

Theology: THE STUDY OF GOD

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I. The Existence of God

'The word theology comes from two Greek words, theos, meaning "God," and logos, meaning "word" or "doctrine." In a broad sense the word theology means the entire study of Bible doctrine, the study of the Creator and His creation. In a more narrow sense it refers to the study of the doctrine of God, His attributes and works. It is in the latter sense that this chapter will study who God is, what God has done in the past, and what He is doing today.

A. Assumptions of God's existence

1. There is a God. (Gen. 1:1)

God does not argue for His existence. He expects us to accept the fact that He exists. He simply started His Word with the phrase, "In the beginning God...."

2. God has revealed Himself to man through His Word. (Heb. 1:1-3)

We must accept (by faith) that God has given us His Word. Without it we would not know how to be saved nor how to have fellowship with Him as Christians. Apart from God's revelation, man drifts along in a meaningless existence that has no purpose and no goals.

B. Proofs of God's existence

To the one who says, "Prove that there is a God," we can reply, "Prove that there is no God." To prove that there is no God, one would have to go to every corner of the universe and look under every rock to show that He is not there. But while that person was looking for God on one planet, God may be on another. Therefore it would be necessary for the individual to be everywhere at the same time. Hence in his desire to prove that there is no God, he himself must possess one of the characteristics of God—omnipresence.

1. Intuition

It is natural for man to believe that there is a God. The abnormal mind is the only kind that cannot accept the fact of God's existence.

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Ps. 14:1

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." James 2:19

2. Tradition

It has been the common characteristic of all peoples throughout history to believe that there is a God and a life after death. History proves that man is basically a religious creature. After a detailed study of some of the remote tribes of Africa, David Livingstone concluded that all people have a conception of God which they have passed on from generation to generation.

3. Reason

By looking around us it seems obvious to us that someone with intelligence created, ordered, and organized this marvelous universe.

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” Rom. 1:20

a) **Cause and effect:** Man’s observations of this world confirm a marvelous “effect.” His rationale demands a cause. What is the Cause behind all that man can see? Surely it must be an omnipotent Creator.

b) **Design and Designer:** It is extremely doubtful that man will ever be able to create life. But what if God allowed man to have that privilege? What would it prove? Only that intelligence is required to create and order this world. Design demands a Designer.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.” Ps. 19:1

“For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.” Heb. 3:4

4. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD FITS THE FACTS

“Belief in a self-existent, personal God is in harmony with all the facts of our mental and moral nature, as well as with all the phenomena of the natural world. If God exists, a universal belief in His existence is natural enough; the irresistible impulse to ask for a first cause is accounted for; our religious nature has an object; the uniformity of natural law finds an adequate explanation, and human history is vindicated from the charge of being a vast imposture. Atheism leaves all these matters without an explanation, and makes, not history alone, but our moral and intellectual nature itself, an imposture and a lie.” —F L. Patton

See Appendix 2 Page 13 - DESIGN IN THE HEAVENS

See Appendix 2 Page 14 - DESIGN IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

See Appendix 2 Page 14 - DESIGN IN THE HUMAN BODY

See Appendix 2 Page 15 - On Universal Design

II. How God Reveals Himself

Revelation is God's disclosing to man things about Himself that man could not know otherwise. The revelation of God to mankind is divided into two sections: general revelation and special revelation. General revelation is God's revelation of Himself in creation, through history, and in a man's conscience. Special revelation is God's revelation in His Word and through His Son Jesus Christ. Without revelation we would know nothing about God.

A. General revelation

1. Definition - God reveals Himself to all mankind through the glories of His creation and His government of the universe.

See Appendix 2 Page 15-HOW GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO US.

a) General revelation is seen in nature by all men.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shew his handiwork." Ps. 19:1

"We preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered [allowed] all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Acts 14:15—17

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. 1:20

b) General revelation sees God as Creator and Governor.

The theme of the book of Daniel is the rule of God over all. Each of the Babylonian kings came face to face with this great thought--"God rules

over all.” Whether these men accepted God’s plan of salvation is unclear, but some at least took the first step by accepting general revelation.

(1) Nebuchadnezzar

“To the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.” Dan. 4:17

“The most high ruleth in the kingdom of men.” Dan. 4:25

“And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation.” Dan. 4:34

“He doeth according to his will... and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” Dan. 4:35

“And he [Nebuchadnezzar] was driven from the sons of men... till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.” Dan. 5:21

(2) Belshazzar

“The God in whose hand thy [Belshazzar’s] breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.” (Daniel speaking to Belshazzar in Dan. 5:23)

“The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.” Dan. 4:25

c) General revelation renders sinful man without excuse.

(1) “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” Rom. 1:20

d) General revelation is insufficient for saving knowledge.

Although general revelation may lead an individual in the direction of salvation (like the kings of Babylon), it is still not enough to teach an individual the of salvation.

A good illustration of this truth is the New Testament account of the conversion of Cornelius.

“There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius... A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.” Acts 10:1-2

Cornelius was very religious, very moral, but he was unsaved. He had accepted general revelation, but he needed the truth of the gospel presented by God's man. God appeared to Simon Peter by means of a vision. Peter was instructed to give the gospel to Cornelius. Cornelius could not be saved until he was able to "hear words" from Peter. Yet when he heard the gospel, he immediately accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior.

Many people are open to the gospel message and are waiting to hear the "good news" of salvation. Jesus said that the fields are white unto harvest but the laborers are few. The Lord seems to have more trouble getting His children to fulfill the Great Commission than He has in opening the hearts of the unsaved.

2. Need for general revelation

a) It saves the world from chaos and cruelty..

