

ARTICLES

PROGRESSIVE CREATION AND BIBLICAL REVELATION: SOME THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

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WHAT THIS ARTICLE IS ABOUT

The biblical description of the creation process seems to conflict with the common scientific understanding that life and death on Earth have existed for hundreds of millions of years. “Progressive creation” is a theory that has been proposed in an attempt to harmonize the Bible with science. Progressive creation proposes that God has created various creatures at various times over hundreds of millions of years, with mankind appearing in a relatively recent creation. In this theory death is seen as part of God’s will before sin entered Earth. This paper examines progressive creation, some biblical statements about death especially in Romans, and explores eight theological implications of the proposal that death existed before sin entered the world. Despite the intentions of the proponents of progressive creation, the theory does not offer a satisfactory solution to the tension between the Bible and science.

The purpose of this essay is to examine the intellectual roots and the current status of the discussion concerning progressive creation, and to identify and evaluate eight theological implications of affirming the presence of death for millions of years prior to the appearance of *Homo sapiens* in the geologic record as required by progressive creation. This piece can be methodologically likened, in the language of a fine-arts painter, to a limited palette endeavor, i.e., the article is an academic account informed by the presuppositions of a high view of Scripture (*sola scriptura*) and Christ’s death understood in a forensic substitutionary sense.¹ However, as an objective theological, reflective exercise, the author hopes that the work will reach a wide academic audience, including readers holding alternative theological presuppositions.²

Progressive creation, popularized in 1954 by Bernard Ramm in his book *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, is a form of broad concordism between the biblical creation texts and science. It invokes God's intervention to accomplish macroevolution over a period of approximately six hundred million years.³ This investigation concerning the historical roots and current status of the discussion about progressive creation is best introduced by considering God's momentous objective expressed in Exodus 25:8: "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them."⁴ The Hebrew word *shakan*, translated "to dwell," means that contrary to Aristotle's unmoved mover who does not concern himself with human affairs,⁵ the true God wishes to dwell permanently in nearness and closeness⁶ with His created beings. God's desire is reaffirmed through His faithful, forgiving, loving acts in the Old Testament, the exodus, the cultic system, the atonement, the gospel commission, and the Second Advent of Christ.

Jesus amplifies this same desire in the famous discourse recorded in John 14, notably in verse 3: "I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." Through these words Christ presents a truth of personal destiny upon which Christians, as it were, "hang their souls." However, connected with this truth about destiny is the biblical teaching about origins. In the following words God outlines the method employed in the creation of humanity: "For in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth...and all that is in them" (Exodus 20:11). Christians eagerly accept the truth of Christ's destiny statements; however, statements from the same source concerning origins are not accepted with equal readiness. Does a faulty origin statement impact upon the certainty of the destiny statement? For example, if science falsifies the divine claim about origins, on what basis does the Christian rely upon Jesus' statement about destiny? In other words, can the Christian scholar legitimately accept the destiny statement in a literal sense while at the same time discounting the truthfulness of the origin statement in a literal sense? The implication seems to be that the truthfulness of Jesus' destiny statement interpreted in a literal sense stands or falls upon the truthfulness of the origin statement. Thus, the basic underlying issue of biblical authority is at stake in the discussion of both progressive creation and the theological and philosophical implications stemming from its claims.

Leading contemporary liberal and evangelical theologians respond similarly to the underlying issue of this paper. Historically, their work forms the intellectual basis upon which the concepts of progressive creation are grounded. For example, perceiving the serious implication of the

eschatological claims of Jesus noted above, Rudolph Bultmann introduced his epoch-making demythologizing method. In what may be the most theologically influential forty-some pages written in this century — the famous 1941 address “New Testament and Mythology: The Problem of Demythologizing the New Testament Message”⁷ — Bultmann deals precisely with biblical elements which he believes to be falsified by science. As a consequence, in order to ascertain what he considered to be authentic human existence “exhibited by the text,”⁸ Bultmann uses helpful existential concepts derived from “phenomenology, into which my colleague and friend, Heidegger introduced me.”⁹

