

Creation: The Foundational Importance of Scripture as Revelation

Norman R. Gulley
Southern Adventist University

Did God create the world and its environs in six days or did He use a natural process through billions of years? Two studies help to answer this question: an examination of methodological naturalism in the light of recent contributions made by the Intelligent Design movement¹ and an examination of Scripture as revelation. The first is a consideration of scientific facts and logic, the second a consideration of scriptural facts and logic. The first is a scientific contribution to the issues before us, the second a biblical contribution to the issues before us. The first deals with inherent design² in nature, the second deals with inherent

¹ Some scholars in this movement who persuasively present the case for intelligent design in nature include Philip E. Johnson, *Darwin on Trial* (Washington: Regnery, 1991); *Reason in the Balance: The Case against Naturalism in Science, Law, and Education* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1995); *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997); *The Wedge of Truth: Splitting the Foundations of Naturalism* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000); William A. Dembski, *The Design Inference: Eliminating Chance through Small Probabilities* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998); ed., *Mere Creation: Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999); ed., with James M. Kushiner, *Signs of Intelligence: Understanding Intelligent Design* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2001); and Michael Behe, *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York: Free Press, 1996). The case for design has been made before in the Teleological argument for God's existence initiated by William Paley (1743-1805), who argued from design to an intelligent design Maker, from a watch to a Watchmaker (compare the five proofs for the existence of God by Thomas Aquinas [1225-1274], *Summa Theologica*, trans. English Dominican Fathers, 5 vols, Westminster: Christian Classics, 1981, vol. 1, 11-14), but the above books analyze the dismissal of design by evolutionary theorists on philosophical grounds and present a powerful case for its reinstatement on empirical and logical grounds.

² By inherent design I do not mean design found in natural laws, which would confine the focus to naturalism, but design empirically discerned in nature, seen as God's work from a biblical perspective (e.g., Psa 19:1; Rom 1:20).

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revelation³ in Scripture. Inherent design and inherent revelation indicate the unity between nature and Scripture as God's two books, one visual⁴ and one verbal. Both inherent design and inherent revelation are revelations of the Creator in the realm of fallen humankind. Both necessitate the illumination of God to be rightly understood in the context of a fallen environment. A fundamental problem before us is the exclusion of inherent design in evolution⁵ and inherent revelation in theology.⁶ These oust God from His world and from His Word.

One can use science (molecular biology and biochemistry) to argue for inherent design and Scripture to argue for inherent revelation (*sola scriptura*). Inherent design in nature and inherent revelation in Scripture contribute to our understanding of God as Creator. Both have their own contribution to make, and neither contribution should be disallowed by the other.⁷

Fixity of species was a general belief when Darwin entered Cambridge to study theology in 1828. Whether he already believed it or learned it from a professor doesn't matter, for the phrase "after its kind" in Genesis 1:11, 12, 21, 24, 25 was interpreted as fixity of species and was Darwin's understanding when he

³ By inherent revelation I do not mean Scripture is revelation in a magical sense, but Scripture is God's revelation (Heb 1:1–2; 1 Thess 2:13) in human language, logic, and literature. It doesn't matter if information came from Chloe's household (1 Cor 1:11) or from research (Luke 1:1–3) and was written in the language of the writer—it was all Spirit-led and is the voice of God (Heb 1:1–2), and as such is inspired revelation (2 Pet 1:21). Thus Paul could say, "We also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe" (1 Thess 2:13).

⁴ Through the electron microscope.

⁵ Since the late 19th century most biologists have rejected evidence for intelligent design in nature. Two examples toward the end of the 20th century are Nobel laureate Jacques Monod, *Chance and Necessity* (New York: Vintage, 1971) and Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker: Why the Evidence for Evolution Reveals a Universe Without Design* (New York: Norton, 1996). At best, some biologists speak of apparent design and attribute it to natural causes. But molecular biology has discovered (1) the complexity of cells, which are a veritable factory of machines processing information, and discovered (2) the comprehensive computer-like biochemical genetic information encoded on DNA molecules. See a thorough examination in Stephen C. Meyer, "Word Games: DNA, Design, and Intelligence," in *Signs of Intelligence: Understanding Intelligent Design*, eds. William A. Dembski and James M. Kushiner (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2001), 102–117.

⁶ See Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena* (Berrien Springs: Andrews P, 2003), vol. 1.

⁷ Interpretation by biblical/theological scholars and scientists can be wrong: e.g., Galileo was right, the Catholic theologians were wrong; and science has changed its worldviews from Ptolemaic, to Copernican, to Einsteinian. Because God is the author of nature and Scripture, there is an assumed coherence between the reality found in both, even though each has its own area of specialization. When advocates of either nature or Scripture present their view of reality as all there is to reality, with the other's contribution ruled out from the start, we end up with both presenting a truncated view of reality that does not do justice to total reality. Some biblical/theological scholars may still believe evolution teaches that humans descended directly from apes, but evolution teaches that humans and other primates have descended from different evolutionary branches, in which humans and apes go back to a common ancestor.

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set sail on the Beagle in 1836.⁸ During his five-year voyage, this fixity of species idea was called in question by his research in nature. So in 1844, in a letter to a close friend, Joseph Hooker, he wrote, “At last gleams of light have come, and I am almost convinced (quite contrary to the opinion I started with) that species are not (it is like confessing a murder) immutable.”⁹ He was right to debunk these “fixity” claims that failed to give empirical evidence in nature its proper place. But he was wrong to assume the Genesis account subscribes to “fixity of species” without giving the biblical record as careful a study as he gave to nature.¹⁰

On what basis did he accept the idea that God is irrelevant to the scientific study of nature? Behind this assumption lies philosophical positivism—a prevailing influence in his time.¹¹ Whereas natural theology included God in the nexus of cause and effect, philosophical positivism excluded God. Darwin empirically disproved a claim of natural theology (fixity of species), but took an

⁸ Darwin states, “that the view which most naturalists entertain, and which I formerly entertained—namely, that each species has been independently created—is erroneous.” *The Origin of Species*, 1859 (New York: Gramercy, 1979), 69, cf. 230. He calls it “the common view” (317), noting that “most eminent palaeontologists” (Cuvier, Owen, Agassiz, Barrande, Falconer, E Forbes) “and all our greatest geologists” (Lyell, Murchison, Sedgwick) “have unanimously, often vehemently, maintained the immutability of species” (315–316). Darwin argues that each species is not “immutable,” or “independently created” with varieties “produced by secondary laws” (443–455). He argues that “the theory of creation” is “inexplicable” in view of the variation of species (446), and how they came about through hereditary modification, or internal rather than merely external conditions (climate and food etc), and mainly through natural selection (66–68, cf. 342). Natural selection of species rather than divine fixity of species is Darwin’s thesis throughout his *Origin of Species*.

⁹ Charles Darwin letter, cited by Harold Coffin with Robert H. Brown, *Origin By Design* (Hagerstown: Review and Herald, 1983), 447.

¹⁰ Darwin apparently believed that the Genesis creation account teaches the fixity of species, which it doesn’t. The Hebrew word *min*, meaning “after its kind,” occurs ten times in Genesis 1 (vs. 11–12, 21, 24–25). “After its kind” does not rule out variation *within* kinds, but it rules out that two dogs can give birth to a cat, for example (a variation *between* kinds). This boundary between kinds that Scripture teaches is precisely what evolutionary theory ignores in its alleged descent through the kinds, from the simplest to the most complex. This is why representatives of each kind, and not all the multiplicity of species within each kind, could be housed in the dimensions of the ark (Gen 6:15–16) in the global flood (Gen 7:4, 19–23) without any problem for the multiplicity of species continuing in the post-diluvian world. If Darwin had realized that the Hebrew word *min* does not teach fixity of species, he would have understood that his findings did not correct the Genesis creation account (he only corrected the misguided interpretation of Genesis). Neither would he have found evidence in geology for the extinction of species that supports evolution, but evidence for a global destruction of all things outside the ark in the flood account of Genesis 6–9. He would have been spared all his effort, and others spared the dismissal of Scripture by science that has ensued ever since. For a good recent article on *Min*, see A. Rahel Davidson Schafer, “The ‘Kinds’ of Genesis 1: What is the Meaning of *Min*?,” *JATS*, 14/1 (Spring 2003): 86–100.

¹¹ See William A. Dembski’s “The Demise of British Natural Theology,” *Intelligent Design*, 70–93. Compare Philosophical Positivism with the later movement called Logical Positivism; see footnote 40.

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empirical leap of faith in accepting the claim of philosophical positivism (rejection of God).¹² Methodological naturalism, which excludes God in Darwinian and neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory, is a philosophical and metaphysical assumption, not empirical science.

Naturalism has excluded the supernatural in revelation as well as in nature. I am convinced that inherent revelation in Scripture and inherent design in nature provide a biblical and scientific hermeneutic to answer evolutionary claims that call in question the creation account of Genesis 1–2. In fact, on empirical and logical grounds, the inherent design movement may yet prove the greatest intellectual threat to neo-Darwinian methodological naturalism.¹³

A study of the relation between science and faith with respect to creation includes a search for an agreement on the method of God's creation. But at a deeper, foundational level, our search must first include an agreement on the method of God's revelation. Until we have reached a conclusion regarding His method of revelation, we are not foundationally ready to reach a conclusion regarding His method of creation. Our focus in this article will be on the foundational importance of Scripture as revelation.

Scripture as Revelation: The Debate

Scripture as revelation is different from Scripture as only a witness to revelation. Scripture is the Word of God and not merely a witness to the Word of God. Unfortunately, J. S. Semler (1721–1791) distinguished between revelation and Scripture. He taught that “The root of evil (in theology) is the interchangeable use of the terms ‘Scripture’ and ‘Word of God.’”¹⁴ He continued, “Holy

¹² There may have been a remnant of God in his 1859 *Origin of Species* (“the laws impressed on matter by the Creator,” 458), but this passing comment had no determining influence on his theory throughout the book, which was *natural rather than God selection*.

¹³ William A. Dembski holds a Ph.D. in mathematics (University of Chicago) and in philosophy (University of Illinois at Chicago) and is one of the leaders of the Intelligent Design Movement. His book *The Design Inference* (Cambridge) is a complex and technical work on statistics, and the thesis of that book is given in popular form in his book *Intelligent Design*. In it he makes a compelling scientific case for intelligent design in nature by empirical and logical deduction. As such it offers a powerful replacement for naturalism. Dembski demonstrates that evolutionary biology needs to be reconceptualized in information-theoretic terms, so that common descent requires that certain informational pathways connect all organisms, for only information begets information. Michael Behe, in his book *Darwin's Black Box*, presents a compelling case for irreducible complexity at the molecular level, which challenges any pre-evolutionary development prior to these complex molecular machines, for they reveal intelligent design, rather than random natural causation. When Darwin said that “many and grave objections may be advanced against the theory of descent with modification through natural selection, I do not deny” (435), he had no idea what molecular biology and biochemistry would discover about the complexity of cells.

¹⁴ J. S. Semler, “*Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Canon*,” *Texte zur Kirchen-und Theologiegeschichte*, vol. 5 (Guetersloh: 1967), 43, 47, 55, 58ff; Gerhard Maier, *The End of the Historical Critical Method*, trans. Edwin W. Leverenz and Rudolph F. Norden (St. Louis: Concordia, 1974), 15.

