

None of these data are cited. They instead appear to be precisely what Moreland says they are—Moreland shooting from the hip. Oddly, he includes a pie chart to illustrate his guesswork.

Worse than these eccentricities, Moreland regularly falls prey to the very kind of scientific thinking he decries. On one hand, he proposes that “[t]he primary academic disciplines suited to studying the nature of consciousness ... are biblical studies, theology, and philosophy of mind” (p. 85). This view, to be frank, seems rather idiosyncratic and is not one that many academics, including religious ones, would ascribe to. Theistic philosophers rarely lean on biblical scholarship in developing their views of consciousness. On the other hand, Moreland’s own variety of scientism appears in his defense of intelligent design, a position that accepts God’s direct action throughout evolutionary history. Moreland strongly endorses intelligent design understood this way. Moreover, he emphasizes that we have scientific reasons to endorse the position:

intelligent design advocates believe that they can and have discovered scientific data that is best explained by an intelligent designer—the origin of the universe, life, consciousness, cases of irreducible complexity, and so on. (p. 171)

Understood in this way, intelligent design takes the hypothesis of an intelligent designer to be our best *scientific* explanation for a range of phenomena. Intelligent design thus stands against rival theistic accounts of evolution such as theistic evolution. Theistic evolution rejects the perspective offered by intelligent design, claiming that a creator is not best construed as a scientific hypothesis. Rather, according to theistic evolution, our reason to believe in God comes largely from nonscientific disciplines such as theology or philosophy. Accounts of creation such as theistic evolution are therefore comfortable with the claim that we can know about God as creator without requiring that this knowledge be distinctively scientific. For Moreland, by contrast, it seems God’s creative action is best understood as empirically detectable, and that science offers a privileged perspective on our knowledge of God as creator. In discarding rival theistic accounts in favor of his brand of intelligent design, Moreland thus seems to embrace the very kind of scientism he pleads with us to reject.

Do some of Moreland’s arguments land? Of course! Moreland is a professional philosopher with an impressive record. For example, his argument that scientism is self-refuting (p. 47–51) has strong moments: if scientism claims that science offers our *only* route to knowledge, then accepting that claim entails that we ought not accept scientism, since the position stakes a claim that can’t be scientifically verified. Of course, this kind of argument works only for a particularly strong version of scientism, one that resembles the discarded logical positivism of the early twentieth century more than the subtler kinds of scientism that are widely held today.

Likewise, some of Moreland’s arguments for the immateriality of consciousness (pp. 86–88), the cosmological argument (p. 133–39), and the fine tuning argument (pp. 141–47) track contemporary conversations, even if these arguments are more controversial than Moreland gives them credit for. The problem with Moreland’s book is not that it is completely devoid of clear philosophical thinking. The problem is that the wheat is mixed thoroughly with the chaff, and the two are difficult to separate.

Do we recommend the book? Not for the casual reader. Moreland’s book is misleading; dangerous for the believer in its mischaracterizations and simplifications, infuriating for the unbeliever in its handling of both science and religion. Importantly, we (the reviewers) agree on this despite coming from different places: one of us (Vukov) is a Catholic and philosopher; the other (Burns), an atheist and biologist. For the careful scholar, though, the book may be worth skimming, as a spur to more careful reflection. Whether scientism is true or false, it has wide-reaching implications. We agree that the subject merits a serious and careful book-length discussion. That’s just not what Moreland’s book delivers.

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## ORIGINS

**A WORLDVIEW APPROACH TO SCIENCE AND SCRIPTURE** by Carol Hill. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2019. 240 pages. Hardcover; \$29.99. ISBN: 9780825446146.

On February 4, 2014, Bill Nye and Ken Ham debated matters of creation, science, and faith. Because this encounter pitted two very public figures against each other—a famous PBS personality and a very flamboyant creationist—this event was highly anticipated. Unfortunately, the results were frustratingly inconsequential. The debate, however, did crystalize the irritations that often gravitate around debates of science and faith. So often, the participants talk past each other instead of engaging each other. The person of faith will often lament the scientist’s narrow-mindedness and fallaciousness because they ignore variables valued by positions of faith. Conversely, the person of science will likely mock the faithful as naive simpletons who cling to their texts and ignore data that confronts their vested interests. Such tendencies are tragic since both sides perpetuate discord and prevent any substantive collaboration.

