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its author (Moses) saw God face to face and that they should understand the text not in human ways (i.e., by literal interpretation) but by the Spirit (i.e., via spiritual and allegorical interpretation). Basil understood that the image of God referred to the inner self, the soul which could not be comprehended through the senses. That which could be understood through the senses, the body, was the mechanism by which the soul expressed itself. So, when the text referred to human beings ruling over the fish, it meant that human beings must use reason to control the passions of the flesh (i.e., body). In a similar, nonliteral, fashion, Basil understood image and likeness as different aspects of humanity. While image was connected to reason, “likeness” was built by the human choice to reign in those passions and (essentially) to “put on Christ” (p. 310). Similarly, Basil understood the commands to “multiply and grow” as the growth of both the body and the soul. Thus, Allert gives examples of Basil’s nonliteral interpretation and puts into question the whole idea that Basil was a literalist.

This is an academic book. It is mostly geared to students and scholars with some familiarity with the church fathers and historic methods of interpretation. The argumentation is thoughtful and flows well, including how Allert describes the early church fathers, recounts the misuse of the fathers by some creation-science adherents, and unpacks their interpretive methods, particularly as they saw Genesis 1. The book is quite effective in leading the reader into the world of the fathers and unfolding both their contexts and their wider thoughts on interpreting scripture. For those unfamiliar with the church fathers, Allert’s definition of who they were, the time frame in which they operated, and the criteria by which they were considered church fathers is all helpful. But even for those familiar with the fathers, Allert’s portrayal of them as people playing a critical role (alongside scripture) in the survival and maintenance of the orthodox faith might be surprising and convincing. He also cites their texts extensively in his effort to give context to their words. He admits that the choice of church fathers is selective due to the constraints of space.

The book provides an excellent assessment of the importance of the church fathers and an evaluation of their interpretive methods. It also calls into question the assumption that the modern category of literal interpretation parallels the literal analysis of the church fathers. As a side accomplishment, the book casts doubt on the often-mentioned conflict between literal and allegorical interpretive camps.

Most of all, it puts a serious dent in the argument that the church fathers interpreted scripture (and especially Genesis 1) in the same way as many proponents of creation science. The interpretation of Genesis 1 has become a litmus test of orthodoxy in a number of Christian circles; since the witness of the church fathers says something about what were normative or acceptable beliefs, any lack of care in using them in the creation/evolution debate will entrench positions on a topic that is already divisive.

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THE BIBLE & ANCIENT SCIENCE: Principles of Interpretation by Denis O. Lamoureux. Tullahoma, TN: McGahan Publishing, 2020. 218 pages. Paperback; \$15.99. ISBN: 9781951252052.

Simply stated, I believe the literary genre of Genesis 1–3 is an ancient account of origins. Notably, it is deeply rooted in ancient science. (p. 195)

Denis O. Lamoureux is Professor of Science and Religion at St. Joseph’s College at the University of Alberta. He possesses three earned doctorates (dentistry, theology, and biology) and tells of an intellectual and spiritual journey out of atheism, through fundamentalism, and to his current position. Consequently, if there was ever a model voice that displays the academic and personal experience necessary to speak formidably about the hermeneutical issues associated with Genesis 1–3 and the other creation texts of the Bible, it is Lamoureux.

The study begins with what seems like a simple question, “Is the Bible a book about science?” However, before the opening chapters are completed, the reader understands that the question is anything but simple. In fact, the difficulty of the conversation is poignantly displayed when he offers answers to his leading question from two giant figures within the evangelical tradition. Henry M. Morris answers in the affirmative, but Billy Graham answers negatively. Yet, to his credit, Lamoureux does not dwell on this disagreement. He quickly emphasizes that a proper answer to his question requires an entanglement with issues of hermeneutics, or principles of interpretation (p. 13). Consequently, the remainder of the book is a journey through the wild and woolly world of biblical hermeneutics on the way to answering the question of whether the Bible is a book about science.