God has provided three channels of general revelation for mankind. They are:

(1) Nature (Ps. 8:3—5; 19:1—6; Acts 14:15—17; Rom. 1:19—25)

"When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained: What is man that Thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" Ps. 8:3—4

(2) Conscience (Rom. 2:14—15)

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." Rom. 2:14—15

(3) History (Deut. 28; Prov. 14:34)

"The Lord shall establish thee [the Hebrew nation] an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee." Deut. 28:9—10, 15, 37

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.” Prov. 14:34

It is through these three channels that God gives to man some sense of morality. The world system realizes that sin needs to be punished. It also understands that order is necessary for a nation or society to survive. Although morality will not save anyone, it does keep a nation from total chaos. General revelation is helpful, but it is still insufficient for salvation.

b) It supports and illustrates special revelation (God’s Word).

The glories of God’s creation are constant reminders of a Supreme Being. The design of this universe demands that reasoning man recognize a Designer. The wonders of the human body cannot be explained apart from God. We would expect that a God that is powerful and wonderful enough to create all things would communicate with His creation: therefore general revelation encourages man to seek special revelation

General revelation and special revelation are like God’s two “books,” His outdoor book (creation) and His indoor Book (the Bible). His outdoor book can be read by all; if it does not lead people to Him, they are without excuse (Rom. 1:20). Sometimes God’s outdoor book leads men to seek after God. God promises to reward the one who diligently seeks Him (Heb. 11:6). He will see to it that true seekers are given the truth revealed in His indoor Book, the Bible. If a man is willing to accept the truth of God’s outdoor book, God will see to it that he finds the truth of God’s indoor Book, the Bible.

This universe and its laws also illustrate truths that we see in God’s Word. The unending universe is a physical illustration of eternity. The world of science is filled with paradoxes. The physicist indicates that there are two mutually exclusive theories of light. Although it appears that they cannot both be true, yet they are. This paradox is an illustration of God’s revelation.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” Isa. 55:8—9

B. Special revelation

1. Definition

Special revelation is the act of God whereby He reveals Himself and His truth to specific people at specific times and places. Yet the revelation was not for those people alone; God revealed Himself to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses, and yet what they learned of God has been recorded for all ages.

a) Special revelation cannot be learned on one's own.

The unsaved man cannot appreciate God's revelation as seen in God's Word. He is considered a "natural man" by God.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned [understood]. 1 Cor. 2:14

Apart from the Holy Spirit, an individual will never understand the Bible. Therefore, it is useless to argue with someone about Bible doctrine. The Christian and the unsaved have no common ground. Not until an unsaved individual accepts Jesus Christ as his Savior will he begin to understand God's special revelation. At that moment the Holy Spirit becomes his Teacher.

b) Special revelation is accepted by faith.

"So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17

Although reason can tell a man there must be a God, faith is required for salvation. The only way an individual can understand what Jesus Christ has done is through God's Word. Faith is always determined by its object. If the object of one's faith is man, it is a weak faith, because man is weak. But if the object of one's faith is Jesus Christ, that faith is strong, because God's Son is all-powerful.

c) Special revelation is sufficient for salvation.

The Word of God contains the gospel, which is all that is necessary for a person to be saved. The great concern is that so many have not heard the gospel story. Even if a person has accepted general revelation, he must be presented with the claims of the gospel before he can be saved. This was the heart cry of Paul as he wrote Romans 10:13—15.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall

they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” Rom. 10:13—15

See Appendix 2 Page 15 - How shall they hear...

2. Need for special revelation

a) Man cannot be saved through general revelation alone.

*(1) “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
Rom 10:17*

b) Man cannot fully appreciate general revelation until he accepts special revelation. The unconverted man’s heart is so blinded by sin that he cannot appreciate all that God has done.

“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” 2 Cor. 4:4

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful: but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” Rom 1:21

“The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.” Ps. 14:1

When a person accepts Jesus Christ as Savior, that person has a new appreciation for God’s creation and a better view of himself.

“When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.” Ps. 8:3—5

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” Prov. 1:7

III. The Attributes of God

Attributes are qualities or characteristics of a person or thing. Although general revelation may give us a glimpse of God’s attributes (surely the Creator of the universe is omnipotent), it is not until we come to God’s Word that we understand the character of God as He has revealed it to us.

Special revelation is absolutely necessary in order to understand the Creator.

A. God's natural attributes

1. Defined

Natural attributes are the very nature of God's Being. They are unique to Him and cannot be the characteristics of man either now or in the future. This is sometimes questioned because of 1 John 3:2, "but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is," In what sense will we be like him? We will be like Jesus in His moral attributes (love, holiness, mercy, etc.). We can never become like Him in His natural attributes (eternity, omniscience, omnipotence, etc.).

2. Described

a) Transcendence - God is above His creation. . . "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity" Isa. 57:15

b) Immanence (Isa. 57:15. Col. 1:7)

Although God is above all (transcendence), He has seen fit to be actively involved within His creation (immanence). The climax of His immanence was His coming to earth as a Baby, living for 33 years on earth, and dying on a cross for man's sins.

"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Isa. 57:15

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. 4:6

c) Eternity - God has no beginning nor ending. There is no past, present, nor future with God, only eternal present. He is not limited by time.

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." Ps. 90:2

d) Infinity - God has no limitation in space. All of His attributes are without limit. (See 1 Kings 8:27; Ps. 103:17; 139:7-12; 147:5; Isa. 55:8—9; Jer. 23:24.)

e) **Immutability** - God is not capable of nor susceptible to change; He is unchangeable, invariable, and permanent (Ps. 102:24—27; Isa. 46:9—10; James 1:17).

“For I am the Lord, I change not.” Mal. 3:6

f) **Omniscience** (Ps. 139:2; Isa. 40:26; 46:10; Rom. 11:23)

Omniscience means that God is all-knowing. He knows the future as well as the past. He knows all things whether actual or merely possible. He knows things immediately and spontaneously. He knows the thoughts of man better than man knows them himself.

“Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.’” Isa. 46:10

See also... Rom 11:33—34; Heb.4:13; Ps. 139:1—4

God’s knowledge is beyond our comprehension. It is not only that He knows more than we do; He knows differently than we do.

