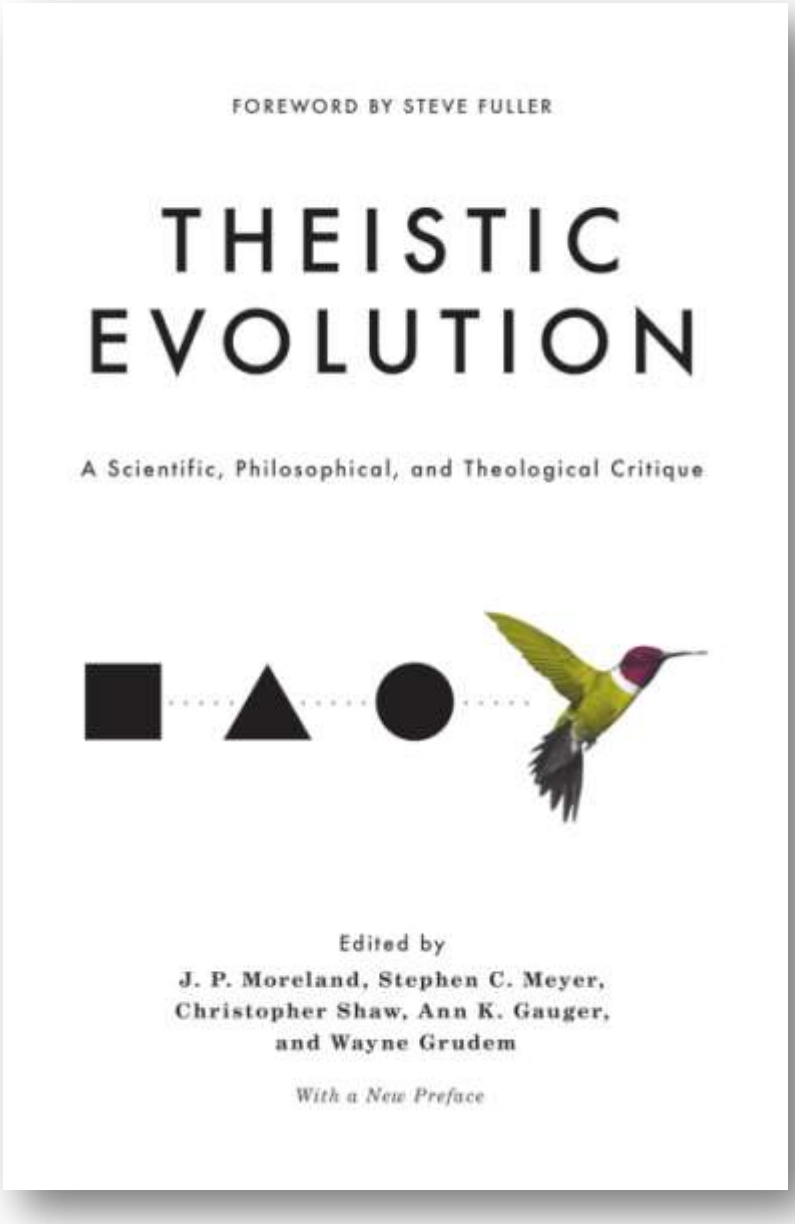
The Christian Education Awareness Network

Presents

<u>Theistic Evolution</u>: A Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Critique **by J. P. Moreland (Editor), Stephen C. Meyer (Editor), and multiple authors**



Note from CEANet: This promotional PDF consolidates the introductory materials from *Theistic Evolution* that Crossway has made publicly available through the Amazon "Look Inside" feature. These materials are reproduced with permission and remain fully the property of Crossway. Readers should note that the book intentionally does not address the age of the earth question. This omission reflects the editorial scope of the volume, not the teaching of Scripture. The historicity of Genesis is strongly affirmed throughout the book, but questions of chronology are deliberately left outside its purpose. CEANet encourages readers to consult Scripture directly on these matters and provides a supplemental PDF with biblical resources addressing the age-of-the-earth question.

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Winner of the ECPA Book of the Year Award for Bible Reference Works

Many prominent Christians insist that the church must yield to contemporary evolutionary theory and therefore modify traditional biblical ideas about the creation of life. They argue that God used—albeit in an undetectable way—evolutionary mechanisms to produce all forms of life. Featuring two dozen highly credentialed scientists, philosophers, and theologians from Europe and North America, this volume contests this proposal, documenting evidential, logical, and theological problems with theistic evolution—making it the most comprehensive critique of theistic evolution yet produced. Here are but a few features of this comprehensive book:

- Explains why theistic evolution is not congruent with a biblical worldview
- Features nineteen essays written by well-known experts in their fields
- Designed to be used as a textbook for courses on religion and evolution
- Accessible for those without expertise in the subject

Endorsements

"This volume fills a wide and expanding gap for Christians who continue to struggle with the relationship of evangelical Christianity to the claims of science. Specifically, for those who have rightly rejected the claims of unguided evolution, this book takes on the similar challenge of the possibility of theistic evolution. Scholarly, informative, well-researched, and well-argued, this will be the best place to begin to ferret out reasons for conflict among Christians who take science seriously. I highly recommend this resource."

