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Dr. Henry M. Morris, founder of the Institute for Creation Research, explains why evolution is nonsense—Page 11

Ken Ham, president of Answers in Genesis-US, talks about reaching today's new pagans—Page 18

Plus:
The flip side of Israel's 'disengagement'—Page 8
A look back at the famous Scopes 'Monkey Trial' that captivated America 80 years ago this month—Page 24
Persecution in Kazakhstan—Page 30
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The biblical explanation of the origin of man and the world around him should satisfy Jewish people as well as Bible-believing Christians. Yet some in both groups reject the Genesis creation account. This they do against their traditions.

Both the Jewish and Christian Bibles verify that God created the world, not that it evolved. Jewish people have the Holy Scriptures, what Gentile Christians call the Old Testament. That portion alone of God’s Word contains enough documentation of how the universe came to be. Christians, whether Jewish or Gentile, also have the further revelation of the New Testament.

The common ground, then, is the Old Testament. For Christians, our belief in the inerrancy of Scripture is enhanced by New Testament references to the Hebrew Scriptures.

For instance, Jesus himself dispels the liberal position that the early chapters of Isaiah were not written by the same man who wrote the latter chapters. He quoted from both Isaiah 6 and 53 and said, “These things Isaiah said when he saw His [God’s] glory and spoke of Him” (Jn. 12:41). Thus Jesus affirmed there was only one Isaiah.

He also affirmed biblical creation. In answering a question of the Pharisees concerning divorce, Jesus said, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female’ . . . ?” (Mt. 19:4).

Moses, the author of Genesis in the Torah (first five books of Moses), presented God as the Creator of all things, and nothing in the New Testament contradicts that truth. In fact, the opposite is true. Every New Testament author refers in some way to the first 11 chapters of Genesis. More than half of the New Testament books mention something from those same 11 chapters. Creation is first taught in Bereshith (literally, “in the beginning”), the Hebrew name for the book of Genesis. It is affirmed by many other Old Testament writers and then confirmed repeatedly in the New Testament. Following are a few examples:

God Created the Heavens and Earth

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1).

For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day (Ex. 20:11).

You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them (Neh. 9:6).

When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained (Ps. 8:3).

Remember now your Creator. He has made everything beautiful in its time (Eccl. 12:1; 3:11).

Thus says God the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it (Isa. 42:5).

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made (Jn. 1:3).

God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth (Acts 17:24).

God who created all things through Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:9).

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible (Col. 1:16).

Jewish and Christian Tradition

Get It Right

God Created Adam, Eve, and the Entire Human Race

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Gen. 1:27).

This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God (Gen. 5:1).

Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, . . . the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God (Lk. 3:23, 38).

The Evolution Theory Is Wrong

Know that the LORD, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture (Ps. 100:3).

All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds (1 Cor. 15:39).

Today DNA testing confirms that humans do not have the same DNA as animals.

One of the beauties of Scripture is that, though it was written by many authors all separated by time and space, it is completely harmonious throughout. Creation is the unanimous teaching of the entire Word of God.

by Steve Herzig
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ABOUT THE COVER
Nearly 150 years ago Charles Darwin’s incendiary book, Origin of Species, ignited an international inferno of controversy. Secular humanists embraced Darwin’s theory as an escape from belief in a creator God. His theory became a faith for humanists’ and was quickly installed in scientific and academic communities as fact. Biblicalists disagree. Our cover depicts the struggle, and declares a winner (Dimitri Iundt/Corbis; digital enhancement, Thomas E. Williams).

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Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you. Peace be within your walls, prosperity within your palaces” (Ps. 122:6–7).

Jerusalem. The very word stirs the hearts of Jews and Christians alike. Mentioned more than 700 times in the Old Testament, Jerusalem permeates the soul and religious consciousness of the Jewish people.

For them, this city is like no other. They have studied King David’s struggles to capture it and build the Jewish Temple there. In exile, they longed for Jerusalem and wrote songs and prayers about it. Two major Jewish holidays, Passover and Yom Kippur, conclude with the words, Next year in Jerusalem. Synagogues throughout the world are built so people pray facing Jerusalem.

In daily prayers, blessings, weddings, and funerals—in joy and in mourning—Jewish people invoke the name of the holy city. At the Western Wall, the only surviving part of the second Temple the Romans destroyed in A.D. 70, Jewish worshipers pray at all hours of the day and night, in all seasons of the year. Thousands flock there from around the world to mourn the loss of their Temple and pray for the coming of the Messiah. Strategically placed cameras let people everywhere view the Western Wall in real time via the Internet.

For Christians, both the Old and New Testaments and the life of Jesus give Jerusalem great importance. Joseph and Mary presented the infant Jesus to the Lord at the Temple there (Lk. 2:22). They brought Him to Jerusalem as a child to attend festivals, such as Passover (Lk. 2:41). Here Jesus preached and healed. Jesus’ last supper was in an “upper room” in Jerusalem. Here, too, was His arrest in Gethsemane, His trial, crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven.

In 1980 Israel’s Knesset passed a law confirming Jerusalem’s status as the nation’s “eternal and indivisible capital.” All branches of Israel’s government (presidential, legislative, judicial, and administrative) are located in Jerusalem. When, as visitors, we stand at the Western Wall during our Up to Jerusalem tour, we readily understand the truth of Ezekiel 5:5: “Thus says the Lord God: ‘This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her.’” We know intuitively that we are standing in God’s geographical center of the world.

Unfortunately, although Jerusalem means “city of peace,” its 4,000-year history is one of almost continuous conflict. No city on Earth has seen more battles than Jerusalem. And it will again become a battlefield in the end-times, when all nations will converge on Jerusalem in a revolt against the Lord.

At The Friends of Israel, we encourage you to follow the Lord’s mandate to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Doing so is a precious privilege that unites us with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who declares of His people, “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love” (Jer. 31:3). Isaiah spoke of a day when prayers for Jerusalem will be answered:

Many people shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3).

The Friends of Israel will join a worldwide effort among Bible-believing Christians to set aside Sunday, October 2, 2005, as a special “Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem.” A resolution has been adopted to proclaim the first Sunday in October, near the season of Yom Kippur, as an annual day of prayer for God’s blessing on His people and for His will to be done in Israel. We encourage you to join us and to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. And we urge you to challenge others, including your church, to participate in this important endeavor.

William E. Sutter is the executive director of The Friends of Israel.
We now know that if Darwin could have foreseen coming scientific developments, he would have had good reason to be concerned that his theory might one day be proved wrong.

In particular, Gregor Mendel had not yet established and published his work on the laws of heredity and genetics, which said that the characteristics of offspring are passed on from parents according to precise mathematical ratios and do not derive from chance random processes in what Darwin called “blending inheritance.”

James Joule, R. J. E. Clausius and Lord Kelvin were only just developing the concepts of thermodynamics, the first law of which states that energy can neither be created nor destroyed (so the present universe could not have created itself), and the second law of which says that the universe is proceeding in a downward degenerating direction of increasing disorganization (so things overall do not of themselves become more organized with time).

Louis Pasteur was just beginning his famous experiments, which showed that life (even microbial life) comes from life, not from non-life.

The mathematical laws of probability, which show that the odds of life’s occurring by chance are effectively zero, had not yet been applied to the theory of evolution.

Molecular biology, with its revelation that the cell is so enormously complex that it could not possibly have been formed by chance, had not yet commenced.

The fossil record had not yet been investigated sufficiently for paleontologists to be able to say, as they now do, that chains of intermediate “links” do not exist.

Any one of these concepts or laws, if known to Charles Darwin at the time he was writing his Origin (1856–59), would have been enough to torpedo his ideas; taken all together they kill the theory of evolution stone dead!

by Russell M. Grigg
When Philip came to Nathanael and invited him to come with him to Nazareth to see Jesus, Nathanael was skeptical:

*And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see*” (Jn. 1:46).

Although the context is far removed from the essence of that ancient encounter, if you have ever ventured into the Gaza Strip you have likely thought something similar. On my last visit, accompanied by Israeli security, I had the impression I was entering the habitation of a depressed, deprived population forced to live in an environment roughly equivalent to a landfill. All along the way I kept asking myself why anyone would want this place, much less choose to live there. In addition to the squalor, which the late Yasser Arafat ensured by stashing in his personal accounts the funds sent from the West to relieve this misery, Palestinian kids played alongside the gangs of terrorists that often provoke Israel Defense Forces (IDF) retaliation, putting these children in harm’s way.

No, there was nothing in Gaza that said, “Nice to see you. Come again soon.” Just the opposite. And you felt, “Let’s get out of here.”

But I am happy to report that the scene is beginning to shift for the Palestinians in Gaza. Even before disengagement, life began to get somewhat better. In the area of humanitarian assistance, there has been a 100 percent increase in the number of permits issued to Palestinian residents seeking to enter Israel. The District Coordinating Office in Gaza said that so far this year, 10,500 permits have been granted to Palestinians seeking hospitalization in Israel and others wishing to visit relatives in Israeli prisons.

Security officials also noted that the newly refurbished and reopened Erez Crossing in northern Gaza has had a 40 percent increase in registered entrance for humanitarian needs, with 4,500 Palestinians passing through the terminal on their way to Israel.

Authorities state that the current security situation has significantly increased activity, encouraging more international relief organizations to enter the Gaza Strip. These organizations work to improve Gaza’s infrastructure and offer assistance to families living there.

A 1998 report from the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimated that, all told, more than 100,000 Palestinians were employed in Israel daily. By the year 2000 that figure had swelled to 130,000, about 3,500 of whom worked at the Erez Industrial Zone in northern Gaza. Palestinians there were employed in 115 industrial plants, of which about one-third were Palestinian-owned.

Yasser Arafat’s war against Israel, the second intifada that began in September 2000, brought terror and death to nearly 1,500 Israelis and wounded many thousands more. However, it also crippled the Palestinian economy. Repeated terrorist attacks inside Israel caused prolonged closure of work areas to Palestinians. Among those who suffered most were the million and a half inhabitants of the Gaza Strip.

Now with Arafat off the scene and some semblance of hope for better things, change is in the wind.

And the changing situation is clarifying two important truths. One is that the absence of terror and disruption of daily life would dramatically improve the lives of these distressed people. If the threat of terrorism were eliminated once and for all, their lives would take great strides forward. That, of course, means nullifying and expelling the terrorists. If the Palestinians of Gaza have longed for the departure of the IDF, they should be even more concerned about the malignancy in their midst, represented by the hooded militants and other organizations that revel in hatred and death. The simple fact is that when the killers and their weapons are gone, there need be no fear of Israeli military action. But the onus is on the Palestinians themselves who want a decent life of tranquility, rather than mayhem.

The second truth, though it will be heatedly denied in radical Palestinian circles, is that the Palestinians in Gaza, and in the entire region for that matter, desperately need Israel as a neighbor. Ask yourself where suffering Palestinians are finding state-of-the-art medical treatment or where they are going for jobs or where they are trading the majority of their goods. It is in Israel.

And for all of their palaver and manic determination to see Israel swept off the face of the Middle East, the Palestinian people would be big losers. In fact, the Palestinians can’t afford to lose Israel as a neighbor because, when all is said and done, she is a very good one.
MYTH: Israel’s presence in the West Bank is the cause of terrorism.

FACT: If Israel were to withdraw completely from the West Bank tomorrow it would not end terrorism. Radical Islamic groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad are opposed to the existence of a Jewish state anywhere in what they consider the Islamic heartland. These and other terrorist groups have never said they were prepared to live in peace with Israel if it were to withdraw anywhere short of the border of the Mediterranean Sea.

Long before 1967, when Israel captured the West Bank, Arabs used violence to try to first prevent the establishment of a Jewish state and then to destroy Israel. Anti-Jewish riots began in 1920 and were instigated repeatedly over the years of the British mandate in an effort to either drive out the Jews or convince the British to renege on the promise to create a Jewish homeland. These were the first “intifadas” and were characterized by the cold-blooded murder of innocents.

After Israel fended off the invading Arab nations in 1948, Egyptian President Gamal Nasser turned Palestinian terrorists against Israel and provoked the Six-Day War. In 1964, while Jordan controlled the West Bank, the Arab League created the Palestine Liberation Organization as a terrorist tool to fight against Israel. History has shown that Arab radicals are prepared to use terror to destroy Israel regardless of its borders.
For Americans who happen to be paying attention, Israel’s planned withdrawal, or unilateral disengagement, from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank is a foggy issue. How much will Israel concede? Will it meet the West’s two-state, Road Map to Peace prescription? Will Palestinians at last accept Israel’s good-faith retreat, stop the terror, and live in peace? Are Israelis happy or unhappy with the plan? Will withdrawal be the forerunner of civil war?

My Jewish friends tell me there’s a saying, “Ask eight rabbis a question, and you’ll get 10 opinions.” Regarding the pullout, one might say, “Ask 10 Americans about disengagement, and you’ll get 10 blank stares.”

One reason is that the vast majority of U.S. citizens are not interested. Another is the abysmally inadequate or distorted media coverage, not only of events in Israel but also the entire Middle East. Why should Americans or other Westerners care about what is happening halfway around the world? Because halfway around the world is no longer half a world away. It’s your backyard and mine. And the way events play out in the only successful bastion of democracy and freedom in the Middle East will either enhance or destroy American credibility and may bring the war on terror over the fence and into our yards.

Who Wants Disengagement?

Frustrated with the stalemate in peace “negotiations” with the duplici- tous career terrorist, Yasser Arafat, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon submitted a controversial plan to withdraw unilaterally from Gaza and a limited number of unauthorized settlements in Judea-Samaria (West Bank).