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isa. 55:8-9

God’s knowledge of the future should not be confused with God’s determination of the future. He can know a certain event will happen without forcing it to happen that way. Sometimes God determines an event ahead of time: sometimes God merely knows an event ahead of time (Jer. 1:5; Acts 2:23; 15:18; Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:2).

God’s omniscience is a free act of His will. He can temporarily suppress knowledge if He so wills. As the Christ, He could “increase in wisdom” (Luke 2:52), ask questions (Luke 2:46), and empathize with the learner (Heb. 2:17). He could will not to know the day or the hour of His second coming (Mark 13:26, 32). If He desires, He can determine not to remember our sins. This wonderful ability is a reminder of the power of the blood of Christ to completely cleanse us from our sins.

“I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” Isa. 43:25

“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” Heb 8:12

God knows all about you. He made you exactly the way you are. He has given you all the abilities and talents you need to do the job you need to do. He has not given you more abilities than you can use nor has He “short-changed” you by not giving you the abilities that you would need to have. Those who fear doing God’s will often never consider that an omniscient God knows what is best for them both now and in the future. We can see only today, while God sees what is best for us fifty years in the future. It makes sense to trust Him with our daily walk, as well as our eternal destiny.

g) Omnipresence

Omnipresence means that God is everywhere present in the universe in the whole of His being. It would be incorrect to suggest that God can be divided up in some material way so that only a part of Him is present in each part of the universe. He fills every part of space with His entire being.

“Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.” Ps. 139:7—10

“Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.” Jer. 23:23—24

God is present in the universe, not by compulsion or obligation, but by the free act of His will. We reject the pantheistic notion that God is limited to His creation. He is the Creator of space and, therefore, not subject to it.

“But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded?” 1 Kings 8:27

Throughout the ages unregenerate man has tried to remove God from his life. Yet there exists within each man a God-shaped void that can be satisfied only with an omnipresent God. The fool says in his heart, “No God for me.” Someday God will grant the unsaved that tragic request as God’s omnipresent power is withdrawn from the lake of fire.

“In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with

everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” 2 Thess. 1:8—9

h) Omnipotence

Omnipotence means that God is all-powerful and is able to do whatever He wills to do. By His great power He created the universe and its creature He maintains in existence all that He has created, and He determines the events and the final end of the universe and its inhabitants.

In Scripture He is called the Almighty God (Gen. 17:1) and the Lord God Almighty (Rev. 4:8).

“Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing.” Job 42:1—2

“Ah Lord GOD! Behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee.” Jer. 32:17

“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.” Matt 19:26

“. . . for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” Rev. 19:6

It is God’s omnipotent hand that holds the universe together. Everything in existence is maintained by God’s power. All that is necessary for the universe to be destroyed is for the Lord to withdraw His preserving power.

“For in Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” Col. 1:16—17

God can do anything in harmony with His nature. He does not do things that are foolish, self-contradictory (e.g., make a square circle), sinful, unworthy of deity, or against the promises He has given in His Word. For instance, God cannot lie “. . . God . . . God, that cannot lie” (Titus 1:2). God limits His omnipotence both by His Word and by His Will. He has also limited Himself by giving to each man a free will to choose to accept His offer of salvation or to reject it.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.. And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us.” 1 John 5:11.14

The omnipotence of God is a great comfort to the Christian. No problem is too big for God. No trial is too difficult. No challenge is impossible. Throughout the Bible the Christian is encouraged to take his problems to the Lord and trust Him to meet every need.

“The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Ps. 27:1

B. God’s moral attributes

1. Definition of moral attributes

God’s moral attributes are characteristics of God revealed in His personal interaction with mankind. They include His love, grace, mercy, justice, holiness, righteousness, truth, and goodness. These attributes of God are examples of what should be in every man. Although we can never be like God in His natural attributes (omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, etc.), we should strive to be like Him in His moral attributes. Someday when we receive our glorified bodies we will be truly “like Him” in His moral attributes.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is...” I John 3:2

2. Description of God’s moral attributes

a) Holiness

Holiness is that perfection of God whereby He abhors that which is evil and demands purity. God is separated totally from sin and evil (James 1:13). Because of God’s holiness, a sinful individual has no right to come into His presence. For this reason God had to turn His back on His own Son on Calvary when He “became sin for us, who knew no sin.” If we approach God at all, we must come through the merits (or holiness) of Another (Exod. 15:11; Ps. 22:1—3; Matt. 27:46; and Rev. 15:4).

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Rom. 5:1—2

See Appendix 2 Page 16 - We should approach God with reverence.

b) Justice

Justice is the attribute of God by which He carries out the laws that He has imposed. It has two sides. It is remunerative (rewarding) and retributive (chastising). Since God cannot act contrary to His laws, sin must be punished. A person must suffer for his own sin or else accept God's plan of redemption by which Jesus Christ becomes the sinner's substitute. God is the One Who has been wronged by sin: therefore, He is the only One Who can determine how restitution is made.

See Appendix 2 Page 16 - Mankind has always attempted to improve on God's plan of salvation

c) Righteousness

Righteousness is the attribute that causes God to always do right Abraham realized that sin deserves God's punishment, but he also realized that God does not punish the righteous. Abraham, therefore, pleaded for Sodom on the basis of God's righteousness.

"That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that he far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen. 18:25

This wonderful attribute of God guarantees that He will always keep His promises. He can do no other. His attribute of righteousness is the reason that men can approach a holy God. Note these verses:

"Thou art the LORD the God, Who madest a covenant with him [Abraham] to give the land . . . I say, to his seed, and hadst performed Thy words: for Thou art righteous." Neh. 9:7—8

"O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city Jerusalem," Dan. 9: 16

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." 2 Tim. 4:8

See Appendix 2 Page 16 - GOD REWARDS RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE CHRISTIAN.

d) Love

(1) Love is the attribute which moves God to communicate His concern for the ultimate welfare of the ones that He loves. He wants the very best for those He loves. Therefore His love moved Him to sacrifice His life for the sake of another.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:13

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.”