K. Scott Oliphint, Professor of Apologetics and Systematic Theology and Dean of Faculty, Westminster Theological Seminary

"Theistic evolution means different things to different people. This book carefully identifies, and thoroughly debunks, an insidious, all-too-commonly accepted sense of the phrase even among Christians: that there is no physical reason to suspect life was designed, and that evolution proceeded in the unguided, unplanned manner Darwin himself championed."

Michael J. Behe, Professor of Biological Sciences, Lehigh University; author, *Darwin's Black Box* and *The Edge of Evolution*

"Evangelicals are experiencing unprecedented pressure to make peace with the Darwinian theory of evolution, and increasing numbers are waving the white flag. The tragic irony is that evolutionary theory is more beleaguered than ever in the face of multiplying scientific challenges and growing dissent. Until now there has been no consolidated scholarly response to theistic evolution that combines scientific, philosophical, and theological critiques. I was excited to hear about this ambitious project, but the final book has exceeded my expectations. The editors have assembled an impressive cast of experts and the content is top-notch. Theistic evolutionists, and those swayed by their arguments, owe it to themselves to read and digest this compendium of essays. This book is timely and necessary—quite literally a godsend."

James N. Anderson, Professor of Theology and Philosophy, Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte; author, *What's Your Worldview?*

"Repeating the error of medieval Christianity, theistic evolution absolutizes the words of finite, fallible humans and relativizes the Word of an infinite, infallible God. As this tremendous and timely collection thoroughly demonstrates, scientific stagnation, circular philosophy, and heterodox theology are the inevitable results. This is simply the best critique of theistic evolution available."

Angus Menuge, Chair of Philosophy, Concordia University Wisconsin; President, Evangelical Philosophical Society; author, Agents Under Fire: Materialism and the Rationality of Science; Editor, *Reading God's World: The Scientific Vocation*

"This significant book persuasively argues that theistic evolution fails as a theory—scientifically, philosophically, and biblically. And with its broad-ranging collection of essays, it mounts a very impressive case. Strongly recommended, both for those who seek to defend Christianity intelligently and for those who find Christianity implausible because of the claims of neo-Darwinism."

Michael Reeves, President and Professor of Theology, Union School of Theology

"The theistic evolution solution to the creation-evolution controversy herein encounters a substantial, sustained, and trenchant critique. The team of scientific, philosophical, and theological scholars assembled by the editors have joined to confront the venerable theory with a stinging challenge that its adherents will have to answer if they value their scholarly integrity. This is necessary reading for those who wrestle with the great questions surrounding the origins of life."

Peter A. Lillback, President, Westminster Theological Seminary

"This landmark achievement contains an amazing collection of chapters by a powerful group of fully qualified experts in molecular biology, mathematics, philosophy, and theology. The chapters are clear, detailed in addressing all aspects of theistic evolution, and of a tone in keeping with 1 Peter 3: 15: 'with gentleness and respect.' I consider this a must-have book for any Christian who wants to be able to give compelling answers to others who believe in theistic evolution."

Richard A. Carhart, Professor Emeritus of Physics, University of Illinois at Chicago

"This book offers a much -needed, comprehensive critique of evolutionary creationism (theistic evolution), covering its scientific, philosophical, theological, and biblical deficiencies. It devotes

much space in particular to the scientific side. This focus is needed because of the common, unwarranted assumption that Darwinism is doing well as measured by scientific evidence. Several articles, from different angles, show how much Darwinism depends on seeing all biological evidence through the lens of a prior commitment to faith in the philosophy of naturalism—particularly the ungrounded assumption that unguided natural forces must suffice as a complete account of origins."

Vern S. Poythress, Professor of New Testament Interpretation, Westminster Theological Seminary

"'In wisdom you have made them all,' says the psalmist of God's activities in nature (Ps. 104: 24). But believers today, often blinded by modern science, fail to see that divine wisdom. This valuable volume challenges the assumptions of much scientific endeavor and proposes a fresh paradigm that is open to God's involvement in nature. It deserves a wide and thoughtful readership."

Gordon Wenham, Emeritus Professor of Old Testament, University of Gloucestershire, United Kingdom

"Few scholars even marginally knowledgeable regarding the nature of this debate could read objectively the lineup of scholars in this volume and not be impressed. Beyond the scholars' academic credentials, the topics covered are both sophisticated and timely. For this reviewer, the experience caused me to respond time and again: 'I want to start right there … or maybe there … wow—have to read that one first…' The topic is not always an easy target, but after almost one thousand pages of critique across interdisciplinary lines, I do not think that it could be bettered. Kudos! Highly recommended."

