

explains how both the authority of Scripture and the integrity of the scientific method can be maintained.

With accommodation, we simply accept that God never intended to reveal scientific truths in the Bible that transcend culture, but rather kept all revealed scientific knowledge within the context of cultural beliefs. Therefore, we shouldn't expect God to fill the Bible with scientifically relevant trivia so that every generation of man, regardless of his scientific progress, can perform some objective test that confirms the truth of Scripture. Instead, we believe that God naturally accommodates his revelation to the scientific worldview of the original audience.

As a biology professor teaching at a Christian university, I am often struck by how difficult it is to present current scientific models and theories while upholding biblical authority in a manner that is credible and does justice to both. I have successfully used these video lessons in my undergraduate biology courses to broaden my students' perspectives on both the nature of science and the various interpretations of the history of life as revealed through God's creation. Although some of the ideas and interpretations presented are controversial among Christian believers, I commend this series as a venue for those who are seeking to construct a framework for integrating modern science with a Christian worldview.

The series is available for download at [www.beyondthefirmament.com/videos/Education/](http://www.beyondthefirmament.com/videos/Education/)

To purchase DVDs of the series, contact Gordon Glover at [contact@beyondthefirmament.com](mailto:contact@beyondthefirmament.com).

*Reviewed by Jane Beers, Assistant Professor of Biology, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.* ♦

## Letters

### Book Review Response Letter

I appreciated Rolf Bouma's willingness to review my book, *Dominion Over Wildlife? An Environmental-Theology of Human-Wildlife Relations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009) published in the March 2010 issue of *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* (p. 62). Reviews constitute a gift of time and as such are to be treated with respect.

By the same token, reviewers have a responsibility to be sure their comments are accurate and in accordance with the goals of the book under review. Unfortunately, some of Bouma's statements failed to inform readers of the contours of my argument as well as the volume of evidence presented in support of my view on human-wildlife relations. I will highlight a few examples. First, he insinuated that I was unfair by calling my description of the Christian animal rights position, a "caricature." That is quite a claim, given that I engaged the Christian animal rights activists' evidentiary appeal to three separate intellectual domains, namely, Scripture, ethics, and science. In which section(s) did I mischaracterize their

view? Unfortunately, Bouma did not say, nor did he provide one specific instance. Second, his assertion that I failed to appreciate Linzey's "the greater serves the lesser" argument completely missed the point of my findings (which involved a detailed analysis of his interpretation of Scripture), namely, that Scripture provides no support for such a position. In fact, I go to great lengths to show that Christ, the perfect example of what it means to be a godly and obedient human, never served animals in a manner Linzey suggests. Third, Bouma's final paragraph leaves the reader with the impression that my Shepherdist position does not countenance limits on the human use of animals (despite my previous statements affirming my support for the protection of species). Such is clearly not the case as anyone who reads the final chapter would understand (cf. p. 172). I contend that Christians are obligated to treat animals in a way appropriate to their owner, namely, Christ. Ultimately, Bouma's suggestion that I engage the thought of Rolston's theocentric view failed to consider that if my exegesis, ethical reasoning, and use of scientific evidence was correct, then obedience to God's will as revealed in Scripture and nature is about as theocentric a view as any Christian could hope to obtain.

Regrettably, Bouma seems to have been caught up in reacting to theological labels rather than in assessing my treatment of the biblical evidence, the only infallible source for Christian doctrine. Maybe that is why he considered my book more of an apologia rather than a theology. Apparently, he skipped chapter 1 (p. 14f), in which I explained why the book focused on the consumptive uses of wildlife: (a) it avoids anachronisms and speculation because the Bible speaks of these activities; and (b) if humanity's consumptive use of wildlife violates God's perfect will, as the Christian animal rights activists claim, then a whole host of human uses of animals are in danger of being immoral as well. To my knowledge, very few environmental theologies provide such a sustained review of the morality of a concrete, real-world practice (namely, hunting, trapping, and fishing) followed by suggestions on how Scripture's answer to consumptive use of wildlife may provide guidance on how humans should utilize the environment. Bouma certainly has a right to disagree with my evaluation of Scripture, ethics, and science (he offered no comment concerning the third); I just wish he had taken the time to provide some concrete examples of where he saw error.

Stephen M. Vantassel  
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### Humans: The Mean between Science and God

Mary L. VandenBerg, in "What General Revelation Does (and Does Not) Tell Us" (*PSCF* 62, no. 1 [2010]: 22), wrote,

The first issue mentioned was how much concordance there is between what the Bible and science tell us about the nature and operations of the physical world. The second issue, and the focus of this article, was how much concordance there might be between what the Bible and science tell us about God.