John 3:16

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things?” Rom. 8:32

The world uses the word love so flippantly that many Christians have a very shallow view of Biblical love. Love is concern for the welfare of another even above one’s own welfare. The world’s idea of love is usually lust. Love is giving; lust is getting. Lust can’t wait to get, while love can’t wait to give. As Christians, we are commanded to love other Christians (1 John 4:20—21), to love our enemies (Matt. 5:43—44), and to love the Lord (Deut. 6:5). We are to show our love for God by keeping His commandments (John 14:15).

e) Mercy

Mercy is God’s compassion for the sinner (Rom. 5:8) in not giving him what he deserves.

“Who is a God like unto Thee that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy.” Mic. 7: 18

In the Hebrew the word mercy comes from the same root as the word for a mother’s womb. It is the caring for that which is completely helpless.

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?” Mic. 6:8

f) Grace

Grace is the unmerited goodness and love of God for those who have forfeited it (Eph. 1:6—7; 2:7—9; Titus 2:11).

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Eph. 2:8

Whereas mercy is God’s not giving us what we do deserve, grace is God’s giving us what we do not deserve.

g) Goodness

This attribute of God is revealed in His bountiful dealing with mankind.

*“The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.”
Ps. 145:9*

“He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Matt. 5:45

h) Truth

God cannot lie nor tolerate untruth. God could commend Rahab’s faith (Heb. 11:31; James 2:25), but could not commend her lie (Josh 2:4).

“God is not a man, that he should lie,” Num. 23:19

“Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth.” John 17: 17

IV. Nature and Names of God

A. The nature of God

1. God is a Unity.

The Divine nature is indivisible; there is but one infinite and perfect Spirit. The Jewish nation was constantly exposed to polytheism (belief in more than one “god”) in Egypt and in Canaan. The people of these nations thought they needed more than one god because one was insufficient. But the idea of two or more gods is self-contradictory because each would limit the other and thereby destroy the omnipotence and sovereignty (absolute rule) of both. one as a

“Hear; O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.” Deut. 6:4

The Hebrew language has two different words for one. The first is singular, and the other is collective (e.g., one bushel of apples). The word for one in Deuteronomy 6:4 is the collective one. Even in God’s unity we begin to get a glimpse of His Trinity.

“That men may know that Thou, whose name is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth.” Ps. 83:18

“Thou art God alone.” Ps. 86:10

“Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no Saviour.” Isa. 43:10—11

“I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. . . . Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any.” Isa. 44:6, 8

“I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.” Isa. 45:5—6

“I am the LORD, and there is none else.” Isa. 45:18

“And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The LORD our God is one LORD.” Mark 12:29

“We know. . . that there is none other God but one.” 1 Cor. 8:4

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” 1 Tim. 2:5

2. God is a Trinity.



God is one in His essential being, but He exists in three Persons. Each Person of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is fully God.

Some cults cannot accept the idea of the Trinity. Their philosophy is “what I cannot understand, I cannot believe.” There are many things that most of us cannot fully explain, but we still believe in them and benefit from them e.g., electricity, atoms, the human mind, etc.).

a) The Trinity is quietly declared in the Old Testament.

(1) In the plural name for God (Gen. 1:1)

One of the Hebrew names for God is Elohim. It is a compound unity. It is a singular noun with a plural ending. (The -im ending in Hebrew is the plural form, as in cherubim and seraphim.)

(2) In the plural forms of the personal pronouns for God

“And God said, Let us make man in image, after our likeness.” Gen. 1:26

“Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language.” Gen. 11:7

“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isa. 6:8

(3) In the Theophanies (visible appearances of God, usually in human form) (Gen. 22:11—12; Exod. 3:1—15)

(4) In the threefold Aaronic blessing

“The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” Num. 6:24—26

(5) In the “thrice holy” of Isaiah 6:3

“And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.”

b) The Trinity is openly declared in the New Testament.

(1) At Christ’s baptism (Matt. 3:16—17)

The Father speaks.

The Son is baptized.

The Holy Spirit descends like a dove,

(2) In the baptismal formula

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matt. 28:19

(3) In the apostolic benediction

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.” 2 Cor. 13:14

(4) In the teachings of Jesus

**“And I [Jesus] will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.”
John 14:16—17**

(5) In the fact that all three are called “God”

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father.” Rom. 1:7

“Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.” Rom. 9:5

“But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” Heb. 1:8

“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?... thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” Acts 5:3—4

3. God is a Spirit. (John 4:24)

The word Spirit is the best way to describe the divine nature. God is not material; the Scriptures clearly indicate that fact (see Isa. 66: 1; 1 Kings 8:27). This means that He does not have a body and that He is invisible (Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17).

A question that naturally arises concerns the Bible’s use of expressions such as God’s “hand” or His “back” or His “face.” If He is a Spirit, why do we have such expressions in the Bible? These are called anthropomorphisms; i.e., ascribing to God human features to help us as simple human beings to begin to understand God’s feelings toward us and His working in our lives. Technically, “no man has seen God at any time,” but if God wills, He can put on the outward appearance of a man to meet with men.

4. God is a Person.

a) Two ingredients are required in order to classify someone as a person: self-consciousness and self-determination. God’s “I am” (Exod. 3: 14) implies self-consciousness; His “I will” (Exod. 6:6—8) implies self-determination.

b) God possesses all the qualities of personhood. He possesses intellect (Exod. 3:7; Isa. 1:18), emotion (1 Kings 11:9; Prov. 6:16), and will (Gen. 3:15). His personal names and the personal pronouns used of Him indicate personality (Gen. 15:6; Exod. 3:14; and Ps. 23:1). God is a living Person (Jer. 10:10—16).

