

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Bert Thompson and Sam Estabrook

Q I know the Bible teaches that every human has an immortal soul. But do animals have souls?

A If you ever owned a dog, a cat, or any other kind of animal to which you grew attached, you may have wondered whether or not that animal had a soul. Men and women through the ages have pondered the same question. Animals—whose vast numbers stretch into the millions—are ubiquitous as our co-inhabitants on planet Earth. They serve as an unpaid, ever-dependable, and quite invaluable work force as they help the farmer plow a rough field or the blind person cross a busy city street. They account for a considerable portion of the total world food supply for humans. They provide joy and companionship for young and old alike. They are an undeniable boon to mental health, especially for sick children and the infirm elderly. Surely none among us would doubt the many benefits that accrue as a result of the presence of animals among us.

But do animals possess souls? And if they do, is their soul the same as a human soul? That is to say, is it immortal—will it eventually inhabit either heaven or hell?

The English word “soul” derives from a number of different words in the Old and New Testaments and is used in the Bible in a variety of ways. First, it is employed as a synonym for a living, breathing person. Moses wrote: “All the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls”

(Exodus 1:5; cf. Deuteronomy 10:22). In legal matters also, the word soul was used to denote any individual. The Lord told Moses: “Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, ‘If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done’” (Leviticus 4:2). When Jacob was speaking of himself in Genesis 49:6, he used the expression, “O my soul”—which meant simply “me.” In each of these instances, actual people—individually or collectively—were under discussion.

Second, the word soul can be used to describe the physical form of life that both men and animals possess and that ceases to exist at death. In their *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Brown, Driver, and Briggs noted that the word “soul” (Hebrew *nephesh*) often is employed to mean “life principle” (1907, p. 659). In Genesis 1:20,24,30, God spoke of the *nephesh hayyah*—literally “soul breathers” or “life breathers” (often translated as “living creatures” or “life”—cf. Leviticus 11:10). The writer of Proverbs observed in regard to animals: “A righteous man regardeth the life (*nephesh*) of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel” (12:10). Hebrew scholar Hugo McCord therefore suggested:

Then the translators realized that the first meaning of *nephesh* is “breath,” and so Genesis 1:20,24,30 and Genesis 2:7 all fit together in understanding Moses as saying that all animals and man too are breathers. Breathers,

coupled with *hayyah*, “living,” the translators thought, would be well translated, in the case of animals, as “living creatures,” and in the case of man as a “living being” (1995, 23 [1]:87-88).

Third, the word soul can be used to describe something that is immortal and thus never dies. In speaking of Rachel’s death at the birth of her son, Moses wrote: “And it came to pass, as her soul was departing (for she died)” (Genesis 35:18). While Elijah was at the house of a widow in the city of Zarephath, the woman’s son died. But Elijah “cried unto Jehovah, and said..., ‘O Jehovah my God, I pray thee, let this child’s soul come into him again’” (1 Kings 17:21). Hezekiah celebrated the fact that the soul survives the death of the body: “But thou hast in love to my soul (*nephesh*) delivered it from the pit of corruption” (Isaiah 38:17).

Centuries later, the Lord Himself warned: “And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28) When the apostle John was allowed to peer into the book “sealed with seven seals” (Revelation 5:1), he “saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God” (Revelation 6:9). Each of these passages is instructive of the fact that there exists within man a soul that survives the death of the body.

The question therefore becomes: Can the word “soul” be used correctly in referring to animals? The first definition obvi-

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ously cannot apply to animals since animals are not persons. But the second definition most certainly would apply to animals. Compare the following passages. In Psalm 78:50 we find an example of the usage of “soul” as “life” when the writer said in speaking of the people of Egypt (who tried in vain to prevent the Israelites from leaving their country’s slavery) that God “spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence.” In this instance, the word “soul” (Hebrew *nephesh*) is used to denote the physical life of humans. But in Genesis 1:20,24, the identical Hebrew word is employed to speak of animals as “living creatures” (Hebrew *nephesh hayyah*). In this sense, then, yes, it is correct to say that animals have “souls”—since the word soul means only physical life. In responding to the question, “Do animals have souls?” McCord wrote: “Yes, when the word soul, *nephesh*, only means ‘breath,’ as in Genesis 1:20 (ASV), ‘Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures,’ *nephesh hayyah*, literally, ‘living soul’ ” (1999).

