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*Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 5/1 (1994):131-154.  
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## INSPIRATION, THE NATURAL SCIENCES, AND A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

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The most important change in the understanding of religious truth in the last centuries . . . has been caused more by the work of science than by any other factor religious or cultural. Langdon Gilkey<sup>1</sup>

True science and Inspiration are in perfect harmony. Ellen White<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

What does inspiration guarantee?<sup>3</sup> As hidden in Langdon Gilkey's thesis mentioned above, have advances in historical critical study of the Bible, evolutionary theories in biology, geology, and paleontology compelled Christian scholars and theologians to interpret the six days of creation week as nonliteral,<sup>4</sup> the talking snake of Genesis 3 as figurative, the fall of Adam and Eve as nonhistorical, the flood as limited, the phenomenon of rain as something experienced continually before the flood,<sup>5</sup> Joshua's long day as legendary,<sup>6</sup> and so on<sup>7</sup>—thereby radically redefining traditional views of the reliability and intent of inspiration? Is inspiration, therefore, trustworthy only in matters of faith and practice as claimed by many Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant theologians so that the narratives of Genesis 1 and 2, for example, are "merely phenomenological descriptions which have no scientific intent?"<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, as stated by Ellen White, are true science and inspiration in perfect harmony? Does the reliability of biblical

inspiration extend to the natural sciences? If so, to what extent and in what fashion does inspiration extend to these topics? Furthermore, when such queries are seriously addressed in this age, is the endeavor anachronistic in the extreme, an act exhibiting pitiable academic naïveté? Before turning directly to the central issue of this essay, namely, whether and in what sense biblical inspiration extends to the natural sciences, an additional word concerning its importance and timeliness may be helpful.

Writing in the 1912 edition of the famous *The Fundamentals*, an unnamed "Occupant of the Pew" astutely reverses a famous phrase associated with Galileo in the following way: "We cannot depend on the Bible to show us 'how to go to heaven' if it misleads us as to 'how the heavens go' regarding the origin, nature, descent and destiny of brutes and man."<sup>9</sup> Here the truths of biblical soteriology and eschatology are linked to the truthfulness of biblical protology, and thus by implication, to the reliability of biblical inspiration as it extends to matters of science.<sup>10</sup> The unnamed writer expresses a legitimate concern if inspiration is indeed in some sense supernatural and extends to the natural sciences. The real meaning of any position on inspiration is not fully known until its advocates apply their position to the six-day creation, the Fall, and the flood narratives because even high views of inspiration tend to dissolve before these texts.

The topic is timely in view of the recent publication of academic works which are turning the attention of the academic community to the creationist question and thus upon the issue of the authority of biblical inspiration in scientific matters. Two landmark volumes have just appeared, representing the liberal perspective on this question. *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education* (1993) carries two major articles addressing the creation science issue.<sup>11</sup> Ron Numbers' award-winning book, *The Creationists* (1992), traces the development of groups holding a literal interpretation of the Genesis creation texts, and culminates in a study of the Seventh-day Adventist Geoscience Research Institute.

Two recent studies critical of naturalistic Darwinian theory have literally stunned the academic community: *Darwin on Trial* (1991) by Phillip E. Johnson, an eminent trial lawyer teaching at

the University of California, Berkeley, and the landmark 1991 article by world-class philosopher of religion, Alvin Plantinga, entitled, "When Faith and Reason Clash: Evolution and the Bible."<sup>12</sup>

Representing a confessional-specific perspective, Alden Thompson's thought-provoking book *Inspiration*<sup>13</sup> is also important. Thompson, however, centers largely upon the laudable task of harmonizing apparently conflicting biblical passages rather than upon the issue of inspiration and the natural sciences *per se*.<sup>14</sup> The combined impact of these publications is causing vigorous exchanges within the academic community as many scholars reinvestigate, among other questions, the issue of the authority of inspiration in relation to science.

This essay will proceed in three steps. First, it briefly addresses the matter of defining the nature and extent of inspiration. Second, it describes and evaluates in historical perspective three contemporary postures toward the Genesis creation texts—each approach reflecting a distinctive understanding of inspiration. Third, the essay concludes by discussing a scholarly window of opportunity which has recently opened for a fresh academic hearing of a concordist<sup>15</sup> position concerning the authority of biblical inspiration and science.

#### The Nature and Extent of Biblical Inspiration

*Parallel Mystery of the Incarnation.* A few comments will suffice concerning the meaning of the term inspiration so that it does not function in this essay as a sort of "tribal totem-pole" as James Barr characterizes the evangelical use of the term.<sup>16</sup> According to Barr, "inspiration" too frequently functions in evangelical circles as a sacred word that must be employed even if there is no clarity as to its meaning, and which if used often enough is likely to be accepted within the tribe.<sup>17</sup>

In his dissertation on inspiration Kern Trembath distinguishes between revelation and inspiration. The latter refers in general to the transformational process whereby divinely received concepts take written form.<sup>18</sup> He also distinguishes between deductive and inductive definitions of inspiration, i.e., between *a priori* and *a posteriori* definitions. The former, represented by Hodge,



Warfield, Montgomery, and Carnell, deduce the character of inspiration from principles found from within the Scriptures. Inductivists such as Strong, Ramm, Abraham, and the liberal tradition in general, work back from "effects which the Bible has among those who call it inspired."<sup>19</sup> Thus, for the latter scholars, inspiration is not limited to the process of producing the Bible but, like Barth,<sup>20</sup> refers to the inspiration of the readers of biblical material.<sup>21</sup>

Because of their high view of Scripture, an emphasis upon the supernatural aspect of inspiration, and a faith acceptance of the Bible as the normative source, discussions on the nature of inspiration among Adventist scholars may be subsumed appropriately under the general rubric of the deductive approach. For example, the biblical *loci classici* of the doctrine of inspiration, namely the "God-breathed" activity of 2 Tim 3:16 respecting the *graphe*, the moving of the prophets by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21), and Jesus' affirmation that the "Scriptures cannot be broken" (John 10:35) point both to the nature and extent of inspiration in scientific matters. For example, in regard to creation, Adventist scholars tend to suggest that the "God-breathing" or inspiration should be viewed as the mysterious divine work of the Holy Spirit upon the prophet writing the creation texts, rendering the contents a "factual history of the origin of Planet Earth and of all life upon it."<sup>22</sup>

A word of caution is appropriate at this point. Because the Bible associates inspiration with the work of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind, attempts at detailed ontological definitional specificity concerning the process of inspiration seem well advised to employ the term *mystery*.<sup>23</sup> Just as Jesus taught Nicodemus that the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind is like the mysterious process of the wind as far as human comprehension is concerned, so the process of biblical inspiration is analogous to the working of the Holy Spirit in human conversion. This implies that inspiration itself is a profound mystery, although its effects are empirically evident.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the use of the term *mystery* in definitions is strength, and not weakness.

