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Please read all literature alongside your bible, so that you can see the accuracy and truth of the message for yourself

This Pamphlet reproduces the third of a course of twelve addresses arranged for the first Sunday of each month during 1949, by the

CHRISTADELPHIAN (CENTRAL) ECCLESIA,  
In the  
Midland Institute, Birmingham

To show that it is not only possible but reasonable to believe those foundation truths of Christianity upon which doubt has been cast by some modern writers.

Dare we believe?

## CHRISTIANITY AND EVOLUTION

It is often supposed that an irreconcilable difference exists between the creation narrative in the book of Genesis and the geological data on which the theory of evolution rests. This impression is a mistake; the real antithesis is between the rationalist assumptions underlying evolution and the principle of divine intervention upon which Christianity is based. It will be our task to examine this difference and attempt a true assessment; but before considering the doctrine of rationalism, the "record of the rocks" will be compared with the Genesis narrative.

### GUESSES OF THE PAST

By means of several interlocking techniques, the most important of which is a measurement of radio-active content, the relative ages of many fossil-bearing strata have been determined. Although the absolute age in years is still a subject of controversy, the relative value is established, and we now know not only the order in which the various forms of life first appeared, but also the relative magnitude of the intervals between separate stages. Most of the older geological dating was based on assumptions which have proved wrong, and it is only within the last thirty years that reliable figures have become available; this new knowledge has brought many surprises in its train. A modern authority on the subject has written: "History has the advantage of written records and of calendars which provide more or less reliable dates, and therefore allow of estimating or determining the duration of periods of evolution. For prehistory, no calendars are available. Up to not many years ago the time scales suggested for the evolution of early man and his cultures were

pure guesses, not to say imagination. From a scientific point of view they were worthless." (F. E. Zeuner. *Dating the Past*. Methuen, 1946; p.1)

Yet, on these flimsy guesses without scientific value many arguments claimed to be infallible have been levelled against the Bible. At the turn of the century, for example, Haeckel could boast "We now have all the principle documents which tell the history of our race" (E. Haeckel. *The Riddle of the Universe*. Trans. McCabe. Watts, 1929 ; p. 73). This example is typical of many attacks on the credibility of the Bible narrative.

### **FORMS OF LIFE, APPEAR SUDDENLY**

One of the greatest surprises for the evolutionist was to find that each of the major divisions of life came suddenly into existence during a comparatively short time; that during the period of emergence all the main subdivisions rapidly appeared, and thereafter continued for a much longer period without appreciable variation. Only 25 years ago the following idea was presented: "The progress of organic evolution from invisible animalcules to birds and mammals and man has a magnificence that cannot be exaggerated..... For hundreds of millions of years it has continued without rest or haste"( J. A. Thompson. *The Gospel of Evolution*. Newnes (John O'London); P. 190).

How different is this from the picture necessitated by more exact knowledge, for which the term "explosive evolution" has had to be coined! Far from being without rest or haste, the progress is now known to have been a series of frantic spurts, each followed by long periods of inactivity. This more accurate picture is exactly in accord with the Genesis narrative, which describes the sudden appearance of new types at fairly regular intervals. This tendency of fuller knowledge to necessitate a modification of earlier ideas into closer conformity with the Bible scheme is to be seen in the realm of archaeology as well as in evolution. It strongly suggests that the Bible may well be completely correct after all.

A second problem of similar type concerns the Pre-Cambrian fossils. More than 5,000 forms of life in Cambrian times have already been discovered. To account for the abundance and variety of life in this period Darwin had to assume: "Consequently, if the theory be true, it is indisputable that before the lowest Cambrian stratum was deposited, long periods elapsed, as long as, or probably far longer than, the whole interval from the Cambrian age to the present day; and that during these vast periods the world swarmed with living creatures" (C. Darwin. *The Origin of Species*. 6th Edn. Murray, 1872; p. 286).

In Darwin's day, however, no fossils were known from this long age "swarming with living creatures", and he admits : "Nevertheless, the difficulty of assigning any good reason for the absence of vast piles of strata rich in fossils beneath the Cambrian system is very great. . . The case at present must remain inexplicable; and may be truly used as a valid argument against the views here entertained" (*Ibid*; p. 287).

Evolutionists have felt the force of the argument against their theory to such an extent that many searches have been made to find fossils in these strata, but completely without success. To date, not a single definite form of life has been discovered despite the extensive efforts; details are to be found in a paper presented before the Victoria Institute in 1948 by Douglas Dewar. The evidence now indicates that all the varieties of Cambrian life did spring suddenly into existence as Genesis claims.

