rather than its theological purpose as both authors seek to show how their faith integrates with their different positions.

David Clough and Brian Stiltner have produced an excellent and innovative book. They come from different perspectives as well as different sides of the Atlantic. Clough, a Methodist at St. John's College, Durham, UK, expounds and defends a pacifist position. Stiltner, a Roman Catholic at Sacred Heart University, USA, takes a just war position.

The impetus for this book is the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Two friends found themselves on opposing sides of the debate and long e-mail debates ensued. These debates formed the basis of *Faith and Force*. Each of the chapters is co-written and then followed by the e-mail type discussions which retain much of a conversational character and highlight agreements and disagreements.

The key questions addressed are: When, if at all, is it right for a country to go to war? Should a person serve in the armed forces? How much money, if any, is legitimate to spend on the military? These are urgent questions since millions of lives and dollars are at stake.

Along the way, clear and insightful discussions are directed at topics like developing a war-ethic (chap. 1), the issue of weapons' proliferation (chap. 4), and the menace of terrorism (chap. 5).

It is a little disappointing for this neo-Calvinist not to see any major interaction with Reformed authors on the just war position as it avoids the problems of a natural law approach. Nevertheless, this book is highly recommended, not only for its ethical discussion, but also as a model for debate and discussion. Ethics involves a reflective and dialogic process and these aspects are exemplified in this book. The authors have provided useful resources in thinking about the ethical issues of war from two different Christian traditions.

Despite my reservations with the book's title, it would be great to see a series of books using this as a model such as *Faith and Global Warming*, *Faith and Evolution*; though I suspect these debates might not be as cordial as this particular book.

Reviewed by Steve Bishop, City of Bristol College, Bristol, UK. ∞

Letters

Numerology in Genesis

In a recent article,[1] Carol Hill promotes Umberto Cassuto's suggestion that the author of Genesis employed contemporary numerology in writing his account of creation (Gen. 1:1–2:3).[2] This is an important suggestion, and merits careful consideration. I support the aim of interpreting Genesis in a way that is consistent with how its first readers would have understood it. If the author did use contemporary numerology in writing it, this greatly affects its meaning.

According to Cassuto, in ancient Middle Eastern numerology, seven was a perfect number. From this he suggests that, when the author of Genesis describes creation as taking place in seven days, he is intending to convey that the work was carried out perfectly. The seven days are accordingly symbolic.

An obvious problem with this explanation is that the author says that God made the seventh day holy (2:3), in anticipation of the fourth commandment (Exod. 20:8–11). In this commandment, God told the Israelites to work on six days and rest on the seventh as he had done in creation (v. 11). For the Israelites, the numbers in the commandment were real—they had to rest for one 24-hour day in seven.

Another problem is that the author of Genesis says that, on the first day of creation, God established the cycle of "day" and "night" on the earth (Gen. 1:3–5), and on the fourth day, made the sun and the moon to "rule over" this cycle (vv. 14–19). The implication is that the cycle before the fourth day was the same as that after it, and that "day" throughout the narrative is equal to the time interval between one sunrise and the next.

Cassuto himself acknowledges a further difficulty. This is that, in parallels from ancient Middle Eastern literature, the seven days of working on a project are divided up as 2 + 2 + 2 + 1. Genesis divides them up as 6 + 1 or 3 + 3 + 1.

Carol Hill also promotes Cassuto's suggestion that the author of Genesis used contemporary numerology in his genealogies (Gen. 5; 11:10–32).[3] Cassuto points out that most of the ages in these end in zero or five, and that the remainder can be obtained by adding multiples of seven:

$$\text{age} = (5x + 7y) \text{ years}$$

He associates the number five with the base number of the sexagesimal counting system used in ancient Mesopotamia, 60 months being 5 years.

A major problem with this suggestion is that the above formula will reproduce *any* age above 23 years. As the lowest age in the genealogies is 29 years, the fact that all the ages conform to the formula is of no significance. There is a similar problem with the more complicated scheme proposed by Carol Hill.[4] In her Table 2, she uses 6 x 2 months to reproduce Nahor's ages. Multiples of this increment can be used to reproduce any age.

It is true that most ages in the genealogies end in zero or five, but this can be explained as being the result of rounding to the nearest zero or five. Many of the numbers look rounded. The distribution of the remaining last digits is unexceptional (1, nil; 2, four times; 3, twice; 4, once; 6, nil; 7, thrice; 8, nil; 9, thrice).[5]

I offer these observations for discussion. Can other readers help?

Notes

[1] Carol A. Hill, "A Third Alternative to Concordism and Divine Accommodation: The Worldview Approach," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 59, no. 2 (2007): 129–34.

[2] U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, pt. 1, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), 12–17.

[3] Ibid., 258–62.

[4]Carol A. Hill, "Making Sense of the Numbers of Genesis," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 55, no. 4 (2003): 239–51.

