

# THE NEW CREATIONISM

**Building scientific theories on a biblical foundation**

**Paul A. Garner**

*Foreword by Dr Andrew Snelling*

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## Introduction

In the increasingly secular age in which we live, it is all too easy to forget that the major disciplines of science were founded by men of broadly Christian convictions.<sup>1</sup> Their names are perhaps familiar to us—Boyle, Ray, Hooke, Newton, Faraday—but there is often an embarrassed silence concerning the spiritual beliefs that motivated these scientific giants. Like the astronomer Kepler, they perceived that in their scientific insights they were ‘thinking God’s thoughts after him’. Today, however, there is a sense of collective amnesia about the religious motivations of these men. Over the last two or three centuries, science has become almost completely disconnected from its biblical roots, with the result that the academic culture in which science is practised today is one of tacit—if not explicit—atheism. Nowhere is this more evident than in the scientific study of how the universe began and developed—the field of origins.

This book has been written in the conviction that the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis—the Bible’s book of beginnings—provide a trustworthy and accurate account of the early history of the universe. Plainly understood, these foundational chapters of the Bible give us the following outline of ‘primeval history’:

1. They speak of *creation*. All things were created by God in six days as laid out in Genesis 1:1–2:3 and affirmed in Exodus 20:8–11. Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the ground on the sixth day and the genealogies of Genesis chapters 5 and 11 allow us to place his creation within the last few thousand years. All human beings are descendants of Adam and his wife Eve.
2. They tell us of *the fall of man*. Adam was instructed by God to rule over the Earth as a righteous steward, but the entrance of sin brought God's curse upon mankind and all his dominion. One of the consequences of Adam's rebellion, as Genesis 3:14–19 makes clear, was that death and bloodshed became a part of the creation.
3. We learn about *the Flood* of Noah's day. Following Adam's fall into sin, the wickedness of mankind grew until the whole world was full of violence and corruption. This culminated in the intervention of God in a global flood which destroyed the world that then existed. Genesis 7:21–23 records that every human being and air-breathing land animal perished except for those preserved with Noah in the ark.
4. We read about *the confusion of the languages at Babel*. After the Flood, Noah's descendants rebelled against God by disobeying his command to repopulate the world. Genesis 11:1–9 tells us that they set about building a city and a tower, to make a name for themselves, but God confounded them by confusing their languages and causing them to disperse.

Of course, many people today regard these events as little more than pre-scientific myths. In their view, the theory of evolution has replaced the concept of biblical creation and the idea of long geological ages has replaced the Bible's account of the Flood. However, the book of Genesis presents these events to us as a record of real history—things that actually happened.

This means that we are faced with an apparent conflict between what science says concerning origins, on the one hand, and what the Bible says, on the other.

How are Bible-believing Christians to handle this conflict? One approach is to focus upon the scientific problems faced by conventional evolutionary theories. There are many books that do this, although the approach has often proved unsatisfying to people who, quite understandably, want to know what we are going to put in the place of the theories we have rejected. Other creationists have taken a more positive approach, which is to show that rigorous scientific ideas about the past can be built upon the historical foundation provided in the Bible. This is a much more challenging task—but ultimately more fruitful. In this book, I will, where necessary, offer criticisms of conventional theories; however, my main aim is to summarize the work of modern-day scholars who are seeking to restore the biblical foundations of the scientific enterprise and build positive creationist theories in the field of origins. It is my conviction that many of the scientific puzzles concerning the origin and development of our world can be solved when we take these early chapters of the Bible seriously and use what they say to build our theories. I hope that even those readers who disagree with me will persevere long enough to discover why I hold this view.

Of course, the very idea that scientific theories can be built upon a biblical foundation may be surprising to some readers. The first book of the Bible is not, in the words of the cliché, ‘a scientific textbook’. If it were, how could it possibly have been understood by generations of people before modern science was developed? Nevertheless, I am convinced that Genesis is a book of history—and that it provides a satisfying framework for scientific study relating to origins.

As you read, however, I want you to keep in mind that scientific theories—even those developed upon biblical foundations—are not of the same level of certainty as Scripture itself. Scientific

explanations are always incomplete and often our understanding is limited or unsatisfactory. We must remember that science is a dynamic process, and theories change as a result of new evidence and new ways of thinking. The inevitable consequence is that some material in this book will become out of date—perhaps even by the time it is published! Although I have tried to summarize what I regard as the best research available at the time of writing, not all the ideas in this book will stand the test of time. Some of these theories will have to be revised or abandoned, while Scripture remains true for all time. This should not be disturbing to us because our faith in God’s Word is not dependent upon scientific argument; nevertheless, it is exciting for the Christian believer to know that biblical truths can help us to frame our scientific theories and promote genuine enquiry.

Inevitably this book will deal with some concepts that may be unfamiliar to those without a scientific background. However, the intention is to help the non-specialist reader think through the topic—so when it has been necessary to introduce unfamiliar concepts, I have tried to explain them in everyday language. There is also a glossary of technical terms at the end of the book.

It is my prayer that this book will help to build up your confidence in God’s Word and excite you about the scientific study of God’s world. It will not necessarily answer all your questions, but I trust that it will help you to think seriously about some important issues. If you want to dig deeper, each chapter has many references to follow up and there are recommendations for further reading at the end of the book. I have also included details of some websites where you can find more information.