Getting rid of the poverty-ridden, terrorist-torn slum that is the Gaza Strip seemed like an excellent idea for Israel. The down side was the need to relocate approximately 8,000 Jewish residents of Gaza. As expected, this became an extremely traumatic, divisive issue.

But the die was cast; and before withdrawal was to begin, it had the blessing of the prime minister, the vast majority of Knesset members, and the polled approval of 60 to 65 percent of Israelis. The plan was music to the ears of the administrations in Washington, London, the European Union (EU), and UN.

Carrying signs that read, “We shall not stop on the way,” signed by residents of Gush Katif and Samaria, Israeli youths walk along a road near the southern Israeli kibbutz of Yad Mordechai to protest the plan to evacuate the Jewish towns in the Gaza Strip. (Ariel Schalit/AP/Wide World Photos).

A Laundry List of Good-Faith Gestures

According to information obtained by The Jerusalem Post, when Ariel Sharon and his entourage met in April with President George W. Bush in...
Crawford, Texas, and Washington, they brought a list of perks for the Palestinians to pick up. Below are a few of them.

- Israel offered to build a rail link between the West Bank and Gaza, enabling the free flow of people and goods between the two areas.
- Israel offered to construct a rail link from Erez in northern Gaza to the port of Ashdod for Palestinian exports to Europe and elsewhere.
- Israel offered to coordinate the operation of the Erez Crossing from Gaza to Israel to facilitate passage of Palestinians to jobs in Israel and their merchandise to Israeli markets.
- Israel offered to discuss with the Palestinian Authority (PA) the admission into Israel daily of tens of thousands of Palestinian workers from Gaza and the West Bank after disengagement is completed.
- Israel offered to discuss the building of new roads for the use of Palestinians in the West Bank.
- Israel proposed the coordination of economic aspects of postdisengagement Gaza that would turn over greenhouses and other agricultural and industrial assets intact and ready to operate.

Thus far, the Palestinians have either rejected or refused to respond to Israel’s offers.

**More**

You’ve probably heard it said, “Ask a multimillionaire how much money is enough, and his answer will be ‘more.’” Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and his cronies, to their way of thinking, have Israel on the run. Washington, the EU, and UN are turning up the heat on the Israelis, and all Abbas has to do is wait.

On its own initiative, and with minimal nudging from the West, Israel conceded land it won fairly in response to military aggression. Everywhere in the world, the victors, not the vanquished, are in the driver’s seat. But the current situation is reversed. It is the stateless, Palestinian terrorist leaders (former and current) who make the demands and put Israel under unrelenting pressure to surrender land that, by every rule of international conduct, should be Israeli.

With the single exception of the intifadas, the wars of aggression against Israel were launched by foreign governments: Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia. And though elements of Palestinian factions fight to destroy Israel, they are not part of a legitimate country. It has been repeated ad nauseam that the Palestinians have never had a country, borders, or central government anywhere in the world and certainly not near Jerusalem or areas now known as the “occupied territories.”

Contrary to popular hype, the Palestinians did not own all of the land they and their Arab bedfellows refused in the UN partition plan of 1947. Instead of accepting the plan, they chose war in the unfounded belief they could kill the fledgling State of Israel at birth. They gambled and lost. Israel did not violate Palestine’s borders in order to “steal their land.” In fact, there were no borders, as there are none today. There was no Arab State of Palestine. In fact, the Arabs stole Jewish land, as is thoroughly and meticulously documented in Joan Peters’ book, *From Time Immemorial*. It’s as simple as that.

Since Israel’s enemies can’t, at least for the foreseeable future, destroy Israel militarily, they are letting Israel’s friends do it for them.

**The Shrinking State of Israel**

With “peace” being imposed on Israel, there are some facts to bear in mind. First, the word *reciprocity* has been swept off the negotiating table and onto the scrap heap. Second, the once firmly espoused notion that no free nation would ever negotiate with terrorists, especially while the shooting was still going on, has become a joke—at least to the Palestinians. To their way of thinking, terror has paid big dividends.

Also, we have no clear definition of what the Palestinian leadership actually has in mind for its end game. What kind of state are we in the process of consorting to establish? Will it be a friendly neighbor or a launching pad for Mideast terror? The coin is still in the air, and only time will tell which side will be facing up when it hits the ground.

Using the 1949 armistice lines as the final disposition of borders (an idea heard increasingly) would be a leap into potential catastrophe. One would be hard-pressed to believe that true allies of Israel and the Jewish people would countenance the breath of a hint of such borders.

Despite all the well-intentioned declarations guaranteeing Israel’s security by friends abroad, in the end Israelis can look to no one but themselves when hostile armies and missile launchers begin to roll across their land.

**The Flip Side of Disengagement**

Even if we grant that Mahmoud Abbas is ready to act in good faith out of concern for his people and a desire for peace, such cannot be said of others in his circle who flatly reject peace with Israel, at any time, under any conditions. And international diplomats trying to slice and dice the process into acceptable proposals had better be listening.

On March 24, 2005, a senior Hamas official, Ahmed al-Bahar, was quoted in *The Jerusalem Post* as saying,

> The painful and qualitative blows which the Palestinian resistance dealt to the Jews and their soldiers over the past four-and-a-half years led to the decision to withdraw from the Gaza Strip. . . . The suicide attacks . . . have taken their tolls on the Jews, both psychologically and economically, in addition to the high number of casualties. . . .
All indications show that since its establishment, Israel has never been in such a state of retreat and weakness as it is today. . . . The withdrawal marks the end of the Zionist dream and is a sign of the moral and psychological decline of the Jewish state. We believe that the resistance [terrorism] is the only way to pressure the Jews.

This terror-driven tirade is not the ranting of an insignificant, minor figure. Al-Bahar’s voice echoes the heart of the Islamist obsession of the Hamas organization, whose stated objective is to annihilate Israel and her people.

Given the fact that Hamas and its terrorist kinfolk are key players in the political and military affairs of a future Palestinian state, Mr. al-Bahar’s words could be prophetic, articulating the nightmare that terror mongers are planning when the allies depart and Israel is deemed sufficiently vulnerable.

With Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, Fatah, and like organizations operating, any good-faith overtures from Israel, including territorial concessions, will be doomed to fail. An incremental peace must be prefaced by the total elimination of these groups. And under no circumstances should they be allowed to intrude into the political process. Terror, continued on page 23
This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens (Gen. 2:4).

This key verse both summarizes the opening chapter of the Bible and introduces the second chapter. Note that the heavens and earth were “created” and “made.”

That these two verbs are not mere synonyms is clear from the preceding verse, which says God rested on the seventh day “from all His work which God had created and made” (Gen. 2:3). Although the difference between creating and making may be subtle, in the case of God’s works it is quite real.

In the original text, “create” is the Hebrew word bara, and “make” is asah. The essential distinction is that only God can “create,” whereas man, as well as God, is able to “make” functional systems out of basic entities that had previously been “created.” Thus, whenever the Bible uses the word create, the stated or implied subject is God. Make and made, on the other hand, often have a man as the subject (as well as God), such as when Adam and Eve “made themselves coverings” (Gen. 3:7), trying to hide from God after they had sinned. Later, “God made tunics of skin, and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21).
God’s Three Acts

It is significant that only three acts of divine creation are mentioned in the great creation chapter that begins the Bible.

1. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). This wonderful statement summarizes God’s calling into existence the physical structure of the cosmos: the space–matter-time triuniverse.

2. “God created . . . every living thing that moves” (v. 21). This verse summarizes God’s speaking into existence the universe’s biological component: conscious animal life.

3. “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (v. 27). Here is recorded the ex nihilo—out-of-nothing—creation of the universe’s spiritual component: the “image of God,” centered solely in mankind.

Thus God created only the basic physical, biological, and spiritual realities of the universe. Upon these fundamental entities, however, God then proceeded to make many complex systems. For example, “God made the firmament,” the two great lights [sun and moon] and “the stars also,” plus “the beast of the earth . . . cattle . . . and everything that creeps on the earth” (vv. 7, 16, 25).

As far as the spiritual universe was concerned, however, the only system He made was man: “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;’ . . . So God created man in His own image” (vv. 26–27). That is, man was both created and made in the image of God. He was created as a spiritual being, able to have fellowship with His Creator. He also was made (from the previously created “dust of the ground,” 2:7) in the physical image that God would assume one day when He would himself become a man.

The world’s strictly material objects (including even plants, which are complex reproducing chemicals but do not possess conscious life) thus share the physical creating and making handiwork of God. Animals, on the other hand, are both physical and biological systems created and made by God. Men and women alone, however, are physical, biological, and spiritual beings, created and made in the image of God.

Evolution’s Scenario

That all seems reasonable, as well as biblical. But what do scientists say about it? The sad fact is that the modern scientific and educational establishments are almost completely committed to total evolutionism. They maintain that the physical universe evolved from nothing at all by a kind of quantum leap from nothing into an infinitesimal particle of space-time. This primeval particle rapidly inflated and then exploded into the so-called Big Bang. From this the universe has been rapidly expanding ever since, somehow enabling stars and galaxies to form, then planets.

On this Earth planet, and perhaps others, the nonliving chemicals in the primeval seas somehow came to life as primitive reproducing cells. These developed into multicelled marine invertebrates, then into fish. Some of these fish became amphibian, then turned into reptiles. One or more of the latter evolved into birds, while other reptiles were evolving into mammals. Finally, one mammalian line developed into the primates, and some ape-like creature in this line became man.

That scenario—believe it or not—is essentially what is taught as absolute fact in practically every school in the Western world, from elementary grades through graduate school. It also dominates the news media and the legal and political systems.

But the remarkable fact is that the real facts of science do not support it at all. As a result, literally thousands of fully credentialed scientists have repudiated it altogether in recent decades and become believers in special creation.

This wonderful first chapter of Genesis also reveals two other vital facts. Ten times the animals, as well as plants, were made able to reproduce only according to their “kind,” never according to a different kind. Whatever the created “kind” may have represented, it could never evolve into a new kind. The respective genetic systems permitted much variation (no two individuals are alike), even the formation of stable “varieties,” but nothing more.

Second, everything was “very good” (v. 31). Nothing bad existed anywhere in the universe—no sin, disharmony, pain, and especially no death. All these came only after sin came—first through Satan and his angels, then Adam and Eve.

God then cursed the ground (that is, the basic elements out of which He had made all things). “By man came death” (1 Cor. 15:21). Since then, “the whole creation [that is, all its physical, biological, and spiritual components] groans and labors with birth pangs together until now” (Rom. 8:22). Everything in the physical realm tends to return to the dust from which it was made, just as Adam’s body did (Gen. 3:19). All biological life forms eventually die, although the “consciousness” aspect of human life survives, eventually to be reunited with a resurrected body when Christ returns. The “image of God” in man has been badly marred but can be “renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him” (Col. 3:10).

Evolution’s Dilemma

True science does not support the evolutionary worldview. It does support the biblical worldview, however. For example, the two most universally applicable and best-proved laws of science point absolutely to the primeval creation of the universe, not to its evolution out of nothing. These are the First and Second Laws of Thermodynamics, or, one might say, the laws of quantitative conservation and qualitative decay of all things. The First Law confirms that neither matter nor energy is now being either created or destroyed, as stated in Genesis 2:3: “He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” The New Testament confirms that our Creator is now “upholding all things by the word of His power” (Heb. 1:3).
This fact assures us that the universe could not have created itself because, by the First Law, none of its present process can create anything. Yet the universe must have been created at some time in the past because the Second Law tells us that everything is now running down, heading toward stillness and “death.” This situation, of course, is also the implication of God’s curse on “the whole creation.”

Now, if the universe could not have created itself (by the First Law) but must have been created somehow (since it is not dead, though heading inexorably toward death by the Second Law), the only answer is that God created it! That is the most scientific conclusion possible on the basis of the best scientific laws we have.

This Second Law also makes it clear why no one has ever proved any case of vertically “upward” evolution from one kind to a higher, more complex kind. In all human history, no one has ever documented any such “macroevolution.” There have been many cases of “horizontal” variation (e.g., the different species of dogs) and downward variation (mutations, extinctions, deteriorations), but nothing else.

In the fossil record of the past, with billions of known fossils, there are many examples of extinct kinds (e.g., dinosaurs) but not one known transitional series of a lower kind into a higher kind. As atheistic Harvard Professor Ernst Mayr, generally acknowledged to be the greatest living evolutionary biologist, has admitted in his most recent book, “The fossil record remains woefully inadequate” to prove evolution.1 Furthermore, those billions of fossils all speak eloquently of a suffering, dying world. They must have been buried, therefore, only after man brought sin into the world.

The evolution of life or of any living kind has never been recorded in the 6,000 years of written history, and there are no evidences of it in the fossil record of the past. The reason why it has never been observed is that it cannot happen: The Second Law of Thermodynamics tells us that evolution would be impossible without continuous, miraculous intervention by God. And He has pronounced the biogenetic law to be “according to its kind.”

God can intervene when there is a special reason to do so. For example, on one occasion He miraculously caused water to “evolve” instantaneously into wine (Jn. 2:7–11). He is still the Creator and can still perform miracles of creation when the occasion justifies. But evolution, which men commonly try to use to do away with the need for God, is not one of them.

There is one special miracle of creation that God still performs today: “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17).

The miracle of regeneration is the Holy Spirit’s genuine creation of a “new man” when a natural man receives the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith and is “born again.” The marred image of God in him is thereby made new again. People who have been born again possess a “new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph. 4:24).