But can the third definition be applied to animals. Do animals possess immortal souls that one day will inhabit heaven or hell? In this era of evolutionary fervor and an increasing fascination with all kinds of “rights,” we are reminded constantly that man shares a “kinship” with members of the animal kingdom that positively must not be overlooked. Michael Fox wrote:

There is indeed a kinship in the present diversity and evolutionary continuity of all life.... It is more important today than ever before for human beings to be aware of their kinship with all life. It is essential for our survival that we have a strong reverence for all forms of life as our kin... (1978, p. 121).

Those who do not believe in God or accept the Bible as His Word (and thus deny the existence of an immortal soul) generally perceive animals as man’s equal in almost every aspect. Thus, they often refer to animals as being not one whit behind humans in regard to how they should be viewed or treated. For example, in his book, *The Case for Animal Rights*, Tom Regan acknowledged that each human is “the experiencing subject of a life, a conscious creature having an individual welfare” (1987, p. 59). But he likewise viewed animals as “the experiencing

subjects of a life, with inherent value of their own” (p. 59) and so he asked:

What could be the basis of our having more inherent value than animals? Their lack of reason, or autonomy, or intellect? Only if we are willing to make the same judgement in the case of humans who are similarly deficient. But it is not true that such humans—the retarded child, for example, or the mentally deranged—have less inherent value than you or I. Neither, then, can we rationally sustain the view that animals, like them, in being the experiencing subjects of a life have less inherent value. All who have inherent value have it equally, whether they be human animals or not. Inherent value, then, belongs equally to those who are the experiencing subjects of a life (p. 60).

This type of thinking—that men and animals both possess “inherent value equally”—has set the stage for those who profess a belief in God to set forth their claim that animals do indeed possess immortal souls. In his book, *All Creatures Here Below*, Frank Hoffman stated:

...if the animal sacrifice is the precursor, or type of the final sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, which is a mainstream Christian teaching, is **God’s Word not also telling us that animals do have souls?**... Now then, why are we reluctant to accept the fact that animals do have souls? Because we are still trying to hold on to some of our pride, and perhaps our greed. If we do not accept the fact that animals have souls, then we may have a self-acceptable excuse for the way we treat the rest of God’s creatures, which is not in accordance with God’s desire, but ours (1998, emp. added).

The position advocated by such writers is completely at odds with the teaching found in God’s Word. First, man and animals **do not** share kinship—all the claims of evolutionists (and those sympathetic to them) notwithstanding. The apostle Paul addressed this very point in 1 Corinthians 15 when he wrote: “**All flesh is not the same flesh:** but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes” (v. 15, emp. added). As Stuart Walker correctly commented: “Genesis 1:26-30 and 2:7,21-25 clear-

ly states that man was a special creation with no phylogenetic relationship to any other creature. Thus, there is a phylogenetic **discontinuity** between man and animals—we are not physically interrelated” (1991, 5[2]: 21, emp. added). As Adam previewed the animals in the Garden of Eden for a mate and went about naming them (Genesis 2: 18-20), this “discontinuity” became clear. Among all the animals that God had created, there was none that corresponded to him. Not one sufficed to remove him from his personal isolation of being “alone” (Genesis 2:18). As Walker went on to note:

Thus, we share in the life principle, but it is not the life principle itself that is precious.... Ontological continuity cannot be established upon the experiences of life, the intrinsic value of life itself, or physical parallels between animals and humans; rather, **we are separated from the animal world by an impassable gulf—a chasm of essential difference in who we are** (1991, 5[2]:22, emp. added).

Second, man was commanded to “subdue and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28). The Hebrew word for “subdue” (*kabash*) is described in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* as meaning “to tread down,” “to bring under subjection,” etc. The same word is used in Numbers 32:22, 29 and Joshua 18:1 where it is used to describe the subduing and pacifying of Israel’s enemies. To *kabash*, therefore, is to

face that which opposes us and is inimical in its present state to our goals and well-being, and bring it into conformity with our needs—completely pacifying it.... Thus it can be inferred that when God gave Adam dominion over the creative order, He was describing a pre-emptive authority which man would wield over the creation as he interpreted the cosmos and manipulated its functions to man’s benefit... (Walker, 1991, 5[2]: 25).