If this is true, then definitions of inspiration may well be constructed according to *quia est* (that a thing is) discourse rather than *quid est* (what a thing is) discourse. In other words, the Bible

may caution, by implication, against constructing definitions of inspiration that attempt to define in scientific terms precisely the ontological nature of the process of the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the biblical writer.<sup>25</sup> The Bible suggests in effect that one is well advised simply to affirm, in *quia est* discourse, that inspiration occurs. However, the Bible invites us to understand the *effects* of inspiration, namely the end product—the written Word of God—which (like the incarnation of Christ) stands as a divine human work.<sup>26</sup> We now discuss whether the reliability of biblical inspiration extends to the natural sciences in light of Jesus' attitude toward the creation texts.

*Jesus and the Extent of Biblical Inspiration.* Adopting a high view of Scripture<sup>27</sup> permits regulative value to accrue to Christ's attitude toward the historicity of several events in Genesis 1-11. For example, Jesus' attitude toward the murder of Abel as well as several other Old Testament stories,<sup>28</sup> seems to indicate<sup>29</sup> His thinking concerning the extent of the reliability of inspiration. In the woes pronounced against the Pharisees (Luke 11:50-51) Jesus states that the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world would be charged against His generation. Jesus explains that "the blood of all the prophets" means the blood shed "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zachariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary" (RSV). New Testament scholars have identified Zechariah as the son of Jehoiada the high priest, who was stoned to death in the courts of the Temple upon order from King Joash (2 Chron 24:20-22).<sup>30</sup> In this statement Jesus places in parallel relationship an historical occurrence, the murder of Zechariah (which left a profound impression upon the nation),<sup>31</sup> with Cain's murder of Abel recorded in Genesis (chap. 4). This parallel implies that Jesus considered the Genesis narrative to be as strictly historical as the murder of Zechariah is a historical fact.

This indicates that Jesus regarded the reliability of inspiration to extend to the historicity of this narrative of Genesis, and, by extension, to the historical accuracy of the narratives of Genesis 1 and 2 concerning the miraculous origin of the parents of Cain and Abel, namely Adam and Eve, and to the historicity of the Fall recorded in Genesis 3. Since this is the case, then Jesus considered

biblical inspiration to give literal, historically factual details in the creation and fall texts of Genesis 1-3. In other words, Luke 11:50-51 implies, using contemporary terms, that Jesus was a strict concordist, meaning that the Bible and nature are complementary in the sense that when properly understood each endorses the claims and findings of the other.

With these guiding bench marks in mind concerning the nature and extent of biblical inspiration, we now review three contemporary approaches to the creation texts, each driven by a distinctive theory of biblical inspiration.

#### Approaches to Inspiration and the Creation Texts

Three distinct, scholarly views of biblical inspiration in relation to the natural sciences can be characterized as follows. First, most historical-critical scholars understand inspiration to represent a fallible, natural phenomenon displaying no concordism between science and the creation texts.<sup>32</sup> Second, evangelical scholars generally endorse a position on of inspiration which in my view may be characterized as equivocal (restricted) infallible divine inspiration, resulting in either no concordism or a broad concordism. Third, fundamentalist evangelical thinkers endorse a view of inspiration that can be described as unequivocal (unrestricted) infallible divine inspiration of the biblical writer, resulting in a strict concordism.

**The Higher Critical Approach.** John Cobb captures the essence of the historical-critical approach to inspiration and science: "Having abandoned supernaturalism, we cannot explain the superiority of the Bible in terms of the contrast of Word of God and word of man."<sup>33</sup> In effect this position means, in the famous words of Rudolph Bultmann, that

[H]istory is a unity in the sense of a closed continuum of effects . . . . This closedness means that the continuum of historical happenings cannot be rent by the interference of supernatural, transcendent powers and that therefore there is no 'miracle' in this sense of the word. . . . It is in accordance with such a method as this that the science of history goes to work on all historical documents. And there cannot be any exceptions in the case of biblical texts.<sup>34</sup>

This naturalistic characterization of the biblical texts and

their accommodation to the natural sciences are presaged as early as the fifth century A.D. by Augustine in his *Literal Interpretation of Genesis*, and are later confirmed by Friedrich Schleiermacher. In his illuminating second letter to Dr. Lücke in 1827, Schleiermacher pinpoints the central motive which drove him, in his writing of the *Glaubenslehre*, to shift religious authority from the written documents of the Bible to the subjective, human experience of piety:

I thought I should show as best I could that every dogma that truly represents an element of our Christian consciousness can be so formulated that it remains free from entanglements with science. I set this task for myself especially in my treatment of the doctrines of creation and preservation. . . [so that] science need not declare war against us.<sup>35</sup>

Schleiermacher's revealing words "so that science need not declare war against us" show that the weight of the findings and theories of the natural sciences of his day caused him to reinterpret the Genesis narratives to avoid the attacks of science. This demonstrates the accuracy of Gilkey's statement quoted at the beginning of this study concerning the strong influence of science upon theology.

Adolph von Harnack radically applies this understanding to the relevance of the OT. In the concluding paragraph in his book about Marcion, von Harnack writes:

To reject the Old Testament in the second century was a mistake which the Church rightly repudiated; to retain it in the sixteenth century was a fate which the Reformation could not yet avoid; but to continue to keep it in Protestantism as a canonical document after the nineteenth century is the consequence of religious and ecclesiastical paralysis. To sweep the table clean . . . is the action required of Protestantism today. . . . And it is almost too late.<sup>36</sup>

However, it has not been too late for leading higher critical practitioners to articulate with a vengeance some profound theological implications of their nonconcordistic understanding of Genesis 1-11.<sup>37</sup> In his latest book entitled *Credo* (1993), Hans Küng implies that the idea of an original sin is effete because "there never was this human couple who sinned for all humankind."<sup>38</sup> Driving the point home Küng quotes with approval Karl Schmitz-Moormann, theologian and Teilhard specialist, as follows:



The classical theory of redemption is imprisoned in a static view of the world in which to begin with everything was good, and in which evil first came into the world through human beings. The notion of this traditional view of redemption as reconciliation and ransom from the consequences of Adam's fall is nonsense for anyone who knows about the evolutionary background to human existence in the modern world.<sup>39</sup>

How then should the contemporary Christian characterize redemption? Schmitz-Moormann answers that salvation "cannot mean returning to an original state, but must be conceived as perfecting through the process of evolution."<sup>40</sup>

It is little wonder that leading scholars who accept these far-reaching theological conclusions engage in strident rejection of the traditional views of inspiration and in cavalier dismissal of the efforts of concordism by conservative scholars. Two examples of this understandable, but challenging, phenomenon bring to a close our discussion of the critical approach to inspiration and the natural sciences.

Harvard theologian Gordon Kaufmann asserts that the Bible no longer has unique authority for Western man. It has become a great but archaic monument in our midst. . . . It contains glorious literature, important historical documents, exalted ethical teachings, but it is no longer the word of God. . . . Only in rare and isolated pockets--and surely these are rapidly disappearing forever--has the Bible anything like the kind of existential authority and significance which it once enjoyed.<sup>41</sup>

As noted below, however, Kaufmann's "rare and isolated pockets" of belief are not disappearing, but are rapidly gaining in strength, perhaps to his wonderment, in terms of new possibilities for a rapprochement between inspiration and science.