And what God creates lasts forever. Things that are made may, under the curse, disintegrate and die; but not what God has created.

For example, the earth was created in the beginning, and though it has gone through and yet will go through many changes, it has been “established forever” (Ps. 78:69). Similarly, the sun, moon, and stars “were created”; and God “also established them forever and ever” (Ps. 148:5), though their structure also may undergo drastic changes. Every person who has been made a new creation through faith in Christ will join with all God’s angelic creation to praise our Creator saying, “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created” (Rev. 4:11).

Analogously, our bodies (assuming our souls have been born again) will be changed into immortal bodies like that of Christ (Phil. 3:21) and “shall never perish” (Jn. 10:28).

Henry M. Morris is the author of more than 45 books on creation/evolution and is the founder and president emeritus of the Institute for Creation research in El Cajon, California.

ENDNOTE

The Creationist case should not be taught in schools, for, whatever may be said to the contrary, “Scientific Creationism” does move right over into religion.¹ How often this cry resounds whenever public discussion turns to the teaching of origins. Somehow evolutionists are never labeled as religionists. Consequently, evolution now dominates the discourse on origins. Since the separation of church and state is an essential policy in America, creation proponents face an uphill battle to even get a hearing in the public square. The playing field does not seem level. After all, it is argued, evolutionary science is neutral and objective, while creation science is merely religious dogma in disguise.

Would the matter change if evolution were classified as a religion? Is evolution more than simply the erroneous teaching that all life on Earth originated through a natural progression from simple life-forms to the more complex? Indeed, evolutionists make it sound as if a higher power were at work, driving the evolutionary process forward. And some treat that unseen force like a god.

Philosopher Mary Midgley aptly demonstrated this point in her book Evolution as a religion. Her research revealed that most scientific texts on evolution included statements that are not scientific but religious. “They made startling suggestions about vast themes such as immortality, human destiny and the meaning of life.”² Whether these authors intended to do so or not, their writings combined scientific analyses with spiritual application. This is a mark of religion! Although Midgley has no sympathy for Christianity, she deftly identified the hypocrisy of those who deny the religious nature of evolutionism.

The Source of Evolution’s Theology

We need look no further than the writings of Charles Darwin, the father of modern evolutionary theory, for the source of evolution’s theology. At one time Darwin considered entering the clergy of the Church of England. That path changed radically after he spent five years (1831–1836) sailing and exploring the variety of living creatures on the Galapagos Islands off the coast of Ecuador. In his autobiography, Darwin explained that, at that time, he wrestled with the presence of evil in a world created by God:

> There seems to me too much misery in the world. I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created the...
habit of scientific research makes a man cautious in admitting evidence. For myself, I do not believe that there ever has been any revelation. As for a future life, every man must judge for himself between conflicting vague probabilities."

It is no wonder he wrote, *I had gradually come by this time, i.e. 1836 to 1839, to see that the Old Testament was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindoos. . . . I gradually came to disbelieve in Christianity as a divine revelation. . . . Thus disbelief crept over me at a very slow rate, but was at last complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress.*

There is little evidence, if any, that he ever changed his mind.

The path that Darwin traveled is described in Romans 1:

*Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things (vv. 21–23).*

God has created all people with an innate knowledge about himself. But because mankind is disposed against God, people turn away from Him and worship self-manufactured deities. Humans instinctively worship, but many worship idols.

Darwin’s descent from professing Christianity to pioneering evolution has attracted many followers. What more convenient way to displace the consciousness of the true God than to postulate the god of natural selection.

### The Character of Evolution’s Theology

Evolution’s god is the awesome force of nature that supposedly drives all life forward in gradual steps of progress. This deity is impersonal, undemanding, and detached from the constraints inherent in a personal relationship. One does not pray to the god of natural selection. Although textbooks do not define the doctrine of evolutionary theology, its contours and highlights may be seen in three ways.

First, evolution’s theology forms the basis for secular humanism’s dogma as stated in *Humanist Manifestos I and II*. The first document, written in 1933, begins by exclaiming the need to create a new religion that would fit the coming age. Its first two pillars of faith regard “the universe as self-existing and not created” and teaches that man “is a part of nature.
and that he has emerged as the result of a continuous process [evolution].”7

Forty years later, in 1973, this document added the need for faith in humanity’s progress despite the emergence of Nazism and other despotic regimes after its first edition in 1933:

*Humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to love and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers, and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith. Salvationism . . . still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter. Reasonable minds look to other means for survival. . . . No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.*

The humanists’ religion is the faith of evolution, and only the fittest will survive.

Second, Darwin believed that morals originate by the same process as all life: by his god of natural selection. In the struggle to survive, the fittest win merely because they display high moral values, not necessarily right values. Morals are therefore dependent on a situation and have no external basis of right or wrong.

The majority of social scientists view natural selection as the fundamental doctrine guiding their research in morality. Because mankind is simply a “higher animal,” the study of animal behavior translates into equivalency for humans. “The biological sciences continue to throw fresh light on the nature of human beings in their relation with the remainder of the animal world.”9 Such thinking produces situation ethics and a morality based on the moment. No wonder we see bumper stickers that read, “Do not be surprised when our children act like animals if they learn they descended from them.”

Third, some theologians desire to wed evolution to the God of the Bible. Read these words of accommodation:

*A biblically inspired vision of the face of the earth (vv. 24–26).

Only after constructing a worldview based on the Genesis record of creation could Paul present the message about Jesus Christ and eternal judgment.

Satan’s plan is quite ingenious; he has found a way to convince humanity that people are the product of an imperonal, evolutionary force and that they are therefore not responsible to any divine being. The fight is not merely about origins, but about destinies.

Christians must never allow those who argue for evolution to keep the battle in the realm of science. It is ultimately a religious war of faith, values, and worship. Christians worship the God who created all things: “For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6). We should join with the heavenly beings in praise, saying, “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created” (Rev. 4:11).

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**The Result of Evolution’s Theology**

The stakes are high in this battle; eternal life or eternal death are the consequences. Acts 17 describes how the apostle Paul fought a similar battle in Athens, the first century’s heart of Greek philosophy and culture. Paul visited Athens and saw many temples to multiple gods. He engaged the philosophers at the Areopagus by noting the religiosity of the Athenian people. Shrewdly using the statue to the Unknown God, he engaged the philosophers at the Areopagus by noting the religiosity of the Athenian people. Shrewdly using the statue to the unknown god, Paul proceeded to explain the scriptural truth about that god—the true God.

However, before he could declare the gospel of Jesus Christ, Paul had to demolish the Greek view of origins. Present with Paul that day were philosophers from the Stoic and Epicurean schools, whose “two eminent systems of Graeco-Roman philosophy were evolutionary in essence.”10

Paul began to dismantle the evolutionary, polytheistic worldviews by stating God’s creative activity three times:

*God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands, Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all

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6 Humanist Manifesto I ([www.americanhumanist.org /about/manifesto1.html](http://www.americanhumanist.org/about/manifesto1.html)).


10 Henry M. Morris, *The Long War Against God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 211. His discussion (pp. 211–218) includes Plato’s Timaeus, which reveals an early teaching of origins by chance (c. 400 B.C.).

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Charles Darwin was born February 12, 1809, in Shrewsbury, England. His grandfather, Erasmus Darwin, was an evolutionist/naturalist, poet, and philosopher. His father, Robert, was a successful and wealthy physician. His mother died when he was eight.

As a youngster, Charles took keen interest in nature and science. At his father’s urging, he studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh. But Charles found medicine distasteful and after two years transferred to Christ’s College, Cambridge, for theological training. Darwin wrote, “I did not then in the least doubt the strict and literal truth of every word in the Bible.”

Upon graduation he served on a British science expedition as a naturalist and gentleman’s companion aboard the HMS Beagle. The five-year excursion (1831–1836) gave Charles a chance to see the world. Captain Robert FitzRoy conducted worship every Sunday, and attendance was mandatory.

In South America, explains one source, “Darwin found fossils of extinct animals that were similar to modern species. On the Galapagos Islands in the Pacific Ocean he noticed many variations among plants and animals of the same general type as those in South America.”

Darwin was introduced to Charles Lyell’s work, Principles of Geology, at a critical time, when his religious beliefs came into direct conflict with his expanding knowledge of science; he began to doubt the inerrancy of Scripture. “I had gradually come by this time, [i.e. 1836–1839] to see that the Old Testament was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindoos or the beliefs of any barbarian,” he wrote.

In 1838 Darwin began to write up his notes from the Beagle expedition. These later became known as his theory of evolutionary change and the origin of the species by a process of natural selection. A 35-page paper, developed in 1842, became a 230-page paper in 1844. It was then he wrote to his friend Joseph Hooker, arguably the most important British botanist of the 19th century, “I am almost convinced . . . that species are not (it is like confessing a murder) immutable.” Many say the “murder” was the murder of God.

Writer Russell Grigg said Darwin’s son, Francis, “recalled him as saying, ‘I never gave up Christianity until I was forty years of age.’ Grigg continued, “And the death of his eldest daughter Annie from fever at this period of his life hammered the final nail in the coffin of his Christianity.”

In a letter written in 1880 Darwin stated, “I am sorry to have to inform you that I do not believe in the Bible as a divine revelation, & therefore not in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.”

Charles Darwin had become a self-proclaimed agnostic.

In 1871 his book Descent of Man was published. There he argued that humans are no different from other forms of life and that we, too, evolved through natural selection.

by Steve Herzig

2 Ibid.
4 Quoted in Brentnall and Grigg.
5 Ian Taylor, quoted in Brentnall and Grigg.
7 Quoted in Brentnall and Grigg.
In 1959 I turned eight years old. It was a historic year for my homeland of Australia because a famous American evangelist conducted a series of crusades in the cities of Melbourne and Sydney.

Some commentators claimed this was the closest Australia ever came to revival.1 Australia has never seen such an impact for the gospel since then. Similar crusades did not seem to match the results of 1959. Today when such outreaches are conducted, whether in Australia, America, or other countries, statistics indicate that the small percentage of people who go forward for first-time commitments seem to fall away or are not incorporated into any church.2

Why was it that even though the Australian culture “buzzed” as a result of these 1959 crusades, they seemed to produce no lasting major impact on the culture itself? And why have Australia and other Western countries continually declined in regard to Christian morality, despite numerous evangelistic campaigns?

Understanding the Differences

It really comes down to understanding the difference between Jews and Greeks, using these terms as types.

In 1 Corinthians 1:23 we read, “but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness.”

In Acts 2, the apostle Peter preached a bold message that was primarily directed to the Jewish people (or those familiar with the Jewish religion). His main thrust concerned Jesus’ death and resurrection and mankind’s need for salvation.

Scripture records that 3,000 people responded positively. This was a phenomenally successful “crusade.”

However, in Acts 17 Paul preached a similar message to the Greek philosophers, but they thought it was foolishness.

Why the different responses?

In Acts 2 Peter preached to people who believed in the God of creation as recorded in the Old Testament. They understood the meaning of sin and knew about the spiritual fall of the first human couple. They also had the Law of Moses, so they knew exactly what God expected of them and that they fell short. They were not indoctrinated in evolutionary ideas. The Word of God had credibility in their eyes and was considered sacred.
They also understood the need for a sacrifice for sin because, after all, they were in Jerusalem on that particular day to sacrifice animals, as they had always done. However, most of the Jewish people had rejected Jesus as the Messiah (Christ), so Peter challenged them concerning who Christ was and what He had accomplished on the cross.

Here, then, is an important observation: The Jews had the foundational knowledge of creation and sin, which is necessary to understand the message of salvation. Peter did not have to convince them that God was Creator or that man had sinned. He could concentrate on the message of the cross. Peter did not have to establish the credibility of God’s Word or convince the Jewish people that naturalistic explanations of origins was wrong or deal with the teaching of an Earth that was supposedly millions of years old. These were not issues in the Jewish culture at that time.

However, in Acts 17 Paul was preaching to Greek philosophers. They had no understanding of the God of creation, as did the Jews. They believed in many gods and that the gods, like humans, had evolved. The Epicureans, for instance, believed man evolved from the dirt; in fact, they were the atheists of their day. The Epicureans, many gods and that the gods, like people of their altars, and he defined for them the true God of creation. He also explained that all people were made from “one blood” (from one man), thus laying the foundational history necessary to understand the meaning of sin and the need for salvation. He countered their evolutionary beliefs and thus challenged their entire way of thinking.

Then Paul again preached the message of Christ and the resurrection. Although some continued to sneer, others wanted to hear more. Their hearts were receptive, and some were converted to Christ.

Even though Paul didn’t see 3,000 people saved as Peter did, he was successful nonetheless. Think about what he had to do: Change “Greeks” into “Jews.” In other words, he had to take pagan, evolutionist Greeks, change their entire way of thinking about life and the universe, and then get them to think like Jewish people concerning the true foundation of history.

No wonder only a few came to Christ at first. Such a change is dramatic. Imagine, for example, trying to get an Australian Aborigine to think like an American. Such a change would be extremely difficult, to say the least.

Now let’s return to 1959. At that time in Australia’s history, it was common for public school students to pray at assembly before the start of the day. In elementary schools, it was common for students to be read a section of the Bible before they started the day. Many children went to Sunday school, and ministers of religion even visited schools each week and taught students about the Bible.