Man’s “pre-emptive authority” over the creation, including the animal kingdom, was demonstrated quite forcefully in a single stroke when God granted mankind permission to kill and eat animals for food (Genesis 9:3-4). Interestingly, however, with-

in the same context God specifically forbade manslaughter “for in the image of God made he man” (Genesis 9:5-6). If man “shares kinship” with animals or if animals possess immortal souls, why would God permit him to kill his own kin—relatives whose souls are no different than his own? As Neale Pryor commented: “Animals also have a *ruach* [a Hebrew word for “breath” or “life”—BT/SE] (Genesis 6:17). Killing one who has a *ruach* or *nephesh* would not necessarily constitute murder; otherwise animals could not be sacrificed or slaughtered” (1974, 5[3]:34). God’s prohibition against murder carried over even into New Testament times (Matthew 19:18). At the same time, however, God broadened the list of animals that men could kill and eat (Acts 10: 9-14). Why was it that men **could not** kill other men, but **could** kill animals? The answer lies, of course, in the fact that animals were not created “in the image of God.”

Third, although it is true that at times the Bible uses the same terms to refer to the life principle/force in both humans and animals (e.g. Genesis 7:22), and although it is true that those terms may be used to refer to the immortal soul of humans (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 10:28), they **never** are employed by Bible writers to refer to an immortal soul in animals. In their *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Keil and Delitzsch observed:

The beasts arose at the creative word of God, and **no communication of the spirit is mentioned** even in ch. ii:19; the origin of their soul was coincident with that of their corporeality, and their life was merely the individualization of the universal life, with which all matter was filled in the beginning by the Spirit of God. On the other hand, the human spirit is not a mere individualization of the divine breath which breathed upon the material of the world, or of the universal spirit of nature; nor is his body merely a production of the earth when stimulated by the creative word of God. The earth does not bring forth his body, but God Himself puts His hand to the work and forms him; nor does the life already imparted to the world by the Spirit of God individualize itself in him, but God breathes it directly into the nostrils of the one man, in the whole fulness of His personality, the breath of life, that **in a**

manner corresponding to the personality of God he may become a living soul (1982, 1:79-80, emp. added).

Man alone was created “in the image and likeness of God” (Genesis 1:26-27)—something that may not be said of animals. Walker therefore asked: “If the putative parallels either do not exist or are insignificant before God, what then is the critical essence of man that distinguishes him from all of creation, and what are the ramifications of this distinction? The key is found in Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18-25, and 9:5-7; it is that **only man is created in the image of God**” (1991, 5[2]:22, emp. added). Gary Anderson addressed this same point when he wrote:

Man’s concepts of spiritual values, his recognition of morals and his universal acknowledgement that he is responsible for his own behavior set him far apart from the animal world. That is to say, they have no immortal soul, as the following point documents. The spirit of man returns to God who gave it when one dies (Eccl. 12:7). Such is not said of the animal! Adam is called the son of God in Luke 3:38, obviously by creation. **What animal is called the son of God or offspring of God?** (1989, p. 76, emp. added).

Nowhere does God’s Word indicate that animals were created in God’s image. As Philip Hughes commented:

Only of man is it said that God created him in his image. It is in this charter of his constitution that man’s uniqueness is specifically affirmed as a creature radically distinguished from all other creatures. In this respect a line is defined which links man directly and responsibly to God in a way that is unknown to any other creature. Nothing is more basic than the recognition that being constituted in the image of God is of the very essence of and absolutely central to the humanness of man. It is the key that unlocks the meaning of his authentic humanity (1989, p. 30, emp. added).

But do animals have souls? Animals may be said to have souls—if the word “soul” is used as the Bible employs it in discussing members of the animal kingdom (i.e., to describe only the physical life force found within all living creatures). But if the word “soul” is used to refer to an **immortal** soul

that one day will inhabit heaven or hell, then no, animals may not be said to possess a soul. This is the only conclusion that can be drawn, respecting the instruction on the subject found within the Word of God.