Gary R. Habermas, Distinguished Research Professor and Chair, Department of Philosophy, Liberty University

"As the debate over the origins of the universe, earth, and humans continues, and Christians grapple to understand the relationship between science and Scripture, evolution and creation, the voices in this book need to be heard. Scientific data need not be in opposition to what the Bible teaches about God and his world. The big questions about life are simply beyond the reach of 'objective' analysis. This volume critiques theologically and philosophically the flaws of positions that marginalize God from the process."

James Hoffmeier, Professor of Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern History and Archaeology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

"*Theistic Evolution* is a carefully crafted, academically sophisticated interdisciplinary challenge to the attempt to wed Christian theism to any version of the Darwinian project. I am awed by its scope and by the magnificent success of its intentions. Whether your interest is in the scientific deficiencies, the philosophical failings, or the theological dangers of Darwinism hitched to theism, look no further than this thorough analysis. *Theistic Evolution* is simply the most comprehensive and convincing critique of the topic I've ever read—a singular resource for careful thinkers—replacing a dozen books on my shelf."

Gregory Koukl, President, Stand to Reason; author, *Tactics* and *The Story of Reality*

"An increasing number of evangelicals are advocating theistic evolution as the best explanation of human origins, thereby denying the special creation of a historical Adam. Without taking any specific view as to the age to the earth, this important new book demonstrates that theistic evolution fails to take proper account of Genesis 1–3 as a historical narrative. Leading scholars from a variety of academic disciplines argue that theistic evolution is exegetically ill-founded, theologically damaging, scientifically implausible, and philosophically unjustifiable. Written with an irenic tone toward those it critiques, this book will help guard against false teaching in the church that undermines the gospel and will also provide apologetic help for confident evangelism in a secular world."

John Stevens, National Director, Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, United Kingdom

"With the 'death of God' and the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' having captured the academy decades ago, the apologetic discussion moved decisively to the nature and origin of human beings. With this volume, the editors and contributors to *Theistic Evolution* have given us an important and much-needed resource for the conversation currently taking place within evangelicalism. Comprehensive in its breadth, specific in its critique, and confidently nuanced in its tone, each chapter contributes to a thorough rebuttal of the idea that theistic evolution is compatible with either historic Christian faith, sound reasoning, or rigorous science. But while written by specialists, *Theistic Evolution* is remarkably approachable to the average reader. I highly recommend this volume to students, pastors, educators, and anyone else who cares deeply about the discussion of human origins. This is a major contribution to one of the most important debates of our time."

Michael Lawrence, Senior Pastor, Hinson Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon; author, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church*

"Under the banner of 'theistic evolution,' a growing number of Christians maintain that God used evolution as his method for creation. This I believe to be the worst of all possibilities. It is one thing to believe in evolution; it is quite another to blame God for it. Indeed, theistic evolution is a contradiction in terms—like the phrase "flaming snowflakes." God can no more direct an undirected process than he can create a square circle. Yet this is precisely what theistic evolution presupposes. Modern Christians too often buy high and sell low—just as neo-Darwinian evolutionism is fighting for its very life, it is being propped up by an irrational hypothesis. Theistic Evolution is the most thorough and incisive refutation of this dangerous presupposition. I strongly recommend this volume!"

Hank Hanegraaff, President, Christian Research Institute; Host, Bible Answer Man broadcast

"This volume is the most comprehensive study on the relation between evolution and Christian faith I have discovered so far. While opening up fascinating firsthand insights into cutting-edge scientific results, at the same time the book treats the reader to a bird's-eye view, asking the fundamental philosophical and theological questions and delving into the underlying worldview assumptions. It provides a very substantial contribution to the ever-ongoing dispute between naturalism and Christian faith in the areas of philosophy, theology, and the sciences."

Alexander Fink, Director, Institute for Faith and Sciences, Marburg, Germany

"Essentially, theistic evolution says Charles Darwin and Richard Dawkins got the science right, but that God is still somehow involved. Putting this view into the crosshairs, this book argues convincingly that the science of evolution is in fact wrong, and that any theistic gloss one puts on it is thus doubly wrong."

William A. Dembski, Former Senior Fellow, Discovery Institute; author, *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology*; *The Design Revolution*; and *Intelligent Design Uncensored*

"*Theistic Evolution* is a major contribution to the very lively debate of exactly how to understand the 'data' from God's revelation of himself in his Word with the 'data' from his revelation of himself in his world. Previous contributions to this debate have generally focused on the data from either science or Scripture. *Theistic Evolution* benefits from its comprehensive analysis from theologians, philosophers, and scientists in the same book. Whatever are your current views, *Theistic Evolution* will provide analysis from some of the most prominent critics in this conversation that should be helpful to people on both sides of this debate."