One of the most bold liberal voices attempting to discredit the effort of concordism is that of the Roman Catholic scientist-theologian Stanley Jaki. His 1993 pronouncements swell nearly to magisterial dimension. After referring to concordism as a total fallacy, a trap, and a lure, he offers the following conclusion:

[C]oncordism is a radical misunderstanding and as such it can only bring discredit to very sound philosophical and theological doctrines set forth, or intimated, in Genesis 1.<sup>42</sup>

In view of this alleged bankruptcy of concordism Jaki says that the proper approach to the creation texts and inspiration is to join the lead of Basil, Augustine, and Aquinas by adopting their principle of accommodation, which he describes as follows:

Whenever well-established scientific evidence stands in contradiction to this or that statement of the Bible about the physical world, it is the Bible that should be given an appropriate reinterpretation.<sup>43</sup>

These quotations show that for adherents of the higher critical approach there is neither a conflict between science and inspiration nor a need for rapprochement, because a special creation of biological forms in this world is consistently denied.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the contemporary exegete does not read the Bible in order to be informed about matters of natural science.<sup>45</sup> Elements of the evangelical approach to inspiration and its relation to the creation texts, to which we now turn, echo the higher critical position.

**Three Evangelical Approaches.** In his recent article entitled, "Climbing Out of a Swamp: The Evangelical Struggle to Understand the Creation Texts,"<sup>46</sup> Clark Pinnock, who may succeed Carl F. H. Henry as the new "dean of Evangelical theologians,"<sup>47</sup> divides the evangelical approaches to the creation texts into three groups: nonconcordists, broad concordists, and narrow concordists. Remarkably, all three groups retain some form of supernatural inspiration. Pinnock's theological essay, together with a major scientific work by evangelical geologist, Davis E. Young, entitled, "The Bible in the Hands of Geologists,"<sup>48</sup> deftly articulates the leading contemporary position of evangelicals on inspiration and the creation texts. We now consider evangelical nonconcordism.

*Evangelical Nonconcordism.* Contemporary, evangelical nonconcordists such as N. H. Ridderbos,<sup>49</sup> Howard J. Van Till,<sup>50</sup> Henri Blocher,<sup>51</sup> J. I. Packer,<sup>52</sup> and Clark H. Pinnock,<sup>53</sup> do not consult the Scriptures for scientific matters, or as Pinnock says, "to discover history as it really was."<sup>54</sup> Rather, they read the creation texts as restricted to theological concerns,<sup>55</sup> believing that it is a mistake to assume that scientific questions can be answered by using biblical data.<sup>56</sup> For them, this claim means that it is a serious blunder to construe the interpretation of Genesis 1 in terms of the debate over Darwin.<sup>57</sup>

This can be called an equivocal view of inerrant plenary inspiration, because of the restricted compass of inspiration imposed by science. Their position links these scholars solidly with liberal thinkers advocating theistic evolution. In fact, Van Till et al. explicitly advocate theistic evolution as the proper view for evangelicals to adopt.<sup>58</sup> Another coterie of evangelical scholars practice broad concordism, to which we now turn.

*Evangelical Broad Concordism.* In the section "Geology and the Bible" in his famous *Systematic Theology* (1871), Charles Hodge articulates what may be considered the ideological foundation principle<sup>59</sup> for a large segment of subsequent evangelical broad concordist thought concerning the nature of inerrant inspiration and its relation to the natural sciences:

It is of course admitted that, taking this account by itself [the Genesis creation week], it would be most natural to understand the word [day, i.e., the days of the creation week] in its ordinary sense [i.e., a 24 hour literal day]; but if that sense brings the Mosaic account into conflict with facts, and another sense [of the word day] avoids such conflict, then it is obligatory on us to adopt that other [sense].<sup>60</sup>

Important theological consequences follow Hodge's approach. Because he accepts the accuracy of the geological teaching that the creation of this world has been in "progress through periods of time which cannot be computed,"<sup>61</sup> the literal or most natural interpretation of Genesis 1 is, for him, contradicted by science. Undaunted, Hodge follows the lead of Augustine et al. by suggesting that the way out of this serious dilemma is to reinterpret Scripture to harmonize with the findings of science. In this case, as noted above, Hodge tells us that the saving method is to adopt another sense for the word, namely, that "the word 'day' be taken in the sense of 'an indefinite period of time.'"<sup>62</sup> Thus, for Hodge, the word day as used throughout Genesis 1 and 2 represents geological periods which he describes as "of indefinite duration."<sup>63</sup>

A surprise and a difficulty attend Hodge's approach to the creation texts. First, this scientifically-driven reinterpretation of the admitted natural interpretation of the creation texts comes, astonishingly, not from a liberal voice, but from a conservative, evangelical theologian given to a high view of inspiration.

Second, Hodge's free reinterpretation of the intent of divine

inspiration in the narrative of Genesis 1 carries far-reaching theological consequences in its impact upon other biblical doctrines. For example, according to Exodus 20:8-11, God directed the Israelites to observe the literal seventh-day Sabbath following his example of resting on the seventh day of creation week. However, according to Hodge's "indefinite period" sense of the term "day," God is made in the Decalogue to command the Israelites to labor a week of six literal days and to observe the seventh as the Sabbath in commemoration of seven indefinite periods. Interpreted in this fashion, this divine action would severely undermine the credibility of God's instructions to the Israelites by obscuring what is definite and very plain in the creation narrative, thereby distorting the character of God. The interpretation renders the fourth precept senseless.<sup>64</sup> In this case a stated belief in the creation account seems to be a cloak to cover disbelief in its literal nature. Current expressions of broad concordism, follow the course articulated by Hodge.

Contemporary broad concordists include such scholars as Bernard Ramm,<sup>65</sup> Pattle P. T. Pun,<sup>66</sup> Robert C. Newman and Herman J. Eckelmann.<sup>67</sup> Broad concordists maintain some form of concordism between biblical claims and evolution by rejecting theistic evolution and accepting the notion of progressive creation that requires periodic acts of special creation during the claimed 4.4 billion years of earth's deep time history.<sup>68</sup> In this fashion broad concordists retain the biblical concept of special creation, but in a reinterpreted form. For example, Ramm speaks for the position in these classic words:

In progressive creationism there may be much horizontal radiation [micro-evolution]. . . . But there is no vertical radiation [macro-evolution]. Vertical radiation is only by fiat creation. A root-species may give rise to several species by horizontal radiation, through the process of the unraveling of gene potentialities or recombination. Horizontal radiation could account for much which now passes as evidence for the theory of evolution. The gaps in the geological record are gaps because vertical progress takes place only by creation.<sup>69</sup>

By this method, Ramm retains numerous, necessary interventive special creative acts of God within secular history in order to create new root species, including human beings.



Thus, an inerrantist view of inspiration does not necessarily guarantee a historical approach to the creation texts, as might be initially expected. In addition to the nonconcordists and the broad concordists, there are, finally, the narrow concordists to which we now turn.

