

HEBREWS: REPLACING MAN'S RITUALISM WITH CHRIST
"Part XIV: Holding To Pure Creationism Over Externalistic Evolution"
(Hebrews 11:1, 3)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

- (1) The belief that God **used evolution** (theistic evolution) to create in Genesis 1-2 is becoming more popular in Christendom today:
- (a) Pope John Paul II has claimed there is " . . . no opposition between evolution and the doctrine of the faith about man." (Pope John Paul II, "Message to Pontifical Academy of Sciences," L'Osservatore Romano (30 Oct. '96), 3, 7 as cited in Hunt, The Berean Call, Feb. '97.
- (b) Some Evangelicals are also going soft on theistic evolution:
- (aa) Promise Keepers' magazine, New Man urges believers **not** to take a **strong** stand **against** theistic evolution. In its July-Aug. '96 issue, p. 54, it says, "Remember, however, that the debate over how God created the world -- through millions of years of evolutionary work or through a few words spoken over a few days -- is not the central tenet of Christianity." (Ibid.)
- (bb) Virginia Schaeffer of Indianapolis wrote to the editor of the Creation Ex Nihilo magazine (June-Aug., '97) complaining about a new translation of the Bible. She said one "released in 1996 leaves out the 'evening and morning' before all of the 6 days of creation". That makes theistic evolution more applicable to Genesis by making "day" more easily mean an "age" in which evolution could occur rather than leaving "day" as a 24-hour **solar** day!
- (2) Of interest is how **similar** theistic evolution as a belief system is to the claims of Charles Darwin himself. In a May 22, 1860 letter, the author of modern uniformitarian evolutionary theory wrote: " . . . I cannot . . . view this wonderful universe, and especially the nature of man, [as] . . . the result of brute force. I am inclined to look at everything as resulting from designed laws, with the details, whether good or bad, left to the working out of what we may call chance . . . " (cited in "Theological Problems With Theistic Evolution," David H. Lane, Bibliotheca Sacra, April-June '94, p. 155)

Well, as even some EVANGELICALS are going "soft" on tolerating theistic evolution, should WE do so to avoid being seen as "unscientific"?!

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . .)

Need: "As increasing numbers of Evangelicals allow for the theory that God USED evolution to create where historically the Church had held to 'pure' creation, should I believe in it? Why?!"

- I. **The author of Hebrews urged his Hebrew Christian readers to hold to faith in the UNSEEN heavenly Christ and temple ministry instead of reverting to the VISIBLE, earthly Jewish system, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, p. 1729; Hebrews 9:7-10, 11-14 and sermon XII.**
- II. **This author taught his readers to EXERCISE that faith in TRUSTING God's WORD on UNSEEN realities OPPOSITE depending on what was seen in Judaism around them, Heb. 11:1.**
- III. **In ONE APPLICATION of this exercise, the author spoke of HOLDING that the universe's origin was MIRACULOUS by way of special creation VERSUS denying it or adopting another view!**
 - A. Hebrews 11:3 (and 1:2b) speaks of believing the Genesis 1-2 record:
 1. The KJV's "worlds" and NIV's "universe" from the Greek *tous aionas*, "the ages," (UBS Grk. N.T., p. 769) is the same expression used in Heb. 1:2 of the **universe**, B.K.C., N.T., p. 807. (NIV)
 2. The word, "made" in Heb. 11:3 comes from *gegonenai*, the perfect infinitive of *ginomai*, "to come into existence," Zond. Anal. Grk. Lex., p. 76; Arndt & Gingrich, Greek-Eng. Lex., p. 157.
 3. God's "command" (NIV) or "word" (KJV) is from the Greek word, *hrayma*, meaning what God **SPOKE** as **opposed** to a message(s) in general, Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, p. 562.
 4. Well, the epistle's readers were **Jewish** Christians who believed the **Genesis** account on the origin of the universe, so they would have understood this *hrayma* in the context to be God's **verbalized** orders in Gen. 1:3, 6, etc. that **brought into existence ALL** things.
 - B. Hebrews 11:3 thus says that all things God made in Genesis came from what is **unseen**, and Genesis 1-2 makes "unseen" to be the absence of any and all suggested creative cause(s) besides the Bible's God!
 1. Yes, the animals and man came from the **visible** earth, Gn. 2:19, 7.
 2. Yet, man, being a mammal could not have evolved **indirectly** from the earth via other life forms, for male and female would have had to co-exist in earlier life forms. Rather, man arrived **directly** from the **earth**, for Eve came from an adult Adam's rib, Gen. 2:20-22.
 3. Well, there is no indication from the Genesis context to view the origin of animals from the earth in Genesis 2 in any way other than the way man came -- by miraculous **means directly** from the earth!
 4. Thus, by "unseen", the author meant the absence of any **source** in the universe besides God that **itself could bring** things into **being!**

