generic words for its god, it never defines him, it magnifies
the “American Way,” it has its own saints (Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln) and its own shrines (mostly in Wash-
ington, DC). Its holy day is July 4 and it holds that the USA
is a “god-favored” nation. Schmidt attacks the Masons, the
authors of the 1786 Virginia Religious Freedom Act, and
even the U.S. Constitution (a hand offered to future poly-
theists). He concludes by arguing that “faith” is not
to be equated with “religion.” As an example, the phrase
“Hindu religion,” is OK; the phrase “Hindu faith” is with-
out meaning. The word “interfaith,” he says, is an oxymor-
on. He concludes with four scriptural arguments
forbidding Christians from participating in civil religious
exercises.

Adams returns again with “The Church in the Public
Square in a Pluralistic Society.” Summarizing the preced-
ing essays, he presents ten theses, all keyed to recognizing
that American Civil Religion is the state religion, and
warning Christians against it.

Two short essays conclude the book. Adams writes
about the tensions involved in being a Christian, the expe-
rience of living as “strangers in a strange land.” He writes
at length on “the scandal of particularity,” and the need to
not confuse the two kingdoms, the church and the secular
realm.

Finally, Mark Sell writes on the two kingdom concept.
It is best to read this essay first before engaging the other
authors, for it is foundational to what they have to say.

I found the book interesting; it gave me insight into
some of my Christian brothers with whom I have issues.
I recommend everyone read it and Lutherans buy it.

Reviewed by John W. Burgeson, Rico Community Church, Rico, CO.

Serial Endosymbiosis Theory and the Hierarchy of rps Genes

I agree with Michael Buratovich concerning the validity of
the serial endosymbiosis theory, and that neo-Darwinian
mechanics alone do not explain the grand history of uni-
versal phylogeny (PSCF 57, no. 2 [June 2005]: 98-113).
However, I disagree with the Buratovich hypothesis that
the hierarchal transfer of ribosomal protein small unit (rps)
genes from mitochondrial genomes to nuclear genomes
indicates inbuilt Intelligent Design (ID) instead of
neo-Darwinian mechanics, where inbuilt ID involves
“purposeful forces that are wholly natural in their scope
and activity.”

Buratovich explains that the hierarchal transfer of rps
genes relates to the importance of each rps gene to the
function of the ribosome. This suggests that the hierarchal
transfer of rps genes relates to the selective advantage of
the particular rps genes. And basic population genetics
probability indicates that the percent of selective advan-
tage of a particular mutation relates to the probability of
fixation by natural selection for the particular mutation.
Likewise, the percent of selective advantage of particular
rps genes relates to its probability of fixation that results in
gene transfer from a mitochondrial genome to a nuclear
genome. This indicates that probabilistic neo-Darwinian
mechanics alone could have been responsible for the
hierarchal transfer of rps genes.

Perhaps the major flaw of the Buratovich hypothesis is
that Buratovich seeks to find inbuilt ID other than
neo-Darwinian mechanics in the processes of evolutionary
genetics. While I encourage an exhaustive search for
inbuilt biological ID, I conjecture that biologists will never
find inbuilt ID apart from neo-Darwinian mechanics. But
outside manipulation may have occurred in natural
history.

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Soul-Doctrine

Jeeves and Rüst grant that common soul doctrine is
unfounded in Scripture (PSCF 57, no. 3 [Sept. 2005] 170–86;
191–201). But both seem concerned over how to discard
mythology without becoming heretics. Only in real Protes-
tantism can one suggest that both Plato and Calvin were
incompetent on the subject of the Hebrew “soul.”

Realizations about Greek ghosts have long existed
among the “patently heretical” notions (p.188) that
Siemens (PSCF 57, no. 3 [Sept. 2005]: 187–90) is anxious to
label and condemn. Tyndale and Luther both taught that
the Greek immortal soul doctrine and its dualism are in
clear opposition to Scripture.1

Rüst grants souls only to higher animals. However, the
seas brought forth “abundantly the moving souls” during
creation (Gen. 1:20). This unique abundance suits Cambrian
invertebrates.

The meaning of the Hebrew term for living animals—
translated “soul”—is in Scripture, not Greek philosophy.
Tyndale realized that Greek doctrine steals Christ’s argu-
ment by which he proved the Resurrection. Abraham is
alive, and this proves he will physically awaken. No men-
tion is made of the alien notion of ghosts awake in heaven.

Scripture speaks of identity, not a ghost addition. Ani-
imals are souls. Humans are souls. Adam was not given a
soul; he became a soul. The religious “soul” is no more (or
less) than “person,” “self” or “creature.” It includes such
abstract, but physically linked realities as thought, feeling
and memory— but never apart from the physical. The Res-
urrection is God’s anti-Greek declaration of reorganizing
this very same dust. Humans struggle to accept the auda-
cious claim, primarily because they demand immediate
gratification over millennial patience.

Jesus is the one unique person ascended to heaven. David
is still in his tomb (Acts 2). Further, Paul did not offer con-
dolences by claiming the dead to be awake in heaven;
instead, he gave assurance that the sleepers would be glo-
riously awakened—literally. The physicality of resurrec-
tion is crucial to the Gospel message. Orthodoxy rejected
extreme Gnosticism and came to regard its own moderate
infection of the disease as correct.