*Evangelical Narrow Concordism.* Narrow, strict, or consistent concordists include scholars such as Norman L. Geisler, J. Kerby Anderson,<sup>70</sup> Henry M. Morris, Francis A. Schaeffer, and many scholars within the Seventh-day Adventist community. Some of these individuals are at times associated with terms such as fundamentalist, bibliolatrism and other pejorative labels. Probably narrow concordism represents the "rare and isolated pockets" of thought which Kaufmann claims are rapidly disappearing forever. Strict concordists tend to treat the creation texts of Genesis as presenting literal, accurate, scientific and historical information which is open for investigation by the natural sciences. Thus, for example, strict concordists still believe that the Noachian flood was wet, wild and universal, and that there really was a first couple who literally and historically initiated sin into a perfect order.

In this approach the Bible is not considered to be a textbook on science in the sense that its main purpose is to deliver scientific facts. However, the Bible can be considered to be a scientific textbook, as Francis A. Schaeffer suggests, in the sense that "where it touches the cosmos it is true, propositionally true."<sup>71</sup> He expands this concept as follows:

What the Bible teaches where it touches history and the cosmos and what science teaches where it touches the same areas do not stand in a discontinuity.<sup>72</sup>

This understanding of the extent and nature of inspiration and its relationship to science is the basis for the ongoing institutional academic efforts concerning concordism within these communities of faith. The scientific institutes comprised of university-trained scientists who are also Christians are found only in strict concordist communities. Neither nonconcordists nor broad concordists need these institutes because, according to their understanding, the purpose of biblical inspiration is not to specify in scientific fashion literally how life arose on the planet.

This situation raises two questions. Are strict concordists'

endeavors misguided, anachronistic enterprises, which should rapidly disappear, and be referenced only in textbooks on the history of science and religion? Or, are scientific research projects which are concerned with concordism, such as those conducted by the Geoscience Research Institute, even more relevant, vital, and theologically and scientifically probative than ever before? Our essay concludes by discussing a remarkable window of opportunity recently opened for a fresh academic hearing of basic concordism concerning the authority of biblical inspiration and science which indicates that the most significant story of full concordism may lie just ahead.

### An Academic Window of Opportunity

**The General Situation.** Fresh winds are blowing in the academic community. Serious scholarly questions about Darwinian theories of origin are being raised in journals of distinction. Here are a few examples: Writing in the December 1992 issue of the *International Philosophical Quarterly*, Kenneth T. Gallagher<sup>73</sup> shows convincingly that Richard Dawkins' attempt, in his book *The Blind Watchmaker*, to overthrow the argument from perfection fails miserably. Dawkins mistakenly assumes that the first small incipient stages of a future eye on the way to completion might have vision.<sup>74</sup> However, Gallagher points out that incomplete stages of a future eye could not have vision, thereby fatally undermining Darwin's theory of origin. No Darwinian biologist has yet adequately addressed this critique.<sup>75</sup>

Michael Polanyi insists that life and human consciousness are irreducible to the laws of physics and chemistry.<sup>76</sup> John B. Cobb, Jr. cogently argues that subjectivity cannot arise from objectivity, thus indicating that from its own materialistic resources and without help from a divine power Darwinian evolution cannot occur.<sup>77</sup> After subjecting Darwinian theory to the principles of probability theory, mathematicians Sir Fred Holye and Chandra Wickramasinghe offer this startling conclusion:

It must be judged of some considerable social significance that so simple and so decisive a disproof of the "Darwinian" theory as that given above has escaped the attention of scientists for so long. There can, we think, be no explanation other than intellectual perversity.<sup>78</sup>

Contemporary German advocate of polymeric chemistry Bruno Vollmert writes:

The stricter my argumentation takes place in the frame of the exact sciences by treating the biological evolution in the sense of Neodarwinism as a process by chance, that is to say (the terminology of polymeric chemistry) as a statistical copolycondensation, the less I am afraid to understand the world as the creation of an almighty creator as an alternative to Darwinism.<sup>79</sup>

Harvard paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould challenges the rate of Darwinian developmental theory with these epoch-making words:

The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology. The evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips . . . of their branches; the rest is inference, . . . not the evidence of fossils. . . . In any local area, a species does not arise gradually by the steady transformation of its ancestors; it appears all at once and "fully formed."<sup>80</sup>

Gould, of course, remains an evolutionist, but faithfully reports his findings, as problematic as they may be to traditional Darwinian developmental theory.

Pierre Grassé of the University of Paris comments on the implications of the lack of transitional forms as follows:

From the almost total absence of fossil evidence relative to the origin of the phyla, it follows that any explanation of the mechanism in the creative evolution of the fundamental structural plans is heavily burdened with hypotheses. . . . We do not even have a basis to determine the extent to which these opinions are correct.<sup>81</sup>

The hypotheses noted in this quotation may reveal some form of mechanism of change, but concerning the causes of the orientations of lineages and of the causes of living functions Grassé significantly confesses that "[p]erhaps in this area biology can go no farther: the rest is metaphysics."<sup>82</sup> By these words Grassé suggests the following possible point of beautiful concordism between science and religion. On its own terms biology surveys all its causal options and concludes that they inadequately account fully for the biological forms studied, implying the need for some form of causality other than the Darwinian paradigm. Faith can supply the

needed transempirical causality, the Divine Creator of heaven and earth.

These illustrations could be multiplied,<sup>83</sup> but this sampling of opinions indicates that a fresh scholarly skepticism of evolutionary theory is growing in academic circles. Of even greater interest is the fact that current developments are now opening a window of opportunity for a serious academic hearing of traditional concordism, provided its principles are presented in a scholarly, accountable fashion in light of the most recent concordist research.

**A Specific Window of Opportunity.** Just as Karl Barth's *Römerbrief* is said to have fallen "like a bomb on the playground of the theologians" in 1918,<sup>84</sup> so Plantinga's "When Faith and Reason Clash: Evolution and the Bible" and Johnson's *Darwin on Trial* have fallen like two bombs into university departments of religion in 1991. Stunned scholars are scrambling to respond. Strikingly, both studies claim that the biological facts are best interpreted from an empirical standpoint that fatally undermines Darwinian theory.

Evoking the probative argument from perfection concerning the development of the eye *de novo*, Plantinga asks, How, biologically, can one properly "envisage a series of mutations which is such that each member of the series has adaptive value, is also a step on the way to the eye, and is such that the last member is an animal with such an eye[?]"<sup>85</sup> His point is that on "Darwinian assumptions, none of [these steps] could be the path in fact taken . . . so how could have the eye have evolved in this way?"<sup>86</sup> The answer is that its eye could not have developed in this fashion. Plantinga insists that these considerations suggest that the Christian needs a scientific account of life that is not restricted by "methodological naturalism."<sup>87</sup> No wonder the academic community is reeling.

Johnson offers an evaluation of Darwin's theory from the perspective of a teaching, trial lawyer at Berkeley. After critically, carefully, and thoroughly surveying the evidence for Darwinian naturalistic biological evolution, he concludes that viewed strictly from the point of view of logic and the principles of scientific research, the Darwinian theory of origins "is not supported by impartially evaluated empirical evidence."<sup>88</sup> Therefore, Johnson asks, "Why not consider the possibility that life is what it so evidently seems to be, the product of creative intelligence."<sup>89</sup> Be-



cause of the cogently expressed skepticism of Darwinian theory by Plantinga and Johnson, evangelical scholars supporting theistic evolution such as Van Till and Hasker are understandably on the defensive. However, in the several exchanges which have been published among the latter three scholars, two significant developments<sup>90</sup> have occurred which open a new window of opportunity for a serious academic hearing of strict concordism.