## THE GENESIS ACCOUNT

Turning now to the Genesis account, a significant point becomes obvious. Man was the last form of life to appear on the earth: so appear, both the evolutionists and Genesis are agreed. It is certain, therefore, that no details concerning the ages before his time could be preserved in legend or myth; the actual order of appearance was unknown. Yet the evidence of the rocks is of an order corresponding to the Genesis narrative, an order far from probable in the eyes of early man, and one which could never have been guessed by accident. The alternative is that God, the creator, revealed it in vision.

A second point is the essential difference between the Genesis account and the Sumerian legends of comparable age. While the Bible account is simple and dignified, the other is a bizarre story of great warring monsters whose place is usurped by their progeny, and from whose carcasses much of the universe was formed. At the Sumerian account we look with indulgence; man in his infancy, we may say, showed all the tendencies of infants—a love for the fantastic and the magical which we feel to be beneath our serious consideration. With the Bible narrative, on the other hand, we in all our self-satisfied learning can find no element which jars our sense of correctness, and but for an inherent tendency to reject the idea of God, we should have no difficulty in accepting it today. In many other ways, such as its accurate delineation of character in the progenitors of the Hebrew race, the Bible differs from all other national literature of that age; this, as a sign of divine authorship, is an argument allowable in- this discussion, since if the Bible shows evidence that it is really God's word, then evolution as the word of man must be dismissed.

## THE SIX DAYS

Some have found their greatest difficulty to be a reconciliation between the "six days" of Genesis and the expanded time scale of geology. Although the geological periods are not yet known with precision to be so many years, it is certain that they cover an interval incomparably greater than six days. To those who argue that the six days were really six very long periods it has been replied with justice that the Bible wording of "evening and morning" is so precise as to render this explanation improbable. The alternative explanation of a "double start" whereby God is represented as populating the earth, destroying the population, and then recreating an identical population in six days, is likewise not probable, nor in accord with what we know of God's other works. There remains an explanation noted by several early expositors, but recently advanced with great conviction by the late Air Commodore Wiseman, that in six days the details of God's creation were revealed to man in vision, the timing in Genesis conforming to the incidence of the visions (P. J. Wiseman. *Creation Revealed in Six Days*. Marshall, Morgan, Scott. 1948).

This explanation, which is so simple a reconciliation as to have escaped popular notice for a considerable time, leaves no contradiction between the millions of years quoted by geology and the 144 hours of Genesis. We cannot prove that this is the correct explanation, but it appears probable from the narrative in Genesis, and it removes any necessary contradiction between the Bible and the facts on which the evolutionists claim to build.

## "MAN" DEFINED

The remaining factual difficulty often advanced concerns the age of man. Leaving the difficult question of a precise Biblical chronology, in Genesis, we may nevertheless be certain of the order of time. The time of Adam cannot have been more than 10,000 years ago, whereas the geological evidence claimed as proof of man's existence is alleged to be 50,000 years old at least. We would suggest that the explanation of the discrepancy is just as simple as that which solved the "six days"

difficulty, but often overlooked because it is so simple. We might ask with the Psalmist, "[What is Man?](#)" We all know a man when we see him; but what is the essential difference between man and animal? Darwin recognizes (*Descent of Man*) that the real differences are mental rather than physical, and seeks to list them. Modern psychology has found a close parallel between the instincts of animals and the more complex reactions of man, and the one outstanding difference which is fundamental to man alone is a religious tendency.

Now geology has been unable to find any signs of agriculture or religion prior to a period now thought to be about 10,000 years ago, and this period is approximately the time of Adam as accurately as we may determine the two periods. Strangely enough, these first signs of agriculture and religion were found in the Near East, the very district where Genesis places the creation of man. Writing of this fact, Keith says "In the previous chapters we have been attempting to trace the footsteps of the prehistoric inhabitants of Palestine down the stream of time. We have followed them to a point which we presume to be about 10,000 years before the Christian era began. Having reached this point we come to a standstill; cave man vanishes, leaving no certain trail behind him. We have not yet discovered the path which led man from the cave to the village. When next we come across the Palestinians they are members of settled communities—tillers of the soil, raisers of cattle, spinners, weavers and makers of earthenware" (Sir Arthur Keith. *New Discoveries Relating to the Antiquity of Man*. Williams and Norgate, 1931 ; P. 225.). On this subject also modern knowledge has presented evolutionists with a problem and confirmed details of the Genesis narrative.