The result of applying this method is well-known. For Bultmann and other liberal scholars and theologians, the literal, historical fall of Adam, the entrance of sin interpreted according to a literal reading of Genesis, the literal return of Christ, and so on, are no longer tenable. Here are Bultmann’s challenging words regarding the last point: “We can no longer look for the return of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven or hope that the faithful will meet him in the air.”¹⁰

The current status of the discussion about progressive creation is in flux. Because of convictions concerning origins analyzed above, not only liberal scholars — e.g., John Polkinghorne¹¹ and Arthur Peacocke —, but even leading evangelical thinkers such as J. I. Packer, Clark Pinnock, and Davis A. Young are advancing beyond progressive creationism.¹² These thinkers do so because they already agree with Polkinghorne’s recent claim that at the popular level the concept of the “God-of-the-gaps” as employed in progressive creation is dead.¹³ Consequently, these scientists, scholars, and theologians are now championing non-concordist, theistic evolution.¹⁴ Nevertheless, both theistic evolution and progressive creation require the constant operation of the death-and-life cycle for over six hundred million years prior to the appearance of *Homo sapiens* in the geologic record, i.e., before the appearance of the biblical Adam. What are some of the theological implications of affirming the existence of death prior to Adam? What is the theological price of adopting either progressive creation or theistic evolution? We turn to this task in the discussion below.

The following reflections are divided into two parts. First, space permits only a summary of Paul’s discussion in Romans concerning the origin of death, and a brief analysis of selected treatments of this Pauline material by contemporary scholars. Second, I shall explore eight significant theological implications of the idea that death necessarily existed for approximately six hundred million years prior to Adam — an inherent aspect of progressive creation.

Important Pauline passages which treat the origin of death are located in Romans 5 and 8. In brief outline, one can say that the former chapter links the appearance of death to human sin while the latter chapter causally links human sin to the phenomenon of death within the brute animal kingdom. Paul states in Romans 5:12 that “sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men.” In this passage Paul makes the crucially important causal linkage between the original appearance of sin and the first entrance of death. Death here is placed in an unqualified perspective, hence suggestive of a universal, all-encompassing meaning of the term. However, the most important theological point to notice is the relationship between human sin and death, because it is upon this connection that the atonement is based.

What about the origin of the life-and-death process in the lower animal kingdom? Does Paul in some sense link the origin of death in this portion of the animal kingdom to the sin of Adam? Romans 5:14 states that death reigned from Adam, not from a time long before Adam. Again, does this beginning of the reign of death at the time of Adam include death in the lower animal kingdom as well? If Paul’s words can properly be viewed as responding in the affirmative to this question, then he is in effect establishing the affinity between human beings and the natural world, contrary to the essential dualism prevalent in the Hellenistic world.¹⁵ Romans 8:20 suggests a positive response to this query by stating that “the creation was subject to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it.” Moreover, the creation is subjected not only to frustration but to decay (v. 21, *phthora*), i.e., to that which implies death. In this context the “creation” which is subjected to decay or death refers to the lower animals and not to human beings, because in Romans 8:22-23 Paul contrasts the said “whole creation” that groans for liberation from subjection to decay and death with himself, or with those in the human race who also groan for liberation from the bondage to death. John Murray underscores this point by stating that the scope of the term “creation” in v. 21 is limited to the non-rational creation, and that the subjection within this realm means the “mortality of the body”¹⁶ (i.e., the death of lower animals). Thus two domains — the human race and the lower brute creation — comprise a single unified totality of God’s creation groaning for liberation from death stemming from the sin of Adam.¹⁷

Furthermore, Paul’s position concerning the entrance of biological death in the lower animal kingdom because of the sin of the first human beings is consistent with important biological inferences from a prelaps-

arian (“before the fall”) philosophy of nature gained by a literal reading of Genesis 1:30. In this creation text God states that “to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground — everything that has the breath of life in it — I have given every green plant for food.” These important words, giving the nature of the diet of some land and air creatures, carry significant biological implications. They suggest that the uncursed first dominion was a predation-free habitat, i.e., free of the life-and-death cycle for the creatures noted. In other words, Paul may be understood to view *all* forms of death as phenomena which are ultimately foreign elements, something which a loving God must have temporarily superimposed because of sinful action by the human overseer of the lower animal kingdom.