Lamoureux guides the reader toward his answer by discussing twenty-two hermeneutical principles

that range from the mundane topics of “literalism,” “literary genre,” and “historical criticism” to the more complex, such as “cognitive competence,” “accommodation,” and “concordism.” Each chapter is devoted to one principle, and all the chapters are organized similarly. They discuss the principle and then specific applications to the creation texts. This approach produces manageable-sized chapters that can be pondered without a fear of being overwhelmed by complex arguments; however, presenting an argument by a series of propositional statements can obfuscate how each proposition interacts with the others and how they all cooperate. In Lamoureux’s defense, however, he does well to minimize any dissonance.

Ultimately, Lamoureux finds himself landing between Morris and Graham when answering his leading question. According to Lamoureux, the Bible contains science, but it’s ancient science. And that qualification makes all the difference. The biblical writers are indeed talking about the origins of the universe, but they are doing so in terms of an Iron Age worldview while using Iron Age concepts. Therefore, their “science” is incompatible with the scientific inquiry and discourse of today. This conviction implies that concordism neither does justice to the text and its message nor frames a useful conversation.

In pushing back against any simplistic appropriation of the Bible’s message upon the demands of modern scientific discourse, Lamoureux offers a very nuanced proposal. But at its heart is a respect for the ancient worldview of the biblical authors with all its frustrating peculiarities. For example, Lamoureux emphasizes how things such as the rhetoric and ahistorical symbolism of parables must be respected. Simple enough; however, Lamoureux also recognizes that ancient Israel perceived the universe through a three-tiered concept, a reality that finds itself alongside flat-earth theories in the hall of fame of modern-day cosmological ludicrousness. Similarly, ancient Israel’s botanical awareness was clearly ignorant of the data we have today. Therefore, Lamoureux’s discussions eventually bring the reader to a crossroad. How can a reader respect the Bible if it is invoking principles of, say, botany or any other field of science, in ways that run counter to contemporary scientific discourse? Is the reader confronted with the terrible situation in which they must support the Bible’s claims despite the contradictory scientific evidence? Are they forced to abandon any notion of inerrancy?

It is at this point that the integrity of Lamoureux’s argument reaches a critical point. His argument cannot work without certain hermeneutical principles. First, the principle of accommodation argues that God accommodates himself to humanity—through language, culture, concepts, etc.—in order to ensure effective communication. So, in the example of Israel’s botanical awareness, God is “using the botany-of-the-day” to ensure that the audience would understand the message. Similarly, this should also be applied to Israel’s three-tiered universe and other cosmological concepts. Second, the message-incident principle argues that the mode of communication is incidental to the core message. To be clear, “Incidental has the meaning of that which happens to be alongside and happening in connection with something important” (p. 46). Therefore, applied to the creation texts, ancient science is incidental but important to delivering spiritual truths (p. 47). Third, Lamoureux champions incarnational inspiration. According to Lamoureux, the incarnation, as understood in Jesus, becomes the analogy *par excellence* for understanding the nature of scripture. It is fully divine and fully human. The Bible, like Jesus, transcends time and history. And God’s perfect message comes through finite and imperfect humanity.

Many of Lamoureux’s arguments echo similar arguments made by biblical scholars in recent memory. For example, Kenton Sparks, in *God’s Word in Human Words: An Evangelical Appropriation of Critical Biblical Scholarship* (2008), emphasized accommodation in his attempt to balance a conviction that the Bible contains factual errors but is also inerrant. Peter Enns systematically argued for incarnational inspiration, as in *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament* (2005). John Walton and Brent Sandy display affinities to Lamoureux’s message-incident principle in their work *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority* (2013). Consequently, the pitfalls that face these scholars face Lamoureux as well. If accommodation explains the scientific ignorance of the biblical writers, is inerrancy the best description of scripture? Or, because the incarnation is unique to the realities of Jesus, how appropriate is it to invoke it as an analogy for something else? At what point does it break down (cf. Ben Witherington, *The Living Word of God* [Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007], 35-49)?