### **THE POWER TO "HEAR GOD"**

The Bible claims that man was created "[in the image of God](#)", by which is usually understood that he had "personality", could feel responsibility, and respond to a moral code. The very first record of Eden shows man in just this position, under law to God. Furthermore, Genesis records that Adam was an agriculturist, and that his immediate descendants kept domestic animals and engaged in manufacture. The fact that at this time those characteristics are first found, and that they appear suddenly, not slowly developing, as evolutionists predicted, places the Genesis record of man on the same sure basis relative to the facts as is the earlier record of the first appearance of life. But the early chapters of Genesis form but one view of creation—the details of physical generation. In the prologue to John's Gospel we have a different point of view—a discussion of the moral and mental factors involved at that time. John opens his Gospel by a statement concerning "[The Word](#)". This term, in the Greek, is derived from a root signifying "to set in order", and has reference to the set of words conveying an idea rather than to the sounds issuing from the throat. From the same root we obtain logic, the setting in order of simple ideas to obtain a complex result. Thus the term "[word](#)" stands for the mechanism used to transfer a thought from one mind to another, and when God is the speaker, God's word is the mechanism used by God to implant His thoughts in the mind of man. With this in mind we might summarize the first few verses of John's Gospel, thus

- vv. 1-2      From the very beginning of time the purpose of implanting God's thoughts within the minds of separate personalities (man) was present with God in so intimate a manner as to form part of His nature.
  
- v. 3              The whole of the visible universe was created with this object in view, and of all formed from the beginning not one single item was apart from this aim.
  
- vv. 4-5        The word (implanting of God's thoughts in man) constituted life for man (life in John's Gospel is not transitory mortal existence, but the eternal life of God to be inherited later), and its effect was to enlighten the darkness of man's mind. From the

very beginning God caused this light to shine, but the darkness of man refused to apprehend it.

- vv. 6-8 God sent a messenger to bear witness of the light (word of God being spoken) who was not personally identified with the Word.
- vv. 9-13 While John was witnessing, a special manifestation of the Word was in process of coming into the world, but it was received by very few. To those who did accept, however, it was indeed light ("[son of God](#)" signifies one partaking of God's life) and life.
- v. 14 Jesus, the "[begotten](#)" Son of God, was God's word made flesh. His life was a speaking of God's way, God's thought, God's righteousness.

With this central theme all the Bible is in agreement. Thus Paul speaks of the whole creation as groaning inwardly by reason of the present distress, which is but a discipline to result in the "[glory of the children of God](#)", and straining towards that desired end when corruption has passed away and life is manifest in God's sons (Rom. 8 v 18-23).

We might summarize this point, therefore, by saying that the power to "[hear God](#)" is essential to man, and any creature without this potentiality is not man within the Bible's meaning of the term. All therefore that the Bible definitely claims is that Adam was the first real man, the first living creature having rational converse with God. The first chapter of Genesis is but a prologue to God's great purpose with man; God did not send His word as a text-book to satiate our curiosity, but to reveal those things concerning Himself which relate to "[life](#)". He gave the visions of Genesis chapter 1 to impress upon man the absolute dependence of all upon God, who made all and continuously sustains it. Much of the finer detail now revealed in the rocks is not mentioned there; only the broad sweep of God's work in implanting life in the earth is noted. There are no lurid details, for instance, of the giant reptiles which have so captured the public imagination, for God is not impressed with size, and their main import lay in their size at a period when rank vegetation must be kept in check by such vegetarians. So also it is possible, though not noted in Genesis, that creatures much nearer to man in shape and habits than the present anthropoids, may once have roamed the earth; the only point mentioned by the Bible is the one in which it is absolutely definite—they were not men capable of seeking God, for Adam was the first of such.

### **THE RATIONALIST ASSUMPTION**

The basic assumption provided by rationalism upon which evolution is built, is that the whole universe is a chance combination of elements in space, that it is self-running as a huge machine which needs no tending, and that all history past and future is uniquely determined by the exact position and motion of all particles at any one instant of time. Many philosophers began to doubt this principle of determinism when the Quantum Theory indicated that it is impossible to observe both motion and location simultaneously for any single particle, and that single particles, as distinct from conglomerations, do not evince the deterministic behaviour expected of them. A much more serious objection to the whole principle, however, was known before Quantum Mechanics were thought of—the law of entropy. Since it is postulated that the complex universe has gradually evolved without external design or guidance from an original chaos, it is implicit in the theory that the nature of things in themselves is to develop in this way, and given an original amorphous state, a continuous increase in complexity and seeming design will occur. In physics, however, exactly the reverse process is always observed: nature, left to itself without human intervention, inevitably degenerates from higher to lower organization. So universal is this rule, that it is a principle without

exception that of any two events related in time, that in the highest state of organization is the earlier, providing all factors are taken into account. In this matter also, science is in agreement with the Bible statement that in the beginning all was created: we see all states of energy degenerating, and if we look back along the path of time we are brought to a point of maximum organization when some power outside of the present system organized it and set it in motion.