Perhaps, for the first time in recent history, proponents of some form of special creation are being treated with respect rather than with the usual opprobrium. This is an important new development. For example, Ernan McMullin, director of the Program in History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Notre Dame, and a colleague but outspoken critic of Plantinga, admits in a *Zygon* article (September 1993) that it is worthwhile to consider Plantinga's argument, because he [standing in the Calvinistic tradition] is not only a well-known philosopher of religion, but also presents a very "sophisticated sort of defense of special creation."<sup>91</sup>

Van Till salutes Johnson and Plantinga by saying that when compared to traditional scientific creationists, their cases are "more persuasively formulated,"<sup>92</sup> rendering them worthy of being addressed. In a lecture delivered in February 1993, Michael Ruse, Darwinian philosopher of science, surprised an audience of evolutionists when he complimented Johnson by saying that he correctly shows in [Ruse's words], that "evolution akin to religion involves making certain *a priori* or metaphysical assumptions which at some level cannot be proven empirically."<sup>93</sup>

These illustrations indicate that the Berlin Wall of defiance against serious consideration of creationist points of view may be cracking in segments of academia. However, the most significant current development is that occasioned by the comments of William Hasker, which in effect open a window of opportunity for conservative concordist Christian scholars.

In his response to Johnson, appearing in a 1993 issue of the *Christian Scholar's Review*,<sup>94</sup> Hasker, a severe critic of Johnson until now, welcomes his proposal for a new research agenda which includes, among other things, a call to "paleontologists to interpret their evidence without Darwinist prejudice."<sup>95</sup> Hasker magnanimously allows that Johnson's research proposal "could

produce a genuinely viable special creationist alternative."<sup>96</sup> Then Hasker articulates a window-opening challenge: "I hope [Johnson] will find scientists who are willing and able to undertake the research he has in mind."

There it is, a window of opportunity flung wide open by the scholarly community itself to be informed by the latest concordist research.<sup>97</sup> This means that a time of unequalled possibilities lies open before the Geoscience Research Institute, Seventh-day Adventist colleges, and M.A. and Ph.D. degree-granting institutions to rise to the sole glory of God in making major contributions, some perhaps of epoch-making significance, concerning issues of origins and neo-catastrophism indicating that true science and inspiration are harmonious after all.

In this volatile environment of contemporary biblical and theological reexamination of the role of inspiration and the natural sciences, responsible strict concordist scholars willing to risk the whitewater ride through the spray-filled canyons of the creation texts and nature itself will surely discover additional new harmonies between Scripture and science about which to write, not only as it were with breathless excitement but above all with deeply compelling academic power.<sup>98</sup> This effort can continue to show that concordism is not an anachronistic effort, but is very relevant indeed in the post-Darwinian age.

In view of these possibilities, John Woodbridge is so right when he observes: "It is ironic that some evangelical scholars are discounting the Bible statements about nature and history at the very time evolutionary thought is in such flux."<sup>99</sup> Now is the time to tremble at the words of the God of Israel, particularly in the creation and flood narratives,<sup>100</sup> and not to tremble at the words of Darwin whose theory is in crisis.<sup>101</sup> Strict concordism's day in court may have come. At least the academic ball is in its court. What will the Adventist scholarly societies and organs of communication such as *Adventist Society for Religious Studies*, *Adventist Theological Society*, *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, *Origins*,<sup>102</sup> the *Adventist Review*, and *Spectrum*,<sup>103</sup> et al. publish and speak in response? The general academic community, for the time being at least, is listening.

## Endnotes

- 1 Langdon Gilkey, *Religion and the Scientific Future: Reflection on Myth, Science, and Theology* (NY: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 4.
- 2 Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1948) Vol. 4, p. 584.
- 3 This is the issue as framed by Adventist theologian Peter van Bemmelen in recent conversations with the author. See Peter van Bemmelen, *Issues in Biblical Inspiration: Sandy and Warfield* (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1987), p. 66.
- 4 This position is widely held by evangelicals sympathetic to the theistic evolutionary perspective. For example, in *The Meaning of Creation*, Hyers writes: "The weight of scientific evidence is too great, and scientific arguments too persuasive, for one to hold any longer to the literal six-day creationism" (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1984), p. 86.
- 5 For a counter view see Gerhard F. Hasel, "Watering the Antediluvian World: Mist, River, Flood, High Water, or Rain," Paper presented at the SBL conference, in Washington D.C., November 1993.
- 6 James Barr makes this suggestion in *Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), p. 245.
- 7 For a partial list of these alternatives see Clark Pinnock, "Bernard Ramm: Postfundamentalism Coming to Terms with Modernity," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 17:4 (Winter 1990): 22.
- 8 For this quote see Kurt A. Wood, "The Scientific Exegesis of the Qur'an: A Case Study in Relating Science and Scripture," *Perspectives on Science & Christian Faith* 45:2 (June 1993): 92. For a somewhat contrary view see John D. Woodbridge, "Does the Bible Teach Science?," *Bibliotheca Sacra* (July-September 1985): 195. For the position of the Vatican see Walter M. Abbott, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1966), p. 119, n. 31.
- John Calvin states that God adapts His language in the creation narrative to common usage, but this does not mean that the narratives support historical error. For comment and sources on the former point see, G. B. Deason, "The Protestant Reformation and the Rise of Modern Science," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 38 (1985): 221-240, particularly, p. 223.
- 9 Louis Meyer, ed., *The Fundamentals*, vol. 7 [1911]; quoted in Tom McIver, *Anti-Evolution: A Reader's Guide to Writings Before and After Darwin* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), p. 170.
- 10 In an insightful question, George McCready Price also argues that eschatology is negatively affected by a faulty protology as follows: "[H]ow can we hope to impress such a person with the imminence of the events predicted in the last chapters of the Bible, when he has lost all confidence in the history recorded in its first chapters?" George McCready Price, *Science and Religion in a Nutshell* (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, n.d.), 15.
- 11 See, Everett Mendelssohn, "Religious Fundamentalism and the Sciences," pp. 23-41; and James Moore, "The Creationist Cosmos of Protestant Fundamentalism," pp. 42-72 in: Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *The Fundamentalism Project*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Vol. 2: *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*, 1993.
- 12 Alvin Plantinga, "When Faith and Reason Clash: Evolution and the Bible," 21:1 *Christian Scholar's Review*, 1991, pp. 8-32.
- 13 Alden Thompson, *Inspiration: Hard Questions, Honest Answers* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1991).
- 14 Thompson occasionally touches on the issue of inspiration and the natural sciences. For example, he argues for a supernatural element in the Noachian flood, but seems to look with favor upon recent perspectives which treat the flood as limited in scope. For a response to this particular point see Randall Younker: "A Few Thoughts on Alden Thompson's Chapter: Numbers, Genealogies, Dates," *Issues in Revelation and Inspiration* (Berrien Springs, MI: Adventist Theological Society, 1992), pp. 187-193.
- I would welcome an additional scholarly study by Thompson in which he would