Generations ago, even in Australia, which has not had the Christian heritage of America, the culture was somewhat like that of the “Jews”: People were familiar with the Bible. Most knew the basic concepts of Christianity concerning creation, sin, and the message of salvation. So when an evangelist came and preached the message of the cross, it was somewhat like Peter preaching to the Jewish people in Acts 2. Australians had the foundational knowledge to understand the message and respond accordingly.

However, I believe most church leaders did not understand that these people really were already “Greeks” in their thinking about reality. Even at this stage, students were being taught evolutionary ideas in a low-key way that was subtly undermining the credibility of the Bible’s history.

Consequently, there was no real, lasting impact on Australian culture, which has progressively become more anti-Christian. Underneath it all, people had questions about the validity of the Bible.

In Australia today, praying during an assembly or telling Bible stories to start the day would be unheard of in public schools. Furthermore, evolution is taught as fact throughout the educational system.

Generations of Australians now have little or no knowledge of the Bible. They have been thoroughly indoctrinated in an atheistic, evolutionary philosophy. Children don’t automatically go to Sunday school or church programs as they used to. Ministers of religion find it more and more difficult to conduct programs in schools. And most church leaders tell their congregations it is fine to believe in the millions-of-years notion of creation and/or evolutionary ideas, as long as God is somehow involved.

After years of subtle indoctrination and an emphasis on rejecting the book of Genesis as literal, generations today see the Genesis history as not credible and, thus, doubt the reliability of the entire Bible.

Reaching the ‘Greeks’

Whether it is Australia, America, Great Britain, or another country, Western culture today is no longer one of mainly “Jews” but is more like “Greeks”—genuine, pagan “Greeks”—increasingly anti-Christian, with a predominantly atheistic, evolutionary, secular philosophy. Indeed, they are probably even worse than Paul’s opponents, who at least asked to hear him out. Now many secularists try to suppress Christian teachings. Today there is a remnant of “Jews” who still understand biblical and Christian terminology, but they are quickly becoming the minority.

Today’s “Greeks” do not have the foundational knowledge to understand the gospel. Because people have been taught to
believe evolution and that creation took millions of years, they have been led to believe the Bible is not credible and its history in Genesis (creation in six days and the Noahic Flood) is not true. Thus when an evangelist preaches the message of the cross, like the Greeks in Acts 17, they see it as foolishness.

How then can we reach today’s “Greeks”? Like the literal Greeks of Paul’s day, they need to be turned into “Jews.” Their faulty foundation concerning evolution needs to be rebuilt. They need to understand and believe that the Bible’s account of creation and the Fall of Man (i.e., that man is a sinner) is true. Once they have this foundation, they can better understand the message of the Messiah, who came to provide forgiveness for them by being the final blood sacrifice for their sin (Isa. 53). Then, hopefully, they would respond accordingly.

America and Britain are in similar circumstances as Australia. Generations ago, the Bible, prayer, and the Genesis history of creation were a part of everyday life in public (government-run) schools. But the seeds of “Greek” thinking were subtly sown through the educational system. Even in 1925, public school students in America learned from a textbook that taught Caucasians were the “highest race” and that the Earth was millions of years old. That textbook also promoted eugenics.

Generations have now passed through an educational system that is basically devoid of the knowledge of God. In fact, most schools teach against Christianity or relegate it to mere personal belief instead of objective truth about world history. The Bible, prayer, and creation have been thrown out of public education. Students are taught evolution as fact; and in their eyes, the Bible is not a credible book. They are “Greeks.”

Today, if we want to evangelize the once “Christianized” Western world, we must understand that the message of the cross will not be understood until we can change them from “Greeks” into “Jews.”

The culture today needs answers from science and the Bible to counter the evolutionary/millions-of-years teaching, so the literal history of Genesis 1—11 is established, thus giving credibility to the gospel (in fact, all Christian doctrine) founded in this history.

ENDNOTES


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Science long ago answered the question, “What happened to the dinosaurs?” Are you ready for the answer?

It explained that something from outer space, perhaps a gigantic asteroid, comet, or other space-born object, collided with our “evolving” planet, which led to massive changes in the climate, atmosphere, and topography and ultimately signed the death warrants of these early residents of Earth.

Recently Princeton University professor and paleontologist Gerta Keller proposed a new theory. Keller believes the dinosaurs and other mass extinctions can be tied to an intense period of volcanic activity and resulting greenhouse effects, and probably a series of asteroid hits.1 The National Academy of Sciences, in fact, published her theory.

Scripture, however, provides a more logical explanation.

God told Noah to build an ark. Noah was to bring aboard a male and a female of all ritually unclean, living creatures; seven pairs of ritually clean animals; and seven pairs of birds (Gen. 7:2–3).

Everything outside the ark died in the flood. The animals inside survived and were later set free to repopulate the earth.

These animals undoubtedly included dinosaurs. However, when they were set free, they found the world a different place. Under the Noahic Covenant, animals could be hunted for food; and many species were hunted into extinction. Climate and food changes also affected the dinosaurs. But they survived. The book of Job references the Behemoth (Job 40:15–24) and Leviathan (Job 41), which certainly sound like dinosaurs: “His [Leviathan’s] sneezings flash forth light. . . . Out of his mouth go burning lights; sparks of fire shoot out. Smoke goes out of his nostrils, . . . and a flame goes out of his mouth” (41:18–21).

Down through history there have been legends of monsters and dragons and the brave knights and sportsmen who slew them. Perhaps these legendary beasts were dinosaurs that survived the flood.

Today reptiles like the Komodo dragons of Indonesia, discovered at the start of the 20th century, can grow to 10 feet long and are the largest lizards in the world.2 The Galapagos Tortoise, which lives about 500 miles off the coast of Ecuador, is the largest tortoise known to exist. Perhaps even our own American alligator descended from a dinosaur that survived extinction.

by Thomas C. Simcox, Northeastern States director for The Friends of Israel

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2 21
The Table of Nations (Gen. 10:1–32) is the first part of the fourth section of the book of Genesis (each section is introduced by the word ma‘atot, “this is the genealogy of”). The second part of the section records how the nations became separated around the earth through the Tower of Babel incident (11:1–9). This fourth section (10:1—11:29) plays a crucial part in the progress of Genesis, namely, moving the historical account from a universal theme (Noah) to focus on Abraham (Shem’s descendant).

The Table of Nations then is not a genealogy in the sense that it delineates all the descendants of Noah’s sons. Rather, it is a general description of the spread of the nations through the sons of Noah, but with specific interest in those nations around Israel, particularly Canaan. This focus is because of God’s curse on Canaan, recorded in the previous section (9:18–27). It was important for the Israelites, whom God had appointed to dominate the descendants of Canaan, to know who specifically those descendants were.

**Structure of the Table**

The Table of Nations falls naturally into three parts, one for each of Noah’s sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. In a manner typical of Genesis, the least important son concerning Israel, Japheth, is dealt with first; and the most important, Shem, dealt with last. Each section about each son follows the same structure: (1) The sons of the son of Noah are listed, (2) some of the descendants of some of these sons are detailed, and (3) a summary statement ends the section.

An interesting facet of the passage is that two Hebrew words are used to describe the relationship between the names. The Hebrew word benê (“sons of”) highlights the ancestor or father, while the term yala(s) (“begot”) emphasizes the descendants and what happened to them. The result of adding up the table is this: Names listed for Japheth: 14; names listed for Ham: 30; names listed for Shem: 26, making a grand total of 70, which some see as comparable to the 70 Israelites who go down to Egypt in Genesis 46:27. Not all the names listed are descendants. Some are tribes; some even are lands or cities.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR ISRAEL**

What was Israel to learn from this table?

(1) All the nations of the earth descended from a single ancestor: the righteous Noah.

(2) God scattered mankind through confusion of languages (Tower of Babel, 11:1–9) as judgment for disobeying His command to “fill the earth” (9:1) and for displaying rebellious pride against Him.

(3) The stage is then set for God to begin bringing salvation to this divided, fallen world through His chosen servant, Abraham, a descendant of Shem.

(4) As it was about to enter the Promised Land, the nation of Israel (the generation reading Genesis to Deuteronomy) was to recognize its neighbors’ familial and tribal relationships.

(5) The Israelites were especially to recognize Canaan’s descendants as cursed and as their servants (cf. 15:17–21).

(6) And finally, the Israelites were to see themselves as a nation of priests in a dark world, a light to the Gentiles as God’s Chosen People.
Incitement, and attacks of all types must stop. No hudnas (temporary cease-fires) tolerated. Only total disarmament.

Peace through strength is the only path to survival. And the time to demonstrate that strength is now, before it is too late.

But What If?

But what if disengagement is a success? What if the Jewish residents of Gaza and those living in a few communities in northern Samaria evacuate and look to the future in other parts of the nation? In the eyes of some, their departure would constitute the beginning of the end for Israel—the termination of the Zionist dream. Before endorsing that notion, we must stop and think.

A short time ago, I stood atop a small hill in the old port of Jaffa and looked northward along the beautiful coastline of the Mediterranean Sea. There at my feet was Tel Aviv. It is a sprawling metropolis with wide shoulders, a huge heart, and designs on the future.

Had I stood there nearly 100 years ago, I would have been looking at a barren, lifeless sandscape—a stretch of seafront American writer Mark Twain could well have included in his dreary assessment of the Holy Land as a “forlorn and forsaken” place, fit only for the “habitation of owls and jackals.”

Sixty families in 1909 decided that it would be a good place to start a new life. So they did, and one can only imagine what they would say to one another were they to walk down Dizengoff Street today and see what they started.

We must never sell the people of Israel short. They are a nation of right-stuff pioneers. With water and time, the Negev will blossom and the Galilee will resemble a preview of Eden. You can count on it.

Elwood McQuaid is editor-in-chief for The Friends of Israel.
Eighty years ago this month, the famous Scopes Monkey Trial dominated the nation. It challenged the teaching of evolution in the public schools and initiated an era that has seen American education devolve from Bible based to an anti-Bible, anti-God view of the universe.

The drama unfolded in Dayton, Tennessee, a small, economically depressed town located between Chattanooga and Knoxville in the Tennessee River Valley. When the Dayton Coal and Iron Company went bankrupt in 1913, the population sunk to 1,800. Hard times fell on little Dayton, home of nine churches, two banks, a hosiery mill, a canning factory, a blast furnace, and the soon-to-be-famous Hotel Aqua on Main Street. Dayton was considered a Christian town. Law Professor Douglas Linder wrote that famous American journalist H. L. Mencken found Dayton “suffocatingly moral. He complained the town had no bootleggers, no gambling, no place to dance, and that ‘no fancy women’ had been seen in Dayton ‘since the McKinley Administration’” 25 years earlier. It was a sleepy place, not a tourist attraction. But by the end of 12 days in July 1925, hardly an American alive had not heard of Dayton, Tennessee.

From the time Darwin first published his theories, American evangelicals, particularly in the South, fought hard against teaching evolution in school. Christopher Armstrong and Grant Wacker of Duke University wrote that between 1923 and 1925, Oklahoma, Florida, North Carolina, and Texas tried, “with mixed success, to stop the teaching of evolution in the public schools.” Tennessee joined them on March 21, 1925, by passing the Butler Act, the only law in the country that made it a crime to “teach any theory that denies the Story of Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animal.” A conviction carried a $500 fine.

The five-year-old American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) quickly placed an ad in the Chattanooga Times offering to help any teacher who challenged the law. George Rappleyea, a 31-year-old former New Yorker, coal-mine manager, and evolutionist, read the ad and saw in it a way to bring business and fame to struggling little Dayton. He and local leaders formulated the plan; and Rappleyea contacted the ACLU, which agreed to fund the defense.

All they needed was a willing teacher. They found their man in John Scopes, a 24-year-old high school football coach and substitute biology instructor. His textbook was *A Civic Biology*, by George William Hunter, “a pro-evolutionary work certainly, but a work more advanced than Darwinian theory.” The famous Scopes Monkey Trial, as it became known, began in a sweltering July heat. Mencken, one of hundreds of journalists who descended on Dayton, described the town as having “the atmosphere of a blast furnace.” Yet the stifling heat did nothing to deter visitors or prevent the town from becoming like a sideshow at a circus. Huge banners...
as the trial opened on July 10, 1925. In people squeezed themselves in, 300 standing, their messages up hill and down dale. Darrow, a self-proclaimed agnostic who was democratic candidate for president. Clarence former U.S. secretary of state, and three-time William Jennings Bryan, a Christian, lawyer, would collapse. Because people feared the courtroom floor would collapse. The fact, the trial was later moved to the lawn High School. Linder, “Anti-Evolution League members block area around the Rhea County Courthouse was dubbed Monkey ville. Wrote Linder, "Anti-Evolution League members sold copies of T. T. Martin’s book Hell and the High School," and street preachers bellowed their messages up hill and down dale. Business boomed at the Hotel Aqua, which was forced to turn patrons away. In the courthouse, built to seat 700, about 1,000 people squeezed themselves in, 300 standing, as the trial opened on July 10, 1925. In fact, the trial was later moved to the lawn because people feared the courtroom floor would collapse. Prosecuting the case was the famous William Jennings Bryan, a Christian, lawyer, former U.S. secretary of state, and three-time democratic candidate for president. Clarence Darrow, a self-proclaimed agnostic who was considered the most famous attorney in the nation, defended John Scopes. Chicago radio station WGN broadcast live from the trial each day. And covering the story for the Baltimore Evening Sun was reporter H. L. Mencken.

The prosecution was brief. The defense had lined up expert scientific witnesses to support evolution, but the court would not allow them to testify. As a result, Darrow called an expert Bible witness, none other than William Jennings Bryan. Bryan’s entire testimony can be accessed on the Internet.