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Scripture and Word of God are very much to be distinguished, because we know the difference; just because someone has not previously seen that difference, that is no prohibition against us seeing it.” Semler believed that Scripture contains God’s Word, but also contains much else. He could even suggest that a condensation of the Bible is possible in order that it would then be God’s Word.¹⁵ For Semler, on balance Scripture was not too different from any other book. He claimed that it was full of contradictions,¹⁶ and many, since Semler, have taken similar positions.¹⁷

This new view is a product of the Enlightenment. It successfully severed revelation from Scripture, so that Scripture is, at best, only a witness to revelation, but never revelation. There is a difference. A witness to revelation means that the encounter of God with the biblical writer is written in Scripture as the prophet/apostle’s response to God’s revelation. Thus Scripture is not a divine record of revelation but a human response to revelation. This empties Scripture of divine revelation, and to this degree lowers it to a human work. Divine revelation is confined to the encounter of God with the writer and not recorded in Scripture as such, for it is the Living Word of God (Jesus Christ) who is revelation and not the written Word of God.

In our time it is important to stress that when God’s Word to humans is confined to Jesus Christ, this is not essentially different from God’s Word confined to personal experience, as in Friedrich Schleiermacher’s *The Christian Faith*¹⁸ and subsequent existential systems. It is true that the focus has moved away from a revelation made to an individual to a revelation made through an individual, and it is true that the focus has moved away from revelation to a human to revelation made through One also divine. But the foundation is still limited to the existential realm, albeit on different levels, because Scripture is emptied of revelation.¹⁹ Rather, revelation is found outside Scripture within the Christian or in Christ.

¹⁵ Gerhard Maier, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, trans. Robert W. Yarbrough (Wheaton: Crossway, 1994), 298.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁷ Maier, 47.

¹⁸ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, 1830; ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999). Schleiermacher is the father of existentialism. Like the New Testament scholar Bultmann in the 20th century, Schleiermacher attempted to reach the thinkers of his day, but did so by rejecting Scripture as revelation. Many biblical and theological scholars do the same in attempting to reach the scientifically minded through dismissing the literal/historical propositional revelation of Genesis 1–2.

¹⁹ When I speak of Scripture being emptied of revelation, this does not deny that (to neo-Orthodox theologians like Barth and Brunner) Scripture repeatedly becomes revelation in an encounter of God with the reader, but it points out that Scripture is not revelation outside of these encounters. It is not inherently revelation. Encounter revelation places revelation within the encounter rather than within Scripture. The Holy Spirit Author of Scripture opens human understanding to the inherent revelation in Scripture.

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Hence, at best, Scripture is only a medium through which revelation comes. There is no “given” revelation in Scripture, it is merely a conduit for revelation and never revelation itself. On a practical level, this means that existentialists will look within themselves more than within Scripture to find God (Schleiermacher’s theology focuses on a feeling of absolute dependence upon God—within human experience, rather than within biblical revelation).

Many theologians reject Scripture as the Word of God, speaking of it merely as a witness to God (Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Thomas Torrance, Hans Frei, Paul Tillich, Georg Stroup, George Lindbeck, G. C. Berkouwer, Stanley Grenz, Avery Dulles, James Barr, David Tracy, David Kelsey, and Donald Bloesch). In fact Colin Gunton, of King’s College, London, likens Barth’s view, in many respects, to “mainstream Christian tradition including that of Roman Catholicism, in holding clearly to the view that Scripture is not revelation, but in some sense mediator of it.”²⁰

But is Scripture only a witness to God, or medium for God, rather than a Word from God? How would we know anything about Jesus Christ except in Scripture? Of necessity Scripture must be the written revelation of God in order for us to know anything about Jesus Christ, the living Word of God. To deny Scripture as revelation is to deny revelation about what and who it presents, including Jesus Christ. It is not possible for Jesus Christ to be God’s revelation to humanity if Scripture, which tells about this revelation, is not itself God’s revelation about Jesus Christ. We cannot accept one as revelation without the prior acceptance of the other.

Scripture as revelation separates it from God’s revelation in nature, for the difference lies in God’s speech in Scripture. The speaking God is first encountered in Scripture itself, and not in some noncognitive subjective experience. The limitations of general revelation are overcome only when Scripture is God’s revelation about Himself, His relationship with humans, the plan of salvation, and the final destiny of humankind—none of which is understood from nature alone. So one must move away from Barth’s encounter as revelation and Panenberg’s history as revelation to the biblical position of Scripture as revelation.

Propositional Nature of Scripture

In contrast to general revelation in nature and encountering “revelation” in theology, scriptural revelation is cognitive—it speaks to humans in propositions.²¹ By definition the Word of God is a word from God, a message composed of many words, sentences, and hence propositions. Hence “no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried

²⁰ Colin Gunton, “All Scripture is Inspired?” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, 14/3, New Series (1993), 242 (240–253).

²¹ This is not to limit biblical revelation only to propositions, but it is to reflect on the propositional nature of revelation.

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along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet 1:20–21). “God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets . . . in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son” (Heb 1:1–2). In the same way Paul can say, “When you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe” (1 Thess 2:13). There was no more severance of the divine and human in Scripture than there was a severance of the divine and human in Christ. The written Word of God and the living Word of God are an indivisible union. Those who, like Barth, oppose propositional revelation do so by using propositions, which is self-defeating to their argument. John Montgomery put it well: “Like logic itself, both the subject-object distinction and propositional thinking must be presupposed in all sensible investigations. Why? Because to argue against their necessity is to employ them already! When one asserts ‘Personal encounters, not propositions, yield truth,’ one is in fact stating a proposition.”²²

Idealism was right in believing humans need an absolute Word, but it was wrong in thinking humans arrive at that Word through their own efforts. Existentialism was right in recognizing human inability in such a quest, but wrong in rejecting an absolute Word.²³ In his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Wittgenstein (1889–1951) argues that “the sense of the world must lie outside the world,”²⁴ or beyond human experience. Only one who is God can take in the whole perspective, a view that calls into question the attempts to interpret history without revelation (as in Kant and Huxley).²⁵ This concept undercuts both philosophers who attempt to explain the empirical and scientists who attempt to explain the visible. None of them are God. God, who is omnipresent and omniscient, has spoken propositionally about some of these matters in Scripture (see Heb 1:1–2).

In commenting on Wittgenstein’s contribution, Montgomery stated, “This insight has revolutionized all branches of philosophy and has dealt a virtual deathblow to metaphysical idealism.”²⁶ “The analytical philosophy movement—Wittgenstein’s continuing legacy—has provided the tools by which early 20th-century existential skepticism toward objective biblical truth can be effectively countered, and the fact of ‘divine intervention’ through Scripture meaningfully proclaimed.”²⁷

²² John W. Montgomery, *The Suicide of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1970), 334.

²³ *Ibid.*, 364.

²⁴ Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, and Montgomery, *The Suicide of Christian Theology*, 365.

²⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within The Limits of Reason Alone*, 1934; trans. Theodore M. Green and Hoyt H. Hudson (New York: Harper & Row, 1960). Julian Huxley, *Religion Without Revelation* (New York: Harper Brothers, Rev., 1957).

²⁶ Montgomery, 365.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 367.

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The work of Wittgenstein has exposed the fallacy of existential subjectivity. A wordless encounter or a meeting of God in the immediacy of one's own existence is seen to be without any objective norm. With the rejection of propositional truth, the subjective encounter is left without objective evaluation. Montgomery concludes, "Today, as never before, philosophical thought manifests a passion for objective, empirical truth, and the ordinary-language philosophers (whose work stems from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*) are stressing the importance of verbal expression in conveying truth. Idealistic castles-in-air have been deflated and existential wanderings in the labyrinth of subjectivity have been discredited. Evangelicals in the 21st century have an unparalleled opportunity to affirm the relevance of their high view of Scripture. The 'divine intervention' for which Wittgenstein longed can with confidence be offered to modern man in the totally veracious, inscripturated Word of God."²⁸

There is no good news for postmoderns in the 21st century unless truth is inscripturated in propositions. The silent god of the encountering experience is as absent as the god of Deism, for whether God meets one in the silence of the mind or does not meet one in the silence of space, there is no spoken Word. Scripture is the empirical evidence that God is not silent. He has spoken. If humankind would approach Scripture to listen to what it says and follow God as their God, it would revolutionize coming history. For too long humans have played god, even under the name of neoorthodoxy. To reject propositional revelation and end up with a dumb god is to be left with the cogitations of one's own mind. At least they are propositional. One then attributes more to one's own propositional ability than to God's, and in so doing, ousts God from His place as the speaking God.

Testimony of Scripture to its Revelation

Scripture presents itself as God's revelation. God asked Aaron to "teach the Israelites all the decrees the LORD has given them through Moses" (Lev 10:11).²⁹ King Josiah went to the temple with priests and prophets and others and "read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the LORD," and he pledged "to follow the LORD and keep his commands, regulations and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, thus confirming the words of the covenant written in this book" (2 Kgs 23:2-3). King Josiah declared that God had been angry because the fathers "have not acted in accordance with all that is written in this book" (2 Chron 34:21). Ezra and the Levites "read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and

²⁸ Ibid., 370.

²⁹ The fact that earlier decrees of God were later annulled (e.g., circumcision, Acts 15:1-11, 22-29) or made obsolete (e.g., the old covenant sacrifices, Heb 8:13; 9:15-28) does not refute their being God's decrees. They were divine revelation to those who lived prior to the coming of Christ, and their fulfillment in Christ does not negate them as revelation, but affirms their function to point to Him as their fulfillment.

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giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read” (Neh 8:8).

These leaders looked to the written Word of God and had complete confidence in it as God’s revelation in human words—words that are powerful to change and enlighten and have within them the evidence of the divine. It is vital that the words of Scripture be taken seriously. Throughout the history of Israel, Judah, and the Christian church, many have taken them seriously. God’s revelation in Scripture has brought conversions and inspired great lives, great preaching, the great international missionary outreach, and the international Bible societies’ translation work.

Nowhere in Scripture do we find Jesus speaking about a dynamic view of revelation. The preeminent example of His not speaking of a dynamic view of revelation is on the Emmaus road after His resurrection (Luke 24:13–35). Two disciples were discouraged, believing that Christ was dead. He joined them. If Christ is revelation, then His best way to overcome their discouragement was to manifest Himself to them. But He didn’t. He took a much longer route, for He wanted them to see the evidence for who He is from the propositional revelation of Scripture. He even rebuked them for not giving heed to propositional revelation in the Old Testament. “He said to them, ‘How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?’ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself” (Luke 24:25–26).

In His three crucial temptations in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1–11), He overcame by quoting three verses from Deuteronomy (Matt 4:4–Deut. 8:3; Matt 4:7–Deut 6:16; Matt 4:10–Deut 6:13), showing His belief in divine power in God’s revealed Word. He did not answer Satan by saying, “I am the living Word” and defeat the tempter by His omnipotent power. He was tempted and overcame like all other humans (Heb 4:15). The fact that He used the written Word shows that He believed in its divine authority, in its inherent revelation.