I wholeheartedly agree with Lamoureux that it is paramount for the interpreter to dutifully consider the text on its own terms, particularly since I take seriously the notion that God used ancient Israel to

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communicate his redemptive plan. Thus, the interpreter should yield to Israel's concepts, conventions, and philosophies on the way to understanding the message before they move to appropriation for theological discourse. Nevertheless, several elements in *The Bible and Ancient Science* could be fine tuned. These include Lamoureux's framing of the discussion of translating Genesis 1:1 (pp. 75–81) as a text-critical issue, when it is more of a translation problem. Lamoureux also presents a generic, almost flat, portrait of the classic criticisms of biblical studies (e.g., textual criticism, literary criticism, historical criticism) that does not support a nuanced understanding of their results for the creation texts.

A little more significant is Lamoureux's understanding of Paul's typological argument in Romans 5. He struggles with the possibility that Paul's argument appears historical in nature. He states,

As a consequence, Paul undoubtedly believed Adam was a historical person and that the events of Genesis 2–3 really happened. However, it must be emphasized that Paul's belief in the reality of Adam and the events in the Garden of Eden does not necessarily mean they are historical. (p. 175)

Thus, he is forced to wrestle with the implications of his argument as it confronts the semantics of the text. He may well have been influenced by Enns in how he tries to navigate this, but a difficult tension remains (Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say about Human Origins* [2012]). For Lamoureux, and Enns for that matter, it is difficult to advocate a framework-like typology which usually interprets historical figures in the context of history as, in this instance, functioning with a significant level of historical ignorance.

A deeper commitment to comparative investigations would also have enhanced Lamoureux's argument. He is certainly aware of non-Israelite texts and how they help us understand the concepts, conventions, and message of the biblical text, for he references them in his discussions of worldview and ancient conceptions of the universe. However, reading Genesis 1–2 in the shadow of texts such as the "Enuma Elish" and the "Memphite Theology" crystallizes the form and function of the genre as well as the Old Testament's theological emphases.

Nevertheless, overall Lamoureux gets far more right than wrong and this work is valuable. It makes potentially complicated concepts accessible and applies them to the very important debate about

what "inerrant" means when describing the nature of scripture.

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HISTORY OF SCIENCE

THE WATERS ABOVE THE FIRMAMENT: An Exemplary Case of Faith-Reason Conflict by Dino Boccaletti. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020. 136 pages. Hardcover; \$99.99. ISBN: 9783030441678. Paperback; \$69.99. ISBN: 9783030441685.

The Waters Above the Firmament is a fascinating tour through the exegetical history of an offbeat subject: the waters above the firmament. In both popular and scholarly conversations about science and religion, a few subjects tend to dominate the landscape, with the topic of origins dominating the conversation since Darwin's day. Interestingly, however, the "waters above the firmament" references have been largely overlooked, even though they bear on the cosmology and view of creation held by biblical authors. In this volume, physicist Dino Boccaletti takes readers through an in-depth tour of how these passages have been understood by Christian exegetes from the early centuries of the Christian era through the seventeenth century.

The driving question tackled by the exegetes is how to understand the following verses from the first chapter of the book of Genesis:

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. (Gen. 1:6–8, KJV)

In the history of exegesis of this passage (and others that build on it, such as Psalm 148:4, "Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens"), many different theories about its meaning have been put forward. In our own day, those familiar with the young-earth creation (YEC) movement may have heard a bit of exegesis of this passage from a peculiarly YEC point of view. In their hands, it is sometimes understood to teach that the earth was surrounded by a canopy of water that made the whole world a paradise and reduced the harmful effects of the sun, enabling people to live the centuries-long lives described in Genesis. The canopy was