Questioning lasted more than two hours, but the judge abruptly adjourned the court and struck the entire examination from the record as irrelevant.

In his closing argument, Darrow, the defense attorney, pulled a switch. He asked the jury to find Scopes guilty, saying in part, “The court has told you very plainly that if you think my client taught that man descended from a lower order of animals, you will find him guilty. . . . This law will never be decided until it gets to a higher court, and it cannot get to a higher court probably, very well, unless you bring in a verdict.”

After 12 days of what some called “the trial of the century,” it took the jury only nine minutes to return a verdict of guilty. The judge fined Scopes a mere $100, and everyone went home. According to law professor Edward J. Larson, “Not a single editorial . . . determined it was a decisive event either killing the anti-evolution crusade or a tremendous victory propelling it.”

Darrow appealed the conviction to the Tennessee Supreme Court, which reversed it on a technicality.

Five days after the trial ended, Bryan who had been suffering from diabetes and a heart condition for years, returned home from church Sunday morning, ate dinner, took a nap, and died in his sleep. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. His tombstone reads, “He Kept The Faith.” Bryan College, an evangelical Christian college in Dayton, is named after him. Darrow died in 1938 at age 80.

Tennessee repealed the Butler Act in 1967 when a teacher claimed it violated his First Amendment right to free speech. John Scopes became a petroleum engineer and died in 1970.

The Scopes trial was the beginning of court involvement in the never ending drama that has seen evolution overtake America. In the 1968 case of Epperson v. Arkansas, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that evolution could be taught in public schools “because it is a science.” However, it disallowed creationism, “because it constitutes a religion.” In 1987 Louisiana case, the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional to teach evolution and creationism together. In 2001 the State Board of Education in Kansas voted 7–3 to reverse its 1999 decision to remove evolution as a required subject. It also restored the teaching of two other evolution-oriented theories: cosmology and plate tectonics.

In the years since the Scopes trial, America has so changed that God and the Bible have been thrown out of public education in favor of the theory of evolution, now considered “the bedrock of science.” In fact, laws are on record to keep creation science, considered a “religion,” from being taught.

If all this could happen in just 80 years, what do the next 80 years hold?

ENDNOTES
3 Ibid.
4 Christopher Armstrong and Grant Wacker, Duke University, National Humanities Center, “The Scopes Trial” [www.nhc.rtp.nc.us/8080/tserve/twenty/tskyinfo/bscopes.htm].
5 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
12 Quoted in “The Scopes Monkey Trial” [www3.mistral.co.uk/bradburyac/tennesse.html].
13 “A Battle of Wills,” Court TV Online.
14 Raja Chebium, “75 years after the Scopes trial pitted science against religion, the debate goes on,” CNN.com Law Center [http://archives.cnn.com/2000/LAW/07/13/scopes.monkey_trial/].
15 “Can Science Conquer Kansas,” University of Wisconsin, Board of Regents [http://whyfiles.org/091evolution].

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Richard Dawkins, noted scientific scholar, ethologist,1 and author, describes someone who does not believe in evolution this way: “It is absolutely safe to say that if you meet somebody who claims not to believe in evolution, that person is ignorant, stupid or insane—or wicked, but I’d rather not consider that.”2

According to a November 23, 2004, CBS poll, Dawkins reportedly described a majority of Americans. The poll claims to show that “Americans do not believe that humans evolved, . . . only 13 percent of those polled say that God was not involved [in creation],” and “about two-thirds of Americans want creationism taught along with evolution.”3

In his best-selling book The Blind Watchmaker, Dawkins argued that the universe exists without design: “I want to persuade the reader, not just that Darwinian world-view happens to be true, but that it is the only known theory that could, in principle, solve the mystery of our existence.”4 And Dawkins is absolutely sure he is right.

Others who share his self-confidence are the editors of ScienceWeek. In their January 23, 2005, editorial they slammed creationism as “blasphemy”; accused creationists of being primitive thinkers who “believe the Earth is as flat as a pancake, a few thousand years old, and resting on the backs of four giant elephants”; and warned America to keep “religionists” out of public education because they “subvert the public school teaching of science.”5

Ken Ham, president and founder of Answers in Genesis–US (AiG) and a leading spokesman on creation, has been ridiculed and raked over the coals recently by the secular press concerning AiG’s construction of a $25 million Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky, near Cincinnati, Ohio. AiG’s Web site says the museum “will proclaim to the world that the Bible is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice and in every area it touches on.”6

Andrew Kantor, a columnist with USA Today, called the museum a “national embarrassment” that uses “fake ‘science’ to convince gullible people of silly things.”7

The great divide between those who believe in creation and those who don’t has existed for centuries. However, evolutionists are becoming increasingly aggressive and more determined than ever to wipe God from what they consider the Big Bang-created landscape.

How far back does this big lie go? As early as the sixth century B.C. there

Creation vs. Evolution: The Battle for Truth
were Greeks who denied the concept of intelligent design. Biographer Desmond King-Hele wrote that Anaximenes believed life “originated in water . . . [and] began spontaneously in primordial slime.” Another Greek, he wrote, believed men “developed, by gradual stages, from fish.” In the first century A.D. the apostle Paul confronted the pagan but intelligent Athenians with a simple explanatory statement on creation, referring to “God, who made the world and everything in it” (Acts 17:24).

Even in the midst of 18th-century “Christian” Europe, naturalists such as Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus and Frenchman Georges de Buffon raised questions about the concept of creation; yet they did not eliminate God. There were several early though mostly unknown evolutionists, including Erasmus Darwin, Charles Darwin’s grandfather. Erasmus wrote about the concept in his book Zoonomia. French scientist-philosopher Pierre de Maupertuis wrote extensively on mutation, and French naturalist Jean Baptiste Lamarck devised a theory he called “transformism.” But the publication in 1859 of Charles Darwin’s On the Origin of Species, called the “book that shook the world,” brought widespread acceptance to the theory of evolution.

Simply put, On the Origin of Species claims that, in a fight for survival of the fittest, the young of a species gradually develops adaptive variations through a process of natural selection. These variations are genetically passed on to the next generation, thus evolving the species. He also claimed that all related organisms come from common ancestors.

The book sold out the first day it hit the stands.

But it did not resolve the issue of how the world actually began. Enter the Big Bang Theory. According to the U.S. government’s National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Big Bang is “the dominant scientific theory about the origin of the universe.” Says NASA, “The universe was created sometime between 10 billion and 20 billion years ago from a cosmic explosion that hurled matter in all directions.” NASA’s description, however, does add this disclaimer: “Although the Big Bang Theory is widely accepted, it probably will never be proved; consequentially, leaving a number of tough, unanswered questions.”

Another explanation goes something like this:

Our universe is thought to have begun as an infinitesimally small, infinitely hot, infinitely dense, something—a singularity. Where did it come from? We don’t know. Why did it appear? We don’t know. After its initial appearance, it apparently inflated (the “Big Bang”), expanded and cooled, going from very, very small and very, very hot, to the size and temperature of our current universe. It continues to expand and cool to this day and we are inside of it. Today belief in evolution and the Big Bang permeate the educational system, and anyone who tries to change that fact is dragged into court. In October 2004 the Dover, Pennsylvania, school board voted 6-3 to include the teaching of “intelligent design” alongside Darwinism in its ninth grade biology curriculum. The decision, the first of its kind in the nation, caused a commotion in the small, rural school district located 20 miles south of the state capital of Harrisburg:

Critics call the change in the ninth-grade biology curriculum a veiled attempt to require public schoolchildren to learn creationism, a biblical-based view that credits the origin of species to God. Schools typically teach evolution, the theory that Earth is billions of years old and that life forms developed over millions of years.

Two of the three board members who voted against the measure immediately resigned. They contended the 1987 U.S. Supreme Court ruling making it unconstitutional for Louisiana to teach creationism applies equally to Pennsylvania. Meanwhile in Atlanta, Georgia, a federal court ruled in January against Cobb County leaders who approved a sticker, placed on the inside cover of biology textbooks, that called evolution a theory, not a fact. The judge admitted the sticker made no reference to God or religion. Nevertheless, he wrote, “The sticker would appear to advance the religious viewpoint of the Christian fundamentalists and creationists who were vocal during the textbook adoption process regarding their belief that evolution is a theory, not a fact.”

Evolution has become so deeply ingrained in public education that many Georgia residents feared the state was “making itself look like a bunch of rubes” for allowing anything to imply that the theory might, perhaps, be wrong.

Ken Ham believes the secular media have misinterpreted the November reelection of President George W. Bush to mean that more people in America believe in creation than evolution because they voted conservative. Creation/evolution battles are going on in more than 20 states, he said, and “many Americans have
finally awakened to the fact that the secular humanists are taking over the culture.”

So the battle for truth continues. On one side stand the evolutionists, like Richard Dawkins, who sneer at Genesis and view creationists as dolts who reject science and want to shove the world back into the dark ages. On the other side are the creationists, who believe Moses and Jesus: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).

It is a battle between spiritual darkness and light. Unfortunately, many people cannot distinguish between the two: “The natural [unregenerate] man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:14).

So the fight is destined to rage on.

Have You an Answer?


TO WHAT WERE ITS FOUNDATIONS FASTENED? OR WHO LAID ITS CORNERSTONE? OR WHO SHUT IN THE SEA WITH DOORS. WHEN IT BURST FORTH AND ISSUED FROM THE WOMB; WHEN I MADE THE CLOUDS ITS GARMENT; AND THICK DARKNESS ITS SWADDLING BAND? (vv. 6, 8–9)

HAVE YOU COMMANDED THE MORNING SINCE YOUR DAYS BEGAN, AND CAUSED THE DAWN TO KNOW ITS PLACE? HAVE YOU ENTERED THE SPRINGS OF THE SEA? OR HAVE YOU WALKED IN SEARCH OF THE DEPTHS?

HAVE YOU COMPREHENDED THE BREADTH OF THE EARTH? TELL ME, IF YOU KNOW ALL THIS (vv. 12, 16, 18).

HAVE YOU ENTERED THE TREASURY OF SNOW, OR HAVE YOU SEEN THE TREASURY OF HAIL, WHICH I HAVE RESERVED FOR THE TIME OF TROUBLE, FOR THE DAY OF BATTLE AND WAR? (vv. 22–23)

BY WHAT WAY IS LIGHT DIFFUSED, OR THE EAST WIND SCATTERED OVER THE EARTH? WHO HAS DIVIDED A CHANNEL FOR THE OVERFLOWING WATER, OR A PATH FOR THE THUNDERBOLT, TO CAUSE IT TO RAIN ON A LAND WHERE THERE IS NO MAN, . . . TO SATISFY THE DESOLATE WASTE?


DO YOU KNOW THE ORDAINANCES OF THE HEAVENS? CAN YOU SET THEIR DOMINION OVER THE EARTH?

CAN YOU FILL UP YOUR VOICE TO THE CLOUDS, THAT AN ABUNDANCE OF WATER MAY COVER YOU?

Can you send out lightnings, that they may go, And say to you, “Here we are”? (vv. 31–35)

HAVE you the horse strength? DOES the hawk fly by your wisdom? . . . Does the eagle mount up at your command? (39:19, 26–27).

He who rebukes God, let him answer it (40:2).

ENDNOTES

1 Ethology is “a branch of knowledge dealing with human character and with its formation and evolution.” Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v. “ethology.”


6 “About the Answers in Genesis Creation Museum” [www.answersingenesis.org/museum/about.asp].

7 Andrew Kantor, “Good technology requires good science behind it,” USA Today, February 4, 2005 [www.usatoday.com/tech/columnist/andrewkantor/2005-02-04-kantor_x.htm].


13 “Big Bang Theory: An Overview” [www.allaboutscience.org/big-bang-theory.htm].


15 Ken Ham, Answers in Genesis newsletter (March 2005).

16 Ibid.
As far as the nations of this world are concerned, Israel stands apart. Scripture teaches that the nations were "made [not created] from one blood" and so may be, and quite often are, only here temporarily, depending on how they conform to God's conditions. He has "determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings" (Acts 17:26).

Some nations, like some animals, no longer exist, such as the Hittites, Sumerians, Scythians, and others. New nations have been made, such as the United States; and there will actually be nations in the new earth (Rev. 21:24). Possibly those nations will have earned God's blessing as nations because of their kindness towards God's special nation, Israel. (See Genesis 12:2-3; Zechariah 14:16.)

Of all the nations God has formed throughout history, assigning them bounds and times, Israel (with its capital of Jerusalem) is the only nation on Earth said to have been created and therefore certain to last forever. Things that are made may disintegrate and die, but what God creates endures forever. (See "A Special Kind of Miracle," page 13.)

"For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory. That a people yet to be created may praise the Lord (Ps. 102:16, 18).

But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy (Isa. 65:18).

These wonderful promises refer not to the present people of Israel and the present Jerusalem, of course—for they and it are still dominated (like most of the other nations) by secular humanism and an evolutionary worldview. But the day is coming when "all Israel will be saved. . . . 'The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob'" (Rom. 11:26).

God, speaking through the prophet Isaiah, long ago promised Israel,

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me," says the Lord, "so shall your descendants and your name remain" (Isa. 65:17; 66:22).

Like the first heaven and earth, God will both create and make the new heavens and earth, and "the holy city, New Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:2, cf. 10) will be its eternal capital city. The gates of the city will be inscribed with the names of Israel's 12 tribes and its foundations with the names of Christ's 12 apostles.