Walter Bradley, Former Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Baylor University

"The question of origins rarely fails to attract interest, not least because it is overloaded with worldview implications. For too long the increasingly shaky modern 'Darwinian' synthesis has been accommodated into theological thinking. This remarkable book exposes how scientifically and philosophically preposterous the notion of theistic evolution really is. An authoritative and vital contribution to the topic!"

David J. Galloway, President, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow; Honorary Professor, College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences, University of Glasgow

Contributors

Gregg R. Allison (PhD, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) is professor of Christian theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He is the author of *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine; Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church; Roman Catholic Theology and Practice: An Evangelical Assessment; The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms; The Unfinished Reformation* (with Chris Castaldo); and other titles. Allison is secretary of the Evangelical Theological Society and is a book review editor for the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society.*

Douglas D. Axe is the director of Biologic Institute, a founding editor of BIO-Complexity, and the author of *Undeniable—How Biology Confirms Our Intuition that Life Is Designed*. After a Caltech PhD, he held research positions at the University of Cambridge and the Cambridge Medical Research Council Centre. His work and ideas have been featured in the *Journal of Molecular Biology*, the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, and *Nature*. In *Undeniable* he brings the main conclusions of his work to a general audience by showing that our intuitive sense that accidental causes cannot have invented life is correct.

Günter Bechly is a German paleontologist and senior research scientist at Biologic Institute. His research focuses on the fossil history of insects, discontinuities in the history of life, and the

waiting time problem. He earned his PhD, summa cum laude, in paleontology from the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen (Germany), where he studied the evolution of dragonflies and their wings. He worked from 1999– 2016 as curator for amber and fossil insects at the State Museum of Natural History in Stuttgart, as successor of Dieter Schlee and Willi Hennig. He has described more than 160 new fossil taxa, including three new insect orders, and published more than 70 scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals and a book with Cambridge University Press. His research has received broad international media coverage, in particular his discoveries of *Coxoplectoptera* and the predatory roach *Manipulator*.

C. John Collins is professor of Old Testament at Covenant Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. With degrees from MIT (SB, SM) and the University of Liverpool (PhD), he has been a research engineer, a church planter, and a seminary teacher. He was Old Testament chairman for the English Standard Version of the Bible, and is author of *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* and *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?: Who They Were and Why You Should Care*, and is currently writing commentaries on Numbers, Psalms, and Isaiah. He married Diane in 1979, and they have two grown children.

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Wayne Grudem is research professor of theology and biblical studies at Phoenix Seminary. He received a BA (Harvard), an MDiv and a DD (Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia), and a PhD in New Testament (University of Cambridge). He has published over twenty books including *Systematic Theology*, was a translator for the ESV Bible, and was the general editor for the *ESV Study Bible*. He is a past president of the Evangelical Theological Society. He and Margaret have been married since 1969 and have three adult sons.

Ola Hössjer received a PhD in mathematical statistics from Uppsala University, Sweden, in 1991. Appointed a professor of mathematical statistics at Lund University in 2000, he has held the same position at Stockholm University since 2002. His research focuses on developing statistical theory and probability theory for various applications, in particular population genetics, epidemiology, and insurance mathematics. He has authored around eighty peer-reviewed articles and has supervised thirteen PhD students. His theoretical research is mostly in robust and nonparametric statistics, whereas the applied research includes methods of gene localization (linkage and association analysis), and the study of short-term microevolutionary dynamics of populations. In 2009 he was awarded the Gustafsson Prize in Mathematics.

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Stephen C. Meyer received his PhD in the philosophy of science from the University of Cambridge. A former geophysicist and philosophy professor at Whitworth University, he now directs Discovery Institute's Center for Science and Culture in Seattle. He has authored the New York Times best-seller *Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design* (HarperOne, 2013) as well as *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design* (HarperOne, 2009) which was named a Book of the Year by the Times (of London) Literary Supplement in 2009.

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Paul A. Nelson studied evolutionary theory and the philosophy of science at the University of Chicago, where he received his PhD (1998). His dissertation examined Darwinian universal common descent. He is a fellow of the Discovery Institute, and an adjunct professor for Biola University's MA program in Science and Religion. Nelson's scholarly articles have appeared in journals such as *Biology and Philosophy*, *Zygon*, *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, and *BioComplexity*, and book chapters in the anthologies *Mere Creation*, *Signs of Intelligence*, *Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics*, and *Darwin, Design, and Public Education*. His memberships include the Society for Developmental Biology (SDB) and the International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology (ISHPSSB).