- address at length the reliability of biblical inspiration in relation to the natural sciences concerning issues such as the six-day creation, the Fall, et al., in particular, and the question of strict concordism in general.
- 15 The term concordism here refers to the scholarly endeavor of harmonizing the findings of science with a historical reading of the creation texts.
  - 16 James Barr, review of *Evangelical Theories of Biblical Inspiration, A Review and Proposal*, by Kern Robert Trembath, in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 41 Part 1 (April 1990): 322-323.
  - 17 *Ibid.*, p. 323.
  - 18 Kern Robert Trembath, "Evangelical Theories of Biblical Inspiration: A Review and Proposal" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1984), p. 100.
  - 19 See, for example, Trembath, p. 95.
  - 20 Cf. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G. W. Bromiley, vol. I/2: *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1970), p. 532.
  - 21 Trembath, p. 140.
  - 22 "Study Documents on Inspiration and Creation," section entitled "Creation and Re-Creation," *Adventist Review*, January 17, 1980, p. 11.
  - 23 Specificity beyond what is revealed by the experience of prophets concerning the nature of inspiration may well be avoided. In a classic sentence, Ellen White states, "Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation," (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 37, quoted in, Arthur L. White, *Inspiration and the Ellen G. White Writings*, Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1978), p. 6. This description indicates "thought" inspiration rather than "word" inspiration, and gives the prophet a more active role in the inspiration process—an active instrumental role, not a passive role. This position distinguishes an Adventist infallible inspiration notion from the inerrantist verbal position where every word is God-breathed, even though the prophet retains his own personality of expression in the process.
  - 24 Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), p. 585.
  - 25 See footnote #23.
  - 26 The powerful incarnational model of Scripture illustrating the union of the mysterious divine influence upon the biblical prophet writing the Bible does not, however, imply syllogistically that since all things human are imperfect, and because the Bible has human authors, therefore the Bible is imperfect in theology, science, and history. Rather, Jesus' remark that the Scriptures cannot be broken (John 10:35) seems to limit, by implication, biblical imperfection to matters of little or no consequence, and thus to instrumental, not substantive categories. For example, an imperfect mode of expression does not make the truth of what is said imperfect.
  - 27 For a conservative but scholarly presentation of the traditional position concerning the historical trustworthiness of Daniel which shows a high view of Scripture see Edward J. Young, "The Bible and History," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 122 (January-March 1965): 16-22.
  - 28 Concerning Jesus' attitude to the historicity of the creation of Adam and the historicity of Genesis 1 and 2 in terms of the creation of Adam and Eve, see Francis A. Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1972), pp. 39-43.
  - 29 For a discussion of Jesus on John 10:35 ("the Scripture cannot be broken,") as viewed by Warfield and Dunn, see Roger Nichole, "The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture," *Churchman* 97:3 (1983): pp. 198-215.
  - 30 John Chapman stands at the head of a line of scholars who argue for this identity. See John Chapman, "Zacharias, Slain Between the Temple and the Altar," *Journal of Theological Studies* 13 (1911-12): 398-410, note particularly p. 407; J. Barton Payne, "Zechariah Who Perished," *Grace Journal* 8 (1967): 33-35; G. H. P. Thompson, *The Gospel According to Luke*, vol. 3 in *The New Clarendon Bible* ed. by H. F. D. Sparks, (Oxford:



Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 182; *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5 (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1956), p. 492.

For a sampling of critical scholarship which argue for a Q redaction source of this pericope see R. J. Miller, "The Rejection of the Prophets in Q," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988): 223-240. Miller states that the material represents the "risen Jesus spoken by the Q prophets," p. 225. E. S. Steele, "Luke 11:37-54: A Modified Hellenistic Symposium?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103 (1984): 379-94. Steele suggests that this pericope represents the work of a redactor shaping his narrative along the lines of a modified Hellenistic symposium, p. 394.

31 Steele, *ibid.*

32 For an overview of contemporary critical scholarship on this question see the introduction in Claus Westermann, *Creation*, trans. by John J. Scullion (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 1-15.

33 John B. Cobb, Jr., "The Authority of the Bible," *The Drew Gateway* 45 (1974): 200.

34 Rudolph Bultmann, *Existence and Faith: The Fontana Library of Theology and Philosophy* (London: Collins, 1964), p. 345.

35 Friedrich D. E. Schleiermacher, *On the Glaubenslehre: Two Letters To Dr. Lücke*, transl. James Duke and Francis Fiorenza (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Edwards Brothers, 1981, for the American Academy of Religion), p. 64.

36 Adolph von Harnack, *Marcion: das Evangelium vom fremden Gott, eine Monographie zur Geschichte der Grundlegung der katholischen Kirche. Neue Studien zu Marcion* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1960); quoted in James Barr, "The Old Testament and the New Crisis of Biblical Authority," *Interpretation* 25:1 (January 1971): 33-34.

37 As noted earlier in this paper, concordism is the effort by some evangelical scholars to harmonize scientific findings with scriptural statements concerning, for example, cosmology and the origin of human beings by divine special creation. Concordism is discussed subsequently in this paper.

38 Hans Küng, *Credo* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), p. 21.

39 Karl Schmitz-Moormann ed., *Neue Ansätze zum Dialog zwischen Theologie und Naturwissenschaft* (Düsseldorf, 1992); quoted in Küng, *Credo*, p. 22.

The seriousness of the theological implications outlined by Schmitz-Moormann in this citation is not being lost by scholars holding a high view of inspiration. For example, Marco Terreros is currently completing an Andrews University doctoral dissertation entitled, "Death Before the Sin of Adam: A Fundamental Concept in Theistic Evolution and Its Implications for Evangelical Theology," in which Terreros convincingly studies the biblical self-understanding of theories of sin and death, then offers a critical analysis of selected theological implications which follow from the theistic evangelical affirmation of death before the sin of Adam.

40 Karl Schmitz-Moormann, "Evolution and Redemption: What Is the Meaning of Christians Proclaiming Salvation in an Evolving World?" *Progress In Theology* 1:2 (June 1993): 7.

George McCready Price anticipates this kind of conclusion concerning the nature of salvation if scholars adopt theistic evolution. He argues that theistic evolution results in "redemption by development," or in a "doctrine of salvation by development." See George McCready Price, *Evolution and the Sabbath* (Warburton, Victoria, Australia: Signs Publishing Assn., n.d.), pp. 5, 14-15.

41 Gordon D. Kaufman, "What Shall We Do With the Bible?" *Interpretation* 25:1 (January 1971): 96.

42 Stanley L. Jaki, "Genesis 1: A Cosmogonism?" *Homiletic & Pastoral Review* 93:11-12 (August-September 1993): 29.

43 *Ibid.*

44 The most authoritative recent collection of articles representing the current thinking of critical scholarship concerning the interface between science and religion is Ernan McMullin, ed., *Evolution and Creation* (Notre Dame, ID: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985).