### **MANS WAY "NOT IN HIMSELF"**

This same fundamental hypothesis of evolution is in conflict with the Bible in a second direction: it implies that the natural tendency of all is improvement—the universe runs without guidance or assistance from outside, and all creatures, including man, contain within themselves all that is necessary for their further development. To this whole attitude the Bible is entirely opposed. It teaches that not only was the universe made by God in the beginning, but it is under His continual care and guidance, and every second of time its existence is dependent upon an act of God's will. Man, in particular, has no power in himself to improve, and must rely solely upon an intervention of God for his salvation. The Bible teaching may be summarized in a single passage "[O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps](#)" (Jer. 10 23)

In the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans Paul gives a graphic picture of man's progress from God's point of view—a progress very different from that pictured by evolution. To Paul, the whole direction was reversed: God formed man in the beginning and revealed Himself to man, but man preferred his own way, and corrupted himself upon the earth until his plight was indeed a sorry one. This is the same scene which we have noted in John, the coming of God's light and its rejection by men. The practical implications of the two opposed points of view are of the greatest import in our life. For the rationalist, hope and duty lie in social work and political action: for the Christian there is no hope in man; he places his hope in God alone. When the Christian is asked why he does not devote his energies to social work rather than religious preaching, he has his answer in the life of his Lord. Jesus came to a world filled with oppression, slavery, and disease: at no time was he found leading a political agitation; he refused the people's attempt to make him a king; he charged those whose diseases he healed to tell no man lest they sought him for the healing rather than to hear the Gospel. Jesus devoted his energies to living and proclaiming the word of God so that he became a "living word". He did this precisely because he loved man and pitied his distress; but he knew that only by learning of God, only by hearing God's words and hence thinking God's thoughts, could true life be man's, and could he experience true happiness. It is in the assurance that an omnipotent God is in control who loves man and will save that the Christian takes consolation; and Jesus describes the opposing attitudes of rationalist and Christian in times of great distress when he says: "[There shall be ... distress of nations with perplexity . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which, are coming on the earth . . . When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh](#)" (Luke 21 v 25-28).

In this aspect we have touched the most serious side of the difference we are considering: it is not 'merely, a matter of opposing philosophies, a question 'whether we beguile our minds with this idea or that; it is a matter of gravest import, since to devote our energies to religion if it is a sham is wasting our fleeting pleasures, while to deny God in rationalism if Christianity is true, is a wilful casting away of true life and happiness beyond present imagination. (1 Cor. 15 v 13-19)

### **A PATTERN IN MAN'S HISTORY**

We have a light-hearted proverb that "history repeats itself", and the Bible presents us with a grim picture of a repetitive design impressed upon the pages of history. It is a design compounded of man's foolishness and God's mercy. Man strays from God, beguiled through the "[deceitfulness of](#)

sin", imagining in his blindness that the things denied by a loving God are good for him instead of the evil they inevitably turn out to be God, in order that all who will may have opportunity to repent and turn to Him, delays the punishment until iniquity has grown so rampant that there is no further hope for repentance ; then comes crisis—divine intervention with judgment, and a fresh start; only, alas, to repeat the general pattern. Nevertheless, over the centuries a remnant have availed themselves of opportunity, and in God's power will yet stand again in life to participate in a greater portion of God's design. The Old Testament paints the canvas—the flood, the cities of the plain, the Jewish monarchy, the return under Persia, the Jewish state of Jesus' day, all are of this design; and Jesus said that in the days when he would return to the earth in judgment events should exactly conform to earlier crises (Luke 17 v22-35). So also Peter describes the purpose behind history—which is hidden from agnosticism by wilful blindness—as a storing up of judgment that more might repent, but an eventual crisis of unparalleled intensity (2 Pet 3). Through it all, however, the Christian is confident that eventually salvation will come, for God, the Almighty, has spoken, and His word, capable of giving life, will accomplish its intention : "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace" (Isa 55 v 10-11). For the Bible there is no slow automatic progress of evolution, but swift, powerful, and selective intervention by God to accomplish His design.

### THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM

The inherent antithesis between evolution and Christianity comes to a head in all its aspects in the person of Jesus Christ. The contradiction commences at his birth, for the Bible says that he derived his unique authority from a divine begettal, whereas to the thorough-going evolutionist such an intervention by God in the process of human generation is unthinkable. Christianity is Christianity only because Christ was more than a mere man, and any attempt to deny the virgin birth cuts away the foundation from under the Christian's feet by denying the authority of his Lord. The Bible presentation of Jesus is well summed up in the words of Paul when he says "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5 v 19)

The evolutionist may admit Jesus to be the greatest man that has ever lived, but no more than man, the product of nature and arising by chance. By the law of probability, therefore, a greater should arise in the vast eras presumed to lie ahead; for that which has occurred once by chance in a certain period is almost certain to occur again in a very much longer period, and if advance is automatic, should occur on a higher level. But Paul claims Jesus as "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1 v15), where the term "image" implies a likeness stamped or formed on some inferior substance, but usually carrying authority from the original (as the image of Caesar on the Roman coin). Thus Jesus is presented as being "as good a likeness of the invisible God as could be formed in human flesh" (we are reminded of John's term "word of God made flesh"), and he carried the authority of God, the right to forgive sins, which his contemporaries rightly saw was the prerogative of God alone. John the Baptist, because he was the herald of Jesus, was called the greatest man yet born (Luke 7 v 28), but John spoke of himself as insignificant in comparison with Jesus (Matt 3 v 11). The whole picture of Jesus seen in the Gospel is of a man not boastful or self-seeking, but despite this, a man invested with supreme authority who assumed that his word was much more than that of man.

To the evolutionist Jesus was a great moral teacher but however he may laud the name of Jesus by words, to the evolutionist he was but a teacher, and the only assistance which he may gain from him is that of instruction and encouragement. The evolutionist sees in Jesus that which one man became by virtue of something inherent in man, and feels assured that in the dim future a race of better men

than he will eventually grace this earth. To the Christian, as we have seen, there is no power in man to lift himself out of the mire, but he relies on the intervention of God in his life and to the Christian it is Jesus who is the channel and agent of God in this work of salvation. We may be unable to comprehend the reason and philosophy behind the Cross, but we have God's assurance that in that act Jesus won for us the salvation which we desire, that it is through Jesus now that God helps and strengthens us, that it is by the intervention of Jesus that we shall be called out of our graves, that it is at the hand of Jesus all men will be judged, and that it is from Jesus that we shall receive the gift of true life if it is to be ours. In all these things we have received God's assurance, in that He has already raised Jesus from the grave and given him His own life, to die no more. The resurrection is a double assurance; it is God's witness that the Jesus who promised to help and save his people was a divine messenger enjoying the divine approbation, but his resurrection is also our assurance that God is able and willing to raise dead men to eternal life; and Paul speaks of Jesus as "[The firstfruits of them that are asleep](#)" (Cor. 15 v 20), and the Christian hope is described in the words: "[For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection](#)" (Rom 6 v 15). The evolutionists who do profess to be Christians, do so only because either they have not realized the logical outcome of evolution, or else have never grasped the Bible teaching concerning Jesus their Lord.

### **AN IRRECONCILABLE CONFLICT**

Remembering therefore the dictum of Jesus that "[no man can serve two masters](#)", we may conclude that evolution and Christianity are mutually exclusive outlooks; and we may sum up the irresolvable conflict between the two in their opposing views of the person of Jesus. Jesus himself made the claim after his resurrection that "[All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth](#)" (Matt. 28 v 18). To the evolutionist the very idea of "authority" on earth from an outside source is abhorrent and meaningless. From that point of view Jesus was but a moral genius who willingly sacrificed his life for "the race"; he was the product of chance working through her latest offspring, man; and our future hope lies in our endeavours and those of our fellows. To the Christian who believes the Bible, Jesus is all that Paul described when he wrote:

["Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself; taking the form of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself; becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."](#) (Phil 2 v 5-11)

#### **DARE WE BELIEVE?**

Twelve addresses designed for those who feel that there is a conflict between modern knowledge and religious belief.

The Need for Belief  
The Scientific Outlook and the Christian Faith  
Christianity and Evolution  
Miracles  
Biblical Criticism  
Revelation and Reason  
The Meaning of Inspiration  
The Virgin Birth and Divine Sonship  
Sacrifice and the Blood of Christ  
Physical Resurrection  
The Exclusive Element in Christianity