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Christopher Shaw received his BSc (honors) in biological sciences from the University of Ulster in 1980 and his PhD in molecular endocrinology from Queen's University Belfast in 1984. He has held the positions of lecturer, reader, and professor in Queen's University, Faculty of Medicine, and of professor of biotechnology in the University of Ulster. He is currently professor of drug discovery in the School of Pharmacy, Queen's University. His research interest is in all aspects of bioactive peptides. He has authored some 500 peer-reviewed scientific papers and has delivered numerous invited international lectures, and is cofounder of a biomarker discovery company.

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Sheena Tyler spent eight years teaching biology after undergraduate studies in dentistry and zoology. She received her PhD in zoology at the University of Manchester, during which time she won the British Society of Developmental Biology Conference student prize. Following further postdoctoral work at Manchester, she is now the research director of the John Ray Research Field Station. In 2013, she was awarded the University of Manchester First Prize Medal for Social Responsibility. Her current research interests and publications include aspects of bioelectric fields in morphogenesis and wound healing, egg surface structure, avian development, solar-electric power, and the biology of cork.

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John G. West is vice president of Discovery Institute and associate director of the Institute's Center for Science and Culture, which he cofounded with Stephen C. Meyer in 1996. He has written or edited twelve books, including two about C. S. Lewis: *The C. S. Lewis Readers' Encyclopedia a*nd *The Magician's Twin: C. S. Lewis on Science, Scientism, and Society*. His other books include *Darwin Day in America: How Our Politics and Culture Have Been Dehumanized in the Name of Science*; *The Politics of Revelation and Reason*; and *Celebrating Middle-Earth: The Lord of the Rings as a Defense of Western Civilization*. West was previously associate professor of political science at Seattle Pacific University, where he chaired the Department of Political Science and Geography. He holds a PhD in government from Claremont Graduate University, and he has been interviewed by media outlets such as *Time*, *The New York Times*, *CNN*, and *Fox News*.

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the theology of Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, and he has published two related books on Warfield.

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Foreword

It is an honor and a pleasure to write the foreword to this book, which sets a new standard for Christian engagement with contemporary science. The cumulative effect of the set of papers assembled in this volume is to suggest that the "God hypothesis" (or what philosophers call

"divine action") remains very much on the table as a scientific explanation for events in the history of life. Christians who fail to deal seriously with that point—perhaps out of deference to secular scientific authority—end up selling short both science and their faith. I take this to be the most important challenge that the scientists and scholars in these pages are offering to theistic evolutionists.

By conventional Christian standards, I do not think that I would count as a person of faith—though I may count as one by conventional secular standards. In any case, I write as someone who was confirmed in the Roman Catholic Church and studied on scholarship with the Jesuits before attending university. The Jesuits are notoriously rationalistic in their approach to matters of faith, which has always appealed to me. I was never compelled to declare belief in God but was strongly encouraged to question default secular solutions to problems of knowledge and action. As a result, I have been a "seeker," a term originally used to characterize Christian dissenters from the Church of England in the seventeenth century, which Thomas Henry Huxley appropriated two centuries later, when he described himself as an "agnostic" on matters of faith.

The real question for me has been not whether God exists but how the deity operates in the world—including all the issues that raises for what we should believe and how we should act. In this respect, I have always regarded "atheism" in the true sense (that is, anti-theism, not simply anti-clericalism) as a moral and/ or epistemic failure—perhaps a prudishness if not absence of the imagination, which when threatened can morph into bigotry toward that which one simply fails to understand. The neologism "theophobia" would not be out of place. My Jesuit teachers would go one step further and ask atheists the following question: What advantage would your understanding of reality gain by dismissing out of hand the existence of a divine intelligence, such that it would be worth the loss of meaning to your life and reality more generally?

But this is a book about theists who contest the place of modern science in Christianity. The charge laid at the doorstep of theistic evolutionists is that the doorstep is exactly where they leave their religious commitments when they enter the house of science. They do this, even though the weight of the evidence from across the natural sciences does not oblige such a conclusion. On the contrary, from cosmology to biology, it is becoming increasingly clear that science's failure to explain matters at the most fundamental level is at least in part due to an institutional prohibition on intelligent design as one of the explanatory options. In these pages, "methodological naturalism" is the name by which this prohibition goes, but it could be equally called "methodological atheism."

Like some leaders of the intelligent design movement, I was formally trained in a field called "history and philosophy of science." As the name indicates, the field combines history, philosophy, and science in search of a lost sense of purpose in organized inquiry that began with the proliferation of academic disciplines in the nineteenth century. The field's guiding idea is that if we understand how something as distinctive as science came about and was sustained over the centuries, we might have a better sense of what it says about us and hence where it and we should be going. The field's founder was William Whewell, an Anglican theologian who introduced the natural sciences into the Cambridge University curriculum in the mid-nineteenth century. He also coined the word "scientist" in its modern sense.