45 For a sampling of opinions of scholars who endorse and illustrate this perspective, see Philip Hefner, "Biological Perspectives on the Fall and Original Sin," *Zygon* 28:1 (March 1993): 77-101; William Hordern, "Creationism. . . A Problem in Biblical Authority," *Touchstone* 3:1 (January 1985): 22-28; Bernard Ramm, "The Fall and Natural Evil," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 5:2 (April 1963): 21-32; Howard J. Van Till, "Evolutionary Science and the Forgotten Doctrine of Creation's Functional Integrity," *Progress in Theology* 1:1 (March 1993): 6. For a history of the struggles with this modern point of view at Princeton Theological Seminary, see Darryl G. Hart, "The Princeton Mind in the Modern World and the Common Sense of J. Gresham Machen," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 46:1 (Spring 1984): 1-25.

46 Clark H. Pinnock, 43:2 (April 1989): 143-155.

47 Robert W. Yarbrough, "Retreating Authority: Evangelical-Liberal Rapprochement?" *Christian Scholar's Review* 19:2 (1990): 149-162.

48 Davis A. Young, "Scripture in the Hands of Geologists," Part One, *The Westminster Theological Journal* 49 (Spring 1987): 1-34; and Part Two, *Ibid.*, 49 (Fall 1987): 257-304. Part One surveys the history of literalism in the interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis by Christian geologists, while Part Two focuses on the concordist tradition.

Also see Davis A. Young, "Nineteenth-Century Christian Geologists and the Doctrine of Scripture," *Christian Scholar's Review* 11:3 (1982): 212-228.

49 H. H. Ridderbos, *Is There a Conflict Between Genesis 1 and Natural Science?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Co., 1957). In this and the other sources concerning the figures in the three groups of evangelical scholars, I am informed originally by Pinnock's article.

50 Howard J. Van Till, *The Fourth Day: What the Bible and the Heavens Are Telling Us About the Creation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1986).

51 Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning: The Opening Chapters of Genesis* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984).

52 J. I. Packer, "The Challenge of Biblical Interpretation: Creation" in *The Proceedings of the Conference on Biblical Interpretation 1988* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1988), pp. 21-33.

53 In addition to his article cited above, see Clark H. Pinnock, *The Scripture Principle* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984) for a crisp but carefully nuanced exposition of a softened view of inerrancy—see particularly p. 224.

54 Pinnock, "Climbing Out of a Swamp," p. 145.

55 Pinnock quotes Gerhard F. Hasel's "The Polemical Nature of the Genesis Cosmology" [*Evangelical Quarterly* 46 (1974): 81-102] in support of his claim that the creation narratives do not have a scientific intent in the modern sense. However, it seems to me that Pinnock may be misusing Hasel's article. On the one hand, Hasel clearly shows that the creation texts do indeed critique mythical religious beliefs. On the other hand, Hasel's point in the article is not to limit the intent of the creation narratives only to these important theological critiques. Therefore, Pinnock can only properly use Hasel's material by using the raw data in making his own point about a narrowed focus in Genesis 1. Pinnock misuses Hasel's material if he is implying that Hasel is making the same point Pinnock is making, because Hasel is not suggesting that the anti-myth theme of Genesis 1 is the exclusive interest of the creation narrative.

56 Pinnock, "Climbing Out of a Swamp," p. 145.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 149.

58 The classic collection of recent, cutting-edge scholarly discussions by leading evangelical scholars concerning the relation of science to the creation texts is Howard J. Van Till, ed., *Portraits of Creation: Biblical and Scientific Perspectives on the World's Formation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990).

59 For a detailed discussion of nineteenth-century broad concordism, see David N. Livingstone, *Darwin's Forgotten Defenders: The Encounter Between Evangelical Theology and Evolutionary Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, Scottish Academic Press, 1987).

60 Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 571.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 570.

62 *Ibid.*, p. 571.

- 63 Ibid., p. 570.
- 64 Cf. the language of Ellen G. White supporting this point in *Spiritual Gifts* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864), 3: 91-92
- 65 Bernard Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954; reprint ed., 1984).
- 66 Pattle P. T. Pun, *Evolution: Nature and Scripture in Conflict?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982).
- 67 Robert C. Newmann and Herman J. Eckelmann, *Genesis One and the Origin of the Earth* (Downers Grove, Ill: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977).
- 68 Stephen Jay Gould coined the term "deep time" to refer to the 4.4 billion years of earth history posited by contemporary geological and evolutionary theory. See particularly chapter one, entitled "The Discovery of Deep Time," in Stephen Jay Gould, *Time's Arrow, Time's Cycle: Myth and Metaphor in the Discovery of Geological Time*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987).
- 69 Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, p. 191.
- 70 Norman L. Geisler and J. Kerby Anderson, *Origin Science: A Proposal for the Creation-Evolution Controversy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987).
- 71 Francis A. Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time: The Flow of Biblical History* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1972), pp. 35-36.
- 72 Ibid., p. 166.
- 73 Kenneth T. Gallagher, "Dawkins in Biomorph Land," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 32:4, (December 1992): 501-513.
- 74 Ibid., p. 512.
- 75 For a discussion of the argument from perfection, its history and cogency, see John T. Baldwin, "God and the World: William Paley's Argument from Perfection Tradition--A Continuing Influence," *Harvard Theological Review* 85:1 (1992): 109-120.
- 76 Michael Polanyi, "Life's Irreducible Structure," *Science* 160: (June 21, 1968): 1308-1312.
- 77 Cobb made this point in a lecture delivered at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago in 1982.
- 78 Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe, *Why Neo-Darwinism Does Not Work* (Cardiff, Wales: University College Cardiff Press, 1982), pp. 32-33.
- 79 Bruno Vollmert, *Das Molekül und das Leben: vom makromolekularen Ursprung des Lebens und der Arten: Was Darwin nicht wissen konnte und Darwinisten nicht wissen wollen* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1965; reprint 1985), p. 26 in early edition quoted in Kurt Hübner, "Genesis and Modern Theories of Evolution," *Man and World* 25 (1992): 406.
- 80 Stephen Jay Gould, "Evolution's Erratic Pace," *Natural History* 86:5 (May 1977): 14.
- 81 Pierre Grassé, *Evolution of Living Organisms* (New York: Academic Press, 1977), 31.
- 82 Ibid., p. 246.
- 83 In his book entitled *The Evolution and Classification of Flowering Plants*, 2nd ed. (Bronx: New York Botanical Garden, 1988), A. Cronquist says that the origin of the angiosperms remains an "abominable mystery" to modern students of evolution as it did to Darwin, quoted in Dennis Woodland, *Contemporary Plant Systematics* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1991), p. 423.
- In addition, see for example the excellent collections of studies in support of transempirical causality in the design and origin of biological forms, Leo R. Van Dolson, ed., *Our Real Roots* (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1979). In this collection see particularly the report of research by G. E. Snow and G. T. Javor entitled "Atmospheric Oxygen Rules Out Biochemical Evolution," pp. 155-161.
- Renewed interest in the theory of intelligent design is being expressed on several fronts. The December 1993 *Newsletter* (35:6):1 of the American Scientific Affiliation and Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation describes the Intelligent Design Symposium at the 1993 ASA Annual Meeting chaired by Dr. David Willis of Oregon State University and organized by ASA's Committee for Integrity in Science Education.