B. The names of God

1. God's Old Testament names

a) **Jehovah: “the Self-Existent One” [LORD in KJV] (“I am”—Exod. 3:14)** This is God’s covenant name. It is always an indication that God keeps His promises even though man fails Him often. This name was highly honored by the scribes, who were responsible for copying Biblical manuscripts. Before they would write this name, they would take a bath and change their clothes. Once they began to write His holy name they would not even allow the king’s entrance to interrupt them. Should we today reverence His holy name any less?

I AM _____ whatever you need.

b) **Adonai: “My Lord; my Master” [Lord in KJV]**

Our Master has a right to our obedience (Matt. 23:10; Luke 6:46; John 13:13), and as His servants we have the privilege of direction in His service (Isa. 6:8—11).

See Appendix 2 Page 16 - JEHOVAH

c) **Elohim: “the Strong One”; “the One to be Feared” [God in KJV]**

When God first introduced Himself to us in Genesis 1:1, He used the name which shows He is indeed strong enough to create the heavens and the earth and is therefore worthy of reverence.

d) **El Shaddai: “the All-Sufficient One” [God Almighty in KJV] (Gen. 17:1)**

God reminded Abraham of His “all-sufficiency” when He promised Abraham a son in his old age.

e) **El Elyon: “the Most High God” [Most High in KJV] (Isa. 14:13-14)**

This name for God is also found throughout the book of Daniel as the Babylonian rulers realized Daniel’s God was superior to their heathen gods. -

2. God's New Testament names

a) **Theos: the Old Testament “Elohim” [God in KJV] (John 20:28)**

b) **Kurios the Old Testament “Adonai” [Lord in KJV] (John 20:28)**

c) Pater: no Old Testament equivalent ~Father in KJV] (Luke 11:2)

When Jesus Christ died on the cross, He established the parental relationship between God and man. When an individual accepts Jesus Christ as Savior, God becomes his heavenly Father.

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:12

d) Immanuel: “God with us” (Isa. 7:14; 8:8—10; Matt. 1:23)

God was with us for 33 years in the person of Jesus Christ. Someday

He will be with us forever (Rev. 21:3).

V. God’s Acts of Creation

A. Definitions of creation

Creation is the act of God whereby He brought all things into existence. The word creation is used in two senses: immediate creation and mediate creation.

1. Immediate creation (Gen. 1:1)

Immediate creation was the act of the Triune God by which He brought into existence immediately, without the use of preexisting materials, the entire universe.

a) All three Persons of the Trinity created.

(1) God the Father created.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Gen. 1:1

The Hebrew word for God (Elohim) in this verse reveals two things: (1) God is “The Strong One,” perfectly capable of creating the world, and (2) this plural form of the Hebrew implies that the Trinity was present and active in the creative act.

(2) God the Son created. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.” John 1:1,3

“For by Him [Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible... all things were created by Him, and for Him.” Col. 1:16

(3) God the Holy Spirit created.

“And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Gen. 1:2

b) The Trinity created the universe out of nothing.

The Latin phrase ex nihilo is used to signify this creation “out of nothing.”

*“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.” Gen. 1:3
“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Heb. 11:3*

2. Mediate creation

Mediate creation is the act of God in which He does not originate things but simply shapes and transforms material that is already in existence.

Many of the miracles of Christ were accomplished by mediate creation. He turned water into wine (John 2:1—11), fed 5,000 men with five loaves of bread and two fish (John 6:5—14), transformed blind eyes (John 9:1—41), deaf ears (Mark 7:31—37), lame legs (John 5:1—9), and wicked hearts (Ps. 51:10, 17).

In Creation God created something out of nothing.

In salvation God creates something holy out of something unholy.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [creation]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Cor. 5:17

B. The basis of Creation

1. Both Creation as declared in the Scriptures and the man-made philosophy of evolution are based on faith.

a) The Christian believes by faith that there is a God and that God created as He says in His Word.

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.” Heb. 11:3

b) The evolutionist believes by faith either that there is no God, or that if there is a God, He did not create the heavens and the earth as He revealed in the first two chapters of Genesis.

(1) “The more one studies paleontology [the fossil record] the more certain one becomes that evolution is based on faith alone. ” —Louis T. More, evolutionist

(2) “What is evolution based upon? Upon nothing whatever but faith upon belief in the reality of the unseen—belief in fossils that cannot be produced, belief in the embryological evidence that does not exist, belief in the breeding experiments that refuse to come off. It is faith ‘unjustified by works.’” —Arthur N. Fields, Australian geologist

(3) “Meanwhile, though our faith in evolution stands unshaken, we have no acceptable account of the origin of ‘species.’ ” —William Bateson, evolutionist

2. Creation is based on a reasonable faith.

a) The scientific method requires observability and repeatability (i.e., the ability to duplicate something in a controlled environment).

b) God is the only One who observed the creation.

“And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.” Gen. 1:31

“Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said... Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?” Job 38:1,4

c) No one has observed evolution in progress.

*“Within the period of human history we do not know of a single instance of the transformation of one species into another one... It may be claimed that the theory of descent is lacking, therefore, in the most essential feature [an eyewitness to its occurrence] which is needed to place the theory on a scientific basis.” —Evolutionist T. H. Morgan, *Evolution and Adaptation*. Quoted by D. James Kennedy in *Win I Believe* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1980). p. 59.*

d) Neither Creation (of this universe) nor evolution is repeatable.

(1) God ended His Creation.

“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made.” Gen. 2:2

“For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day.” Exod. 20:11

(2) Man cannot “duplicate” evolution in the scientific laboratory.

“Neither evolution nor creation can be either confirmed or falsified scientifically.” —Dr. N. Heribert-Nilsson

“[The evolutionary] assumptions by their nature are not capable of experimental verification.” —G. A. Kerkut, evolutionist

e) Creation is reasonable.