In the book reviewed here, Carol Hill offers another crack at navigating the chasm between science and the Christian faith. Thus, Hill’s work is not necessarily novel or innovative. And it is certainly not the first to

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boast an author who is globally accomplished in their field of scientific inquiry and a committed Christian (e.g., Francis S. Collins, *The Language of God* [New York: Free Press, 2006]). However, the potency of this book exists in how she allows the data points, both scientific and textual, to speak for themselves. To facilitate this, she employs a hermeneutical lens described as a “worldview approach.” While she struggles in the opening chapter to effectively articulate what this approach means, she ultimately does enough throughout the presentation to paint a picture of what she is utilizing. She describes an interpretive posture that adopts, to the extent that it can, an overarching conceptual framework born out of the authoring culture. Essentially, the claims of the biblical text need to be considered in light of an Iron Age, ancient Near Eastern society. Therefore, using the biblical text to answer specific questions forged out of modern scientific discussions is ultimately asking the text to bear a weight that it is not designed to bear. Rather, ancient Near Eastern texts, of which the Bible is one, are concerned with questions of function and order when speaking to fundamental realities of the cosmos, not questions of precise mechanisms and timelines. This allows Hill to responsibly summarize the Bible’s foundation that in turn informs specific convergences between science and scripture.

God/Christ is the creator of the universe and all that is in it, and by him all things consist (hold together). According to the Bible, the universe and life did not happen by chance, but was created, directed, and sustained by God. (p. 159)

This is an important premise. On the one hand, Hill’s work acknowledges a fundamental reality about scripture. It is a text that is ancient; therefore, it is influenced by conventions and assumptions very foreign to modern people on this side of the industrial and scientific revolutions. On the other hand, it frames discussions that may produce irenic debate between science and faith. Or, to put it another way, a worldview approach or anything similar, allows the text, along with its intentions, to define the boundaries of the conversation, and it is within these boundaries that scientific musings may flourish and inform the larger dialogue. If this sounds like a push to allow the text to take the lead in debates of science and faith, that is the suggestion. Christians believe that ancient Israel, with its experiences and authoritative texts (i.e., the Old and New Testaments), is a chief mechanism for communicating God’s cosmic intentions for humanity. Science has something to say, but it just doesn’t enjoy the level of sanction that the text does.

Nevertheless, Hill gets boxed in occasionally by her worldview approach. For example, “The basic premise of a Worldview Approach is that the Bible in its *original context* records historical events *if* considered from the worldview of the biblical authors who wrote it” (pp. 12–13, *emphasis original*). The implications of this statement unnecessarily complicate things. If one is committed to considering an author’s worldview,

cognitive framework, and ancient literary conventions when attempting to understand the claims of scripture, then one should allow ancient canons to dictate. This inevitably raises a question. To what extent are these literary accounts making claims about real people, space, and time? There is reason to believe, based largely on comparative analyses that pit ancient Near Eastern texts against the biblical texts of the same or similar genre, that Genesis 1–11 may be making nonhistorical (e.g., polemical) claims. Thus, is the pursuit of Eden’s location, or of a chronological context for Adam and Eve, or of the dynamics of a regional flood, really a moot point? Certainly, not all texts of Genesis are of the same ilk, for Genesis 12–50 is a different type than Genesis 1–11. But Hill stymies the possibilities of her own approach by a commitment to discussing everything historically.

I am a biblical scholar who is convinced that God sanctioned ancient Israel, with its Messiah and text, to be the authoritative channel for revealing his divine intentions. And so, I write this review with these confessions. Ultimately, I applaud Hill for her work. It embodies a balance that respects the Bible for what it is—a text given by an ancient society that enjoys divine sanction as God’s authoritative revelation while not being capable of precisely informing highly technical and nuanced issues illuminated by the developments of modern scientific research. I suspect that if both Nye and Ham had recognized this, the infamous debate of 2014 would not be another example of fruitless endeavors tarnished by entrenched rigidity, but rather it would stand as a watershed moment in irenic debate between traditional antagonists.

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**GOD’S GOOD EARTH: The Case for an Unfallen Creation** by Jon Garvey. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019. 209 pages. Paperback; \$30.00. ISBN: 9781532652011.

**THE GENERATIONS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH: Adam, the Ancient World, and Biblical Theology** by Jon Garvey. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020. 264 pages. Paperback; \$36.00. ISBN: 9781532681653.

Together, these two books endeavor to provide an interpretation to the Genesis creation accounts that sees them not only as historical but also coherent with modern scientific theories. The result is a proposal that initially appears coherent, drawing on Garvey’s extensive reading in many areas.

*The Generations of Heaven and Earth* (GHE) complements Joshua Swamidass’s *The Genealogical Adam and Eve*. Garvey explains that Swamidass’s premise is “that a historical couple living in the Ancient Near East, amongst an existing human population, at any time plausibly matching the biblical account, would *almost certainly* be common ancestors of everyone living in the world today” (xiii, *italics original*). At the same time,