Evidently Satan knew that, too, because he quoted Scripture in the second temptation (Matt 4:6), and Christ’s authoritative answers from Scripture caused Satan to leave defeated (Matt 4:11). Humans overcome by the written Word of God. King David, a type of Christ, declared, “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Ps 119:11). Scripture confirms this power, “For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Heb 4:12). King David affirmed, “I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes” (Ps 119:99). “The entrance of your word gives light; it gives understanding to the simple” (Ps 119:130). No wonder he could say, “I have put my hope in your word” (Ps 119:147). The Word of God has godlike power because it is God’s

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Word. Jesus knew this, defeated the enemy through using the Word, and by doing this showed His respect for it as the cognitive revelation from God.

This doesn't make Scripture magical, as if it houses some power to be used on demand. There is no bibliolatry involved; Christ did not worship the writings. When invited to worship Satan He clearly stated, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only" (Matt 4:10). Christ didn't look to Scripture alone, but to the divine author and His Word together. Christ knew that God and His Word are to be united, as were His own divine-human reality on another level. It was the Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted (Matt 4:1). It was the Spirit and His Scriptures that helped Him overcome. The presence of the Revealer and His revelation must always be held together. The use of Scripture and the interpretation of Scripture is to be done in relationship with its divine author, and never without.

Throughout His ministry Jesus never called attention to Himself as God's revelation to humans. Although He did mention that He revealed the Father on one occasion (John 14:8, 9), He consistently directed His hearers to the written Word of God. He asked the lawyer, "What is written in the Law . . . How do you read it?" (Luke 10:26). The lawyer quoted Deut 6:5—"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"—and Lev 19:8—"Love your neighbor as yourself" (John 10:27). And Jesus replied "You have answered correctly. . . . Do this and live" (John 10:28). Repeatedly Jesus asked His hearers if they had read the Old Testament, calling them "Scriptures" (*graphe*, Matt 21:42). His reference to these Scriptures showed He believed in the historicity of David in the temple (Matt 12:3–4; Mark 2:25; Luke 6:3), of the priests in the temple (Matt 12:5–8), and of the creation of Adam and Eve (Matt 19:4). Christ referred to the Mosaic authorship of Exodus (Mark 12:26; Exod 3:6), and made reference to various psalms (Matt 21:16, Ps 8:2; Mark 12:10, Ps 118:22–23).

The validity of biblical propositions is found in Scripture. One example concerns the references to the Old Testament as "written for our instruction"—this includes we who live in the end-time. If what was written so long ago has instructive relevance for today, then it must be propositional revelation. George W. Knight III, wrote an insightful article on this point in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*.³⁰ Even an ad hoc situation turns out to have universal application. Thus the Ten Commandments, though given to an Israel recently liberated from Egypt (Exod 20:2), are proclaimed by Jesus to cause people to enter life in His day (Matt 19:17–19), are presented by Paul to be kept in his time (Rom 13:8–10), and promoted by James for those who read his letter (James 2:8–13).

³⁰ George W. Knight III, "The Scriptures Were Written for Our Instruction," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 39/1 (March 1996), 3–13. The paragraphs in this section contain his thinking (biblical texts), with additional insights added.

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Here are a few more examples. The first example concerns a law in the Old Testament. “For it is written in the Law of Moses: ‘Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.’ Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn’t he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest” (1 Cor. 9:9–10). The original truth-intent of the Old Testament instruction takes on a broader audience in the New Testament. The original truth-intent remains, but the audience is vastly expanded.

The second example refers to events that happened to Israel. Paul says, “These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come” (1 Cor 10:11). Note in each of these examples it is the written Scripture that acts as guidance years after the events given, as an example or guide to the Christian church. The cognitive revelation in Scripture has more than an original intent; it has an original truth-intent that has universal application. The guidance first given is equally valid to contemporary followers of Christ. No wonder Paul can say, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16–17).

The third example refers to the way events of the past, including Christ’s experience, were written in the Scriptures to help later readers. “Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: ‘The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.’ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (Rom. 15:2–4). Clearly Christ’s example was written in the Scriptures to guide His followers. It was propositional revelation to that end.

The fourth example is Christ’s view of the Scriptures. Note His balance: (1) He “explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself” (Luke 24:25–27), and (2) He says, “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are they which testify about me” (John 5:39). Christ showed His disciples from Scripture why they should not be discouraged, because His crucifixion and resurrection were prophesied. In the second passage, Christ speaks to unbelievers who rejected Him (John 5:37–38). They approached Scripture without a relationship with God (vs. 38, 40, 42), and thought that by so doing they merited eternal life, when they should have found in Scripture evidence (testimony) that they needed Christ as their only Savior. On both occasions Christ was saying Scripture testifies about Him.

Scripture Testifies to a Literal/Historical Creation

Scripture testifies to God as creator (Gen 6:7; Deut 4:32; Neh 9:6; Ps 95:3–6; 104: 2–5,10–24;115:15–16; 136:5–9; 146:6; Isa 40:26; 42:5; 45:12;

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Amos 4:13; Mal 2:10). The New Testament speaks of creation (Mark 10:6; 13:19; Rom 1:20; 8:22; 2 Pet 3:4; Rev 3:14). Beings worship at the throne of God, saying, “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things” (Rev 4:11). Even the eternal gospel is linked to a call to “every nation” on earth to worship the one “who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water” (Rev 14:6–7).

Just as God and Christ were together in the supernatural work of salvation (John 3:16), so they were together in the supernatural work of creation (Heb 1:1–2). Christ and the Holy Spirit work together in the supernatural work of re-creation (2 Cor 5:17; Col 1:27; John 17:17; Rom 15:16b). On the basis of the portrayal of God throughout Scripture it is logical to deduce that He was no more dependent on the natural process of evolution to create than He is dependent upon human works to save. There are works that only God can do—atonement sacrifice for humans, regeneration in humans, and a creation of a new heavens and a new world (Isa 65:17; cf. Rev 21:1) for the redeemed. Creation is something that only God can do (Neh 9:6). It is a sign of who He is (Ps 95:6).

Theistic evolutionists believe that God is the Creator, but differ with creationists on how He created. Scripture never suggests that Christ used the evolutionary process in creation. Given a cosmic controversy, and Satan’s hatred of the Creator/Redeemer Christ, wouldn’t one expect a counterfeit creation claim to the biblical account? After all, Scripture speaks of other counterfeits, such as salvation by human effort in place of salvation as a gift (Rom 10:3), the little horn counterfeit priesthood on earth in place of Christ’s priesthood in heaven’s sanctuary (Dan 8:9–12), Satan appearing as an angel of light in place of the second coming (2 Cor 11:14; Matt 24:23–24; 1 Thes 4:16–18). Each is a replacement of the Creator by a created idea or person, just as creation by evolution replaces Christ’s speaking, molding, and forming things into existence. The work of nature replaces the work of the Creator. Just as the natural worldview replaces supernatural revelation, so the natural worldview replaces supernatural creation. The latter is the logical conclusion of the first. By contrast, creation by God is found throughout Scripture as God’s work. Christ speaks of God as Creator—in reference to Genesis 1–2 (Matt 19:4–5), the very chapters rejected as non-literal and non-historical myth (Bultmann) or saga (Barth). G. C. Berkouwer was right when he wrote, “science cannot become an ‘interpreter’ alongside of Scripture itself.”³¹ If all Scripture is God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:18), then it follows that “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matt 4:4; cf. Deut 8:3).

“In fact, every NT writer explicitly or implicitly affirms the historicity of Genesis 1–11 (see Matt 19:4, 5; 24:37–39; Mark 10:6; Luke 3:38; 17:26, 27;

³¹ Berkouwer, *Studies in Dogmatics: Holy Scripture*, trans. Jack B. Rogers (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 134.

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Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 6:16; 2 Cor 11:3; Eph 5:312; 1 Tim 2:13, 14; Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5; James 3:9; 1 John 3:12; Jude 11, 14; Rev 14:7).³²

Is an External Interpretive Tool Required in Place of the Internal Interpretive Tool of *Sola Scriptura*?

It is well known that Scripture interprets Scripture (*sola scriptura*). That's why all the biblical references to creation are important to determining whether the Genesis 1–2 account is to be taken literally. In the above references we found no evidence for a non-literal/historical interpretation of creation.

What about *sola scriptura* in this time when some claim that science is a better interpreter of the biblical record of creation? Does Darwinian or neo-Darwinian evolution explain the origin of life, thus providing a new hermeneutical tool when interpreting the Genesis creation? G. C. Berkouwer asks, about this new “occasion” for understanding Scripture, “What is the relationship between such an ‘occasion’ and the authoritative power of the ‘Sacred Scripture is its own interpreter?’” (*sui ipsius interpret*).³³ He concludes that the Reformation principle remains, for “the discussion about Scripture, its God-breathed character and authority, cannot take place via a coerced concession to a new hermeneutical method and the ‘occasion’ of science.”³⁴ I concur with him, and not with a principle of David Tracy, who says the theologian “finds that his ethical commitment to the morality of scientific knowledge forces him to assume a critical posture towards his own and his tradition’s beliefs.”³⁵

What about The 21st Century Scientific Worldview?

If Scripture is God’s revelation to us, does it have authority in the realm of metaphysics? In other words, does the biblical presentation of a literal/historical creation in Genesis 1–2 present an authoritative account that can be accepted by faith, just as salvation through Christ’s atonement is accepted by faith? Or, must Scripture as revelation give way to science as a more empirical reading of created reality? Does the alleged scientific view of the origin of species disprove the Genesis account of origins? Is the Genesis account a mere primitive attempt to describe what the allegedly more enlightened and sophisticated scientific account presents in the 21st century? Is it time for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to update its interpretation of the Genesis account in the light of science, as so many other churches have done? Or is it possible to marry two mutually exclusive worldviews (supernatural and natural) and live at peace? Or should one consider the domains of Scripture and science as decidedly different, with

³² Richard M. Davidson, “Biblical Interpretation,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown: Review and Herald, 2000), *SDA Bible Commentary*, 12:70.

³³ Berkouwer, 133.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 138.

³⁵ David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology* (New York: Seabury, 1978), 7.

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belief as the final word for the Genesis account and empirical evidence as the final word for science?³⁶

In order to consider some of these questions, we will evaluate the important article of Fritz Guy, “Interpreting Genesis One in the Twenty-first Century.”³⁷ Fritz Guy is an influential Adventist theologian who presents a non-literal/historical view of Genesis 1–2, and his view must give comfort and support to many Adventist scientists, for it comes to the Genesis account with the assumption that the “scientific” view of origins is very persuasive. His article is representative of the views of some Adventist scholars. It should not be ignored. It is crucial to the three years’ study that the church is giving to the relationship between faith and science. I commend Fritz Guy for writing his view with clarity and conviction. There is no mistaking where he stands. So his contribution deserves careful study. First we should note that there are many things in the article with which we can agree,³⁸ and these should not go unnoticed, but these do not alter the major purpose of his contribution.

Guy clearly lays out three principle ways to interpret the creation account in Gen 1:1–2:3. He suggests the chapter is either “quasiscientific,” “antirealistic” or “theological.”³⁹ He prefers the last one. In that context he defers to science when interpreting Gen 1 and 2, because empirical science seems more valid to him than the classical interpretation of the creation account that he confines to a spiritual/ theological presentation. Guy dismisses the biblical cosmology of a

³⁶ Even though Genesis 1–2 has nothing to say about science, it is to be understood first within the authority of biblical revelation with its scientific hermeneutic of *sola scriptura*, where the entire context of Scripture on creation corroborates the immediate contextual understanding of Genesis 1–2. Hence the context for understanding the Genesis 1–2 is the canon of divine revelation, rather than the secular context of science.