Understandably, not all scholars share the same interpretation of the meaning of death in Paul’s discussion. Some evangelical scholars interpret what they consider to be Paul’s own understanding and meaning of the word “death” as not conflicting with modern evolutionary biology. Hugh Ross, for example, believes that Paul himself limits the meaning of the term “death” in Romans 5 and 8 to human spiritual death, thereby excluding the concept of biological death either of humans or of the lower animals from the meaning of the term “death.”¹⁸ In this fashion he harmonizes the Bible and science by interpreting Paul’s original intent and meaning in a way which accedes to the claims of science. In other words, he believes that Paul’s own, original meaning in Romans 5 and 8 does not conflict with a progressive-creationist point of view requiring physical death prior to Adam.

By contrast, with nothing theologically to fear, one liberal theologian understands that Paul’s own, original meaning in Romans 5-8 dashes with the claims of progressive creationism. Aiming for harmony with modern science, he simply reinterprets what he sees as Paul’s original meaning of the connection between sin and death as stated in Romans 6:23. Thus, Arthur Peacocke, eminent Oxford scholar and author of many recent, influential books on science and religion,¹⁹ makes the following assumption when discussing death in relation to Christian anthropology:

*Biological death was present on the earth long before human beings arrived. It is the prerequisite of our coming into existence through the creative processes of biology which God himself has installed in the world.... God had already made biological death the means of his creating new forms of life. This has to be accepted, difficult though it may be for some theologies.*²⁰

I appreciate Peacocke's honesty in perceiving and admitting the potential theological difficulties of his evolutionary assumption about the presence of death prior to Adam, who for Paul is "a historic personage and not just the mythological personification of every human being."²¹

However, notice how Peacocke reinterprets Paul's corollary message (to Romans 5:12) in Romans 6:23 about the wages (or "the soldier's pay"²²) in light of what he has written above: So when St. Paul says that 'the wages of sin is death,' that cannot possibly mean for us, now, *biological* death.... [I]n that phrase St. Paul can only, for us, mean 'death' in some figurative sense of, [perhaps], the death of our relationship to God as the consequence of sin."²³ Peacocke's words "for us, now," and "for us" indicate his understanding that Paul in Romans 6:23 is speaking literally about the causal linkage between sin and death of all kinds, perhaps even about the origin of death of all kinds; and that Paul is, therefore, saying something in Romans 6:23 which is unacceptable to modern theology. Above all, Peacocke's words "for us, now," and "for us" indicate that he is deliberately reinterpreting Paul's original meaning to conform with modern anthropology. This illustrates that in some cases, though not in all instances, a liberal scholar may ascertain the original intended meaning of a biblical writer more adequately than some evangelical scholars do, even though the scholar who employs higher criticism may not consider the original meaning normative for contemporary theology.

With this summary of Paul's discussion in Romans concerning the origin of death and an analysis of some contemporary response to Paul's position, we turn now to a brief consideration of eight theological implications of the claim by both progressive creation and theistic evolution that death existed for long ages prior to Adam.

First, the claim impacts upon the literal and historical trustworthiness of the Bible in general. One can, for example, trust neither the historicity of the fall of Adam nor the actuality of a universal deluge if the literal biblical statements about these events are countered by the claim that death existed prior to Adam.

Second, to assert the ongoing cycle of life and death prior to Adam for millions of years deeply affects our perception of the character of God in at least two important ways. On the one hand it necessarily leads to the conclusion that the God who purportedly notices when a sparrow falls (Matthew 10:29) countenanced and intended the suffering and death of animals for millions of years prior to Adam. Thus, the merciful character of God is compromised.

On the other hand, the claim of death before sin destroys the integrity of God's character. If indeed millions of years of death existed before Adam, then God, knowing this fact, articulates in the fourth commandment of Exodus 20 a creation methodology in direct opposition to the truth. The irony of this conclusion is that in the original presentation of the ten commandments as recorded in Exodus 20, the ninth of which prohibits the bearing of false witness, God Himself is made to tell a lie in the fourth commandment, thereby Himself sinning by transgressing His own law. Of course, this action clearly contradicts the honesty of God acclaimed both in the Old and New Testaments. God inspired Balaam with the following words, "God is not a man, that He should lie" (Numbers 23:24). Paul praises the God "who cannot lie" (Titus 1:2), while in Hebrews 6:18 we find these famous words, "It is impossible for God to lie."

