a confession. It is not by reason but by revelation that we come to know what the Bible never attempts to prove—that the world was created in six literal days of evenings and mornings and that in creating it, God wasn't dependent on preexisting matter. It is “by faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible” (Hebrews 11:3). From creeping things to human beings, from earth to sky, from the highest mountain to the lowest valley, and from sea to shining sea, this is our Father's world!