³⁷ Guy, 5–16.

³⁸ Some examples are: the Sabbath is the climax of the Genesis creation account (6); Ellen White says that long-held truths are not proof that our ideas are infallible (8); science does not and cannot claim that the universe actually began in a Big Bang about 14 billions years ago, even if appearances suggest it (10); antirealism disassociates the observational from the theoretical (10); and, all observation is theory laden (10). He recognizes the following issues: that the brutality and wastefulness of the long evolutionary process is incompatible with an all-wise, all powerful, and all-loving God (8); that if death was present throughout the long evolutionary process, then in what sense is death sin’s wages, and in what sense did humans fall? (8, 13); but he opts for the long ages anyway, because he believes empirical evidence dictates it.

³⁹ Guy seems to read the Genesis account with naturalistic assumptions, saying “Creation progresses from light to the image of God in humanity, from the physically elementary to the psychosocially complex.” (6). He asks if Genesis 1 tells “us how the world actually began or what it means?” (6). He opts for purpose and meaning (8). But, does it not give us both? Guy approaches Genesis 1 to interpret it in light of so-called empirical science. He says, “Accumulating empirical evidence regarding the history of the universe, planet earth, and life raises an obvious and unavoidable issue: how does this evidence affect an interpretation of Genesis 1?” (7). He doesn’t come to Genesis 1–2 as divine revelation and ask how we should interpret the empirical claims of naturalism in the light of the Genesis account. Apparently, to Guy, empirical science has more authority than divine revelation. So it is important that we evaluate the authenticity of empirical claims by science.

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three-decker universe but apparently accepts the big bang cosmology of science.⁴⁰ Could it be that the biblical cosmology is just as non-scientific as scientists in the 21st century speaking of sunrise and sunset? Guy considers the six day creation week as non-literal/historical, whereas the long ages of naturalistic evolution are empirical/scientific. It should be clearly noted that Guy believes in God as the Creator, and he believes in a functional view of revelation,⁴¹ but does not see a literal/historical creation week as revelation.

We need to pause here and remember the famous lecture, “New Testament and Mythology,” that the New Testament scholar Rudolf Bultmann presented at a pastors’ conference on April 21, 1941, in Frankfurt, Germany. Bultmann said, “The cosmology of the New Testament is essentially mythical in character.” It is “obsolete.” “Can Christian preaching expect modern man to accept the mythical view of the world as true? To do so would be both senseless and impossible. It would be senseless, because there is nothing specifically Christian in the mythical view of the world as such. It is simply the cosmology of a pre-scientific age.” “For all our thinking to-day is shaped irrevocably by modern science. A blind acceptance of the New Testament mythology would be arbitrary . . . It would involve a sacrifice of the intellect which could have only one result—a curious form of schizophrenia and insincerity. It would mean accepting a view of the world in our faith and religion which we should deny in our everyday life. Modern thought as we have inherited it brings with it criticism of the New Testament view of the world.”⁴²

What is Bultmann saying? Acceptance by modern man, meaning scientifically sophisticated man, necessitates a change of a biblical teaching method. He admits the impossibility of marrying two mutually exclusive worldviews, the naturalistic worldview of science and the supernaturalistic worldview of Scripture. So he believes he has resolved the tension by siding with the modern/scientific naturalistic worldview and jettisons the supernaturalistic worldview, but with disastrous results.

Look what he did to the propositional beliefs of biblical revelation. He said, “No one who is old enough to think for himself supposes that God lives in a local heaven. There is no longer any heaven in the traditional sense of the word . . . We can no longer look for the return of the Son of Man on the clouds

⁴⁰ Guy, 6,10.

⁴¹ Fritz Guy, *Thinking Theologically* (Berrien Spring: Andrews UP, 1999), 146 (a functional rather than an infallible view of Scripture). He says, “Scripture consists of narratives and interpretations of revelatory events” (98), and “the understanding of the authority of scripture is changing from infallibility to reliability; and the understanding of its function in Christian life is changing from ‘code book’ to ‘case book.’” Guy considers this change to a ‘case book’ to be “an important improvement” (91). For a presentation and evaluation of *Thinking Theologically*, see Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 1:110–116.

⁴² Rudolf Bultmann, “New Testament and Mythology” in *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate*, 1st English trans. 1953, ed., Hans Werner Bartsch, trans. Reginald H. Fuller (London: S.P.C.K, 1964, 1953), 1–4 (italics his).

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of heaven or hope that the faithful will meet him in the air (1 Thess. 4:154ff.)” “Even if we believe that the world as we know it will come to an end in time, we expect the end to take the form of a natural catastrophe, not of a mythical event such as the New Testament expects.”⁴³

Bultmann rightly says that “the biblical doctrine that death is the punishment of sin is equally abhorrent to naturalism and idealism.” But he sides with them in saying, “the only criticism of the New Testament which is theologically relevant is that which arises necessarily out of the situation of modern man.” In other words, the prevailing cultural worldview (or the existential reality of human understanding) is the criterion for critiquing Scripture. He says attributing “human mortality to the fall of Adam is sheer nonsense,” and he objects to the atonement, for how “can the guilt of one man be expiated by the death of another who is sinless—if indeed one may speak of a sinless man at all? What primitive notions of guilt and righteousness does this imply? And what primitive idea of God? The rationale of sacrifice in general may of course throw some light on the theory of the atonement, but even so, what a primitive mythology it is, that a divine Being should become incarnate, and atone for the sins of men through his own blood!”⁴⁴ (Death before the fall and the unnecessary death of Christ to make atonement were also views in papers of other presenters in the Faith and Science Conference at Glacier View Ranch, August 13–20, 2003).

At the end of the day, Bultmann believed he had gone beyond the primitive ideas of Scripture to the more sophisticated ideas of humans who live in an age of empirical science. It is the existential influence of Heidegger and the scientific influence of naturalism that form the human criterion by which he judged Scripture as primitive and hence mythological. At least this should indicate the slippery slope that one scholar tumbled down in making too much of the cosmological worldview of Scripture. He failed to grasp that his questioning of Scripture and placing of human ideas above divine revelation placed him on the wrong side of the biblical cosmic controversy worldview.

The crux of Guy’s article, it seems to me, is the placing of things of nature in the empirical/scientific worldview and things of Genesis 1–2 in the spiritual/theological worldview. A quick glance at this division would logically lead one to think that the empirical/scientific way of looking at creation has an advantage over the spiritual/theological way of looking at creation. The rest of the article substantiates that this is Guy’s conclusion. It is necessary, therefore, to unpack the normal meaning of the terms empirical and scientific and apply them

⁴³ Bultmann, 4–5. See also the Gifford Lectures that Bultmann delivered at the University of Edinburgh in 1955, where eschatology is confined to the ever-repeated coming of the Holy Spirit in encounters to human existence, replacing a final cosmic coming of Christ. This is the extent of the reinterpretation and reductionism of Bultmann’s existential hermeneutic. Rudolf Bultmann, *History and Eschatology* (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1957).

⁴⁴ Bultmann, *Kerygma and Myth*, 7.

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to the reasoning of Guy's article.⁴⁵ It should be remembered that the attempt to restrict meaning to the empirical by Logical Positivism ended in failure.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ After which we will also consider other matters he presents.

⁴⁶ Logical positivism came out of a University of Vienna seminar conducted by Moritz Schlick in 1923. It combined the logical rigor of Cambridge with the positivism of Vienna. The members (known as the Vienna Circle) included Morris Schlick, Rudolf Carnap, Victor Kraft, Herbert Feigl, and Otto Neurath, who, though "primarily scientists rather than philosophers," were interested in the philosophy of science. Their concerns had been largely shaped by Einstein. They thought they were modern but were rather "the last spokesmen of the Enlightenment." They stood on the border between the change from modernity to postmodernity. The enlarging view of postmodernity would question the narrow view of meaning held by the logical positivists.

Here is the way it developed. Claiming to have exclusive right to the empirical scientific method, the Vienna Circle said there are only two types of meaningful language: (1) Mathematicological truths, where the predicate is included in the subject (such as five minus two is three or two plus two equals four). Nothing is added in the predicate that is not already understood in the subject. These are analytical, or *a priori* statements. They are simply true because they are obvious. (2) Empirical truths, such as the flower in the vase is dead, adds in the predicate something not included in the subject, and is considered a synthetic, or *a posteriori*, statement. These statements or truths are verifiable through sense data. Some adherents of logical positivism call the movement logical empiricism because of the emphasis on empirical verification.

Therefore, statements that define terms (analytical) or statements that have sense data to verify or falsify them (synthetic) are the only types of meaningful statements. According to logical positivism, any other kind of statement besides the mathematicological and empirical statements are nonsense. For there are only three possible categories of language—empirical, *a priori*, and emotive. Theology is placed in the latter category. This means that language used about metaphysics and theology is meaningless.

To understand the impact of analytical philosophy on theology, we must remember that Kant—with his rejection of the transempirical realm as open to sense perceptions, and his rejection of cognitive propositions—set the stage for this kind of thinking. Because of his enormous influence, "many religious philosophers since the time of Kant have contended that God is intellectually unknowable."

Are empiricists being empirical when they reject metaphysical statements as meaningless? "A more empirical, less doctrinaire approach to language would show that there are many noteworthy functions of language besides the analytic and the empirically informative. Among these are the imperative, performative, and interrogative functions of speech." On this basis, how can the scientific method be appraised? As Gordon R. Lewis notes, referring to Edward John Carnell, "No experiment can verify a statement about the value of the scientific method."

Thus logical positivism confined truth statements, or statements of meaning, to a small part of life. All other statements of poetry, music, religion, and art were renounced. But how can anyone live in such a narrowly prescribed world? Furthermore, the theory could not stand under its own test for a truth statement. For how can a theory of language that accepts only mathematicological and empirical statements be tested by that standard? This caused the demise of logical positivism, for it could not live up to its own theory.

Theological propositions transcend human verifiability. There is no empirical evidence for many of the major propositions of theology. For example, the fact that God is eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, and knows the end from the beginning is beyond human proof. The belief that Jesus was born of a virgin, was resurrected, ascended to heaven, and will return again is not open to human verification. These matters transcend the human because they have to do with the divine. It is like a boy at the beach with his bucket trying to capture the ocean. The vast expanse cannot even be seen by the boy, let alone placed in his bucket.

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First, consider the relegation of Scripture to a spiritual/theological status compared to science as empirical/scientific. Guy denies that Genesis 1–2 is literal/historical “in view of current empirical evidence, including radiometric dating, that suggest a very long history of changing life forms.”⁴⁷ However, empirical research is questioning radiometric dating.⁴⁸ Elaine Kennedy cites research studies in Wyoming, Arizona, coastal Peru, and Argentina that call in question geologic time.⁴⁹ Ariel Roth gives compelling evidence questioning geologic time. He states that “Paraconformities pose a serious challenge to the standard geologic time scale, radiometric dating, and interpretations of extended time for the development of life on earth. They are what would be expected from the rapid deposition of sediments during the Genesis Flood.”⁵⁰ He states that “Present rates of erosion, even when corrected for the effects of agriculture, are so fast, that if the geologic time scale is correct, the continents would have been eroded away over a hundred times.”⁵¹ In questioning the naturalistic explanations for the origin of life, L. J. Gibson argues that even the oldest age imaginable would not explain the origin of life without a Creator, for it “is widely recognized that even 15 billion years is much too short a time to plausibly allow for life to originate spontaneously.”⁵² So, apparently, there is too little time to even get the process of evolution started, and yet there is far too much time to

Theological language transcends empirical verification, not because it is meaningless but because it is far greater than the human methods to analyze it. This point was completely missed by logical positivism. Meaningful cognitive language cannot be restricted to the analytical and empirical. It makes sense to speak about God’s creative acts in Genesis 1–2 in ways that are appropriate to His transcendency over everything human. To use God-talk when describing the acts of humans is not appropriate. But to use God-talk about God is not only appropriate, but necessary.