Design surely demands a Designer. An effect demands a Cause. Organization demands an Intelligence behind it. Creation is a faith based on the observable evidence of order and design all about us in the observable world and universe.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Heb. 11:1

C. The importance of belief in Creation

1. It determines our attitude toward the trustworthiness of God’s Word.

Because of its “supernatural” features, the account of the Creation is one of the first areas to be questioned when an individual or group begins its decline into a total rejection of the Word of God. Perhaps more Bibles have had the first eleven chapters of Genesis theoretically “cut out” than any other passage of Scripture. It is very important that we accept the account of Creation for the following reasons:

a) If we cannot accept Moses’ account of Creation, then we cannot accept the words of Christ.

Jesus Himself put the books of Moses on an equal plane with His own words.

“Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?” John 5:45—47

b) If we cannot trust the Biblical account of Creation, how can we trust the Biblical accounts of salvation by faith, eternal life, heaven, and hell?

Some evolutionists (theistic evolutionists) would have us believe that evolution was God’s method for completing His original Creation. But what kind of God would He be if His revelation to us concerning the

original Creation was inaccurate? He certainly would not be a God worthy of our trust concerning our eternal destiny and the way of salvation.

2. To reject God's Word and His plan of salvation necessitates that the unbeliever theorize some system of origins such as evolution.

“But the natural [unsaved] man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor. 2:14

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” 2 Cor. 4:3-4

In the light of these verses, it is not surprising that many people accept the idea of evolution. If they were to accept Creation, then they would also need to accept the fact of their own soul's lost condition and their future destiny in hell.

“[He] that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.” John 3:20

When an individual rejects the Bible as God's Word, he opens himself to the belief in “fables.” The tragic end is a life of hopelessness and despair.

VI. The Six Days of Creation

The Bible records the creation of our earth with its atmosphere, waters, and living things in six 24 hour days.

“Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: ... For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day.” Exod. 20:9, 11

It may be helpful to remember the days of creation by grouping them in pairs. Days 1 and 4 describe God's creation of light and the instruments of that light. Days 2 and 5 involved the creation of the atmosphere, the waters, and the creatures that inhabit those areas. Days 3 and 6 emphasized God's bringing forth of the land and plants as well as the “creatures” that inhabit the land.

Day 1	Light created day and night	Day 4	Sun moon and stars made visible to give seasons, months, and time
Day 2	Atmosphere above divided from the waters beneath	Day 5	Fowl and water creatures created
Day 3	Land made visible; plant kingdom created	Day 6	Land animals and man created

A. The first day Gen. 1:3-5

God had only to speak in order for this world to come into existence.

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. . . . For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.” Ps. 33:6, 9

“Let them praise the name of the LORD: for He commanded, and they were created.” Ps. 148:5

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.” Heb. 11:3

The darkness as well as the light was created by God. Since “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5), He created darkness for the benefit of mankind (Isa. 45:7). According to man’s present knowledge, darkness is the absence of light.

On the first day God probably started the earth rotating on its axis, giving the continual night and day that mankind still continues to enjoy.

“I form the light, and create darkness.” Isa. 45:7

“Thou makest darkness, and it is night.” Ps. 104:20

B. The second day Gen. 1:6-8

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.” Gen. 1:6

The word firmament comes from a verb which means “to beat out, to spread out.” It seems to refer to the expanse of the heavens. In verse eight of Genesis 1 “God called the firmament Heaven.” The Bible uses the word heaven to refer to three different places. The first heaven is the atmosphere of the earth (Gen. 1:8); the second heaven is outer space (Jer. 23:24); and the third heaven is the place of God’s abode (2 Cor. 12:2). Evidently the matter of the universe had already been created and the earth was covered with water vapor. On the second day God divided the water vapor; part was condensed, and part remained as water vapor surrounding the earth, but it was spread out into a firmament for the sky.

C. The third day Gen. 1:9-13

On the third day of creation God caused the dry land to appear as it bulged up out of the waters that had covered the earth. He called the dry land earth. God’s right to name this planet shows His dominion over all that He has created. God later gave this “dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” to Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:28). God caused trees and all the plant kingdom to come forth out of the dry land, and all of these had the appearance of age. The trees and plants were capable of bearing fruit. That which would be needed by mankind was already prepared three days before God created man.

D. The fourth day Gen. 1:14-19

On this day God caused the luminaries to give the light for day and the light for night. The light-bearers would bear the light that God had created on the first day. God then gives five purposes of these luminaries.

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.” Gen. 1:14

Today we still get our day from the sun, our months from the moon, our years from the sun’s movement on the horizon, and our time is calculated by the stars. If these were created in verse 1, then on the fourth day God caused the atmosphere to clear up sufficiently for man to be able to observe these heavenly bodies. We know today that some planets are covered with rings of clouds that obscure any observations of other heavenly bodies. Even heavily overcast days prohibit our seeing the sun, moon, or stars. On the fourth day God made it possible for man to calculate time.

In this very first chapter of the Bible God gives a prophecy concerning His use of the sun, moon, and stars as signs of His active participation in the course of history.

“For we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.” Matt 2:2

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars.”

Luke 21:25

“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the LORD come.” Acts 2:20

God reveals that the purpose of these luminaries was to divide the seasons as well as night and day. In the covenant God made with Noah, He promised him that the seasons, days, and years would never cease.

“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” Gen. 8:22

This is a wonderful promise. Every time the sun rises or the seasons change we should be reminded that God keeps His promises. Even when the nation of Israel was in captivity, the prophets reminded them that God would never break His covenant with them. Just as it is impossible for man to change the seasons, it is impossible for God to break His promises.

“Thus saith the LORD: if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant.” Jer. 33:20—21

E. The fifth day Gen. 1:20-23

In the description of the fifth day of creation two interesting expressions are used. The first is the word translated “whales” (Gen. 1:21), and the other is the phrase “after their kind” (Gen. 1:21).

