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Creation and Evolution: The Facts and Fallacies (Book Review)

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Creation and Evolution: The Facts and Fallacies, Alan Hayward, London, England, Triangle, 1985, 232 pages. (Available in the U.S. from Fortress Press, 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19129; in Canada, from Canterbury House, 760 Somerset Street, W. Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6P9.) Reviewed by Russell Maatman, Professor of Chemistry.

In recent years several books on the creation-evolution controversy have been written by persons who are both qualified scientists and evangelical Christians. Alan Hayward, an English physicist who has a wide scientific knowledge and a Christian faith soundly based on the Bible, has written one of those books. But Hayward's book is different.

The unusual nature of the book does not lie in its rather ordinary main outline of three sections: "The Genuine Scientific Objections to Darwinism," "The Age of the Earth," and "Bible Teaching on Creation." For two reasons, however, the book is unusual; the first of these is the force and clarity—even for the nonscientist—of Hayward's scientific arguments in the first two sections, and the second reason is the presentation of his own view concerning origins in the third section.

Hayward at the very beginning of his discussion makes an important contribution to the debate when he defines the main positions. Persons who claim there never was biological "succession" believe that creation is young; these people he designates *recent creationists*. Those who accept succession without evolution believe that creation is very old; they are *ancient creationists*. Two groups accept succession with evolution, that is, Darwinism (the only plausible explanation of evolution), defined as mutation plus natural selection. These are *theistic Darwinists*, who claim that God used evolutionary means to create, and *atheistic Darwinists*, who maintain natural forces, not a god, was involved. These precise definitions help clear the air and are an aid in the ensuing discussion.

In the first section Hayward shows that a significant number of reputable scientists, especially biologists and mathematicians, reject both creation and Darwinism. (Mathematicians are involved because Darwinists make probability claims which mathematicians can analyze.) Hayward's point is that these scientists find the mutation-natural selection theory to be scientifically unacceptable, even though many persons dogmatically assert that this theory is the "only" explanation of the world of living things. Hayward points out that there is a paucity of early human fossil evidence. Not only would the sum of such evidence hardly cover a dinner table (p. 51), but the evidence itself is also in doubt. For example, in 1983 two anthropologists re-examined the famous "Lucy" skeleton and found that Lucy may well have been an ape.

The second section consists of an extensive discussion of scientific evidence related to the age of the earth. According to my count, Hayward examines over 45 scientific arguments concerning the age of the earth. Some of the arguments are presented by those who hold to a great age, perhaps billions of years; other arguments are advanced by those who hold to an age of only a few thousand years. Surely this section offers one of the more exhaustive

treatments of the subject. Following are some of the scientific arguments Hayward analyzes: the relation of fossils and geological formations to the Noahic flood; the time needed for the formation of metamorphic rocks; the time light takes to travel from distant galaxies; the distribution of radioactive isotopes in the crust of the earth; the distribution of isotopes in individual rocks; circular reasoning and geological fossil evidence; the rate of cooling of molten rock; the number of fossils in the earth's crust; the rate of change of the earth's magnetic field; the amount of meteoric dust in the earth's crust; the question of an early-earth vapor canopy; the use of carbon-14 dating; and the second law of thermodynamics. It seems to me that Hayward presents a convincing case for a great age and that he demolishes the arguments of those who hold to a young earth. However, I was convinced of that position before I read the book. It would be better for someone not so convinced either way to make a judgment.

In part of the third section Hayward discusses biblical passages adduced by others in defense of their theory. This discussion is interesting; but perhaps the most important part of the section is Hayward's development of his own view. His view is based on the biblical account of creation. His position is not in conflict with the scientific conclusions given in the first two sections. He recognizes, however, that scientific conclusions are always incomplete. It is the "divine fiat" theory of creation (a little-known theory mentioned as early as 1902) which Hayward accepts.

The divine fiat theory maintains that after the Spirit of God is said to move over the waters (Gen.1:2), the structure of Genesis 1:3-2:3 is determined by these divine fiats: "Let there be light"; "Let there be a firmament..."; "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together..."; "Let the earth put forth vegetation..."; "Let there be lights in the firmament..."; "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures..."; "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds..."; and "Let us make man in our image...." Each fiat is followed by a parenthetical description of what was created. The description which accompanies one or two fiats is followed by, "And there was evening and there was morning..." or, after the last fiat, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished...(O)n (the seventh day) God rested from all his work which he had done in creation."