Danger of Empirical Evidence. Logical positivism was wrong to dismiss theological language because it did not meet its empirical evaluation. It overlooked the fact that there is a danger of empirical evidence in the religious realm. Theological language can be used by counterfeit prophets. In His Olivet talk, Christ repeatedly warned against false prophets (Matt 24:11, 24) and false christs (Matt 24:5, 24), even though they are empirically present. Such false claims can only be tested if Scripture is divine propositional revelation (1 Thes 5:20–22; 1 John 4:1; Isa 8:20, James 1:17; Deut 18:21–22; 1 John 4:2–32 Pet 1:21; Matt 7:16, 18–20; Gal 5:22–23). For sources and a fuller presentation, see Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, vol 1, chapter 2, 53–76.

⁴⁷ Guy, “Interpreting,” 8.

⁴⁸ See G. Brent Dalrymple, *The Age of the Earth* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1991); Leonard Brand, *Faith, Reason, and Earth History* (Berrien Springs: Andrews UP, 1977); A. Ariel Roth, *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture* (Hagerstown: Review and Herald, 1998).

⁴⁹ Elaine Kennedy, “Time and Geology: A Positive Perspective.” Paper for the Faith and Science Conference, Glacier View, CO., August, 2003.

⁵⁰ Ariel A. Roth, “Scientific Evidence that Affirms a Recent Creation.” Paper for the Faith and Science Conference, Glacier View, CO, August 2003, 5. Leonard Brand makes a case that the forming of the geological column may have began right after creation, and not waited until the global flood.

⁵¹ Ariel A. Roth, 8.

⁵² L. J. Gibson, “Biology and Time.” Paper for Faith and Science Conference Glacier View, CO, August, 2003, 1.

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protect the earth from being flat and the oceans filled (from erosion). On this basis, the mountains and oceans are empirical evidence questioning geologic time.

Guy apparently overlooks the fact that the whole book of Genesis is structured by the word “generations” (*tōlēdōt*), so that the statement “these are the generations of the heavens and the earth” in the Genesis 2:4 (KJV) creation account is as literal/historical as “these are the generations of Noah” (Gen 6:9, KJV), or as literal/historical as God’s promise to establish His covenant with Abraham “and thy seed after thee in their generations” (Gen 17:7, KJV). The non-literal/historical views of the Genesis account have been critiqued by a number of scholars.⁵³ Also, some scientists are calling in question neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory because random selection and chance “runs counter to what is absolutely fundamental to the operation of any formal language system,” for “at the heart of the living world is a sophisticated information-communicating system based on the language of DNA.”⁵⁴

Guy apparently considers the creation account as primitive (non literal/historical) compared to the 21st century sophisticated science about origins (empirical/scientific). But isn’t macro-evolution primitive compared to the complexity of information systems and the astounding performance of complex tasks at the cellular systems level that are goal centered?⁵⁵ By definition macro-evolution (evolving from the simple to the complex on purely naturalistic

⁵³ The non-literal/historical views of Genesis 1-2 (literary framework, theology, liturgy, day-age symbolism, metaphor/parable, and vision) have all been countered. For a thorough presentation supporting the historicity of Genesis 1–2 and presentation of the structure of Genesis see Richard M. Davidson, “The Biblical Account of Origins,” *JATS*, 14/2 (Spring 2003): 4–43. On structure, see *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed., Francis D. Nichol (Washington: Review and Herald, rev. ed. 1976), 1:221.

⁵⁴ Neil Broom, *How Blind Is the Watchmaker?* 144.

⁵⁵ See sources in footnote 1, particularly William A. Dembski, *Intelligent Design*, Neil Broom, *How Blind Is the Watchmaker?*, and Michael Behe’s *Darwin’s Black Box*. Cells, with their molecules, are the “bedrock of nature.” One cannot go lower. They are the “ground level of life.” Cells are complex. There is no simplicity prior to the cell. So cells are irreducibly complex. Irreducible complexity denies a gradual evolutionary development. This means that natural selection, to have any meaning, requires acceptance of a fully functional acquisition. Evolutionary theory has no empirical evidence for how each part became fully functional, and thus complex. If there is complexity before natural selection can meaningfully take place, this calls evolution in question. Some examples of irreducible complexity are (1) cells containing thousands of different kinds of proteins, each assigned a specific task, such as: the nucleus for storage of DNA, the mitochondria which produce energy for the cell, the endoplasmic reticulum which processes proteins, the Golgi apparatus, a shunt off station for proteins to be transported out, the lysome garbage disposal unit, and the peroxisome which helps metabolize fats (Behe, 102); (2) a cilium contains 200 different proteins and is a complex motor engineered with many parts in place in order for it to function as precision equipment; and (3) the coagulation cascade in blood, with its many components. There are many other examples of complexity that present fully functional systems/machines that are irreducibly complex. Function does not take place within the theory of gradualism, for part of a system is no better than a boat without an oar, a steering mechanism, and water to navigate, etc.

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grounds) is logically simplistic. “There is no logical reason why a purely material system should want to embark on a self-improvement program,”⁵⁶ for intentionality transcends the purely material. Of course Guy knows this, and has God using the material system. But is this logical?⁵⁷ We will answer this later.

Guy states that “the astronomical universe is very old, but the present terrestrial ecosystem is relatively young” and this “certainly clashes with a literal interpretation” of Genesis 1 and Exodus 20:11.⁵⁸ But if Guy could accept Genesis 1–2 as God’s divine revelation, he would see that the creation of the heavens and the earth in Genesis 1:1 can be billions of years ago, meaning that the materials of the earth were prepared a long time before creation week, and hence they were “without form” (Hebrew noun, *tohû*) and “void” (Hebrew noun *bohû*), meaning formless and empty (Gen 1:2). They were formed (days 1–3, Gen 1:3–13) and filled (days 4–6, Gen 1:14–31) in a relatively recent literal/historical creation. Thus Genesis 1:2 is interpreted as a passive gap between the original creation and the creation week of the earth and its own surrounding heavens. Richard Davidson has persuasively argued this interpretation of the biblical text.⁵⁹

Referring to an alleged demonic evolution in an active gap theory of Genesis 1:2, Guy says, “One arguably plausible alternative to the idea of demonic evolution is the idea of creation as divine self-limitation.”⁶⁰ Does Scripture present such an idea of God’s self-limitation in creation? Scripture presents creation as one of the mighty acts of God, far beyond any self-limitation. “For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm” (Ps 33:9). “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” (Heb 11:3). The phrase “God said” for each of the six days of creation (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24) reveals the power of His creative word. For all but one of the days, “God said” is followed by “and it was so,” proclaiming the power of His commands. This great power is further

⁵⁶ Broom, 158.

⁵⁷ Darwin’s term “natural selection” was not meant to imply intention (*Origin of Species*, chapter 4, e.g., “insensibly working” [133], cf. “secondary causes” or “laws impressed on matter by the Creator” [458], which seem contradictory). In Neo-Darwinian study selection is an *internal* event within evolution, and not *external* from beyond the process (as in God). Atheistic evolutionists deny any intelligence operating through the material processes. Their assumption that a material process desires self-improvement is illogical, for how can impersonal forces be endowed with intelligent functions within a purely materialistic worldview? Theistic evolutionists have God as the personal intelligent presence working within a purely materialistic worldview, which is equally illogical, for it ignores the mutually exclusive domains of the purely materialistic worldview and the supernaturalistic worldview. Scientist Neil Broom rightly believes that “the term ‘natural selection’ should be removed from the working vocabulary of evolutionary theory” (169). Broom provides a compelling critique of naturalism on the basis of intentionality in nature. See his chapter 10, “How Natural Is Natural Selection?” (159–169).

⁵⁸ Guy, “Interpreting,” 7.

⁵⁹ Davidson, 4–43.

⁶⁰ Guy, “Interpreting,” 9.

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demonstrated by the speed in which His commands were fulfilled, for the creation days were literal/historical, continuous, contiguous, 24 hour periods of time—for the Hebrew word for day, “*yôm*,” when used with the ordinals (2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc) is always a literal day.⁶¹

His commands had instant response. That’s why He could say each day that the newly created reality was “good” (3, 10, 13, 19, 20, 24). On the sixth day “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good” (Gen 1:31). We are dealing with a literal/historical record that gives one method God used in creation—He commanded and it was so.

On the sixth day, referring to human creation, “God said, ‘Let us make man in our image’” (Gen 1:26–27; cf. Gen 5:1–3). Clearly humans did not evolve from animal descent, in the image of animals, but were made by God in His image. God “formed” Adam (Gen 2:7) and told him that death comes through disobedience to a command of God (not to eat of the forbidden tree (Gen 2:16–17), later corroborated by the wages of sin being death (Rom 6:23), which is an empirical fact.

Rejecting God’s commands (words) as one of His methods to create by opting for the naturalism of theistic evolution is as destructive as rejecting His command (word) not to eat the forbidden fruit (Gen 1:17; Gen 3:1, 4) by opting for an alleged empirical evidence. (Eve saw that the fruit gave wisdom as she listened to a snake speaking human language, Gen 3:1–6.) Eve and believers in evolution both see alleged empirical evidence in the natural realm and reject God’s supernatural Word and work. Furthermore, rejecting the literal/historical week of creation as the context for the literal/historical Sabbath is to reject the literal/historical foundational meaning of Christ’s Sabbath command (Exod 20:11), and as such rejects His Word. Is this any different from modern renditions of the fourth commandment—“Remember the Sabbath,” which omits God’s words about the seventh day and creation week?

Guy believes Scripture speaks to purpose and meaning (qualitative issues) compared to science speaking to process and structure (quantitative issues).⁶² But doesn’t Scripture also speak to the process, or God’s method of creation, as noted above? I concur with Scripture speaking about purpose and meaning, but doesn’t the literal/historical creation week contribute to the purpose and meaning of the Sabbath, a holy sacred rest after six days of creation (Gen 2:2–3)?

⁶¹ Context decides the meaning of the Hebrew word for day (*yom*). For example: “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created” (Gen 2:4). The word “when” in Hebrew is *yôm*, meaning in the day they were created—day = six days. “A flood will carry off his house, rushing waters on the day of God’s wrath” (Job 20:28). Day = period of God’s wrath. “Like the coolness of snow at harvest time” (Prov 25:13). Time = period of time. In creation week the six days are designated within the time of an evening and a morning (Gen 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31), and the seventh day (Gen 2:2–3) is the Sabbath of the fourth commandment (Exod 20:8–11).

⁶² Guy, 8.