- Dean Kenyon, biology professor at San Francisco State University, opens another direction concerning intelligent design theory in the book by Percival Davis and Dean H. Kenyon, *Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins*, 2nd ed. (Dallas: Houghton Publishing Co., 1993).
- Evidence from the natural sciences for an intelligent creator of the universe is presented in a forthcoming work available March 1994: J. P. Moreland, ed., *The Creation Hypothesis: Scientific Evidence for an Intelligent Designer* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1994).
- 84 Attributed to Catholic Theologian Karl Adam, quoted by John McConnachie, *The Significance of Karl Barth* (New York: R. R. Smith, 1931), p. 43.
- 85 Alvin Plantinga, "When Faith and Reason Clash: Evolution and the Bible," *Christian Scholar's Review* 21:1 (1991): 25.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Ibid., p. 29.
- 88 Howard J. Van Till and Phillip E. Johnson, "God and Evolution: An Exchange," *First Things* 34 (June/July 1993): 39.
- 89 Phillip E. Johnson, *Darwin On Trial*, p. 110.
- 90 See, for example, William Hasker, "Mr. Johnson for the Prosecution," *Christian Scholar's Review* 22:2 (1992): 177-186; Phillip E. Johnson, "Response to Hasker," *Christian Scholar's Review* 22:3 (1993): 297-304, and in the same issue, William Hasker, "Reply to Johnson," 305-308; Howard J. Van Till and Phillip E. Johnson, "God and Evolution: An Exchange," *First Things* 34 (June/July 1993): 32-41; Howard J. Van Till, "Is Special Creationism a Heresy?" *Christian Scholar's Review* 22:4 (1993): 380-395.
- 91 Ernan McMullin, "Evolution and Special Creation," *Zygon* 28:3 (September 1993): 300.
- 92 Van Till, "Is Special Creationism a Heresy?": 381.
- 93 Michael Ruse in a Boston lecture delivered before the AAAS in February, 1993, entitled, "Non Literalist Evolution," which was one presentation in a series of speakers focusing on the theme, "The New Antievolutionism."
- 94 William Hasker, "Reply to Johnson," *Christian Scholar's Review* 22:3 (1993): 305-308.
- 95 Phillip E. Johnson, "Response to Hasker," *Christian Scholar's Review* 22:3 (1993): 303, n. 7.
- 96 Hasker, "Reply to Johnson," p. 308.
- 97 As a footnote to this, in the latest issue of *Christian Scholar's Review* 22:4 (1993): 395 the editors call for a paper for a special theme issue on Creation/Evolution scheduled for publication in March 1995.
- 98 For aspects of the portrayal of this challenge, I am informed instrumentally in part by language employed by Thomas G. Long, Princeton Professor of Preaching and Worship, in his article, "The Use of Scripture in Contemporary Preaching," *Interpretation* 44:2 (April 1990): 352.
- 99 John D. Woodbridge, "Does the Bible Teach Science?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 142 (July-September 1985): 205.
- 100 Ezra 9:4.
- 101 Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (Bethesda, Maryland: Adler and Adler, 1986).
- 102 *Origins* is the journal of the Geoscience Research Institute. All its articles are peer reviewed and written by scientists, biblical scholars, and/or theologians with earned doctorates at leading universities. Here is a sampling of its articles: Niels-Erik Andreasen, "The Word 'Earth' in Genesis 1:1," *Origins* (1981): 13-19; John T. Baldwin, "Progressive Creation and Biblical Revelation: Some Theological Implications," *Origins* 18 (1991): 53-65; Robert H. Brown, "Radiometric Age and the Traditional Hebraic-Christian View of Time," *Origins* 4 (1977): 68-75; Robert H. Brown, "Geo and Cosmic Chronology," *Origins* 8 (1981): 20-45; Robert H. Brown, "How Solid Is a Radioisotope Age of a Rock?" *Origins* 10 (1983): 93-95; Arthur V. Chadwick, "Precambrian Pollen in the Grand Canyon—A Reexamination," *Origins* 8 (1981): 7-12; Harold G. Coffin, "Burgess Shale Re-examined," *Origins* 17 (1990):



33-37; Mart de Groot, "Cosmology and Genesis: The Road to Harmony and the Need for Cosmological Alternatives," *Origins* 19 (1992): 8-32; Gerhard F. Hasel, "Genesis 5 and 11: Chronogenealogies in the a Biblical History of Beginnings," *Origins* 7 (1980): 53-70; George T. Javor, "A New Attempt to Understand the Origin of Life: The Theory of Surface-Metabolism," *Origins* 16 (1989): 40-44; Ariel A. Roth, "Those Gaps in the Sedimentary Layers," *Origins* 13 (1988): 75-92; Ariel A. Roth, "Life in the Deep Rocks and the Deep Fossil Record," *Origins* 19 (1992): 80; William H. Shea, "Literary Structural Parallels Between Genesis 1 and 2," *Origins* 16 (1989): 49-68; William H. Shea, "The Antediluvian," *Origins* 18 (1991): 10-26; G. E. Snow and G. T. Javor, "Oxygen and Evolution," *Origins* 2 (1975): 59-63; Clyde L. Webster, "The Implications of the Oklo Phenomenon on the Constancy of Radiometric Decay Rates," *Origins* (1990): 86-92.

103 *Spectrum* is a freelance journal by Adventists whose articles may at times reflect sympathy for a broad concordist perspective. A sampling of its pieces relevant to this essay follows: Ross O. Barnes, "Biblical Creationism After a Century of Scientific Investigation," *Spectrum* 10:1 (1979): 2-11; Roy Benton, "Odyssey of an Adventist Creationist," *Spectrum* 15:2 (1984): 46-53; Molleurus Couperus, "Tensions Between Religion and Science," *Spectrum* 10:4 (1980): 74-88; Lawrence T. Geraty, "Beyond Fundamentalism: A Short History of Adventist Old Testament Scholarship," *Spectrum* 13:2 (1982): 44-49; Fritz Guy, "Negotiating the Creation-Evolution Wars," *Spectrum* 20:1 (1989): 40-45; F. E. J. Harder, "Beyond Arithmetic: The Truth of Creation," *Spectrum* 15:2 (1984): 54-59; cf. Richard Rice, "Dominant Themes in Adventist Theology," *Origins* 10:4 (1980): 58-73.

*Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 5/1 (1994):155-179.  
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## THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE

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Recently the subject of inspiration has received increased attention among Seventh-day Adventists. A growing number of believers are beginning to realize that one's view of the inspiration of the Bible has far reaching implications for one's daily decisions and lifestyle.

All Seventh-day Adventists believe the Biblical teaching on the Sabbath and what happens when one dies. All believe that they have a special mission in calling people to the true worship of God. All believe that the body is the temple of God. All believe women should serve God.

But beyond the general themes there is not as much consensus. It is here that the specific view of the inspiration of the Bible makes a significant difference in how its directives are applied to the life. When confronted with the biblical text that addresses specifics not many Seventh-day Adventists would say, "I don't believe what Scripture says there!"

Instead, there is a reason, a context, a cultural/or "for those times" consideration cited. It is not so much that there is a *base disbelief in Scripture*, but an interpretive difference at the root of all Christian controversy. It is precisely here where deep hermeneutical differences divide all Christian groups. As some Seventh-day Adventists seem increasingly uncertain about which hermeneutical tools are appropriate, there is the potential for an