Third, and above all, if death existed before Adam for millions of years, then the crucial causal linkage between sin and death is broken. If the connection between sin and death is severed, then the basis for Christ's atonement is also destroyed. For example, if death is not related to sin, then the wages of sin is not death. Consequently, Christ's death as a wage for sin loses its power to save the believer from death.²⁴ Thus, a most serious implication of this aspect of progressive creation is that it thwarts the purpose of the saving, atoning blood of Christ, i.e., the cross. In light of this implication, a passage in Hebrews is notably relevant in warning all investigators against lessening in any way the value of the blood of Christ: "How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:29).

Fourth, the claims of progressive creationism require a reinterpretation of some of Jesus' teachings. The believer who does not experience complete confidence in all the teachings of his Lord and Saviour will be restricted in his ability to accept the full Lordship of Christ. For instance, an exegete would need to reinterpret Jesus' own understanding of the historical truthfulness of Cain's murder of Abel:

Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary (Luke 11:50-51).

These words indicate that Jesus regarded the account of the murder of Abel to be a reliable historical fact. Because the account of Abel's death is

recorded in Genesis 3, there is clear implication that Jesus regarded this chapter to be a dependable record of historical facts. Abel had a very famous father, whose historical existence is implied by these words of Jesus. However, progressive creation requires Jesus' own understanding in this case to be modified according to the views of modern science.

Moreover, these claims force the Christian scholar to reinterpret the original monogamous nature of marriage as described by Jesus in the following language: "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning" (Matthew 19:8). The statement, "it was not this way from the beginning," indicates that Jesus accepted the historical reliability of the creation account recorded in Genesis 2. There the ideal character of marriage is indicated to be monogamous, as illustrated by the first pair of human beings to exist on Earth. By requiring a radical reinterpretation of these teachings of Jesus, the claims of progressive creation undermine total confidence in His instructions.

Fifth, the claim of progressive creation negatively impact the theology of worship in sabbatarian Christian communions. Recent scholarly discussions of the theological meaning of the Sabbath for contemporary Christians include works by Jürgen Moltmann,²⁵ Niels-Erik Andreasen,²⁶ and James B. Ashbrook.²⁷ Ashbrook concludes that the "Sabbath rest-and-reorganization are built into our very being. The basic cycle of rest/synthesis/activity is the means we have for the making of meaning, and meaning-making is the making of soul."²⁸

These general studies indirectly raise a corollary issue of the divine will regarding the identity of a contemporary Sabbath day of rest and worship, which is negatively impacted by the tenets of progressive creation. If death existed before Adam, including millions of years of evolution, the concept of a literal six-day creation as the basis for a seventh-day Sabbath is untenable. Thus, a contemporary believer who understands the New Testament to teach that the seventh-day Sabbath remains unchanged from Old Testament practice could not base her or his selection of a day of worship upon the Genesis creation texts or the fourth commandment. This demonstrates how progressive creation can impact contemporary worship.²⁹

Sixth, if it existed before Adam, death is a divinely intended part of life. This significant conclusion raises the following question: If death is part of the divinely instituted economy of life, how can death be properly viewed as the last enemy to be destroyed, as Paul suggests in 1 Corinthe-

ans 15:26? In the view of progressive creation, death is an aspect of life that would not be changed or removed in some future new creation in which “there shall no longer be death” (Revelation 21:4).

Thus, how does the concept of the integral part of death in the life processes of natural world impact on the *parousia*? Viewing death in this perspective, are we to conclude that the early Christians mistakenly expected a Second Advent of Christ to put an end to death and suffering as outlined in Revelation 21 and 22? It would seem so. However, a literal reading of Scripture shows that these early Christians correctly looked for the *parousia*, enjoying a strong biblical basis for their hope in the elimination of death at the return of their Lord. Thus, Christians today who adopt progressive creation differ from the early Christians.

