

Orthodoxy and Genesis: What the fathers really taught

A review of
**Genesis, Creation and
Early Man**
Fr Seraphim Rose
Saint Herman of Alaska
Brotherhood, Platina, CA,
2000

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This 709-page book is a welcome addition to the creationist literature in that it is further strong evidence that Hugh Ross, Gleason Archer and other old-Earth proponents do not have a historical leg to stand on when promoting their interpretations of Genesis. With many lengthy quotations from the 'Holy Fathers' of Eastern Orthodoxy from the fourth century to the present, the book reinforces the assertion that a Six-Day Creation about 6,000 years ago, followed by a global catastrophic Flood, has been the historic teaching of the church until the 19th century.

The author

The publication is the posthumous fruit of the research of Fr Seraphim Rose (1934–1982), an American Eastern Orthodox monk. His fellow monks gathered together in this volume all of the relevant material from his lectures, letters and published articles on the subject of Genesis, Creation and evolution, which he had written for students and others in the Orthodox community.

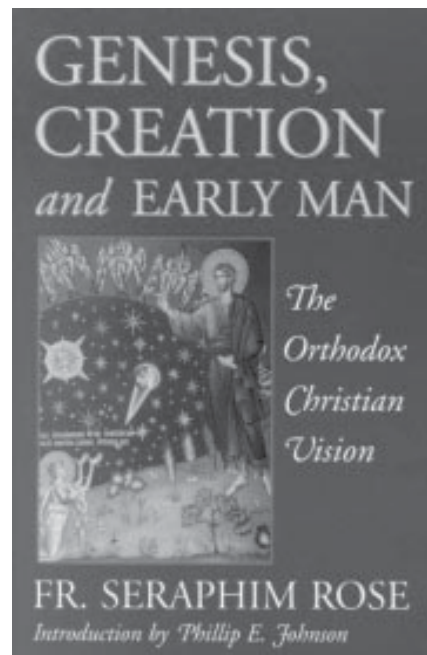
Born Eugene Rose in San Diego, he accepted evolution growing up because 'everyone believed it' (p. 18). He was baptized in a Methodist church at age 14, but soon drifted into agnosticism.¹ Blessed with an excellent mind, he zealously sought knowledge

in biology, zoology, mathematics and philosophy and was very gifted at learning languages. After graduating from Pomona College in 1956, he went on to further his studies in Chinese language and philosophy at the Academy of Asian Studies (AAS) in San Francisco and later at the University of California, Berkeley. While at the AAS, he encountered the writings of a French philosopher, René Guénon, who taught him 'to seek and love the truth above all else' (p. 19). Soon he began to question evolution and develop a hunger for deeper historical roots.

In 1962 he converted to Eastern Orthodoxy, joining the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR). Seven years later he and another Orthodox brother moved to the mountains of northern California to become monks. Eugene then took the name 'Seraphim', after his Russian patron saint, Fr Seraphim of Sarov (1759–1833, p. 435). There they continued their Orthodox missionary work through writing, translating and printing Orthodox literature.

Summary of the book

The editor of Rose's writings provides a helpful and lengthy preface (pp. 15–48), which traces the historical development of Rose's thoughts on the subject and his plans for such a book that would give a 'complete picture' (from the Patristic writings and from science) of the evolution question. It also summarizes changes in evolutionary thinking over the past four decades, the influence of young-Earth creationist literature on Rose's thinking, recent attitudes to evolution among Orthodox believers (especially since Rose died) and also the development of the Intelligent Design Movement (IDM).



The editor believes that the primary contribution of the book to the world is its unique, penetrating and detailed exposition of the mind of the Eastern Orthodox 'Holy Fathers' as it pertains to 'the creation, the first-created world, the natures of created things and the original nature of man' (p. 42).

Philip Johnson, leader of the IDM,² follows the preface with an introduction (pp. 49–62) which summarizes the arguments for biological evolution (natural selection and mutation producing tiny changes which over time lead to dramatic diversity of life forms) and two of the key scientific arguments against biological evolution (abrupt appearance/stasis in the fossil record and irreducible complexity). He also briefly discusses the fact that 'scientific' evolution is inherently atheistic, quoting the much used statement by Richard Lewontin about not allowing 'a Divine Foot in the door' of scientific study.³ He concludes by posing the question whether science can tell us a true story of origins and is clearly sympathetic to Rose's conclusion that it cannot.