Israel has a glorious future. But there will also be other nations in the new earth (Rev. 21:24). In view of the fact that America, up to the present, at least, has been Israel's best friend as a nation, we can hope that one of these will be our own beloved country.

by Henry M. Morris
In 1936, Kazakhstan, a state just south of Russia, was incorporated into the Soviet Union. With the Soviet breakup in 1991, Kazakhstan became an independent nation, which allowed for a religious renewal and the freedom to propagate the faith. The country is predominately Muslim (47 percent). Russian Orthodoxy runs a close second at 44 percent. Protestants constitute only a sliver of the population at two percent, and seven percent is referred to as “other.”

Since the relatively free exercise of religion began, it was the Protestant and “other” groups, with their message of faith in Christ, that began to make significant inroads—inroads viewed as unacceptable by Muslims and the Orthodox hierarchy.

Consequently, the government cracked down on freedom of religion, and one of the first fronts of attack against believers began with the children. It is noteworthy that opponents of the faith are always well aware of the fact that if they can deprive a generation of boys and girls of religious training, they can produce a generation of biblical illiterates whom the state or state religion can easily manipulate. This is precisely what is taking place in Kazakhstan today.

In January officials in a central Kazakhstan town forced schoolchildren to answer questions about their religious beliefs, including whether they attended a place of worship. Although this action was illegal, it followed an earlier directive that banned anyone under age 18 from attending worship services or Sunday school. According to a report by Forum 18 News Service, the Ministry of Education and Science claimed the order was to ensure the security and health of the children.

Another target was a Baptist-run orphanage in northern Kazakh. Despite the fact that locals considered it the best home in town for orphans, officials closed it down and turned out the 30 children being cared for there. Baptists fear closing Hope orphanage will enable local authorities to seize the building on the pretext that the home was operating without a permit, Forum 18 reported.

The founder of the orphanage said other child-care facilities are allowed to operate without permits and that the real reason for closing Hope is the increasing severity of official state policy against religious believers.

His fear is born out in the planned new restrictions banning unregistered religious activity, along with unapproved missionary activity. In addition, all religious literature must now be approved by local officials. A group of Protestant churches complained. “It is the former KGB that lays down religious policy in the country,” a human rights activist told Forum 18.

A sad footnote, one that is becoming all too familiar in the former Soviet commonwealths, is that an Orthodox priest expressed joy at the crackdown. Forum 18 quoted him: “Now Protestants and religious missionaries will not be so free in their activities in Kazakhstan.”

The message is that religion without spiritual reality can as quickly become a weapon in the hands of evildoers as guns and knives. The results, however, are much more devastating.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Scripture Reference</th>
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</table>
| First Day    | LIGHT
God separates light from darkness; calls light “Day” and darkness “Night.” | 1:3–5               |
| Second Day   | FIRMAMENT (Expanse)
God creates a firmament to separate the waters from beneath and above; calls the firmament “Heaven.” | 1:6–8               |
| Third Day    | SEA, DRY LAND, PLANTS
God gathers all dry land “into one place” (probably one massive continent, later separated; 10:25); calls the land “Earth” and the waters “Seas.”
Note: Plant life is created with apparent age, fully mature, with trees yielding fruit (1:12). | 1:9–13              |
| Fourth Day   | LIGHTS IN THE FIRMAMENT
God places sun, moon, and stars in the heavens “to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.” | 1:14–19             |
| Fifth Day    | BIRDS, SEA CREATURES
God creates “an abundance of living creatures” in the waters, and “every winged bird according to its kind.”
Note: All are created fully mature. | 1:20–23             |
| Sixth Day    | LAND, ANIMALS, MAN
God creates all “cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind.” Then the Lord creates man (Adam) and gives him dominion over creation.
Note: All are created fully mature. | 1:24–31             |
| Seventh Day  | GOD RESTED
God creates the Sabbath. “God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” Later God gave His Sabbath to Israel as a sign of His covenant (Mosaic) with the Jewish people. | 2:1–4               |
In the previous chapter, a delegation from Bethel questioned the necessity of continuing to fast over the destruction of Solomon’s Temple. Zechariah did not address the issue directly; instead, he used the question to reflect on how God disciplined the nation’s forefathers in the past because of their disobedience (7:8–14). He warned the returning remnant that failure to repent of sin would bring the same judgment (1:1–6).

In chapter 8, Zechariah turned from God’s past discipline to bring the remnant a new message of hope. He focused on the Millennial Kingdom when Israel will experience restoration, renewal, peace, and prosperity. In that day, Israel’s fasting will be replaced with joyful feasting. The phrase the LoRD of Hosts (used 18 times in this chapter) reassured Israel that God will fulfill His Kingdom promises.

Israel Restored
Zechariah began his third message to the delegation with the following statement:

*Again the word of the LoRD of hosts came, saying, “Thus says the LoRD of hosts: ‘I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her’” (vv. 1–2).*

In these opening verses, God clearly states His burning and passionate love for Israel. His love for the Jewish people will tolerate no rivals (Ex. 34:14) in much the same way that a husband claims exclusivity over his wife. God, in His righteous jealousy, comes to Israel’s defense and wages war in great wrath against all who try to thwart His purposes and plans for this nation (1:14–15; cf. Ezek. 38:18–19).

The Lord further stated, “I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem” (v. 3). This return and dwelling will take place at His Second Advent. In that day the Lord will “dwell,” or settle down, in Jerusalem and make the city His spiritual and political capital from which He will rule the world. Jerusalem will be called the “City of Truth” (v. 3) because the Messiah will rule in truth (Rev. 19:11).

Verse 3 also states that the Temple Mount will be called “The Holy Mountain” because the Messiah’s presence will sanctify it as the holy place where God will be worshiped in truth. Jerusalem will become a city of peace, safety, security, and divine blessing where men and women, well advanced in age (Isa. 65:20), sit without fear for their safety. Boys and girls will also fill the streets of Jerusalem and laugh and play without fear (vv. 4–5).

These promises might have seemed unbelievable to the Jewish people returning from exile in Babylon or, for that matter, to any generation of Jewish people. So the Lord posed a rhetorical question:

*Thus says the LoRD of hosts: ‘If it is marvelous [difficult] in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these [those] days, will it also be marvelous [difficult] in My eyes?’ Says the LoRD of hosts” (v. 6).*

In other words, nothing is difficult or insurmountable for God, including delivering the Jewish people of Zechariah’s generation or any generation, for that matter. In fact, God will execute one of the greatest deliverances and gatherings of Jewish people at the end of the Great Tribulation (Isa. 11:11–12; 43:5–6; Mt. 24:31). In that day Israel’s relationship with the Lord will be restored, and God will again call the Jewish people “My people” (vv. 7–8; 13:9; cf. Hos. 2:23). Notice the rhetorical question in verse 6 is bracketed with the words says the LoRD of hosts, giving divine authority and assurance that Israel’s deliverance at any time is never difficult for God.

Israel Renewed
The Lord then encouraged the remnant, which had started to rebuild the Temple, to finish the task:

*“Thus says the LoRD of hosts: ‘Let your hands be strong, you who have been hearing in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, who spoke in the day the foundation was laid for the house of the LoRD of hosts, that the temple might be built’” (v. 9).*

The prophets’ names are not given, but most likely they were Haggai and Zechariah. “Let your hands be strong” is meant to strengthen and encourage Israel.

Scripture gives two reasons why the Temple was not built: “There were no wages for man nor any hire for beast; there was no peace from the enemy for whoever went out or came in; for I set all men, everyone, against his neighbor” (v. 10). First, the returning remnant was poor and unable to afford the necessary resources to reconstruct the Temple. Second, civil and political strife existed within and without the Jewish community, hampering the work (Ezra 4:1–5; 5:3; 6:6, 13).

But that was then. Zechariah now had an encouraging word from the Lord: “But now I will not treat the
remnant of this people as in the former days,’ says the LORD of hosts” (v. 11). A new day had dawned. In the past God had disciplined a disobedient Israel, but now the nation would experience His favor and blessing. Israel’s land shall prosper:

“For the seed shall be prosperous [literally, “seed of peace”], the vine shall give its fruit, the ground shall give her increase, . . . I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these” (v. 12).

The nation will sow its seed in a time of peace, and nothing will destroy it. God will restore a heavy dew to the land (v. 12), causing the vine and the ground to produce abundant fruit. This promise to the remnant will find its greater fulfillment during the Millennial Kingdom (Amos 9:13–15).

The Lord said to Israel, “Just as you were a curse among the nations, . . . so I will save you, and you shall be a blessing” (v. 13). This is the theme of chapter 8. In the past, Israel was cursed among the nations because she broke God’s commandments and practiced idolatry (Dt. 28:15–68). However, the day will come when God will reverse the curse, “save” (deliver, v. 13) Israel physically and spiritually, and make her a blessing among the nations (Gen. 12:3).

Such a glorious promise of future blessing was meant to calm and comfort Israel in her hardship and give the nation courage to face the future. Therefore, Zechariah commanded Israel, “Do not fear, let your hands be strong” (v. 13). In other words, because of His purpose and plan for His people, God commanded them to be diligent in their efforts, trusting the outcome to God.1

The Lord continued to provide Israel with assurance that His blessings will come to fruition:

“Just as I determined to punish you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I would not relent [repent or change His mind], so again in these days I am determined to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah” (vv. 14–15).

As it was in God’s divine purpose to destroy Israel’s forefathers because of their disobedience, so, too, is it in His plan to bless Jerusalem and Israel. This promise awaits future fulfillment.

In light of these promises, Israel was called on to be spiritually and morally obedient to the Lord and was commanded to practice four things that would provide evidence of a restored relationship with God.

First, Israel was to “speak each man the truth to his neighbor” (v. 16). Speaking truth would prove the relationship with God had been restored. Second, Israel was to “give judgment in your [their] gates for truth, justice, and peace” (v. 16). Court decisions administered in truth at the city gate would show that justice prevailed throughout Israel and bring peace to the nation. Third, “Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor” (v. 17); that is, do not plan wickedness in your mind against a fellow Israelite. Fourth, “do not love a false oath” (v. 17), or do not commit perjury in a court of law against your neighbor. God hates all these sins (v. 17; cf. Prov. 6:16–19).

Israel to Rejoice

In 7:2–3 the men from Bethel had asked the priests and prophets whether the fast to commemorate the destruction of Solomon’s Temple (586 B.C.) should still be kept. A wise Zechariah did not give a direct answer but, rather, addressed the delegates’ motives for keeping the fast. If they fasted for selfish reasons or mere outward, ritualistic show, then God had no part in it. God desired obedience and justice from Israel, not ritualistic formalism. The prophet then warned the delegates and nation not to commit the sins of their forefathers (7:8–14), lest the judgment that fell on their ancestors also fall on them.

Zechariah waited to answer the delegates’ question until his fourth and final message. With the return of the remnant, a new age had dawned; and all their fasting (the fourth-, fifth-, seventh-, and tenth-month fasts) would become “cheerful feasts” (v. 19) because of the blessing Israel would experience through its restoration and spiritual renewal.

This joy is a foretaste of what Israel and the world will experience in a fuller way during the Messiah’s Millennial Reign. Because of future blessings through God’s grace and faithfulness, Israel is admonished to “love truth and peace” (v. 19).

Israel’s restoration and spiritual renewal will bring blessing to the entire world. Gentiles from “many cities” will urge one another to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to worship the Lord and seek His favor; the response is, “I myself will go also” (v. 21). Zechariah emphasized the certainty of this prophecy with these words: “Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD” (v. 22).

Messiah’s rule in Jerusalem will be the main attraction for the nations coming to Israel. Redeemed Gentiles who come to Jerusalem during the Millennium will want to learn from the Jewish people: “In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you’” (v. 23). Immediately on arriving in Jerusalem, 10 men will seize a flopping corner of a passing Jewish man’s garment with such intensity that they will not let go.

What nations have sought through humanistic endeavor, redeemed mankind will realize in the God of Israel. Jewish men will be priests and ministers of God, teaching the nations what they need to know concerning the Lord in Jerusalem (Isa. 61:6). This is the day when God’s promise to the nations, “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen. 12:3), comes to full fruition. In that day, the nations and Israel will rejoice in the Lord’s reign and their redemption.

God and Wisdom
(Part 3)

He previous article described two wisdoms, or world-life views, that oppose each other concerning issues in modern-day society. One wisdom, or view, has as its foundation and starting point the revealed knowledge of the personal, sovereign God who created the universe and a reverential trust in Him and His thoughts and ways. This is the true wisdom that is rightly related to ultimate reality. According to this wisdom, each human being exists to glorify God and serve Him and others.

The other wisdom has as its foundation and starting point a willful rejection of the revealed knowledge of the personal, sovereign God who created the universe and a reverential trust in false religion, including the religions of naturalism and secular humanism. It denies God’s existence, or it claims that, if God exists, He is irrelevant to today’s world. According to this “wisdom,” each human being exists only to glorify and serve mankind or one’s self, not God.

A prominent advocate of this view expressed its essence as follows:

The great conflict of the 21st century may be between the West and terrorism. But terrorism is a tactic, not a belief. The underlying battle will be between modern civilization and anti-modernist fanatics; between those who believe in the primacy of the individual and those who believe that human beings owe blind allegiance to a higher authority; between those who give priority to life in this world and those who believe that human life is no more than preparation for an existence beyond life; between those who believe that truth is revealed solely through scripture and religious dogma, and those who rely primarily on science, reason, and logic. Terrorism will disrupt and destroy lives. But terrorism is not the only danger we face.