Seventh, the notion of the existence of death, especially of higher organisms, before Adam impacts on the conflict between Christ and Satan over the final salvation of humanity. If death existed before Adam, then Christ ultimately redeems no one from a fate that was not a feature of life before Adam’s sin. In what way, then, has Adam’s sin *introduced* Christ’s great longing to dwell with His people? Here is another aspect of the way in which progressive creation helps Satan to achieve his goal of preventing reconciliation between God and His people.

Eighth and last, even if a return of Christ were possible in view of the six-hundred-million-year development of life claimed by progressive creation, there is serious confusion concerning God’s promise in Isaiah 65:17 to create a new heaven and a new Earth. For example, what length of time will be required to accomplish this new creation? In creating this new Earth, will God need another six hundred million years, as He allegedly needed to guide the evolution of the first Earth to completion according to the claims of progressive creation? Are the meek to be kept waiting in the New Jerusalem for six hundred million years while their promised inheritance, the new Earth, evolves into a habitable place as it did the first time? Such concepts, of course, mock the creative power of the God portrayed in the Bible.³⁰

In conclusion, these eight evaluations show a few of the important theological implications of affirming death prior to Adam and his transgression. From the perspective of this paper, the Christian scholarly community stands before two mutually exclusive alternatives. Although reluctant to cast positions into either/or terms, the author discovers no tenable intermediate position in this instance. On the one hand, the scholar may accept the complete canonical witness in a fashion similar to the way in

which Jesus viewed the authority of the Old Testament, namely, as authoritative, reliable, propositional revelation. On the other hand, if the Christian scholar accepts the six hundred million years of death prior to Adam, then this individual may well take her or his stand with Bultmann's methodology and conclusions in order to remain consistent. However, in the ongoing scholarly discussions of these and related issues, those involved need to exercise continually the utmost respect, genuine love and courtesy to one another, and an openness to new ideas lest we deny our caring Christ, the author of all interpersonal relationships worthy of His name.

Considered in the light of the reflections presented in this essay, the admonition of Hebrews 10:35-37 is appropriate for all Christian scholars, theologians, and scientists. In these verses, individuals are encouraged not to cast away a believer's confidence which has great recompense of reward, because, as v. 37 promises, "yet a little while, He that shall come will come." This hope means that John 14:1-3 has yet to be fully realized, that Christ will indeed take human beings to Himself, thereby achieving His deepest desire.

ENDNOTES

1. A high view of Scripture is here assumed to mean one which accepts the unity, reliability and authority of the entire Bible as divinely revealed, propositional revelation. In this view, for instance, chapters 1-11 of Genesis are assumed to be straightforward, factual accounts of historical events concerning the way in which God created this world as a life-sustaining habitat, the entrance of sin and death into the world, and the catastrophic modification of the original habitat.
2. David Tracy distinguishes three kinds of theology: fundamental, systematic, and practical (1981. *The analogical imagination*. NY: Crossroad, Ch. 1 and 2). Concerning these distinctions, Robert Neville observes that practical theologies are those associated with movements of social change, and their audience is the participants in these movements. Fundamental theologies are those that ask the basic questions in a wholly pluralistic, perhaps even secular, context with little or no regard for communities of faith, and their audience is mainly the academy. Systematic theologies are those oriented to the self-understanding and guidance of "communities of faith" (1991. *A theological primer*. Albany: State University of New York Press, p xiv). The current essay addresses the audiences Tracy calls systematic and fundamental.
3. Ramm B. 1954. *The Christian view of science and Scripture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans; reprinted in 1984. See particularly the section called "Progressive Creation" (p 76-79), and above all, Ramm's comments on p 191 about the limits of the natural biological process with respect to horizontal and vertical radiation of species within the paradigm of progressive creation.
4. Scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version.
5. *Metaphysics*, Bk XII: Ch 9.
6. Harris RL, editor. 1980. *Theological workbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2. Chicago: Moody Press, p 925.
7. See: Kümmel WG. 1972. *The New Testament: the history of the investigation of its problems*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, p 456, n 466.