History and philosophy of science truly came of age in the 1960s, a period of widespread disaffection with science's complicity in what was then called the "military-industrial complex." This disaffection was expressed in light of a general understanding that the West had experienced a "Scientific Revolution" in the seventeenth century, which radically transformed how people thought about themselves and their relationship to the cosmos. What most struck the historians and philosophers of science who investigated this "take off" point for the human condition was that it was part of a more general spiritual awakening of Christian Europe, what is normally called the Protestant Reformation. And precisely because the original turn to science involved a break from the established authority of the Roman Catholic Church, science's submission to established secular authority during the Cold War appeared to betray that founding spirit. Readers of this volume should consider the challenge to theistic evolution found in this volume in a similar light.

While it is generally accepted that the Protestant Reformation overlapped with the Scientific Revolution, this is often treated as a mere historical accident, when in fact something closer to a causal connection obtains between the two events. The first movement in human history to trust the ordinary person's ability to judge the weight of evidence for themselves was the drive to get people to read the Bible for themselves. Until the sixteenth century, Christianity found itself in the peculiar position of being a faith founded on a sacred book through which God communicated with humans, yet relatively few of the faithful could read, let alone affirm its contents. The Protestant Reformation reversed that. The Scientific Revolution then extended that "judge for yourself" attitude to all of physical reality by explicitly treating nature as a second sacred book. Thus, it is not surprising that Francis Bacon, with whom the "scientific method" is normally associated, was also instrumental in the production of the King James Version of the Bible.

Today science enjoys an unprecedented authority because of both the number of people who believe in it and the number of subjects to which their belief applies. In this respect, our world resembles the one faced by the Protestant Reformers in that people today are often discouraged, because of the authority of science, from testing their faith in its claims by considering the evidence for themselves. Instead they are meant to defer to the authority of academic experts, who function as a secular clergy. But unlike the sixteenth century, when the Protestant Reformers themselves drove the mass literacy campaigns to get people to read the Bible, we live in a time of unprecedented access to knowledge about science, both formally and informally—from the classroom to the Internet. Moreover, public opinion surveys consistently show that people are pro-science as a mode of inquiry but anti-science as a mode of authority. And so, while it has become part of secular folklore to say that the Catholic Church "repressed" the advancement of science, if "repression" implies the thwarting of an already evident desire and capacity to seek knowledge, then today's scientific establishment seriously outperforms the early modern Church—and perhaps with the consent of theistic evolutionists.

I commend this book as providing an unprecedented opportunity for educated nonscientists to revisit the spirit of the Reformation by judging for themselves what they make of the evidence that seems to have led theistic evolutionists to privilege contemporary scientific authority above their own avowed faith. John Calvin famously likened the reading of the Bible to the wearing of spectacles to correct defective eyesight. Historically speaking, the original Scientific Revolution

was largely the result of those who took his advice. But what was it about the Bible that led such a wide variety of inquirers, all wrestling with their Christian faith, to come up with the form of science that we continue to practice today? This is an important question to ask because there is no good historical reason to think that science as we know it would have arisen in any other culture—including China, generally acknowledged to have been the world's main economic power prior to the nineteenth century—had it not arisen in Christian Europe.

A distillation of research in the history and philosophy of science suggests two biblical ideas as having been crucial to the rise of science, both of which can be attributed to the reading of Genesis provided by Augustine, an early church father, whose work became increasingly studied in the late Middle Ages and especially the Reformation. Augustine captured the two ideas in two Latin coinages, which prima facie cut against each other: imago dei and peccatum originis . The former says that humans are unique as a species in our having been created in the image and likeness of God, while the latter says that all humans are born having inherited the legacy of Adam's error, "original sin." Once Christians began to read the Bible for themselves, they too picked out those ideas as salient in how they defined their relationship to God, which extended to how they did science.

And this sensibility carried into the modern secular age, as perhaps best illustrated in our own day by Karl Popper's slogan for the scientific attitude as the method of "conjectures and refutations," the stronger the better in both cases. We should aspire to understand all of nature by proposing bold hypotheses (something of which we are capable because of the *imago dei*) but to expect and admit error (something to which we are inclined because of the *peccatum originis*) whenever we fall short in light of the evidence. The experimental method developed by Francis Bacon was designed to encourage just that frame of mind. And William Whewell was only one of numerous theologians and philosophers who have suggested ways of testing and interpreting the findings of science to reflect that orientation. Unfortunately we live in a time in which only those who have themselves conducted science in some authorized manner are allowed to say anything about what science is and where it should go.