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Not long ago, a friend suggested to me an idea that he felt would allow a person to believe in an old Earth and yet still accept the biblical doctrine of creation. I had heard of the Day-Age Theory, the Gap Theory, and the Modified Gap Theory, but I never had heard about the concept he was defending. He referred to it as the "Multiple Gap Theory." Could you explain what this is, and whether or not a faithful Christian can accept it?

The Multiple Gap Theory suggests that the creation days were, in fact, six literal, 24-hour days during which God actually performed the special creative works attributed to Him in Genesis 1. However, these literal days tell only a small part of the whole story. Rather than representing the totality of God's work in creation, they instead represent "breaks" between the geologic ages. In other words, after God's activity on any given **literal** day, that day then was followed by long ages of slow development in the style of orthodox historical geology. Actually, this theory is a hybridization of the Day-Age and Gap theories. Instead of making "ages" out of the days of Genesis 1, it merely inserts the ages **between** the days. And instead of putting a gap in between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, it inserts gaps between the days of Genesis 1.

One of the strongest supporters of the Multiple Gap Theory, and certainly one of its most ardent popularizers, is Donald England, distinguished professor of chemistry at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas. Harding is supported by members of the churches of Christ, who generally are known to be quite conservative in their positions regarding the Genesis account of creation. In the past, for the most part, members of the churches of Christ have not tolerated the teachings of false doctrines associated with creation. Dr. England, of course, is well aware of that fact. The Multiple Gap Theory has the advantage of allowing him, when asked, to assert that he does, in fact, believe the days of creation were 24-hour periods. And, if he is asked if he believes in the Gap Theory, again, he can demur, insisting that he does not.

But is this an upright approach? Or is it "playing loosely with the facts"? Interestingly, an example is available upon which one may base an answer to these questions. In March 1982, Dr. England lectured to a group of young people in Memphis, Tennessee. During that series, he told these youngsters that although he had spent a lifetime searching for "proof" that the days of Genesis 1 were 24-hour days, he never had found any. He then went to great lengths to set before this audience of impressionable teenagers a number of "objections" to the days of Genesis 1 being literal.

As a result of England's comments and a subsequent review of them (see Thompson, 1982), the president of Harding University, Clifton L. Ganus, received several inquiries from financial supporters about England's position on these matters. How did Dr. England respond? On October 4, 1982 he wrote Dr. Ganus a letter in which he stated:

Dear Dr. Ganus: I enjoyed my brief visit with you on Friday afternoon. I stated in your presence that I have always believed that the creation days of Genesis One were six twenty-four hour days. Anyone who would take anything that I said in the [name of congregation omitted here] lectures and try to associate me with a "day-age" theory of creation is making a mistake.... Whenever I speak on the creation theme, I am always careful to make my position clear as to my understanding of the length of days in Genesis One... (1982, p. 1).

As proof of his position on these matters, England included in his letter a quotation from pages 111-113 of his book, *A Christian View of Origins*, in which he wrote that he does not recommend strict theistic evolution. But here is the interesting point in all of this. In that same book, just two pages earlier, Dr. England had written:

The statements, "God created" (Genesis 1 and elsewhere) and "God spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast" (Ps. 33:9) do not explicitly rule out some sort of process. Now, if the days of Genesis are taken as 24-hour days, then that certainly rules out any process extending over vast periods of time. The days could easily have been twenty-four-hour days and the earth still date to great antiquity **provided that indefinite periods of time separated the six creation days** (1972, pp. 110-111, emp. added).

Is this dealing honestly with the facts? Dr. England told the university president (who had the power to dismiss him from his professorial position) that he **does believe** the days of Genesis 1 were 24-hours long, all the while knowing that he has defended, in print, the Multiple Gap Theory.