The Bible calls this wisdom “the wisdom of this world” (1 Cor. 1:20).

God’s Rejection of This World’s Wisdom

God indicated that the wisdom of the wise men of a people whose hearts are far from God will not last forever. It will perish (Isa. 29:13–14). God will destroy the wisdom of the worldly wise (1 Cor. 1:19). Paul described God’s rejection or evaluation of this world’s wisdom and the worldly wise in 1 Corinthians 1:17–28. The worldly wise try to gain a personal knowledge and understanding of ultimate reality through wisdom that mankind has developed exclusively on the basis of the human senses, ability to reason, and methods of research. But God is ultimate reality and the source of ultimate wisdom, and the wisdom mankind has developed is incapable of bringing people to a personal knowledge of God and His wisdom (“the world through wisdom did not know God,” v. 21). Thus the world’s wisdom fails to bring its followers to a personal knowledge and understanding of ultimate reality.

Paul indicated that God in His wisdom did what the world’s wisdom could not do: provide a means for mankind to come to a personal knowledge of God and His wisdom and, therefore, a personal knowledge and understanding of ultimate reality. But God did so in a way that advocates of the wisdom of this world consider offensive and foolish (vv. 22–23). God sent His Son to the world through incarnation to die on a cross as the substitute for mankind’s sins. He thereby provided a way for people to come to a personal knowledge of God and His wisdom and, therefore, a personal knowledge and understanding of ultimate reality (vv. 17–18, 23–24, 30).

By using the means that the worldly wise called “foolish” to accomplish what the wisdom of this world could not do, He thereby exposed the foolishness of the world’s wisdom and its inability to bring mankind to a personal knowledge and understanding of ultimate reality (vv. 19–20). This demonstrated that the so-called “foolishness” of God is “wiser than men” (v. 25). F. W. Grosheide expressed it this way:

God entered into the world with its false presumption of wisdom and introduced something which goes counter to the wisdom of this world and condemns it, shows it up as foolishness in bringing about what the wisdom of the world was unable to accomplish. Christ was crucified and brought salvation to all who believe. This work of Christ demonstrates that the wisdom of the world is not wisdom at all, because it does not reckon with God (Jas. 2:15), neither does it accomplish anything. In light of this, “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God” (1 Cor.
things” (Rom. 1:22). Their thoughts and actions are “futile” (“directed to worthless ends”) because they have no understanding, and “are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge” (Jer. 4:22). The word translated “foolish” refers to a person who is impatient with discipline, overbearing in his attitude since he has all the answers, feels that his own way is without error, is licentious, and considers the Bible’s teachings “a strange thing” and contrary to his “world view” (Isa. 44:25). The word translated “silly” describes a person who lacks “a moral or spiritual sense,” lives “by oneself, on one’s own resources, without dependence on God,” and is in “spiritual apostasy.”

Because the “wise men” of Jeremiah’s day had “rejected the word of the Lord,” they were “ashamed” (publicly disgraced), “dismayed” (demoralized “from frustration”), and “taken” (seized with anguish) by the failure of their wisdom when God’s judgment came. These consequences demonstrated that theirs was not true wisdom (Jer. 8:9). In light of such failure, advocates of this world’s wisdom were exhorted not to glory in their wisdom. Instead, they should glory in understanding and knowing God (Jer. 9:23–24).

Jeremiah 10:7 says, “Among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like You.” Those who claim to be wise because they reject God’s revelation become “fools” (Rom. 1:22). Their thoughts become “futile” (“directed to worthless things”) and the part of their being that is supposed to discern or understand truth versus error loses its ability to do so, becoming “darkened” (dominated by false wisdom that is contrary to reality) (Rom. 1:21; 1 Cor. 3:20; Eph. 4:18).

As a result, they do not like to “retain God in their knowledge” (Rom. 1:28). Thus they exchange “the truth of God” (the revelation that God exists as ultimate reality; see Romans 1:18–20) “for the lie” (the assertion that the universe is ultimate reality) and worship and serve “the creature rather than the Creator” (Rom. 1:25). They do the latter through the invention and pursuit of religions that are contrary to reality. Some of these religions involve worshiping idols in human or animal form (Rom. 1:23). Others center on naturalism, pantheism, forms of the occult, mysticism, and secular humanism.

“Because of the ignorance that is in them” and “the blindness [“hardening”] of their heart,” the worldly wise are “alienated from the life of God” (Eph. 4:18), are “past feeling” (calloused, insensitive to God’s revealed truth and witness of their conscience) (Eph. 4:19), and conduct their lives in accord with “the futility of their mind” (Eph. 4:17). As a result, they give themselves over to lewdness (“licentiousness, debauchery, sensuality”), “to work all uncleanness” (“the practice of every kind of immorality”) “with greediness” (“insatiableness, literally ‘a desire to have more’) (Eph. 4:19).

Because the worldly wise reject God’s revelation and they worship and serve “the creature rather than the Creator,” God has judged them by giving “them up to uncleanness” and “vile passions” “to dishonor their bodies among themselves.” He has given them over “to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.” Thus they are “filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality [lesbianism, homosexuality, fornication, adultery, bestiality, pornography], wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness,” and “are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful” (Rom. 1:24–31), “lovers of themselves, lovers of money, . . . blasphemers, . . . unthankful, unholy, . . . slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, . . . always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. 3:2–4, 7).

Although “knowing the righteous judgment of God” that they deserve, they not only do these things “but also approve of those who practice them” (Rom. 1:32).

God’s Judgment of the Worldly Wise

The Bible indicates several ways God judges advocates of the wisdom of this world. Divine woe is pronounced on “those who are wise in their own eyes” (Isa. 5:21). God “turns wise men backward, and makes their knowledge foolishness” (Isa. 44:25). God declared that He would make Babylon’s wise men “drunk” (Jer. 51:57). He threatened to “destroy the wise men from Edom” (Obad. 8). Jesus stated that God has hidden the wise from the wise knowledge He has revealed “to babes” (Mt. 11:25). Paul asserted that “God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise” (1 Cor. 1:27) and “catches the wise in their own craftiness” (1 Cor. 3:19; cf. Job 5:13).

God’s Word uses significant terms to describe advocates of the wisdom of this world. Those of Jeremiah’s day were described as “foolish” and “silly children” who have not known God, “have no understanding,” and “are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge” (Jer. 4:22). The word translated “foolish” refers to a person who “is impatient with discipline, overbearing in his attitude since he has all the answers, feels that his own way is without error, is licentious,” and considers the Bible’s teachings “a strange thing” and contrary to his “world view.” The word translated “silly” describes a person who lacks “a moral or spiritual sense,” lives “by oneself, on one’s own resources, without dependence on God,” and is in “spiritual apostasy.”

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Free elections are now a reality in a country that hadn’t had a shot at a ballot box in decades. Today a free press has its say every day. Rape and torture houses are no more, and crops are replacing the mass graveyards in the fields once worked by the ancient Babylonians. Life is far from perfect in Iraq, but it is also a far cry from what it was.

America and the Iraqi people owe a great debt of gratitude to the much- underestimated and sometimes maligned members of the coalition who stuck it out when the going got rough. All of which says, in more ways than one, that it is good to have friends around when it comes time to do the heavy lifting.

The so-called insurgency has caused much trepidation among those who have not yet learned there is a price to pay for freedom—yours, mine, and the freedom of those unable to defend themselves. And in Iraq the stakes are immensely high. The terrorist operatives are Islamist radicals who see democracy in Iraq as a death knell for the old ways of oppression, brutality, and the life-stifling demagoguery of their brand of governance and pseudoreligion.

At the core of the action for freedom are men and women in uniform who have served with noble honor and distinction and given of themselves so unselfishly. They have seen our reasons for being there with a clarity not often found in the vision of some of our peers.

And, yes, for every one of them, staying alive in the service of the country is item number one. Roadside bombs, snipers, and fanatics bent on suicidal homicide are a constant hazard. That’s when it helps immensely to have a friend or, better still, many friends to help ensure your safety.

Most of us remember the tragic problems encountered when it was discovered that our Humvees, personnel carriers, and trucks were not adequately armored to survive blasts from roadside bombs and other explosive devices. In true, can-do American fashion, the ground troops and service personnel began to jury-rig their vehicles to withstand the explosions. The Marines and Army both found ways of creating armor plating that would improve protection for the soldiers.

The Marines decided to put in a call to a friendly neighbor to see if it could help. And indeed it could. The neighbor was Israel, in particular the Israeli firm Plasan Sasa that has a world of know-how protecting vehicles from bomb attacks because of its experiences in Lebanon and the intifada.

As a result, the Israeli firm was awarded a $100 million subcontract to supply the armor for Marine trucks in Iraq. It’s always good to live in a neighborhood where you can reach out for a friend. Our Marines learned that in Iraq.

An Iraqi woman holds her child while voting in southern Iraq in January. Iraqis turned out to vote in their country’s first free election in a half-century, defying terrorists, suicide bombings, and mortar strikes (Andrew Parsons/AP/Wide World Photos).
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___ Please provide me with an annuity quotation.

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Address: ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
City: _________________________________________ State: _________ Zip: _______________ Phone: __________________________________________
Date of Birth: __________________________________________________ (Suggested minimum age of 60)
Name of Joint Annuitant __________________________________________________________________________________________________
Date of Birth: __________________________________________________ (Suggested minimum age of 60)
Possible Amount of Annuity ______________________________________________________ (Minimum amount $5,000)

Please call regarding details of a deferred payment gift annuity. Mail this form to The Friends of Israel, P.O. Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099.
I dislike pain. It doesn’t matter how many variations it may come in; I dislike them all.

I had been a Christian only two years when a dear friend gave me a book titled *Hinds’ Feet on High Places* by Hannah Hurnard. “It’s wonderful,” she said. “You’ll love it.”

I hated it. It depressed me. I never finished it back then. It was about pain and suffering and how God uses them both to help us grow spiritually.

But who wants pain? Certainly not I. Yet much to my chagrin, I’ve come to understand that one of our most serious defects as human beings is our tendency to seek God when we’re in trouble but become prideful and forget about Him when we’re not. Moses warned the Israelites about this dangerous propensity (Dt. 6:10–12; 8:11–17), and the awful events in the book of Judges attest to it.

But God truly uses our pain for our good if we let Him. He humbles us, draws us closer to Him, and enables us to glorify Him. The result is often a wonder to behold. Such was the case with Much-Afraid, the main character in Hurnard’s book; and such was the case with Hannah in the Old Testament.

At the height of her affliction, God heard Hannah’s prayer and gave the barren woman the son she so desperately wanted. But Hannah’s story does not end there.

After she weaned Samuel (probably at three years old), Hannah made good her vow to give her son to the Lord all the days of his life. She brought the child from their home in Ramah to the Tabernacle in Shiloh.

And there she left him with Eli, the high priest, who had done such a miserable job raising his own sons that God later had them killed.

But it was not Eli to whom Hannah was entrusting Samuel; it
was God. Then she extolled the Lord in a magnificent prayer of praise and faith, much like the one Mary offered more than 1,000 years later when she learned she would give birth to Jesus.

Hannah’s profound hope and trust in God as Sovereign, Creator, and Judge resound in the beautiful words of her soliloquy, which points ultimately to the King-Messiah:

No one is holy like the LoRD, for there is none besides You, nor is there any rock like our God. The LoRD kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up. For the pillars of the earth are the LoRD’s, and He has set the world upon them. He will guard the feet of His saints, but the wicked shall be silent in darkness. For by strength no man shall prevail. The adversaries of the LoRD shall be broken in pieces. . . . The LoRD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed (1 Sam. 2:2, 6, 8–10).

Each year Hannah would sew a little coat for Samuel and bring it to him in Shiloh (v. 19). So Samuel grew up at the Tabernacle, ministering before the Lord.

However, God, whose tenderness, love, and mercy far exceed our understanding, showered His grace on Hannah and gave her three more sons and two daughters, whose names Scripture never mentions (2:21). It mentions only Samuel.

Through Samuel, one of the most righteous men who ever lived, God began to clean up the mess that was Israel. In a single day, as He had warned, He rid Himself of Eli’s evil, corrupt sons who had defiled His holy name while serving as priests. The same day, after hearing the Philistines had defeated Israel, killed 30,000 men including his sons, and captured the Ark of the Covenant, Eli, at 98, died as well (4:18). From then on, Samuel judged Israel until his death.

With Samuel, God made a new beginning in Israel, formally instituting both the prophetic office (Acts 3:24; 13:20; Heb. 11:32) and monarchy and establishing the house of David, the lineage of the Messiah.

How often Samuel saw his mother we do not know. However, Scripture says, “He went from year to year on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and judged Israel in all those places. But he always returned to Ramah, for his home was there” (1 Sam. 7:16–17). And it was there he was buried (25:1).

The absence of trouble in life is often mistaken for blessing. Yet our deepest, most meaningful encounters with the Almighty—those that truly change us and glorify God—often result from our worst agonies.

Many years ago I attended a concert in a church here in New Jersey. The singer was a devout man of God named Paul Schumacher. His voice was beautiful, as was his testimony. He was dying of cancer and had undergone many surgeries over the years. To record his final CD, he had to lie down between songs to catch his breath.

“I’ll never forget what he told us. It went something like this: “Would I do it over again? No. But I wouldn’t have missed one day of what I’ve been through because it has brought me so close to the Lord.”

Do I want trouble in life? No. Did Hannah want to spend so many years childless and tormented? I doubt it. But in the end we turn out like Much-Afraid, whose name was changed to Grace and Glory, whose weakness was made strength in God, and whose heart was completely satisfied through His profound and unchanging love.