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Genesis is only one of five books God wrote through Moses. Do these other books interpret the creation week as literal/historical? It is agreed that the author has a right to interpret his own words. All subsequent references of Moses to creation week⁶³ are given a literal/historical interpretation. For example, (1) manna fell for six days but none on the seventh day Sabbath (Exod 16:16:4–6, 21–23, 29–30). (2) The Sabbath in the fourth commandment is based on the seventh day God blessed after six days of creation (Exod 20:8–11). (3) The Sabbath is a sign between God and His people, “for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested (Exod 31:16–17). To interpret the creation record as non-literal/historical does not make sense in these subsequent references.

In the same way as we allow Moses to interpret himself, so we must allow Scripture to interpret itself. No biblical text on the Sabbath denies its foundational meaning and purpose in a literal/historical creation week. So if one uses the designation spiritual/theological for Genesis 1:1–2:3, one must not discount the literal/historical interpretation, nor should one disallow Scripture the right to interpret itself—before human reason, tradition, or experience attempt to do the same. For Scripture to interpret Scripture is a scientific method in biblical/theological methodology.

Hence, before discounting the Genesis account as literal/historical (in view of his understanding of naturalism and biblical cosmology), would it not be better for Guy to consider biblical corroboration of the historicity of Genesis 1–2 (as given previously) and also evaluate the evolutionary natural process from within science (as the Intelligent Design movement is doing) before coming to any final conclusion on Genesis 1–2? This, it seems to me, is a scientific approach because it recognizes the right of both Scripture and science to evaluation from within their own disciplines in harmony with the different language games analyses of Stephen Toulmin,⁶⁴ Hans-Georg Gadamer,⁶⁵ and Ludwig Wittgenstein.⁶⁶ Then the speaking (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26), forming (Gen 2:7, 19) and making of Eve from Adam (Gen 2:21–23) as methods used by God to create in six literal/historical, continuous, contiguous 24 hour days (and not merely revelatory days) can be considered in their own right, and then the literal and historical dimensions of Genesis 1–2, and their affirmation as such in other biblical statements, are not excluded.

⁶³ Even the repetition of the Sabbath command with its additional meaning and purpose (celebrate liberation at the Red Sea—rest from enemies, Deut 5:15) is prefaced by reference to the Sabbath as a holy day of rest following six days of work (Deut 5:12–14), based upon the creation holy Sabbath following six days of creation (Gen 2:1–2).

⁶⁴ Stephen Toulmin, *Foresight and Understanding: An Inquiry Into the Aims of Science* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 17.

⁶⁵ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 1960, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Crossword, 1990, 2nd rev. ed.), 96.

⁶⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 1958, trans., G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 3rd ed.), 8–9, 11–12, 19, 23, 88, 241.

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With reference to Genesis 1–2, Guy claims that it “is simply impossible to read both of these passages of Scripture literally”⁶⁷ By contrast, Randall W. Younker comes to a different conclusion.⁶⁸ He rightly argues that rather than two authors for Genesis 1 (P) and Genesis 2 (J), Christ cites Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24 as both Mosaic (Mark 10:6–9; Matt 19:4–5), so any alleged difference between Genesis 1 and 2 cannot be attributed to different authors, as historical critical scholarship claimed. Gen 2:4 states that creation was completed, yet Gen 2:5 specifies four things that did not yet exist (“no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up; the Lord had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground”). Each of the four speak about what it will be like after sin enters the world, and so are connected with the fall in Genesis 3. Even the Hebrew botanical terms in Genesis 1:11–12 (Hebrew *deshe*) and Genesis 2:5 are different, the latter being thorny xerophytes (Hebrew *siah*, Gen 21:15 and Job 30:4,7, a plant adapted to dry or desert conditions) due to sin (cf. Gen 3:18). The “plants of the field” (Gen 2:5, 3:18) are grown through labor because of the fall and its effects on creation (Gen 3:17). Before sin Adam and Eve merely worked the garden; after sin they worked the ground through painful toil (Gen 3:17b, 19). Rain didn’t come until the time of the flood, and as a result of human sin (Gen 7:3, 12). So after creation was completed (Gen 1) there were no signs of sin, no cursed earth, no changes in plants, no toiling man, and no rain. There are no contradictions in these future realities due to sin with the sinless creation that was pronounced “very good” in Gen 1:31. Younker allows Scripture to interpret Scripture and in so doing successfully refutes the alleged contradictions and the argument against the literal/historical reality of Genesis 1–2.

3. What does Guy mean by the terms empirical/scientific applied to science⁶⁹ in the area of creation, as opposed to the spiritual/theological account of

⁶⁷ Guy, 12

⁶⁸ Randall W. Younker, “Genesis 2: A Second Creation Account?” in *Creation, Catastrophe and Calvary: Why a Global Flood Is Vital to the Doctrine of Atonement*, ed. John Templeton Baldwin (Hagerstown: Review and Herald, 2000), 69–78.

⁶⁹ One can distinguish two types of meaning to the word “empirical” when applied to science: (1) that which can be observed in the lab through replication, and (2) that which is assumed in a philosophical extrapolation of this replicable data across mega-time, which is impossible for any human observer to replicate, and hence metaphysical and not empirical. Even the first interpretation of “empirical” has to be understood in a qualified sense. Nell Broom convincingly argues that scientific knowledge is often fragmented, for it is an abstraction from reality. For example, in studying a complex system, it is necessary for the scientist to choose a manageable part of the same. So, to understand the complex functioning of body joints, a very small sample of cartilage is shaved from the joint, and then studied under an electron microscope on the lab table. It is true that this thin slice of real cartilage can be studied very well under the powerful electron beam, but it is two steps away from its native reality: (1) it is dead, and (2) it is only a mere slice of the rest of it in its living environment. So at best it is not the full reality that is being studied (30–33).

The other factor about scientific empirical objectivity is that it can be less than objective because observation is interpreted through assumptions brought to it by the observer. See Karl Popper,

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creation? Is this worldview confined to evidence replicable in the lab, or does it also embrace methodological naturalism, which is beyond such demonstration and so belongs to philosophical and metaphysical considerations, which are beyond empirical science?

4. It is widely understood today that the non-scientific, non-empirical, philosophical/metaphysical worldview is foundational for macro-evolutionary theories.⁷⁰ This worldview includes a belief in methodological naturalism, which includes natural selection with random chance, and with a natural view of the origin of life that disagrees with the biblical account of creation by God. This idea, extrapolated over the totality of the evolutionary process, cannot be empirically validated, and hence is not empirical science.

5. Guy appears to be a theistic evolutionist. Scientists as theistic evolutionists (who believe that God had something internally to do with the process of evolution which resulted in all life forms) and progressive evolutionists (who believe God contributes by externally creating more complex life forms) investigate nature within the naturalistic worldview of the scientific academy. To have their work accepted as valid science they do their research and writing within the naturalistic worldview. To do anything less or anything else would consign their work to irrelevance comparable to naive biblical fundamentalism with its ignorance of science, as far as the scientific academy is concerned. Yet on the other hand, because these scientists believe in God as creator, they also accept, in that respect, a supernatural worldview. But how can one believe in God as the origin of life and also nature as its origin? It is this impossible marrying of mutually exclusive worldviews (natural and supernatural) that provide the tensions and issues with which some Adventist scientists wrestle.

6. If the worldview of methodological naturalism includes the philosophical and metaphysical assumption about the origin of life, how can this be considered empirical and scientific while relegating the creation account by God to the status of merely spiritual/theological? After all, philosophical metaphysics is no more scientifically empirical than biblical metaphysical statements about the origin of life. One is simply choosing philosophical metaphysics to replace biblical metaphysics, or an idea of humans to replace the revelation of God.

Does a scientific worldview have the right to interpret Scripture? Our scientific worldviews have changed from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican to the

Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach (Oxford, London: University P, 1979), and Michael Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society* (Chicago: University P, 1966), *Personal Knowledge* (Chicago: University P, 1962). Guy rightly notes that all observing is “theory laden” (“Interpreting,” 10), and to that degree “empirical” may be less than it should be in science, which would have been a good place for him to begin questioning so called empirical science in the light of divine revelation. See also footnote 63.

⁷⁰ This is not to deny that there is empirical evidence for micro-evolution, for it is observable, but to say that the empirical nature of micro-evolution is assumed to be true in macro-evolution, which is beyond the confines of empirical science.

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Einsteinian examples. If scientific worldviews can change, then who can deny that research may discover further worldviews? How can differing worldviews sit in judgment of Scripture when they sit in judgment of one another?⁷¹ So the present worldview may only have temporary significance, which is a shaky basis for biblical interpretation. If one places science above Scripture, then logic demands that one remain open to a possible future different scientific worldview, or worldviews.

Even if it were possible to know, with absolute assurance, that the present scientific worldview is the final foundational worldview, who is to determine whether it is capable of sitting in judgment of the biblical worldview? If Scripture is God's revelation about reality, and worldviews are human attempts to describe reality, then why couldn't the biblical worldview test the validity of all other worldviews?

The Inherent Design movement may well be the best logical and empirical argument to overthrow the contemporary methodological naturalism worldview that dominates contemporary evolutionary thinking. The Inherent Design movement demonstrates the logic and importance of meeting science with science, calling into question naturalism from within molecular biology and biochemistry, unlike the method of calling into question the biblical creation account by a natural worldview which is itself under question.

If a scientific worldview calls into question the validity of the divine revelation of the Genesis account, then what difference is this in kind from Satan's doubting God's word (Gen 3:1–6) in the context of creation (Gen 2:15–17)? Questioning the revelation of Scripture is equally a concern at the end of Scripture (Rev 22:18–19).

Placing contemporary science (whatever the century) as criterion over Scripture is a placing of the human above the divine. Isn't this the same as the

⁷¹ One is reminded that biblical critical methods have done the same. Each new one has called in question the previous one. For a discussion of this, see Norman R. Gulley, "Reader-Response Theories in Postmodern Hermeneutics: A Challenge to Evangelical Theology," in *The Challenge of Postmodernism: An Evangelical Engagement*, ed. David S. Dockery (Wheaton: Victor, 1995), 208–238. Methods of biblical criticism have been used for less than two centuries. They grew out of the Enlightenment with its celebration of human reason. These methods bought into philosophical presuppositions that confined biblical truth to naturalism, which rejected supernaturalism, such as miracles, the divinity of Christ, and the Second Advent, to name but a few. These events depend upon the supernatural breaking into the realm of the natural. Naturalism presents a closed continuum of cause and effect in which events follow laws of predictability. This is precisely what methodological naturalism in evolutionary theories does—it rejects any supernatural inbreaking into the nexus of cause and effect, relying on the "law" of natural selection through random chance. It is a small step from rejecting the miracle of God's act in creation to rejecting any other of His acts in human history. The relative authority of human reason is seen in the fact that new biblical critical methods criticize former methods just as subsequent scientific worldviews criticize former ones. Evolutionary theories, like methods of biblical criticism, have subjected Scripture to vigorous criticism. This needs to be understood in the light of the cosmic controversy biblical worldview in which Satan calls in question God's Word (Gen 3:1–6).

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medieval magisterium placing the church above God's revelation in Scripture? Isn't this what fired the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century?

If any other non-scientific criterion (reason, philosophy, experience, or tradition) is placed above Scripture, to that degree Scripture loses its function to test all things human.