Theistic evolution should be understood as a deformation that results under these conditions. Its advice to the faithful is to keep calm, trust the scientific establishment, and adapt accordingly, even if it means ceding the Bible's cognitive ground. Yet, insofar as science has succeeded as it has because of the revival of the *imago dei* and *peccatum originis* account of humanity, one might reasonably ask whether theistic evolution amounts to an outright betrayal of both the scientific and the Christian message. Christianity's direction of travel since the Reformation has been that each person is entitled and maybe even obliged to decide on matters that impinge on the nature of their own being— and to register that publicly. This volume provides an incredibly rich resource for Christians to do exactly that with regard scientific matters. I hope it will empower them to question and propose constructive alternatives to the blanket endorsement of "evolution" by theistic evolutionists.

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Preface to the Third Printing

Do We Define Theistic Evolution Correctly?

After the first printing of this book, BioLogos president Deborah Haarsma and other contributors to the BioLogos website objected to our definition of theistic evolution, claiming that we had misrepresented their position.[1] But we believe that we did in fact represent their position accurately, as we trust that the following five points will show.

On page 67 in our book, in consultation with the other editors, we defined theistic evolution as the idea that

> God created matter and after that did not guide or intervene or act directly to cause any empirically detectable change in the natural behavior of matter until all living things had evolved by purely natural processes.

Does this misrepresent the position of BioLogos? It is hard to see how.

1. A Refusal to Answer whether God Altered or Intervened in Natural Processes

Haarsma and other theistic evolutionists (or "evolutionary creationist," as they prefer to be called) have long and openly emphasized that purely natural processes did the work of creation without any active guidance or "interventions" by God. As Haarsma said in a 2017 essay, evolutionary creationists "accept that natural selection and other evolutionary mechanisms, acting over long periods of time, eventually result in major changes in body structures."[2]

Moreover, advocates of theistic evolution have long objected to the theory of intelligent design on the grounds that it invokes "interventions" of God after the beginning of the universe to explain major changes in the history of life.[3]

Nevertheless, for the sake of clarity, Stephen Meyer's philosophical and scientific introduction in the first printing of our volume pressed advocates of theistic evolution to clarify *whether or not they thought God had guided that evolutionary process in any active way*.[4] Beyond sustaining the laws of nature, he asked, what do theistic evolutionists think that God actually did in the process of evolution?[5]

Meyer also argued that, on the one hand, the *denial* of such active guidance left theistic evolution as a position indistinguishable from standard materialistic theories of evolution and, thus, also rendered it both theologically and scientifically problematic. On the other hand, he pointed out that refusing to *either affirm or deny* that God had guided the evolutionary process (as many theistic evolutionists have done) leaves the concept of theistic evolution so conceptionally vague and empirically vacuous as to scarcely warrant consideration or critique.

2. New Wording but the Same Problem

Since the production of our book, Haarsma and others apparently have attempted to restate their definition of theistic evolution so as to affirm some form of divine guidance without abandoning their commitment to purely naturalistic explanation for the origin of new forms of life. Thus, Haarsma now offers the following definition of evolutionary creation:

> God creates all living things through Christ, including humans in his image, making use of intentionally designed, actively-sustained, natural processes that scientists today study as evolution.[6]

Of course, if her position is now substantially different than her previous position, she cannot reasonably claim that we misrepresented her previous position, especially if her new position was revised to make it impervious to our previous critique. Instead, that would simply show that she had shifted her ground, not that we had misrepresented her previous view. Even so, it is not at all clear that she *has* substantially changed her view, or that our previous critique of theistic evolution as advocated by BioLogos does not still apply to her new statement of that view.

3. We Agree That God Sustains the Natural World, but That is Not the Question

In this book, we have carefully noted that theistic evolutionists accept that God sustains the orderly concourse of nature by what scientists describe as the "laws of nature."[7] We have also noted that many theistic evolutionists accept that God designed the physical universe at the beginning so that certain physical processes or lawful regularities would ensue.[8] The question we asked was whether or not they *also* accept that God did anything *after* that to guide or direct or to otherwise "cause any empirically detectable change in the natural behavior of matter" in order to produce specific forms of life or even the origin of life from simpler nonliving chemicals. The supporters of theistic evolution still refuse to answer that question.

Indeed, Haarsma's new definition of evolutionary creationism seems either to *deny* that God directed the evolutionary process in any empirically detectable way, or else it again *avoids* addressing this issue. After her revised statement, quoted above, she added the following clarification: "Although God in his sovereignty could have chosen to use supernatural action to create new species, [evolutionary creationists] are convinced by the evidence in the created order that God *chose to use natural mechanisms*" (emphasis added).