1. Whales Gen. 1:21

a) Definition of the word

The English word whale in Genesis 1:21 is a translation of the Hebrew word tannin. It could better be translated “great sea monster” or “gigantic aquatic reptile.” This seems to be the beginning of the answer to the “Dilemma of the Dinosaur.” It is interesting to note that large

aquatic mammals are an embarrassment to the evolutionist. He has a difficult time explaining why a fish would become a lizard, then a piglike land mammal, then reverse its “evolution” and go back into the water as it continues to grow larger.

b) Dragon theme in Scripture

What the Bible calls dragons are probably what scientists today call dinosaurs. Dragons are mentioned in the following Scripture references:

“Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.” Deut. 32:33

“And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well.” Neh. 2:13

“Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.” Ps. 91:13

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.” Rev. 20:1-2

c) Dinosaurs in Job

Many Bible scholars believe that the behemoth and leviathan of Job were also dinosaurs. Since Job probably lived before the events of Genesis 12, he may have personally observed these creatures roaming the earth and swimming in the sea.

(1) Behemoth

“Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee, he eateth grass as an ox. Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly. He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together. His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron. He is the chief of the ways of God. He that made him can make his sword to approach unto him. Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play. He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens. The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about. Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares.” Job 40:15—24

Job 40 describes behemoth as an extremely large creature living near a brook and eating grass. The size of his tail (“like a cedar”) does not appear

to describe any animal in existence today. It may have been a reptile similar to Apatosaurus (or “Brontosaurus”), a huge, swamp-dwelling herbivore.

(2) Leviathan

“Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook? Or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down? Canst thou put a hook into his nose? Or bore his jaw through with a thorn? Will he make many supplications unto thee? Will he speak soft words unto thee? Will he make a covenant with thee? Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?” Job 41:1—5

No creature on earth was as fearless as leviathan, which God describes in Job 41 as a fire-breathing aquatic animal with scaly skin, thick armor, powerful jaws, and terrible teeth.

“Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron. His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth. In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him. The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves, they cannot be moved. His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone. When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves. The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble. Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear. Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire. He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary.” Job 41:19—32

d) Reasons for extinction

Scientists have given many possible reasons for the extinction of these beasts. The most popular current hypothesis is that they became extinct suddenly as a result of some catastrophe. Many Christians think that the dinosaur probably could not cope with the vast climatic changes brought about after the Genesis Flood and thus died out. Since it is quite common for animals even today to become extinct for one reason or another, there is no reason (other than circular reasoning to “prove” evolution) to believe that their extinction is in any way related to evolutionary philosophy. Before the Flood, both men and animals had a longer life expectancy. Since a man reaches his full size around the age of 20, living to be 70 or 700 would not change his physical stature appreciably. But that is not true of reptiles. They continue to grow physically throughout their entire life span. Therefore, the decreased life span after the Flood evidently decreased the ultimate size of the reptiles. The dinosaur skeletons we see in museums today may be those reptiles that grew for

several hundred years. Since the Millennium will see the return of longevity (Isa. 65:20), perhaps it will also see the return of large reptiles.

Dinosaurs were no doubt on Noah's ark, since dragons (dinosaurs) are mentioned in Scripture after the Flood (Deut. 32:33; Neh. 2:13). The huge adults did not have to fit into the ark, of course. Young dinosaurs, or even eggs, would do quite as well.

2. "After their kind" (Gen. 1:21)

The Bible indicates that it is impossible for one kind of plant or animal to produce a different kind of plant or animal. Each must reproduce "after his kind" (Gen. 1:21).

The evolutionist has consistently claimed that there are examples of cross-breeding of different kinds throughout history. Two favorite arguments were "Eohippus" and "mutations."

a) Eohippus (This was allegedly a horse whose descendants had one less toe than their ancestor.)

(1) This still does not explain where Eohippus came from.

(2) There is no proof that this so-called "fossil horse" evolved from another horse.

(3) There is no proof that Eohippus is actually a horse.

(4) The "change" in the number of toes contradicts evolutionary theory. Heinze said, "Losing toes does not make an organism more complex, but more simple."

Evolutionists by and large have discarded the Eohippus story by now. It is only seen now in textbooks.

b) Mutations (sudden small changes in the DNA code of the genes which are passed on to an organism's offspring)

(1) Mutations are extremely rare (1 in 10,000—100,000).

(2) Mutations are usually harmful.

(3) Mutations are very unpredictable, happening at random.

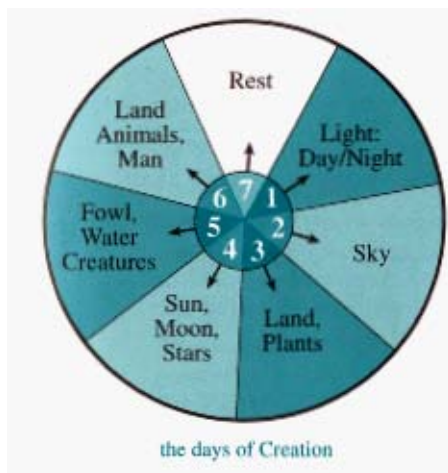
(4) Mutations never develop any new species.

Similarities in various animals indicate a common Creator. Just as a certain writer, composer, or artist has a certain style that is easily recognized; so the Master Designer has consistently put His style into His wonderful creation. Similarities between the monkey and man could just as easily indicate that the monkey evolved from man (one scientist has suggested the possibility) as the reverse. Actually, they indicate that both were created by God.

3. BIOCHEMISTRY AND MAN'S ANCESTORS

- a) 1. Blood precipitation tests indicate the chimpanzee is man's closest relative.
- b) 2. Milk chemistry indicates that the donkey is man's closest relative.
- c) 3. Cholesterol level tests indicate that the garter snake is man's closest relative.
- d) 4. Tear enzyme chemistry indicates that the chicken is man's closest relative.
- e) 5. On the basis of another type of blood chemistry test, the butter bean is man's closest relative. —Gary E. Parker *Creation: The Facts of Life* (San Diego: Creation-Life Publishers, 1980) pp. 21—22.