There are questions about evolutionary and geological theories. Science is ignorant about the origin of life.⁷² Belief in any origin of life scenario (science or Scripture) requires faith. This faith reaches back into pre-history, and therefore into the metaphysical or philosophical, and as such is beyond the domain of empirical science. One is faced with a choice: whether to have faith in human theories or in the divine Word of God. One has to ask what a contemporary worldview does to the very essence of Scripture. To accept contemporary worldviews in place of the biblical worldview rejects not only the written Word of God but the work of God as a communicator of reality and truth to intelligent created beings.

It can be argued that it takes more faith to accept the reality of life through selectivity and chance over billions of years (philosophical metaphysics) than through the awesome God of the universe speaking and forming creation into existence in six literal/historical, consecutive, contiguous 24 hour days (biblical metaphysics) in a relatively recent creation.

Guy does not need creation week with its Sabbath to ground his belief in the Sabbath. Throughout his article he speaks against a literal or literalistic interpretation of the Genesis creation account. So a literal creation Sabbath is jettisoned. He says, "how can we maintain the spiritual validity and theological significance of the Sabbath without affirming a literal six-day process of creation followed by a day of divine rest, which the Fourth Commandment gives us as the reason for the Sabbath (Exod 20:11)? In spite of our traditional Sabbath

⁷² Scientist Klaus Dose admits, "More than 30 years of experimentation on the origin of life in the fields of chemical and molecular evolution have led to a better perception of the immensity of the problem of the origin of life on Earth rather than to its solution. At present all discussions on principle theories and experiments in the field either end in stalemate or in a confession of ignorance" Klaus Dose, "The Origin of Life: More Questions than Answers," *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*, 13 (1988): 348. Cited in Michael J. Behe, *Darwin's Black Box*, 168. Currently the Intelligent Design Movement is demonstrating why. See also scientist and philosopher Michael Polanyi, "Life's Irreducible Structure," *Science* 160 (June 1968): 1308–1312. Broom successfully argues that physical and chemical processes plus time do not produce life (72–83). Concurring with British neuroscientist Donald MacKay, Broom points to ink on paper as explicable simply as a "chemical interaction between the molecules of ink dye and the cellulose molecules in the wood fibers from which the newsprint is made." He calls this a lower level description. But if under magnification the ink reveals a meaningful message, this involves a higher level of explanation (28–45). DNA with its encoded message is a case in point. Science is unable to explain the origin of complex information found at the cellular level. Information-bearing systems cannot be explained by or confined within natural physical and chemical laws. As Dembski argues, "only information begets information" (*Intelligent Design*, 183), for "empirical evidence fails to establish the reduction of intelligent agency to natural causes" (*Intelligent Design*, 224).

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apologetics, the best theological foundation for the continuing value of the seventh-day Sabbath is Jesus' own practice of and teaching about the Sabbath."⁷³

Yet the pre-incarnate Christ, who gave Moses the ten commandments on Sinai, inscribed the following propositional revelation in stone (Exod 24:12): "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Exod 20:11). God created all things through Christ (Heb 1:1–2). In the fourth commandment Christ was writing about His own experience in human history at the end of creation week (Gen 2:1–3, cf. John 1:1–3, 14; Col 1:15–17). Christ as "Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28) made the Sabbath for all humans (Mark 2:27). Christ's pre-incarnate teaching about the Sabbath clearly endorsed the six days creation week, where the days were literal, historical, consecutive, contiguous, 24 hour days with each bordered by an "evening and morning" (Gen 1:5, 6, 13, 19, 23, 31) and not merely revelatory days with millions of years between them. And so it is not possible to ground Sabbath-keeping in Christ's incarnational practice and teaching without reference to creation week because He began His practice of Sabbath keeping at the end of creation week and presents the Genesis creation account as literal history in His pre-incarnate teaching—because He was there. No wonder the incarnate Christ speaks of the creation of Adam and Eve as a literal/historical fact (Matt 19:4–5).

Guy says, "We cannot use our convictions about the character of God to argue that macroevolution didn't occur because God wouldn't work that way any more than we can say that the Holocaust didn't happen because God wouldn't allow it."⁷⁴ But is this comparing apples with apples? The fact that God allows certain actions of others after the cosmic controversy was launched on planet earth is altogether different from God's own acts prior to the inception of the controversy. Allowing others to act is different from acting Himself. Allowing others gives them the freedom of choice, but acting Himself is His freedom of choice. If He always refused to allow others to act, how could evil reveal itself to the onlooking universe? Allowing these actions reveals that God allows creaturely freedom to act even against Him, which was demonstrated at Calvary. Christ's holocaust at the cross was infinitely worse than any other one.

However, if God allowed Himself to create through the natural process of selection and chance, in which the horrors of torture and death over billions of years was necessary to arrive at creating humans, then this would be the longest and cruelest holocaust of all. At least Calvary was a holocaust that others brought upon Christ, but this would be a holocaust that He brought upon the animal kingdom. If Christ chose to create through billions of years of horror when He could have chosen to create without any death (as documented in the

⁷³ Guy, "Interpreting," 13

⁷⁴ Guy, "Interpreting," 9

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historical record of Genesis 1–2), then He would rightly be charged as the ultimate terrorist. The demonstration of God’s love at Calvary is incompatible with any alleged claim that He chose to create through the medium of horror.

If Genesis 1–2 is revelation, then Guy’s epistemology would be the opposite of what it is—then Scripture would be more important than science. Guy is right to focus on hermeneutics when coming to Genesis 1. But it seems to me that hermeneutics requires more than to say that (1) reading a text is interpreting it, as Guy asserts,⁷⁵ and (2) a literalistic interpretation requires justification because “No interpretation has a preferred status, much less immunity to rigorous criticism on literary, factual, logical, or theological grounds.”⁷⁶ Is it not more important to state that biblical interpretation is Scripture interpreting Scripture (*sola scriptura*), so that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the biblical view of creation can emerge? Is it not wise to consider all that Scripture has to say about creation and allow that to give insight into the Genesis account? Would it not be best to look at all biblical truths in the light of the greatest revelation of God at Calvary?

The revelation at Calvary was made in history. It had witnesses. As such it provides empirical (historical) evidence of how loving God is, even asking His Father to forgive those who heaped cruelty upon Him (Luke 23:34). Assuming that this same Christ heaped cruelty on animals not for part of a day, but for billions of years, is not a historical datum with witnesses who wrote about it, and so it is not empirical reality. Rather, it is an interpretation from within a naturalistic worldview.

One must also read the Genesis creation account in light of God’s creation of the humanity of the God-man (John 1:1, 14; Matt 1:20), the creation of the first Adam in light of the incarnation of the second Adam (1 Cor 15:45, cf. Rom 5:18–19). Here is a biblical type/antitype gift of love that is fully compatible with God’s gift of love at Calvary (John 3:16).⁷⁷ Here is the God of love of Scripture and not the God of theistic evolution. The two are distinctly different.

⁷⁵ Guy, “Interpreting,” 7

⁷⁶ Guy, “Interpreting,” 7

⁷⁷ It is true that the creation of Adam and the creation of the God-man are two unique but different levels of God’s creative ability. Both speak of God’s awesome gifts to humankind as Creator. Neither hints that God needed help. In both He created one in the image of God (Gen 1:26–27), and One in the image of man (Heb 2:14). God was not dependent upon anything pre-existing to accomplish His creation, for the pre-existence of the divinity of Christ is eternally uncreated. Adam and Eve formed by the Father through Christ (Heb 1:2) and Christ born of the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:20) are equally indescribable and inexplicable mysteries that indicate the infinite gulf between the powerful Creator and His loving nearness in creating humans and in becoming also human (John 1:1, 14). Just as salvation is a gift without human works (2nd Adam), so creation is a gift without any evolutionary contribution (1st Adam). For God’s speaking with immediate response in creating in Genesis 1 is appropriate to the *Elohim* God who did the creating. It is illogical for such an all-powerful God to be dependent upon billions of years of animal torture to accomplish His work, and yet invite Adam and Eve to keep a literal Sabbath as the seventh day of His powerful creation of all the world and its heavenly environs.

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The fact that the onlooking universe shouted for joy at the creation of this world (Job 38:4–7) is inexplicable if Christ created through causing animal suffering for billions of years. Christ called creation “very good” (Gen 1:31), and that is worth singing about. After Christ’s ascension, beings in heaven praised God as worthy and deserving of glory because He created all things (Rev 4:10–11). That would be impossible if He created through cruelty. A part of God’s end-time message calls the world to worship the Creator and bring Him glory (Rev 14:6–7), which could not be done if He created through cruelty. The propositional revelation of Scripture is consistent that God is deserving of glory and worship as Creator (e.g., Rev 4:6–11), for His creative work can only be understood in relation to His character as a God of love (1 John 4:8–16).

Christ’s warning of Adam about the tree of knowledge of good and evil, stating that eating it would bring death (Gen 2:17), indicates that death was not yet a present reality. Here evil and death are associated with disobedience to the Creator. Such disobedience would bring curses on nature, Adam, and Eve (Gen 3:17–19). When Christ recreates the earth there will be no more curse (Rev 22:3). Clearly curses and death are linked to disobedience and have nothing to do with Christ’s method of creation. If the new earth will have no curse, the curses came through the fall, and the first creation was “very good,” it is logical that the first creation had no curses or death. That’s why Scripture speaks of death as the wages for sin (Rom 6:23) and an enemy (1 Cor 15:26), and never as God’s chosen method to create. That’s why Scripture says Adam introduced sin and death to the world (Rom 5:12). It was Adam and not His Creator who introduced death into the world. It was Christ who came to die to put death to death and liberate a fallen race (Rom 4:25). It was the one act of the first Adam that brought this death-condemnation, and the one act of the second Adam’s death that brought salvation (Rom 5:18). Christ did not use death to create humans in Eden; He died to save humans at Calvary.

Christ created “every green plant for food” for animals (Gen 1:30). They were not created as predators, nor will they be predators in the new earth (Isa 65:25), and no death or pain will be there either (Rev 21:4). Predation is a post-fall phenomenon⁷⁸ and should not be read back into the creative process. The God of love created in love. The fact that He sees the sparrow fall (Luke 12:6–7) and was concerned about “the many cattle” in Nineveh if it was destroyed (Jon

⁷⁸ Why does God permit evil? It is true that God apparently allowed predation after the fall (Psa 104:21, 27–28; Job 38:39–41), just as He allowed humans to eat meat after the flood (Gen 9:3; cf. Gen 6:1). It is also truth that the great suffering in the world is a result of the fall. The curse was immediate on nature and humans (Gen 3:14–19), and even the firstborn human murdered his brother (Gen 4:1–16). Humans became so depraved that their thoughts were only evil all the time (Gen 6:5). Although God is in ultimate control, He allows Satan to demonstrate the fruits of his rebellion. A biblical example is the case of Job and his family (Job 1:6–2:10). In the creation of the new world, God “will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Rev 21:4).

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4:11) is evidence that He would not cause animal suffering in an evolutionary plan of creation. How important it is to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture, rather than allow a nonbiblical idea (naturalism) to have that function.