A Response and Refutation

At the very least, this theory requires a most "unnatural" reading of the Creation

account—which apparently is continuous and intended to describe the creation of “heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.” The context of the creation record suggests continuity. There is absolutely no exegetical evidence to document the claim that in between each of the (literal) creation days there were millions or billions of years. In fact, such evidence is conspicuously missing. In his 1983 volume, *A Scientist Examines Faith and Evidence*, Dr. England commented on this fact when he said: “True, the silence of the Scriptures leaves open the possibility of time gaps but **it does not seem advisable to build a doctrinal theory on the basis of a silence of Scripture**” (p. 154, emp. added).

Nor does the theory harmonize with orthodox geology. If the acts of creation are left on their respective days, then there is no possible way to make the Creation account agree with the geologic-age system—gaps or no gaps. **The Genesis sequence and the alleged geologic sequence do not agree** (see Thompson, 1995, p. 214). The Multiple Gap Theory does not alter that fact.

Additionally, we must not overlook the import of Exodus 20:11 which specifically states that “in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the seas, and **all** that in them is, and rested on the seventh day.” Either God made what He made in six days or He made what He made in six days **plus** millions or billions of years. Those respecting the Bible as the inspired Word of God have no trouble accepting the former and rejecting the latter. It is fitting that we close this section with a quotation from G. Richard Culp:

We stand either with God and His teaching of creation, or we stand with the evolutionist in opposition to Him. The issues are sharply drawn; there can be no compromise. You are either a Christian or an evolutionist; you cannot be both (1975, p. 163).

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Q In several past issues of *Reason & Revelation*, you have discussed and refuted attempts by Christians to justify belief in an old Earth via the Gap Theory and/or the Modified Gap Theory. I recently heard of yet another theory—known as the “Non-World View”—that supposedly permits Bible believers to accept the idea of an ancient Earth. Have you ever heard of the Non-World View? What does it say, and can a faithful Christian believe it?

A Imagine the dilemma of Bible believers who have tried almost ev-

erything imaginable to force the evolutionary geologic age-system into the biblical record—yet without any apparent success. Perhaps they advocated the Day-Age Theory, but soon realized that it proved to be indefensible from a biblical standpoint. Perhaps they then moved their allegiance to the standard Gap Theory, but recognized that it also was unscriptural. Eventually, perhaps, they attempted a defense of John Clayton’s Modified Gap Theory—until it, too, collapsed under the scrutiny of correct biblical exegesis. What to do? If a Bible believer does not wish to abandon completely his faith in God and simply become an out-and-out evolutionist, yet at the same time abjectly refuses to accept at face value the biblical testimony regarding the age of the Earth, what option is left? There appears to be only one—the so-called “Non-World View.”

The Non-World View dates from the 1972 publication of *A Christian View of Origins* by Donald England (yes, this is the same Donald England mentioned in the question above for his advocacy and defense of the Multiple Gap Theory). In essence, the Non-World View represents a “refusal to get involved” by suggesting:

There is no world view presented in Genesis 1. I believe the intent of Genesis 1 is far too sublime and spiritual for one to presume that it teaches anything at all about a cosmological world view. We do this profound text a great injustice by insisting that there is inherent within the text an argument for any particular world view (England, 1972, p. 124, emp. added).

In other words, this is a compromise for the person who refuses to accept the Genesis account of creation as written but who cannot seem to find a reasonable alternative. In his book, Dr. England admitted that from a straightforward reading of the Genesis account “one gets the general impression from the Bible that the earth is young,” and that “it is true that Biblical chronology leaves one with the general impression of a relatively recent origin for man” (1972, p. 109). But he also made it clear that he had absolutely no intention of accepting such biblical implications—since they disagree with “science.”

Having painted himself into a theological corner, so to speak, the only way out was simply to throw up his hands and,



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with a sigh of relief, view Genesis as containing **no world view whatsoever**. As John Clayton (who strongly recommends the Non-World View) has suggested:

By “Non-World” we mean that we don’t accept any “God-limiting” position on how we interpret Genesis. We don’t limit our comprehension of time, space, or process in any way Biblically; and do this unlimiting on the basis that that’s what God intended....