F. The sixth day Gen. 1:24—31; 2:7—25



“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. .. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing

that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created he them.... And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” Gen. 1:24, 26—27, 31

The sixth day was the climax of God’s creative acts. He began the day by creating all the land animals and ended it by creating man and woman. Man is the crown of all of creation. Man is the only being made in the image of God with intellect, emotions, and a will. So important was this sixth day to God that He devoted parts of the first two chapters of Genesis to the details of this wonderful creation. By the end of the sixth day He had completed all His creation and was ready for a day of rest.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made.” Gen. 2:1-2

VII. The Sovereignty of God

A. Definitions of God’s sovereignty

Sovereignty is the absolute right that God has to run the universe as He wants because He created it for His own purposes and glory.

Sovereignty is God’s right to do what He wants with what is His.

In the parable of Matthew 20, a householder early in the morning began to hire workers for his vineyard. They agreed to work for a normal day’s wages. He also hired additional workers at the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours of the day (9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m., and 5 p.m., respectively). At the end of the day the householder gave all the workers the same amount of money, a penny (or denarius). Some murmured and complained, but the householder was correct when he replied:

“Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?” Matt. 20:15

The householder could have given the late-coming workers more money than the others without their even coming to work at all. Sovereignty is a matter of ownership.

B. Extent of God’s sovereignty

1. God controls the universe.

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou

**knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner stone thereof?”
Job 38:4—6**

“He sendeth out His word, and melteth them: He causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.” Ps. 147:18

“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Matt. 5:45

2. God controls the plant and animal creation.

**“The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.”
Ps. 104:21**

**“Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah.” Jon.
1:17**

**“And the LORD God prepared a gourd... But God prepared a worm.”
Jon. 4:6—7**

**“Behold the fowls of the air: ... your heavenly Father feedeth them.”
Matt. 6:26**

“Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field... shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” Matt. 6:30

3. God controls all nations.

“He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: He enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again.” Job 12:23

“For the kingdom is the LORD’s: and He is the governor among the nations.” Ps. 22:28

“The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.” Dan. 4:25

“He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?” Dan. 4:35

4. God controls the length of a man’s life.

“In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind?” Job 12:10

“But God said unto him, thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.” Luke 12:20

“This spake He [Jesus], signifying by what death he [Peter] should glorify God.” John 21:19

“Jesus saith unto him [Peter], If I will that he [John] tarry [live] till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me.” John 21:22

5. God controls all things for His glory.

“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from afar country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.” Isa. 46:9—11

“But our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased.” Ps. 115:3

“For Mine own sake, even for Mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? And I will not give My glory unto another.” Isa. 48:11

“Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: ... Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.” Eph. 1:9—11

C. Self-limitations of God’s sovereignty

If man could limit God in any way, He would cease to be God. But God in His sovereignty may impose upon Himself certain limitations.

“It should be borne in mind that if allowing man a measure of freedom were imposed upon God from without, or if it were forced upon Him by some strange necessity, objection to it might be made. But when it is that which He alone initiates—of His own voluntary doing—out of pure love and for high and lofty ends which His unmitigated omnipotence assures, it is only

to the praise of His glory that it is so.” —Samuel Fisk, *Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom* (Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux Bros., 1973), p. 52.

It is clear from the Scriptures that man may limit God if God allows him that privilege.

“Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.” Ps. 78:41

The limitations that God has placed upon Himself are primarily in three areas: the existence of sin, the free will of man, and the privilege of prayer.

1. The existence of sin

God did not determine sin’s existence, but He allowed it in the universe.

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man.” James 1:13

God could have made man without the ability to sin (as He will in Heaven some day), but that was not His plan for earth. He wanted man to love Him by choice, not by force. The Bible teaches five lessons about God’s relationship to sin.

a) God permits some sin to fully manifest itself.

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. . . . Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.” Rom. 1:21, 24

b) God prevents some sin.

“And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against Me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.” Gen. 20:6

c) God determines the limits to which Satan may go in tempting or trying the individual.

“And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand.” Job 1:12

“And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.” Job 2:6

“God is faithful, who will not suffer [allow] you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” 1 Cor. 10:13

d) God can overrule every expression of sin for His glory.

“Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain.” Ps. 76:10

e) God can restore the wasted years of a sinful life.

“And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten.” Joel 2:25

2. The free will of man

It is a wonderful truth of Scripture that a sovereign God can determine to give man a free choice in the matter of his personal salvation. God did not to give man this privilege, but the Bible indicates that He did. God never forces Himself upon an individual. .

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! ” Matt. 23:37

It is clear from Scripture that God’s sovereign will includes the desires of His heart, which He refuses to force upon His creation.

“The Lord. . . is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing [desirous] that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

3. The privilege of prayer

God has allowed Himself to be influenced by the prayers of His children. This is not a privilege which the Christian can demand. God has allowed us this wonderful privilege. If it were not possible to alter a given circumstance, all of God’s commandments to pray would be ludicrous, “a stupendous farce, a colossal and cruel satire.” —Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, Vol. III, p. 137.

“If God can, in response to the petition of His confiding child, alter what, without such petition, would have been otherwise, we find ourselves wondering if such a view is not, in comparison with that of absolute predestination, equally honoring to God and quite as

stimulating to man. To many it seems far more so.” —Dr William E. Biederwolf, *How Can God Answer Prayer?* third ed., pp. 120—121.

D. THE SCOPE OF GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

1. Sometimes God decrees (determines).

“And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined.” Luke 22:22

2. Sometimes God conceals.

“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God.” Deut. 29:29

3. Sometimes God recommends.

“Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us ye ought to walk and to please God. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.” 1 Thess. 4:1—3

4. Sometimes God desires.

“O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!” Deut. 5:29

5. Sometimes God permits.

“And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them.” Num. 22:12

(Later): “Go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.” Num. 22:20

6. Sometimes God considers.

“If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.” Jer. 18:8