

## 2. “In the Beginning...”

**Biblical material:** Genesis 1.

### Quotes

- If the universe is really completely self-contained, having no boundaries or edge, it would have neither beginning nor end: it would simply be. What place, then, for a creator? *Stephen W. Hawking*
- But God, who is the beginning of all things, is not to be regarded as a composite being, lest perchance there should be found to exist elements prior to the beginning itself, out of which everything is composed, whatever that be which is called composite. *Origen*
- This is an exceedingly strange development, unexpected by all but the theologians. They have always accepted the word of the Bible: In the beginning God created heaven and earth... [But] for the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; [and] as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries. *Robert Jastrow*
- In the beginning there was nothing and God said ‘Let there be light’, and there was still nothing but everybody could see it. *Dave Thomas*

### Questions

Can we still take this Biblical account of creation seriously? Hasn't science disproved it? Can we harmonize creation and evolution? What difference does it make to our view of God? Is it still possible to defend the literal days of creation? Are other theories options? What about “Intelligent Design”? What kind of Designer is he?

### Discussion

Our familiarity of Genesis 1 can lead us to miss the point. In the description of Creation we see the goodness of God at work. Why is it that after every day's creation God sees that “it was good” and at the end “it was very good”? God's sounds very self-congratulatory, almost proud about his creative work. In counter to this mistaken view, we should see God as identifying the good expression of his goodness, that there is no imperfection and that creation is indeed a representation of who he is.

God's character is seen in all he does, especially as he lovingly forms mater out of nothing, and then forms every galaxy, star and planet—and us from the dust of the ground.

Genesis is as much a prime aspect of the cosmic conflict as any other biblical book. The means and perfection of creation assume even greater importance as we understand the background to God's incredible creative acts.

### Comment

The fact of evolution is the backbone of biology, and biology is thus in the peculiar position of being a science founded on an unproved theory - is it then a science or a faith? Belief in the theory of evolution is thus exactly parallel to belief in special creation - both are concepts which believers know to be true but neither, up to the present, has been capable of proof. *L.*

*Harrison Matthews, FRS, Introduction to Darwin's The Origin of Species, J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, London, 1971, p. xi.*

One must conclude that, contrary to the established and current wisdom, a scenario describing the genesis of life on earth by chance and natural causes which can be accepted on the basis of fact and not faith, has not yet been written. *Hubert P. Yockey, 'A calculation of the probability of spontaneous biogenesis by information theory'. Journal of Theoretical Biology, vol. 67, 1977, p. 396.*

If living matter is not, then, caused by the interplay of atoms, natural forces and radiation, how has it come into being? There is another theory, now quite out of favour, which is based upon the ideas of Lamarck: that if an organism needs an improvement it will develop it, and transmit it to its progeny. I think, however, that we must go further than this and admit that the only acceptable explanation is *creation*. I know that this is anathema to physicists, as indeed it is to me, but we must not reject a theory that we do not like if the experimental evidence supports it. *S. Lipson, FRS (Professor of Physics, University of Manchester, UK), 'A physicist looks at evolution.' Physics Bulletin, vol. 31, 1980, p. 138.*

The more statistically improbable a thing is, the less can we believe that it just happened by blind chance. Superficially the obvious alternative to chance is an intelligent Designer. *Dr Richard Dawkins (Department of Zoology, Oxford University, UK), 'The necessity of Darwinism'. New Scientist, vol. 94, 15 April 1982, p. 130.*

Once we see, however, that the probability of life originating at random is so utterly minuscule as to make the random concept absurd, it becomes sensible to think that the favourable properties of physics on which life depends, are in every respect deliberate.... It is therefore almost inevitable that our own measure of intelligence must reflect in a valid way the higher intelligences...even to the extreme idealized limit of *God*. *Sir Fred Hoyle (English astronomer, Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge University) and Chandra Wickramasinghe (Professor of Astronomy and Applied Mathematics at University College, Cardiff), 'Convergence to God', in Evolution from Space, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, London, 1981, pp. 141 and 144. (Emphasis in original)*

### **Ellen White Comments**

Men will endeavor to explain from natural causes the work of creation, which God has never revealed. But human science cannot search out the secrets of the God of Heaven, and explain the stupendous works of creation, which were a miracle of almighty power, any sooner than it can show how God came into existence. {1SP 89}

“So God created man in his own image, . . . male and female created he them.” Here is clearly set forth the origin of the human race; and the divine record is so plainly stated that there is no occasion for erroneous conclusions. God created man in His own image. Here is no mystery. There is no ground for the supposition that man was evolved by slow degrees of development from the lower forms of animal or vegetable life. Such teaching lowers the great work of the Creator to the level of man's narrow, earthly conceptions. Men are so intent upon excluding God from the sovereignty of the universe that they degrade man and defraud him of the dignity of his origin. He who set the starry worlds on high and tinted with delicate skill the flowers of the field, who filled the earth and the heavens with the wonders of His power, when He came to crown His glorious work, to place one in the midst to stand as ruler of the fair earth, did not fail to create a being worthy of the hand that gave him life. The genealogy of our race, as given by inspiration, traces back its origin, not to a line of developing germs, mollusks, and

quadrupeds, but to the great Creator. Though formed from the dust, Adam was “the son of God.”  
{DG 21}

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