Lorna Simcox is senior editor for The Friends of Israel.

Shortly after his death on April 19, 1882, a rumor spread that Charles Darwin repudiated his “discoveries” and had turned to Christ. The story first appeared in the American Baptist journal, the Watchman Examiner, on August 19, 1915. In some Christian circles it still circulates today. Yet it contains more fiction than fact.

A woman named Elizabeth Cotton ministered in evangelism among the sick and elderly in England. According to the story, Lady Hope, as she became known, visits Darwin on his deathbed. He is reading the book of Hebrews as she enters his room. He tells her to gather a group of people on the grounds of his home so he can speak to them of Christ Jesus and His salvation. He also claims he was young and foolish when he promoted evolution and then affirms the truth of Scripture.

Unfortunately, no evidence substantiates this tale, which was put into a tract. Darwin continued publishing his theories even late in life. His children Francis and Henrietta denied the story, and Henrietta’s rebuttal was published in 1922 as Charles Darwin’s Death-Bed: Story of Conversion Denied by Mrs. R. B. (Henrietta) Litchfield. Darwin’s wife, Emma, who reportedly was deeply pained by the irreligious nature of Charles’s views, would have gladly corroborated such a conversion, wrote Russell M. Grigg. “She never did.” And after 20 years of research, Darwin’s biographer, Dr. James Moore, produced a 218-page book called The Darwin Legend, published by Baker Books in 1994. Moore’s conclusion: It was, indeed, only a story.

1 Russell M. Grigg, “Did Darwin Recant?” Creative Magazine, volume 18, issue 1 (December 1995), [www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v18/i1/darwin_recant.asp].
3 Grigg.
4 Ibid.

END NOTES
IDF soldier a neo-Nazi

Arutz-7—A non-Jewish Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) soldier who immigrated to Israel from Russia has been found to belong to a neo-Nazi organization.

Police detectives searched the IDF soldier’s vehicle after they deemed his behavior suspicious. Heroin was found, and he was arrested. During his arrest, the soldier told the police officers that he was a neo-Nazi and hated the State of Israel. The 20-year-old, who serves in a noncombat position, has a swastika tattooed on his left arm.

After searching his and his mother’s home in the Samaria city of Ariel, police discovered Nazi literature and material on his computer from neo-Nazi groups around the globe. He even showed the officers personal correspondence between himself and neo-Nazi groups. He hates Jews, hates the IDF, and considers himself a Nazi, according to a police spokesman.

The soldier’s mother, who immigrated to Israel with her son four years ago, also professed support for neo-Nazi groups and hatred for Israel. She was also taken into custody for possible connection with neo-Nazi groups. “We immigrated for the absorption package,” the soldier’s mother said when challenged.

The government will consider revoking the citizenship of the two if they used fraudulent documents, but warned that such action is complicated from a legal perspective.

Teen murdered

Arutz-7—Islamic Jihad terrorists executed an 18-year-old boy who helped Israel track down members of the gang. He lived in the same village where terrorists recently killed an Israeli soldier. The youth, Rami Al-Malakh, was shot to death.

The execution took place near Tulkarm, one of two cities where Israel has withdrawn its forces and given the Palestinian Authority (PA) responsibility for security.

Tulkarm is east of Netanya and overlooks what used to be the 1967 border before Judea, Samaria, and Gaza were captured by Israel in the Six-Day War. Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade terrorists, affiliated with the Fatah organization, which rules the PA, and the Islamic Jihad have led the latest wave of terror against Israel.

The 450 cows of Gush Katif

Arutz-7—Israel may demolish the city of Gush Katif in Jewish Gaza after it expels the residents there. There are hundreds of farms and hothouses in Gush Katif, but only one dairy farm. Its owners say they have no idea what the government plans for it.

Benny Ginzberg, the chief dairy farmer, pointed to the houses of the Arab city of Khan Yunis, several hundred meters away: “Those houses have been here since before the Six-Day War. If they wanted this land, what stopped them from spreading out to here before? We’re not bothering them; the opposite is true.

When we first came, they told us that we were crazy for even trying to build something here. ‘The land is cursed,’ they told us. Well, we built something, something very great, and now our own government wants to end it all? For what? Why?’

The small force of seven Israelis is filled out by two workers from Nepal. “We started it in Purim of 2000,” Benny recounts. “It took a year and a half of preparations to get off the ground, clearing the sand dunes, planning, building the site, acquiring the cows, and the like. We started with 200 cows and now have 450—a nice growth. Our goal is to reach an output of 5 million liters of milk a year, for which we need another 50 cows. At present, we produce over 13,000 liters a day.”

“One morning we came in to find one cow dead from a direct mortar shell blast,” Yaron Nachman recounts. “All in all, several cows have been hurt by mortars.”

Government officials have shown only limited interest in trying to find a solution for the dairy. “As the dairy goes,” one said, “so go the residents in general. After all, there is no realistic option for any of us; no alternative sites are ready, and no one has any idea where or how we would live, work, or send our children to school if this plan goes through.”

“The most important thing to keep in mind,” Benny says, “is that until the Tunisians arrived [a reference to Arafat and his men, who had been running the Palestine Liberation Organization from Tunisia until the Oslo Agreement of 1993], there was peace between us. Even now, the people of Khan Yunis don’t want us to leave. They’re happy with the situation as it is.

“Sharon didn’t count on the strength and cohesion of the people here—everyone is in this together, and no one will abandon the other, and no one will give up the struggle for the People of Israel to live in the Land of Israel. We’re here!”

‘Jail doesn’t scare us!’

Arutz-7—Among the 70,000–80,000 celebrants who came to Gush Katif for Israeli Independence Day May 12 was Tzfat’s Chief Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu. “I myself am ready to sit in jail to stop the withdrawal plan,” he told the crowds.

Busloads of people arrived in Gush Katif throughout the day, dropping visitors off at various communities along the way. One resident said she drove through several towns, “and each one of them was packed with people.”

Twelve public figures from different fields were invited to address the visitors, including Rabbi Eliyahu, MK Ayoub Kara (Likud), and others. Rabbi Eliyahu called on opponents of the disengagement plan to be willing to sit in jail in the course of the struggle.

He said, “We don’t want to go to jail, but jail doesn’t scare us.” MK Kara said he would be willing to give up his Knesset tasks in order to
remain with the Gush Katif residents. He and others blessed the audience and said they should be privileged to celebrate Independence Day in Gush Katif next year as well.

Both Gush Katif and Kfar Darom are scheduled to be swept clean of Jews this summer under disengagement.

Yehuda Meshi-Zahav said, “The Land of Israel is the inheritance of our forefathers and has belonged to the Nation of Israel for time immemorial. It is no one’s personal inheritance, and no one has a mandate to trade in Land of Israel territories. Don’t steal the Land of Israel from us!”

During the day a new synagogue was dedicated in Kfar Darom. The original cornerstone was laid in 1995 by none other than then-MK Ariel Sharon. Kfar Darom existed in the area during Talmudic times and was renewed some 75 years ago until it was conquered by Egypt in 1948. It was rebuilt once again after the Six-Day War, and now boasts some 70 families, as well as an elementary school, a yeshiva, and the Torah and Land Institute.

What’s next?

Maj.-Gen. Dan Har’el predicts that danger to Israel from Arab forces in Gaza will increase after “disengagement” because the Arabs are smuggling huge quantities of weapons into Gaza.

Arutz-7 reported that the Southern District commander feels the barrages of Kassam rockets and mortar shells will extend even deeper into Israeli territory, striking more Jewish towns.

The government has allocated funds to reinforce roofs of public buildings in the region to help them withstand rocket attacks. Gaza-based attacks aimed at civilian and military targets throughout Gaza and other parts of southern Israel have increased over 300 percent recently.

For all their rhetoric about Israel’s “vicious” and “brutal” occupation, Palestinian Arabs sometimes acknowledge they prefer Israel to the Palestinian Authority (PA).

Restrains on violence. After PA police raided the house of a Hamas supporter and roughed up both him and his 70-year-old father, the father yelled at the police, “Even the Jews did not behave like you cowards.” When the son came out of the PA jail, he declared it as much worse than Israeli prisons. An opponent of Yasser Arafat noted that Israeli soldiers “would first fire tear gas, and then fire rubber bullets, and only then shoot live ammunition, . . . but these Palestinian police started shooting immediately.”

Rule of law. A Gazan leader observed, “When the infighting began in Gaza, the people were happy because the Israeli Army imposed a curfew.” Musa Abu Marzouk of Hamas said, “We saw representatives of the Israeli opposition criticize [Prime Minister Ehud] Barak and they were not arrested, . . . but in our case the PA arrests people as the first order of business.”

Minority rights. A Palestinian Christian declared that when the Palestinian state comes into existence, “the sacred union against the Zionist enemy will die. It will be time to settle accounts. We will undergo the same as our Lebanese brothers or the Copts in Egypt. It saddens me to say so, but Israeli laws protect us.”

Freedom of expression. A lawyer living in Gaza was arrested for slander by the PA when he wrote that Palestinians should adopt Israeli standards of democracy. For his audacity, he served jail time. A prominent psychiatrist and director of the Gaza Community Mental Health Program confessed, “During the Israeli occupation, I was 100 times freer.”

Economic benefits. Palestinians who live in Israel (including Jerusalem) appreciate Israel’s economic success, social services, and many benefits. Salaries in Israel are about five times higher than in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Israel’s social security system has no parallel on the Palestinian side. Palestinians living outside of Israel want an economic in; when the Israeli government announced the completion of the security fence in one region, a resident of the West Bank border town of Qalqiliya reacted with revealing outrage: “We are living in a big prison.”

These comments point to some Palestinians appreciating the benefits of elections, rule of law, minority rights, freedom of speech, and a higher standard of living. In effect, they acknowledge Israel as more civilized than the PA. Amid all the PA’s political extremism and terrorism, it is good to know that a Palestinian constituency also exists for normality.

Unfortunately, it remains a furtive constituency with no political import. The time has come for decent Palestinians to make their voices heard and state that Israel’s existence is not the problem but the solution.

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It is written in Deuteronomy, “You shall not pervert justice; . . . You shall follow what is altogether just” (16:19–20). What organization on Earth should be the best example of this command? The biggest organization: the United Nations (UN). But it is far from the UN to uphold justice.

Within it are 56 Muslim countries and only one little Israel. The Palestinians shoot our soldiers and use Arab mothers and children as shields to protect themselves. They know our soldiers will not shoot back because we do not want to kill Palestinian mothers and children.

They teach their children to become suicide bombers who murder our families in cold blood. The fathers of these bombers receive money afterward. We do not do such things. We believe they are immoral.

But which country does the UN consider the most dangerous in the world? Israel. For Israel, even self-defense is forbidden. So you can see, with the UN there is no justice.

Recently I was in a supermarket and who should be there but several UN soldiers stationed here. I asked them, “Whom are you serving?”

“We are here to make sure justice is done,” one replied.

“Do you believe in God?” I asked. “Do you believe in the One who is truly just and wants us to be just also? This means He does not want us to murder.”

They said they believed in God, but they also believed Israel is the guilty party in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

“God gave this land to the people of Israel. Read Exodus 6:5–8 and Deuteronomy 8:7–9. And what about the borders? The people at the UN break their heads over this issue. But the borders are settled in black and white in Genesis 15:18 and Exodus 23:31.”

They replied, “These are only words. There are 56 Muslim countries. How many of you are there?”

To this I answered, “The Lord is the same. As He was then, so is He now. Psalms 19 and 89 declare His eternal truth. What did He do to the Egyptians? It is written, ‘The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is His name. Pharaoh’s chariots and his army He has cast into the sea’” (Ex. 15:3–4).

“Yes. We know all this,” one replied. “That was then. This is now.”

So I reminded them what happened in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, in which I fought. “They came against us like the mighty locusts. Many Arab countries attacked us. And they were so confident that this time they would do to us what they could not do in 1948: destroy us. More than 200 million Arabs came against a half million Israelis, most of whom were like me, survivors of the Holocaust. Who do you think was on our side?” I asked.

“America, of course!” they all replied.

“I read Psalm 124:2–8, which begins, ‘If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, Let Israel now say—’If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they would have swallowed us alive’” (vv. 1–3).
“What is written here was fulfilled,” I said, “and also what is written in Deuteronomy 7:17–18, which tells us not to fear the nations around us but to ‘remember well what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt.’” They knew I was speaking truth. Now they began to pay close attention.

“If you want to know what to do, I said, “Show us where this is written,” one said. “Show us everything you have read to us. We want to mark this, so we may study it in our free time.”

“Studying is good,” I said. “But it is not enough. You must believe all that is written in the Bible.”

Now one asked me, “What do you want to do? Make us Jewish?”

“You can be who you are,” I said. “We believe in one God. There is only one God for all the people on the earth. It is clearly written in John 3:16, ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.’”

This time they were surprised. “You speak to us about Christianity!” one declared. “Jesus is not a Jew! Why do you speak to us of Him?”

I read to them Moses’ words concerning Jesus in Deuteronomy 18:15–16:

The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, “Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.”

“We never heard this,” one said.

I replied, “Now you have heard God’s Word, so you can know what the Lord said to the people of Israel. But you must read this for yourselves. Here is the Bible. Read Isaiah 49:3–6.”

So after a long time in the supermarket, these UN soldiers received what they could never buy: a love for the Lord and the full truth about God and justice. They were happy that we had such a long conversation. We also learned that we live near each other. I hope we will speak again.