The editor then lays out Rose's works (written during 1972–1982) in a reasonably logical, rather than chronological, order. Part I (the longest section) is a patristic commentary on Genesis 1–11. Part II deals with

the philosophy of evolution, discussing the Holy Fathers' view of science and giving a brief critique of the evolution model and an analysis of some of the key Orthodox and Roman Catholic theistic evolutionists. Part III is a lengthy letter written to a Greek Orthodox medical doctor (who was a theistic evolutionist), which lays out the patristic doctrine of Creation. Part IV gives Rose's answers to 26 questions posed by his students in the course which formed the basis for Part I. Part V is a selection of 26 letters on various relevant topics written over the last 10 years of Rose's life. Finally, the editor wrote an epilogue which provides his explanation (coinciding with Rose's views) of how evolution fits in with the developing one-world religious synthesis of the coming Antichrist.

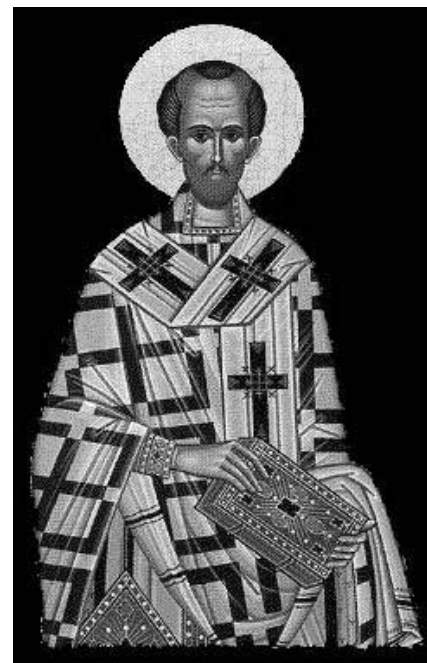
There are also five appendices. One contains Rose's notes (mostly undated) on a variety of topics related to science, evolution and Christian philosophy. The second gives two outlines of Rose's proposed studies, which eventually became some of the earlier sections of this book. The third is Rose's last talk on Creation and evolution, which was a preface to his course on Genesis 4–11 (the last portion of Part I) and given just a few weeks before his sudden death. The fourth is a reprint of an article that was first published by the Bible-Science Association in 1994 and exposes the unreliability of radiometric dating methods. It was written by Curtis Sewell, an Evangelical Protestant scientist and author of *God at Ground Zero* (1997). Appendix five (written by the editor) is a very up-to-date, thorough and annotated list of recommended books, journals and videos (including some books and videos for children) grouped in twelve topics. It also provides the contact information for *AiG*, *ICR*, *CRS* and other creationist sources as well as IDM sources for these materials.

Part I (pp. 65–280) of the book is, in my opinion, the most important, and covering almost 220 pages it could stand alone as a book. Here Rose collates the writings of the Church Fa-

thers to give us 'an Orthodox patristic commentary on Genesis'. This was primarily taken from Rose's lecture manuscripts for a course on Genesis that he taught in the summers of 1981 and 1982. Before entering into a commentary of Genesis 1–11, Rose explains three reasons why we should study Genesis. First, what a person believes about man's origin directly relates to his behaviour. Second, Genesis is part of Scripture, which God gave for our salvation. Third, and most importantly, Christianity tells us about what we will be doing in eternal life and only with an understanding of both the beginning and end of all things can we discover what our whole life is about. Later Rose emphasizes that Genesis is absolutely foundational to the Christian faith and our salvation (pp. 419, 589–590) and that evolution is 'one of the most dangerous concepts' facing the church (pp. 509–582 stress this many times).