4. A Deceptive Use of the Word "Guided"

Haarsma did, in the revised statement of her position, also attempt to affirm some form of divine guidance. She did so by stating that, "God guided evolution just as much as God guides the formation of a baby from an embryo."[9] Similarly, in another BioLogos review, Jim Stump writes, "Yes, we believe God guides evolution, the same way we believe that God guides photosynthesis."[10]

Unfortunately, these statements remain vague and empirically vacuous precisely because neither Haarsma nor Stump explicitly specifies whether, or in what way, God guides either the process of photosynthesis or the development of a baby from a pre-formed embryo. Indeed, unless Haarsma and Stump think, for example, that sometime *after* the origin of the universe God

specifically configured preexisting matter to design the photosynthesis system (which would constitute an intelligent design hypothesis), their use of analogies imply that God did not actively guide the evolutionary process. Indeed, taken at face value, both of these analogies imply that God established the evolutionary process by an initial act of creation at the beginning of the universe and now allows the process to unfold toward some predetermined end without any active guidance—in the same way that biologists think that an egg, once fertilized, develops in accord with the genetic instructions present in the embryo without any active guidance from God.

Yet, Haarsma and Stump's use of the word "guide" is deceptive. People ordinarily use the word "guide" to refer to an action that actively influences the course of an object or system such that the action changes the direction that the object of system would otherwise go. But the analogies that Stump and Haarsma use (embryo development and photosynthesis) imply that God *does not* guide the evolutionary process in that ordinary sense. Instead, their analogies imply that God set up the initial conditions of the universe in such a way as to allow life to unfold toward a *predetermined outcome* without active guidance—just as photosynthesis automatically takes place whenever light hits plant cells or a baby develops in a predetermined way from the genetic instructions present in an embryo. Indeed, as Haarsma and Stump state, they think God actively guides the evolutionary processes in the exact same way that he guides the preprogrammed process of photosynthesis or embryological development—in short, he doesn't.

Thus, equivocation and double-talk notwithstanding, Haarsma's revised position statement serves only to confirm the accuracy of our original characterization of theistic evolution, as quoted above.

5. Adding Statements about Providence Would Not Change the Force of Our Definition

We could, of course, slightly modify our definition to make explicit our acknowledgment that advocates of theistic evolution accept that God sustains the laws of nature (as we did in other places in the first printing of our book). Nevertheless, the substance of our characterization of the BioLogos position would remain the same. For example, we could have characterized theistic evolution or evolutionary creation as affirming that

> God created matter [*with regular properties governed by "natural law"*] and after that [*God continued to sustain matter and preserve its natural properties but he*] did not guide or intervene or act directly to cause any empirically detectable change in the natural behavior of matter until all living things had evolved by purely natural processes [*which God actively sustains but does not actively direct or guide toward a specific end*].

In this modified definition, we have explicitly added the BioLogos belief that God actively upholds and sustains the order of the natural world (as affirmed in Col. 1:17 and Heb. 1:3), a process that scientists describe with the "laws of nature." The authors and editors of this volume agree with that belief and acknowledge that advocates of theistic evolution generally do as well. Indeed, Meyer's introduction to our original volume took great pains to ensure that we

acknowledged that theistic evolutionists do affirm that God's power sustains the orderly concourse of nature.[11]

But to define *creation* in this way confuses God's initial work of creation (which produced *new* things and processes) with his ongoing sustaining power that underlies long-established, regular, and repetitive natural processes (which are, therefore, *not* new). (Note the present-tense verb in Haarsma's definition of theistic evolution: not "God created" but "God creates.")

In any case, our original definition did not in fact misrepresent theistic evolution (or evolutionary creation) and, therefore, the scientific, philosophical, and theological critiques that we offered of that position in the first printing of our volume stand.

---Stephen C. Meyer and Wayne Grudem

Preface References

1. See Deborah Haarsma, "A Flawed Mirror: A Response to the Book "Theistic Evolution," BioLogos website, April 18, 2018: https://biologos.org/articles/a-flawed-mirror-a-response-to-the-book-theistic-evolution.
2. Deborah Haarsma, "Evolutionary Creation," in *Four Views on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*, ed. Jim Stump (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 193.
3. For instance, in "Intelligent Design: History and Beliefs," an article on the BioLogos website, Ted Davis writes, "Ever since the Pre-Socratic philosophers, scientists and physicians have insisted on giving 'natural' explanations for 'natural' phenomena, leaving miracles explicitly out of science." See his article at https://biologos.org/series/science-and-the-bible/articles/intelligent-design-history-and-beliefs.
4. See our pages 41-49.
5. See our pages 46-49.
6. Haarsma, "Flawed Mirror."
7. See our pages 44-46.
8. See our page 44.
9. Haarsma, "Flawed Mirror."
10. Jim Stump, "Does God Guide Evolution?" at https://biologos.org/articles/does-god-guide-evolution.
11. See our pages 44-46.

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