If Christ did heap cruelty upon animals for billions of years, this would have more to say about a prior hell than about a loving Creator. Assuming that Christ is that cruel negates any love He manifested in His temporary hell at Calvary. Some persons may be tempted to say, "He got what He deserved." Given a cosmic controversy in which Satan hates Christ and has engaged in a process of disinformation about God (Hebrew word *rekullah* of Ezekiel 28:15–16)⁷⁹ since the inception of his rebellion, it makes sense that a natural method of creation through horror is something he would promote, for it effectively destroys the drawing power of Calvary. Satan hates the cross because it reveals what God is really like and what he (Satan) is really like. Creation through horror is compatible with Satan's hatred against Christ at the cross and not compatible with a loving Creator-Redeemer who dies for others (rather than inflicting death). Life through death is a biblical concept of atonement and not a biblical concept of creation.

Apparently⁸⁰ Guy sees no problem in the natural process with all its horror, as if it had no part in reflecting upon God's judgment and wisdom, which clearly contradicts the biblical revelation of God as just (Neh 9:32–33; Ps 97:2; Zeph 3:5; Rev 15:3; 19:1–2), and wise (1 Kgs 4:29, 2 Chron 1:10; Ps 51:6; Prov 2:6, Col 2:2–3; James 1:5). By contrast, Scripture even says God created in wisdom (Ps 104:24; 136:5; Jer 10:12), and in love (Ps 100:3–5). Guy approves the following comments of others: "We see God 'not in the predator but in the prey'" (Murphy)⁸¹ and "'God too suffers, not less than creatures'" (Rolston).⁸² If God chose to suffer for billions of years in order to create, when He could create without bringing suffering to Himself, one would have to wonder at His wisdom. This seems more like a sadist and not like an omnipotent loving (Elohim-Yahweh) God who can create without any dependence upon natural processes, and its terror to animals. If Christ is a sadist, how does this deflect from His suffering at Calvary?

Conclusion

In view of the biblical presentation of God's infinite love, as manifested at Calvary, it is inconceivable that He would subject animals to great suffering

⁷⁹ The Hebrew word *rekullah* means "trading" or "peddling," referring to goods or gossip. Here Satan spreads gossip about God. See Richard M. Davidson, "Cosmic Metanarrative for the Coming Millennium," *JATS*, 11/1–2 (2000): 108.

⁸⁰ After my presentation at Glacier View Ranch, Fritz Guy told me that there is a problem with the horror of the natural method of creation. One would hope that the implications of this fact could change his interpretation of the Genesis creation.

⁸¹ Guy, "Interpreting," 12, see footnote 47.

⁸² Guy, "Interpreting," 12, see footnote 48

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over mega-time as His chosen method to create humans. Nor is it conceivable that He would tell us that He created in six days and ask us to keep the seventh-day Sabbath in commemoration of His creative work, when He created over mega-time, leaving the creation Sabbath without any meaning (Exod 20:8–11). These alone are sufficient reason to question any accommodation of the biblical record to the current scientific worldview and to accept the literal/historical interpretation of the Genesis creation, as Scripture does, according to the evidence given in this article. This is the contribution of inherent revelation. The contribution of inherent design by the Intelligent Design movement may well be the best empirical and logical critique of naturalism. Inherent revelation and inherent design reveal the Creator and restore God to His place within Scripture and nature.

Appendix

The above argument, based on Scripture, with reference to inherent design and logic, stands on its own merit. Here is additional affirmation on the importance of Scripture found in the writings of Ellen G. White.

First, Guy questions Ellen White’s “literalistic” interpretation of Genesis 1, saying, “If she were engaged in her prophetic ministry at the beginning of the twenty-first century, recognizing what is almost universally known today about natural history, she would undoubtedly avoid making a divisive issue of the interpretation of Genesis 1.”⁸³ Would Guy also say that if Moses lived today, science would change the way he wrote the creation account? It appears that Guy evaluates the contribution of Moses and Ellen G. White on a literal creation as their own primitive pre-scientific ideas and gives no credence that their writing is more than human culture-conditioned ideas. Yet, paradoxically, Guy selectively uses both Scripture and Ellen G. White as authoritative when he assumes they help his argument (e.g., Christ’s Sabbath-keeping practice⁸⁴ and Ellen G. White’s statements that more understanding of truth is to come,⁸⁵ and nature sheds light on Scripture⁸⁶). In doing such he seemingly accepts these contributions as divine revelation, or in what way would they be authoritative if merely human ideas?

The Ellen G. White quote, “The book of nature and the written word shed light upon each other”⁸⁷ (which Guy quotes, 7), has an important context. She says, “Geology has been thought to contradict the literal interpretation of the Mosaic record of the creation . . . Such a conclusion is wholly uncalled for. The Bible record is in harmony with itself (*sola scriptura*) and with the teaching of nature. Of the first day employed in the work of creation is given the record,

⁸³ Guy, “Interpreting,” 13.

⁸⁴ Guy, 13.

⁸⁵ Guy, “Interpreting,” 5.

⁸⁶ Guy, “Interpreting,” 7.

⁸⁷ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1903), 128

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‘The evening and the morning were the first day.’ Genesis 1:5. And the same in substance is said of each of the first six days of creation week. Each of these periods Inspiration declares to have been a day consisting of evening and morning, like every other day since that time.’⁸⁸ Note how Ellen White believed in a literal Genesis creation, that is inspired, and is revelation,⁸⁹ and believed in *sola scriptura*, or Scripture interpreting itself. This context is wholly ignored by Guy and others. If taken seriously, Fritz Guy could not have written his article.

Guy’s method in the article is to test Scripture by the ideas of science, rather than the other way round.⁹⁰ Ellen White says, “The Bible is not to be tested by men’s ideas of science, but science is to be brought to the test of the unerring standard.”⁹¹ “The work of creation cannot be explained by science. What science can explain the mystery of life?”⁹² “The Bible is not to be tested by men’s ideas of science. Human knowledge is an unreliable guide . . . Moses wrote under the guidance of the Spirit of God; and a correct theory of geology will never claim discoveries that cannot be reconciled with his statements.”⁹³ Hence the global cataclysm is one important way to explain geology. Ellen White said, “I have been shown that, without Bible history, geology can prove nothing.”⁹⁴ Thus the historical reliability of the divinely revealed biblical six days creation and global flood is the worldview in which nature must be studied.

Guy does not take seriously the profound insights of Ellen White’s statements on creation. Note how crucial these are, and how meaningless human reasoning is without guidance from divine revelation. “But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain ‘Thus saith the Lord’ in its support.”⁹⁵

⁸⁸ Ellen G. White, *Education*, 128–12 (italics and parenthesis added).

⁸⁹ Ellen G. White, *Education*, 134. “The deepest students of science are constrained to recognize in nature the working of infinite power. But to man’s unaided reason, nature’s teaching cannot but be contradictory and disappointing. Only in the light of *revelation* can it be read aright. ‘Through faith we understand.’ Hebrews 11:3. ‘*In the beginning God.*’ *Genesis 1:1*. Here alone can the mind in its eager questioning, fleeing as the dove to the ark, find rest” (*Education*, 134 [italics added]).

⁹⁰ Guy, “Interpreting,” 5. “Our central question is this: in the light of what we understand scientifically and theologically in the twenty-first century, how shall we interpret Genesis 1?”

⁹¹ Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents & Teachers* (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1913), 425.

⁹² Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (no publishing data), 414.

⁹³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 1890 (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1913 edition), 114.

⁹⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (Battle Creek: Steam Press, SDA Publishing Assn., 1870) 1:88.

⁹⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* 1888 (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1911 edition), 595.

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“The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience.”⁹⁶ Scripture is “the one infallible guide.”⁹⁷ It gives “the history of the creation of this world . . .”⁹⁸ “The foundation of all true science is contained in the Bible.”⁹⁹ “The deepest students of science are constrained to recognize in nature the working of infinite power. But to man’s unaided reason, nature’s teaching cannot but be contradictory and disappointing. Only in the light of revelation can it be read aright.”¹⁰⁰

“But the infidel supposition that the events of the first week required seven vast, indefinite periods for their accomplishment, strikes directly at the foundation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. It makes indefinite and obscure that which God has made very plain. It is the worst kind of infidelity; for with many who profess to believe the record of creation, it is infidelity in disguise. It charges God with commanding men to observe the week of seven literal days in commemoration of seven indefinite periods, which is unlike his dealing with mortals, and is an impeachment of his wisdom.”¹⁰¹

“But when men leave the word of God in regard to the history of creation, and seek to account for God’s creative works upon natural principles, they are upon a boundless ocean of uncertainty. Just how God accomplished the work of creation in six literal days, he has never revealed to mortals. His creative works are just as incomprehensible as his existence.”¹⁰²

“He who has a knowledge of God and His word through personal experience has a settled faith in the divinity of the Holy Scriptures. He has proved that God’s word is truth, and he knows that truth can never contradict itself. He does not test the Bible by men’s ideas of science; he brings these ideas to the test of the unerring standard. He knows that in true science there can be nothing contrary to the teaching of the word; since both have the same Author, a correct understanding of both will prove them to be in harmony. Whatever in so-called scientific teaching contradicts the testimony of God’s word is mere human guesswork.”¹⁰³

“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

⁹⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, vii.

⁹⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 102.

⁹⁸ Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1923), 129.

⁹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 1900 (Washington: Review and Herald, 1941), 101.

¹⁰⁰ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1903), 134.

¹⁰¹ Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, 1:86–87.

¹⁰² Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, 1:88.

¹⁰³ Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, 462.

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were a miracle of almighty power, any sooner than it can show how God came into existence.”¹⁰⁴

Ellen White gives a warning about human reason unguided by the Word of God:

“The word of God is given as a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path. Those who cast his word behind them, and seek by their own blind philosophy to trace out the wonderful mysteries of Jehovah, will stumble in darkness.”¹⁰⁵ “. . . those who leave the word of God, and seek to account for his created works upon scientific principles, are drifting, without chart or compass, upon an unknown ocean. The greatest minds, if not guided by the word of God in their research, become bewildered in their attempts to trace the relationship of science and revelation.”¹⁰⁶ There are dimensions of the creation story that are way beyond the human mind, and this calls for humility as we come to God’s word, and plead for His discernment. This is the same God who said to Job, “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand” (Job 38:4).

“The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with Scripture. . . . Every part of the Bible is given by inspiration of God and is profitable.”¹⁰⁷

Norman R. Gulley earned his Ph.D. degree in Systematic Theology from the University of Edinburgh and is Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Southern Adventist University, where he has taught since 1978. He has been a pastor and missionary. He has served as Chair of the Religion Department at Madison College and of the Theology Department at Japan Missionary College. He was also founding Dean of the Graduate Seminary in the Philippines. He has written extensively for leading SDA journals, authored four Sabbath School quarterlies, and written several books—most recently, *Christ Our Refuge* (Pacific Press, 1996), *Christ is Coming!* (Review and Herald, 1998), and the *Prolegomena* to a three volume systematic theology (Andrews UP, 2003). He has two books in the publication process: *Satan’s Trojan Horse and God’s End-Time Way to Victory* (Review & Herald, 2004), and *The Cosmic Controversy: Story of the Unfolding Drama: The 27 Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*. He is a charter member and past president of ATS. He also conducts last day events seminars throughout the world and speaks at camp meetings and ministerial worker’s meetings. ngulley@southern.edu

¹⁰⁴Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, 1:89.

¹⁰⁵Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, 1:89.

¹⁰⁶Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 113.

¹⁰⁷Ellen G. White, *Education*, 190–191.