If Chapter 1 is not a detailed historical account, how do we fit the fossil record to it? The “Non-World” View says “we don’t.” If we are to speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent we won’t succumb to the pressure to make it fit. Since the Bible doesn’t mention dinosaurs, bats, amoeba, bacteria, DNA virus [sic], sea plants, algae, fungus [sic], etc., we won’t attempt to match them. There are a few forms we can match, but only a few out of the millions. The Hebrew words used in Genesis do not cover whole phyla of animals but they are reasonably specific. If we take a “Non-World View,” this doesn’t bother us because we are only interested in God’s message to man, not in satisfying man’s curiosity.

The “Non-World View” also finds no necessity in dealing with men’s arguments on the scientific theories of creation and age. There is no necessity to argue about the “big bang,” “steady state,” or irtron theory of origins; nor is there any need to hassle about whether the Earth is 6, 6,000 or 6 billion years old. Genesis 1:1 says only that God did it! That is the purpose. It is **not** the purpose to state how or when (Clayton, 1977, pp. 6-8, emp. in orig.).

A Response and Refutation

The careful reader soon will realize that this is indeed the compromise to end all compromises. With the Non-World View, a person may believe as much, or as little, as he wants in regard to the Genesis account of creation. If the person who holds to this view is challenged with a relevant portion of Scripture, he or she may reply simply, “Oh, that passage doesn’t have **any** world view in it.” The convenient thing, of course, is that it does not matter how forceful the passage may be, whether it comes from

the Old Testament or the New, which biblical writer may have penned it, or even if Christ Himself spoke it. With the Non-World View, **everything** becomes completely subjective.

The beauty of such a position, according to John Clayton, is that it is not “God-limiting” (1977, p. 6). Even though when one reads the creation account he gets the “general impression” that man has been here only a short while and that the Earth is relatively young, and even though the Lord Himself stated in Mark 10:6 that man and woman have been here “from the beginning of the creation,” all of that becomes irrelevant. With a wave of the hand, Genesis 1 means little to nothing. In fact, it might as well not have been written, for it simply has “no world view” in it at all.

Yet God went to great lengths to explain what was done on day one, what was done on day two, and so on. He specifically told Moses that He took **six days** to do it. Then He set the Sabbath day as the Jews’ remembrance of His creative acts on those days. If God said “in the beginning” and “in six days the Lord created,” that is a **time element**. Jesus Himself said that, “**from the beginning of the creation**, male and female made He them” (Mark 10:6). That, too, is a time element. While it may not give an exact day and hour, it says much. It says man was on the Earth “from the beginning.” That automatically rules out both the idea of an ancient Earth and those compromising theories intended to support such an idea (e.g., the Day-Age Theory, Gap Theory, Modified Gap Theory, Multiple Gap Theory, etc.). God has indicated—in a way we can understand—what He wanted us to know about the time element. When He wrote that He created “the heavens, the earth, the seas, and all that in them is” **in six days**, does that sound anything like a “Non-World” view?

Man may not understand completely the “how” of creation, but it is present nevertheless. When the Scriptures say, “And God said, ‘Let there be light’ and there was light”—that is **how**. When the Scriptures say, “And God said, ‘Let the earth put forth grass,’” and “the earth brought forth grass”—that is **how**. The “how” is by the power of God (cf. Hebrews 1:3 wherein the

writer declared that it is God Who upholds “all things by the word of his power”).

Granted, the text of Genesis 1 is sublime and spiritual. **But it also is historical**. Jesus Christ Himself said so (Matthew 19:4). So did Paul (1 Corinthians 15:45; Romans 8:22; 1 Timothy 2:13). That should settle the matter. God said **that** He did it—“God created.” God said **how** He did it—“by the word of his power.” God said **when** He did it—“in the beginning.” The inquiring reader eventually will come to realize just how much that **includes**, and just how much it **excludes**. The only “world view” left is the perfect one—that of Genesis 1.

The Non-World View is a subtly presented yet flagrant attack on Genesis 1. It impeaches the testimony of the Old and New Testament writers and even impugns the integrity of the Lord Himself. For what purpose? What ultimate good does it accomplish? It merely compromises the truth while leaving open the way for any and all viewpoints on creation, whether founded in Scripture or not. Furthermore, surely the question begs to be asked: If Genesis 1 is not God’s world view, then what is?

