

## 2. Creation: Forming the World (1Q 2013—Origins)

**Biblical material:** Gen. 1:1–13, Isa. 45:18, 1 John 1:5, Rev. 22:5, 2 Cor. 4:6, 2 Pet. 3:5, Job 38:4–6.

### Quotes

- Christianity has fought, still fights, and will continue to fight science to the desperate end over evolution, because evolution destroys utterly and finally the very reason Jesus' earthly life was supposedly made necessary. Destroy Adam and Eve and the original sin, and in the rubble you will find the sorry remains of the Son of God. If Jesus was not the redeemer who died for our sins, and this is what evolution means, then Christianity is nothing. *G. Richard Bozarth, 'The Meaning of Evolution', American Atheist magazine*
- 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*
- The statistical probability that organic structures and the most precisely harmonized reactions that typify living organisms would be generated by accident, is zero. *Ilya Prigogine*
- It is absurd for the evolutionist to complain that it is unthinkable for an admittedly unthinkable God to make everything out of nothing and then pretend that it is more thinkable that nothing should turn itself into everything. *G.K. Chesterton*
- I must confess to a feeling of profound humility in the presence of a universe which transcends us at almost every point. I feel like a child who while playing by the seashore has found a few bright colored shells and a few pebbles while the whole vast ocean of truth stretches out almost untouched and unruffled before my eager fingers. *Isaac Newton*

### 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?

### Bible summary

Gen. 1:1–13 gives us the summary of the seven days of creation. "For the Lord is God, and he created the heavens and earth and put everything in place. He made the world to be lived in, not to be a place of empty chaos." Is. 45:18 NLT. God is light, there is no darkness in him, according to 1 John 1:5. Rev. 22:5 tells us that God's throne will be with us in the New Jerusalem when the world is made new. "For God who said, "Let light shine out of the darkness," shone in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4:6 FBV. The creative acts of God are mentioned in 2 Peter 3:5. God as Creator is the protagonist in Job 38:4-6 and reveals how much higher his ways are than ours, yet still looks to relate to all his created children throughout the universe.

## **Comment**

“The universe has no inherent will of its own.” (Sabbath’s lesson). The idea that the universe could “self-create” would make the universe God! How exactly he creates is of course a matter for speculation, not that our minds could comprehend. However the central point here is not only that God is the Creator of the universe and of our world, but that he cares deeply and intimately for his creation.

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 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 matter out of nothing, and then forms every galaxy, star and planet—and us from the dust of the ground. For 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.

It could well be that God initially created the world at a previous time, and then returned to a world that was “without form and void” to complete his creation of our Earth. As the lesson points out, that hardly matters. The key point is the Creator who delights in each day of the creation of our world, step by step bringing it to completion. The creative delight in forming the myriads of birds and animals in their many forms and colors speaks to a Designer who loves to use the whole palette he has made!

This creation week is the foundation for the weekly cycle. There is nothing in nature or in astronomy that gives rise to the week. The day is based on the rotation of the Earth. The month on the orbit of the moon. The year on the orbit of the Earth around the Sun. But the week? There’s nothing in the sky above or the earth beneath to explain this seven-day period. Except the explanation from the Bible: “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made...and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.” The week comes from creation.

## **Comment 2: Some comments on Creation and “alternative theories”**

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}

In God’s word alone we find an authentic account of creation. Here we behold the power that laid the foundation of the earth, and that stretched out the heavens. Here, only, can we find a history of our race, unsullied by human prejudice or human pride. {CE 37}