IV. **Examining Genesis 1-2 in its ORIGINAL historical context further SUPPORTS the Hebrews author's PURE CREATIONISM stand:**

- A. When Moses wrote Genesis 1-2, other Ancient Near Eastern accounts of the universe's origin all pictured a hero-god **struggling** to defeat an evil restraining force so that powers **innately existing in the earth** could be **released** to spring to life, Waltke, *Creation and Chaos*, p. 48.
- B. Yet, **exactly opposite** such a belief, Moses wrote that God's Spirit started out **sovereignly** hovering over a **lifeless mass**, Genesis 1:2!
- C. Also, Genesis 1:13-16 shows God creating the usual pagan deities of sun and moon three days after days had begun, and mentioning the usually pagan-worshipped stars almost as an afterthought! These bodies of light are mentioned in **lowly** and hence **polemical** terms!
- D. Hence, Genesis 1-2 is a **polemic challenging** the **pagan** views that held to spontaneous generation and competing gods at the beginning: **only God** as **sole** Creative Cause **miraculously** made the universe!

Application: (1) *To have eternal life, we believe in Christ as Savior, John 3:16.* (2) *As believers, we fellowship with God by (a) confession of sins (1 Jn. 1:9) to (b) depend on the Holy Spirit for behavior control (Gal. 5:16-23) to (c) obey God in living an upright life, 1 John 2:3-6.* (3) *That life embodies (a) trusting what God's Word SAYS above what EXTERNAL, VISIBLE pressures to the contrary teach, Heb. 11:1. (b) Since putting Scripture ABOVE what EXTERNAL, VISIBLE pressures to the contrary say, Heb. 11:3 with Genesis 1-2 in context also mean that we must resist the theory of EVOLUTION in every form and heed the Scriptures that say God MIRACULOUSLY made ALL things by the power of His spoken words! Thus, we deny both theistic evolution and atheistic evolution and hold firmly to pure creationism!*

Lesson: (1) *The Early Church was to rely upon the UNSEEN heavenly ministry of Christ and not return to EXTERNALISTIC Judaism because of what God's WORD said.* (2) *SIMILARLY, they were to believe God created the universe by His WORD WITHOUT any other creative CAUSE as Genesis taught.* (3) *Thus, WE must resist EXTERNALISTIC evolution to hold to PURE creation by faith in what the BIBLE teaches TODAY!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . .)

(1) Lest we think that holding to pure creation is somehow any less "scientific" than holding to theistic evolution, note the following quote from a noted **atheistic** evolutionist about **theistic evolution**:

"[Natural] Selection is the blindest, and most cruel way of evolving new species, and more and more complex and refined organisms . . . the more cruel because it is a process of elimination, of destruction. The struggle for life and the elimination of the weakest is a horrible process, against which our whole modern ethic revolts. An ideal society is a non-selective society, it is one where the weak are protected; which is exactly the reverse of the so-called natural law [of evolution]. ***I am surprised that a Christian would defend the idea that this is the process which God more or less set up in order to have [hold to] evolution.***" (Jacques Monod, Interview broadcast by the Australian Broadcasting Commission of June 10, 1976, as a tribute to Monod and entitled, "The Secret of Life," cited in Ken Ham, "The Relevance of Creation," *Ex Nihilo* (Casebook II), p. 8 as cited in turn in David H. Lane, "Theological Problems with Theistic Evolution," *Bib. Sac.*, April-June, 1994, p. 167)

(2) Also, lest we think holding to pure creation is somehow any less "scientific" than holding to atheistic evolution, note the following:

A favorite example of gradual evolution that appeared for years in American school textbooks was that of the horse. The fossil record given suggested that *Eohippus*, a small, four-toed creature allegedly evolved into the modern horse. However, though the 18 ribs in *Eohippus* are the same in number as that of today's horse, transitional forms suggested between *Eohippus* and the modern horse **vary** from that number **both ways**: one form, that of *Orohippus* had 15 ribs where another, the *Pliohippus* contained 19! Well, for **gradual evolution** to have occurred, there should have been a move from the less to the more complex rib cage, not a variation **down** and then **up** only to wind up with the **same** number of ribs as the alleged **original Eohippus**! That is not even **evolution**! **Yet this example has been held up as evidence for evolution, leading many youth to favor it over creation!** (Sylvia Baker, M. Sc., *Bone of Contention: Is Evolution True?*, p. 10-11)

We must rely on the Bible's statements on origins in a life of faith in God and His assertions!