Hayward claims that as soon as God uttered a fiat, that which was decreed was certain to come to pass. Then, long before all the events called for by that fiat took place, the next fiat was uttered, and so on. The fiats were uttered over a very short period, one or two per day for several days. Hayward suggests what things may have been like after the first fiat, decreeing light:

Had there been an observer present, he might

have had to wait many millions of years for the gases to thin sufficiently for the first gleams of light to penetrate to the liquid surface. But God does not see things as men see them. To him, remember, the fiats are real: once the word is spoken, the deed is certain to follow. He commanded and at once he saw—in his mind's eye, so to speak—the light of day, followed by darkness. "And there was evening and there was morning, one day." For ever after, in God's own eternal framework of heavenly glory (which is so different from the petty continuum of space-time in which we dwell) the endless succession of day and night continued—even though, to our imaginary observer, the dawn of the first material day was yet to come. In each of the next five of those "divinely-real" days, God spoke. And on the seventh day he rested, for all the work was

then as good as done (pp. 174-5).

Hayward links these ideas to the rest of the biblical revelation. Thus, a second fulfillment of the command that light should appear was the coming of Christ. He concludes his discussion of the fiat theory as follows:

Thus it is possible to view all the rest of the Bible as one giant parenthesis, describing in fine detail the outworking of God's last and greatest fiat. And God's eternal kingdom is the sabbath rest which will follow (p. 178).

Hayward's analysis of both the natural scientific and theological aspects of the origins question deserves consideration and discussion. It is quite possible that years from now we will look back and realize that this was a landmark book, one that changed the debate.

Covenants: God's Claims, John M. Zinkand, Dordt College Press, Sioux Center, Iowa, 1984, \$5.95. Reviewed by Charles Veenstra, Professor of Communication.

In a very readable little book, Professor Zinkand explains the critical place that covenant has in Scripture. He succeeds in his purpose of writing for the lay person rather than theologians. While the term "covenant" may be familiar, many people apparently fail to see this thread all the way through the Old and New Testaments. Perhaps the plural term in the title, as well as the various chapter titles, gives the impression that several covenants existed in the Bible, but the author clearly shows that the various forms of covenants are essentially part of one covenant. He even demonstrates that we ought not talk about the Covenant of Works over against the Covenant of Grace since each form of covenant involves grace rather than works.

In 17 short chapters, one quickly sees that the essence of covenant lies in the subtitle of the book: God tells his people over and over again that he will be their God and asks them to be his people. God always comes to his people *first*. Furthermore, the reader is soon impressed with the fact that God *keeps coming back* to his people when they fail to obey his laws. God, of course, has the right to set the demands of the covenant because he originated it in the same way that rulers made treaties in the time of the Old Testament.

After a brief explanation of the historical meaning of the term "covenant," the author begins with a description of the Mosaic covenant in Deuteronomy because, he says, concepts of covenant are most clearly laid out here. From there he moves to the covenants with Abraham, David and Levi, Noah, and Adam. While I would have preferred a chronological treatment, I did not find his method confusing. In the second half of the book, he traces out clearly how these Old Testament covenants are fulfilled in the New Testament in Jesus Christ. Because Christ kept the demands

of the covenant, God cannot break his promises with those who are his own: "By having been cursed in his death, Christ cancelled the curse which applied to all who broke the covenant" (p. 88). Nevertheless, by its very nature, covenant has two sides—promises from God and required obedience by his people. Nowhere is the required obedience abrogated by Christ's redemption. Covenant obedience is needed to show thankfulness rather than to redeem oneself from the demands of God's law: "This is the way that Israel is to keep the holiness that God imparts to it by being his nation, his peculiar treasure" (p. 27).

At least two things impress the reader as the author reveals covenant in Scripture. First, *all* people have been covenant-breakers. When we begin to sense this, we more fully appreciate what God has done in Christ. Second, God does it *all*: not only does God make the covenant, but he also provides the required redemption for us covenant-breakers. How often God would not let his people go when they wandered away; and when the people came back, God renewed his promises! This same God calls to us today. Yet, the warning is there also for those who persist in turning their backs on God, and this element should have been given fuller treatment by the author.

The book deserves a wide reading. While there is not much new here for the person who has been educated in covenant theology, this book helps one to appreciate more fully how covenant is deeply grounded in Scripture. For those less familiar with covenant, this book should provide much solid material for study of how covenant was instituted and fulfilled. I am convinced that this central theme is necessary to a correct understanding of Scripture.