8. Ibid., p 457, n 468.
9. Ibid.
10. Bultmann R. 1952. New Testament and mythology. In: Bartsch HW, editor. *Kerygma and Myth*. Fuller RH, translator. London: S.P.C.K., p 4.
11. Polkinghorne J. 1991. God's action in the world. *Cross Currents* 41(3):293-307.
12. (a) Packer JI. 1988. The challenge of biblical interpretation: creation. In: *The Proceedings of the Conference on Biblical Interpretation 1988*. Nashville: Broadmann Press, p 21-33; (b) Pinnock C. 1989. Climbing out of a swamp: the evangelical struggle to understand the creation texts. *Interpretation* 43(1):145; (c) Young DA. 1987. Scripture in the hands of geologists, Part II. *Westminster Theological Journal* 49:303.
13. (a) Polkinghorne, p 295 (Note 11); (b) cf. Malone NM. 1991. The silence speaks. *Cross Currents* 41(3):291. In basic support of this concept, Daniel L. Migliore of Princeton Seminary states that because the grammar used by science and theology are two different languages and because the stories of Genesis 1 and 2 are not scientific descriptions, "the purposive activity of the creator and the purposefulness of the world cannot be directly 'read off' what we perceive and experience. It is an affirmation of faith, not an empirical observation" [1991. The ecological crisis and the doctrine of creation. *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* n.s. 22(3):275].
14. The current scholarly drive toward accepting either non-concordist, theistic evolution, or a broad concordist progressive creationism seems to be unnecessary. The endeavor is unwarranted because recent paleontological, biological, geological, philosophical, and geochemical evidence can be correctly interpreted as strongly consistent with a faith position which accepts as true the Scripture's assertions of an origin *de novo* of biological forms by some causality other than random causes and an origin occurring within a relatively recent time. But these assertions are topics for other papers with extensive evidentiary documentation.

However, anyone interested in an introduction to some of the more recent studies presenting evidence in support of these claims may consult the following sources: (a) Brown RH. 1979. The interpretation of C-14 dates. *Origins* 6(1):30-44; (b) Coffin HG. 1983. *Origin by design*. Washington DC: Review & Herald Publishing Assn.; (c) Denton M. 1986. *Evolution: a theory in crisis*. Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler; (d) Hasel GF. 1980. Genesis 5 and 11: chronogenealogies in the biblical history of beginnings. *Origins* 7(1):23-37; (e) Hoyle F, Wickramasinghe C. 1982. *Why Neo-Darwinism does not work*. Wales: University College Cardiff Press; (f) Johnson PE. 1991. *Darwin on trial*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press; (g) Oard MJ. 1990. Evidence for only one ice age. In: Walsh RE, editor. *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Creationism 1990, Vol. II: Technical Symposium Sessions and Additional Topics*. Pittsburgh: Creation Science Fellowship, p 191-200; (h) Polanyi M. 1958. *Personal knowledge*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p 381-405; (i) Roth AA. 1988. Those gaps in the sedimentary layers. *Origins* 15 (2):75-92; (j) Wilder-Smith AE. 1987. *The scientific alternative to Neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory: information sources & structures*. Costa Mesa, CA: TWFT Publishers; (k) Snow GE, Javor GT. 1979. Atmospheric oxygen rules out biochemical evolution. In: Van Dolson LR, editor. *Our Real Roots: Scientific Support for Creationism*, Washington DC: Review & Herald Publishing Assn., p 155-161; (l) Shea WH. 1984. A comparison of narrative elements in ancient Mesopotamian creation flood stories with Genesis 1-9. *Origins* 11(1):9-29; (m) Wise KP. 1990. Baraminology: a young-Earth creation biosystematic method. In: Walsh RE, editor. *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Creationism 1990, Vol. II: Technical Symposium Sessions and Additional Topics*, pp. 345-360. Pittsburgh: Creation Science Fellowship, p 345-360.