[5]I have taken as independent the age at which a patriarch's named son was born and the remaining years of his life.

P. G. Nelson
25 Duesbery Street
Hull HU5 3QE
England
p.g.nelson@hull.ac.uk

Adam and Eve

Peter Rüst suggests that Adam and Eve in Genesis 2–4 came later than the first humans in Genesis 1 (*PSCF* 59, no. 3 [2007]: 182–93).

A problem with this suggestion is that these chapters are closely linked. The same word is used to describe Adam in Gen. 2:7 (*ha'adam*, "the man") as the first human in Gen. 1:27. The name Adam (*'adam*) is only used later on (the article is retained, except after *le*, until Gen. 4:25). Further, the story of the creation of Eve out of Adam's rib in Gen. 2:21–23 explains the transition from singular to plural in Gen. 1:27: "God created the man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 2:7*ff* thus amplifies Genesis 1, as its introduction (Gen. 2:4–6) suggests.

P. G. Nelson
25 Duesbery Street
Hull HU5 3QE
England
p.g.nelson@hull.ac.uk

Prudence and the Redeeming of Technology: A Response to Ken Funk

Ken Funk gives sound advice when he concludes his article (*PSCF* 59, no. 3 [2007]: 201–11) by calling us to "learn prudent technological innovation and practice" and to "think critically and Christianly about technology" (p. 209). However, the arguments for this conclusion would be strengthened and would gain greater coherence if he would abandon what appears to be Platonic presuppositions regarding the nature of created reality, human life, and therefore of technology.

Funk rightly sees and describes the ambivalence in technology. But he cannot quite take the next logical step of admitting that the question, "Is technology good or evil?" is simplistic and ultimately invalid—this in spite of his admission that "technology may be intrinsically value-neutral" (p. 201). This apparent contradiction appears to be caused by Funk's division of reality into a values-neutral physical realm (including technology) and a spiritual realm (which includes "values" and "religion") and his often cited belief in the hierarchical ordering of each realm. While I applaud his discussions of "the ambivalence of technology" (p. 204), "the promotion of subsidiary goods" (p. 204), and "the illusion of human sovereignty" (p. 205), I fear they are weakened by his weddedness to axiological hierarchy and ontological dualism. That hierarchy and dualism resonate more with the world of Platonic philosophy than with the world of the Bible.

When I read the Bible, I learn of a Creator who brought into being all things and who originally delighted in all things (Genesis 1). I learn that the purpose of all things is to serve the Creator (Ps. 119:89–91). I learn that humankind was created in the image of the Creator and called to serve in a particular way: to care for and enable the rest of creation (Psalm 8). I learn that despite humankind's rebellion and the curse wrought upon the whole of creation as a consequence of that rebellion, the Creator has promised to redeem the whole of creation (Col. 1:20). All this suggests that technology is one of many kinds of human activities, all of which are characterized as "service to the Creator" and all of which can be performed in a multiplicity of obedient and disobedient ways. Hence technology cannot be characterized as good or evil in itself (inherently) because it does not exist "in itself." Technology is just one way in which we as the Creator's image bearers, along with the nonhuman creation, relate to the Creator (or as Funk writes, "commune" with the Creator). As such, engaging in technology is no more or less a "spiritual" activity than is attending a church service. For one biblical affirmation of that claim, read the account of Bezalel and Oholiab in Exod. 35:30–36:5. To engage in technology obediently we need, like Bezalel and Oholiab, to be filled with the Spirit of God.

The Platonic notion that there is a hierarchy of human activities ranging from the base, through the mundane, to the noble is often read into the story of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38–42), as Funk does in his article. For a convincing refutation of that interpretation (which includes arguments made by John Calvin in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*), read Lee Hardy's *The Fabric of This World* (Eerdmans [1990], 54–8).

Earlier in this letter, I wrote that "humankind was created in the image of the Creator and called to serve in a particular way: to care for and enable the rest of creation." Technology is one of the chief ways in which we "enable" the rest of the creation to be what the Creator intends for it to be as it unfolds in history. There is a relationship that exists between the human and nonhuman creation that is wonderfully described in Ezekiel 36 (particularly verses 8–12) and that is the foundation for our work in technology. To fully realize that relationship (and to fully acknowledge Ken Funk's call for prudence and critical thinking about technology) we need to see all things holistically, casting off the dualistic and hierarchical glasses fashioned for us by the ancient Greeks.

Finally, thanks to Ken Funk for a most interesting article. The Dordt College Engineering Department read it and spent a delightful afternoon discussing it.

Charles C. Adams
ASA Member
Dean of the Natural Sciences and Professor of Engineering
Dordt College
Sioux Center, IA 51250
cadams@dordt.edu

A Response to Ken Funk

Many ASA members share feelings of guilt associated with "technology," triggered by modern doctrinaire