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ERRATUM

Two typographical errors in the November issue need to be corrected. On page 81 (first column, first paragraph, line 14) the sentence states that **Jerusalem** was destroyed. “Jerusalem” should be changed to **Jericho**. On page 83 (first column, last paragraph, line 9) the sentence states that Rahab was one of **four** women named in the lineage of Christ. “Four” should be changed to **five** (Bathsheba was omitted inadvertently). Matthew 1:6 records: “David began Solomon of her who had been the wife of Uriah.” The Old Testament, of course, names this woman as Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:3). We apologize for these two inadvertent errors on our part.

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At the end of each year, we produce a bound volume of *Reason & Revelation* (containing all 12 issues) that has a comb binding and an attractive, two-color, heavy-weight cover. The bound volume for 1999 now is available. Cost is \$8 each (\$1.50 s/h).

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

A PERSONAL NOTE—ON THE DEATH OF A MENTOR

[When I used this space in the May issue to write about the death of my mother, Mary Ruth Thompson, I noted that it is a rare occurrence for us to include matters of a personal nature in the pages of *Reason & Revelation*. It is almost unheard of for us to do so twice in one year. Nevertheless, I hope that after you read this month's "Note from the Editor" you will understand why I am veering once again from our normal format.]

During the five decades that I have spent on this Earth, I have been influenced time and again in a positive fashion by so many wonderful people. At the risk of omitting some who should be included, several names spring to mind. My late father, Dr. Charles Thompson, was one of the smartest men I ever knew. His influence on my life has been inestimable, and my respect for him is immeasurable. The late Guy N. Woods, former editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, imparted to me through his writings a knowledge of and respect for God's Word that has grown with each passing year. Wayne Jackson, my co-laborer in the work of Apologetics Press for two decades, has taught me as much as any man still living. Dr. Russell Artist, former biology department chairman at David Lipscomb University, has devoted himself to being my friend and teacher.

But in my "Note from the Editor" this month, I would like to pay a special tribute to a man who not only was a dear friend, but an esteemed mentor. His name was Bobby Duncan. On Saturday morning, December 4, Bobby died unexpectedly while serving as the preacher for the church of Christ in Adamsville, Alabama and as editor of *Vigil*, a monthly journal published by that congregation. Years earlier, he had been the minister of the Sixth Avenue church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama, where he also served as editor of *Words of Truth*, the weekly publication of that congregation.

When I was barely 25 years old and fresh out of graduate school at Texas A&M University, I sent an article to *Words of*

Truth for possible publication. As the new editor, Bobby decided to run that article—my first ever put into print. Thus began a friendship that would last more than two decades.

When we were about to begin the work of Apologetics Press in 1979, I telephoned Bobby to ask for his advice. He gave much more than advice, however. He flew into action and in one weekend—due to his influential reputation—helped me raise almost half the necessary support. From that day to this, whenever I needed advice, counsel, or help,

he always was there—listening patiently, encouraging gently, and correcting lovingly. Just days before he died, I sent him the rough draft of a series of articles on "The Origin, Nature, and Destiny of the Soul" that I plan to run in *R&R* in 2000. He returned the corrected manuscript with a hand-written note that said simply, "Great stuff. Thanks for letting me have a part." Typical Bobby Duncan—always self-effacing, always grateful for any small part he could play in furthering the borders of the Lord's kingdom. He taught me wisely, and loved me deeply. But not just me. Thousands came under his beneficent influence. When a pillar of this magnitude falls, the entire edifice shudders. His passing has left a void that will not be filled easily. As

King David said of his friend Abner at his untimely death, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day?" (2 Samuel 3:38). We shall remember with fondness "a prince and a great man" who walked among us. Good-bye, my friend—until we meet again in the eternal city set four-square "whose Builder and Maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10).

— Bert Thompson

[At the request of Bobby's wife, Lois, his son, Tim, and his daughter, Jill, I wrote a eulogy and delivered it as a special tribute at his standing-room-only funeral on December 6. If you would like to receive a complimentary copy, feel free to contact my office and I will be more than happy to send you one.]