- For a useful treatment of the implications of theistic evolution for Christians, see: Gibson LJ. 1992. Theistic evolution: is it for Adventists? *Ministry* 65(1):22-25.
15. For comments concerning such forms of dualism in the Hellenistic world, see: Meyer PW. 1988. Romans. In: Mays JL, editor. *Harper's Bible Commentary*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, p 1153.
 16. Murray J. 1968. The epistle to the Romans. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, p 304.
 17. It should be noted that a recently published dissertation focusing on these passages of Romans 8 takes an alternative point of view arguing that Paul does not have Genesis 3 and the fall of Adam in mind in this context, but rather the Genesis flood-tradition. See: Christoffersson O. 1990. The earnest expectation of the creature: the flood-tradition as matrix of Romans 8:18-27. Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell International.
 18. Ross H. 1989. The fingerprint of God. Orange, CA: Promise Publishing Co., p 154.
 19. See the following works by Arthur Peacocke: (a) 1971. *Science and the Christian experiment*. London: Oxford University Press; (b) 1979. *Creation and the world of science: the Bampton Lectures, 1978*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 20. Peacocke A. 1989. The challenge of science to theology and the church. In: Mangum JM, editor. *The New Faith-Science Debate*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, p 16.
 21. Käsemann E. 1980. Commentary on Romans. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, p 142.
 22. *Ibid.*, p 185.
 23. Peacocke, p 16 (Note 20).
 24. A similar point is made in a 1990 article by John D. Morris entitled "Evolution and the Wages of Sin" [Impact Series 209. *Acts & Facts* 19(11):i-iv. El Cajon, CA: Institute for Creation Research.].
 25. Moltmann J. 1985. The Sabbath: the feast of creation. Chapter 10 in: *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, p 276-296. This work comprises Moltmann's Gifford Lectures, 1984-1985.
 26. Andreasen N-E. 1978. *Rest and redemption: a study of the biblical Sabbath*. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press.
 27. Ashbrook JB. 1992. Making sense of soul and Sabbath: brain processes and the making of meaning. *Zygon* 27(1):31-49.
 28. *Ibid.*, p 46.
 29. The thrust of this article is not to determine the divine will concerning the proper day of worship for contemporary Christians. However, the seriousness of implication number five above is, of course, particularly significant for Christians taking seriously the creation account as the basis for a selection of a worship day.

Readers may be interested in a brief outline indicating the basis upon which some Christians understand the New Testament teaching concerning a day of worship in contemporary times. According to Hebrews 8:7-13 and 10:15-18, it is the privilege of Christians living in the gospel period to participate, by means of the Holy Spirit, in the new covenant experience.

That the seventh-day Sabbath forms part of the new covenant terms is strikingly demonstrated by the fact of Jesus' death for sin (Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Matthew 26:39-45; and Matthew 27:50) as follows. If it were possible that the definition of sin [the ten commandments (1 John 3:4), which are the same thing as the terms of the new covenant (Hebrews 10:16; Romans 13:8-10)] could be changed in any sense, then God would have done so in order to do away with sin in order that His Son would not have had to die, because the Scripture states that Christ died precisely because sin existed (1 Corinthians 15:3). The Son in effect asked God the

Father whether that kind of change in the law was possible (Matthew 26:39-45) while at the same time saving humanity. If the law could have been changed, the cup (the cross) could have passed from the lips of Jesus as He requested. That in the mind of God the Father the law could not be changed in any respect is shown by the subsequent death of Jesus. For this reason some Christians believe that the costly fact alone of Jesus' death establishes the perpetuity of the seventh-day Sabbath.

Moreover, in Romans 3:31, Paul suggests the perpetuity of the law. In addition, our Lord says that the Sabbath was not given to the Jews but to mankind universally (Mark 2:27; Genesis 2:2-3). Finally, the women who wished to anoint the body of Jesus kept the Sabbath "according to the commandment" after the burial of Jesus, thus showing that the author of the gospel of Luke believed that the death of Jesus did not abolish this beautiful term of the new covenant (Luke 23:55-56). For a fuller exposition of this issue, see: 1988. *The Sabbath*. In: *Seventh-day Adventists Believe Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*. Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald Publishing Association, p 248-267.

30. From a confessional perspective, one might conjecture whether God will create the new Earth within a time frame analogous to the original creation of the first Earth, viz., in one week. In any case and by God's grace, it will be a high privilege for Christians to witness the creation of the new Earth in whatever fashion the event occurs.