

Letters

probably referred to the Near East, parts of Europe (including Great Britain colonized by the Romans), parts of Asia, and parts of Africa (in the north and around its coastal areas). Today, from our world view, it means the entire planet Earth. Thus, the term the "whole earth" is to be understood arbitrarily rather than for any specific point in time, and the extent of Noah's Flood cannot be equated with that of the Table of Nations as has been suggested by Seely.

2. Seely's comment: "Old Testament scholars say the 'whole earth' flood of Noah goes back to the Earth being as completely flooded as it was in Gen. 1:2." I have never heard this interpretation before, but just because some Old Testament scholars say it, does not mean it is necessarily the correct interpretation. All of the commentaries I have read on Gen. 1:2 imply that this verse is describing the early, formless state of the Earth—it implies nothing about a "flood." Could this interpretation of Old Testament scholars be more integrally related to a particular cosmology (theology) of *their* time than to two different physical events described by the Bible?

I would argue that neither of Seely's reasons are justification for giving up the historical accuracy of the Bible or for postulating an "accommodating" God. How do other *PSCF* readers feel about this?

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"Subtle Energy" May Not Be Demonic

Burkholder in "What is the 'Subtle Energy' in Energy Healing?" (*PSCF* 55 [2003]:104–16) argues that the subtle energy is psi (chi, qi) and warns against many unorthodox medical practices as demonic signs and wonders. But the connection between acupuncture and demonic power is without firm basis. All ancient practices of medicine were related to religion in some ways, only in the recent secularized Western society are orthodox medicine and religion separated. During the nineteenth century in Western society, Thomsonianism (the idea that all diseases were caused by cold and could be cured by heat), homeopathy (the principle of like is cured by like), hydropathy (the philosophy of water cure), and Graham's Christian Health Movement (the use of dietary regimens for disease prevention that started the Kellogg and Post cereal companies) represented a physiological Arminianism, which claimed that individuals could take control of their own physical salvation, even though these practices did not educe any metaphysical theory of healing. However, Swedenborgianism and mesmerism, which sprang up during the same time, did connect the physical and spiritual realms. During the late nineteenth century chiropractic and osteopathic medicine emerged from mesmerism and gradually muted their references to metaphysical concepts of disease. (See Robert C. Fuller, *Alternative Medicine and American Religious Life* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1989]). From this short summary one can see that unorthodox or alternative medicine may not relate to the spiritual realm and can be

separated from earlier metaphysical speculation in a later stage of development.

Chinese philosophy, like Greek philosophy, was not related to religion through its historical development. Traditional Chinese medicine did not have a strong religious tie, though its theory is related to Taoism through coexisting in the same cultural environment. But Taoism was originated as philosophy, only later emerged with religious rituals. Even under anti-religious and materialistic communist rule of China, traditional Chinese medicine, including acupuncture, was promoted. (See Bill Moyers, *Healing and the Mind* [New York: Doubleday, 1993]). Therefore, the demonic connection of acupuncture is very weak. This hypothesis is plausible only if one considers all non-Christian philosophies or ideologies as demonic idols replacing the Christian theology.

Traditional Chinese medicine is based on a totally different theory of physiology. There is no scientific proof that the theory is true. However, there are still many unknowns in the world, and one should not attribute any unfamiliar theory to demons even if Chinese theory of psi has been appropriated by the New Age Movement. The correct attitude should be to explore any medical intervention, to see its usefulness and limitation, and to disregard any historical metaphysical baggage. (See John P. Newport, *The New Age Movement and the Biblical Worldview: Conflict and Dialogue* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998]). Modern cancer chemotherapy was discovered through herbal medicine, although herbal medicine was related to animism or shamanism in the past. Also many useful pharmaceuticals, discovered through luck and subsequently verified by clinical trials, did not have good physiological explanations first, and some still don't have.

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