Next, by way of introduction to the commentary, Rose discusses hermeneutics—how to interpret Genesis. He criticizes three wrong approaches. Theistic evolutionists are wrong because they treat the text as an allegory or poem. Then there are those who mistakenly try to disconnect Genesis from science as two separate categories of truth. Thirdly, 'Some Protestant fundamentalists,' he says, err in taking Genesis 'all (or virtually all) "literal".' But since he names no examples, it is hard to know whom he has in mind. Indeed, this is a strange criticism since the book goes on to demonstrate that the 'Holy Fathers' took Genesis no less literally than Protestant young-Earth creationists. Perhaps this is one of the places where Protestant readers need to remember that Rose was not writing to the general public, but to fellow Eastern Orthodox believers, who are taught to believe that the EOC is the only true church and Protestants and Roman Catholics are wayward brethren at best and heretics at worst.⁴

In contrast to these approaches to Genesis, Rose insists that the 'Holy Fathers' (who viewed Genesis as 'extremely important') 'are the key to



St John Chrysostom (347–407)

understanding Genesis' (p. 72). His primary sources are early 'Fathers' who wrote commentaries on Genesis: John Chrysostom (344–407), Ephraim the Syrian (306–372), Basil the Great (329–379) and Ambrose of Milan (339–397). But he also used many other 'Fathers' of that and later centuries who wrote on some aspect of Genesis 1–11. In addition to this hermeneutical 'key', Rose also mentions several other principles: we need to seek truth (not just possible interpretations), recognize that Scripture is divinely inspired, humbly respect the text of Scripture and the Patristic opinions, and be careful not to quote the 'Holy Fathers' out of context, which, he says, is a frequent failure of both Protestant and Orthodox readers (pp. 69–84).

Regarding this last point, Rose helpfully explains and documents that the 'Holy Fathers' interpreted Genesis (and other Scriptures) both literally and symbolically. That is, they believed the text was literal history, but that it also had a mystical meaning related to the spiritual life of the individual believer or the whole church. It is for this reason that superficial readers of these ancient writings can find passages, which appear to support their non-literal, old-Earth views. Among the details of Genesis 1–11 that the

‘Holy Fathers’ (even the most mystical ones) clearly took literally are these: length of days (24-hours), order of Creation events (e.g. Earth and plants before the Sun), instantaneous creation of living things with maturity (e.g. Adam being created as an adult not an infant, plants with fruit on the branches, etc.),⁵ Adam created from the dust and Eve from Adam’s rib, Adam’s naming of the animals, a literal talking serpent in the literal Garden of Eden, a global flood, the 900-year life-spans of the pre-Flood patriarchs, and the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 (no gaps, strictly chronological). They were not dogmatic about the precise age of the Earth since the Greek text of the OT (Septuagint (LXX)—preferred by Orthodox theologians) and Hebrew (Masoretic) text disagreed (which didn’t bother the ‘Fathers’),⁶ but they placed it approximately at 5500 BC.

However, it is important to note, the ‘Holy Fathers’ were equally explicit that in the literal history of Genesis (as elsewhere in the Bible) the anthropomorphic language describing God was not literal (pp. 87, 198, 247, 277, 404).

It was interesting to see that the ‘Holy Fathers’ expounded many other important points in the modern young-Earth creationist position. For example, they understood that Cain married one of his close relatives (p. 232), that all people groups are descended from one man (p. 480), and that each original ‘kind’ was fixed to reproduce according to its distinct nature and not to change into a different kind (pp. 123, 133–137, 386–388).

But one of the most important points repeatedly made by the ‘Fathers’ and by Rose was that the pre-Fall world was categorically different from the world that we live in now. The Fall and Curse had a profound effect on the whole Creation (pp. 202, 206–207, 328, 409, 413, 445, 585, 607). Neither animals nor man were carnivores before the Fall, but probably only became so after the Flood (pp. 155, 411–412). Adam’s mind was far superior to any man’s since (pp. 177, 483). The laws of nature, even the nature of matter

itself, changed drastically at the Fall (pp. 328, 415). Man’s significant physical change was seen not only in his becoming mortal, but also even in the ‘voiding of fecal matter’ which Rose claims did not happen pre-Fall (pp. 448–449).⁷ Only in the new heavens and new Earth (which will be like the pre-Fall Creation), argued these ancient writers, will the curse on *all* of Creation be removed (p. 431).

Strengths of the book

This is a great addition to the literature defending the literal truth of Genesis 1–11 (i.e. treating it as straightforward, plain, historical narrative) from the perspective of church history. This is especially so, because Rose quotes so extensively from ancient writers that most people do not have access to. Johnson is right in saying (pp. 50–51) that ‘Fr Seraphim has thoroughly demolished one of the favorite canards of accommodationists [with evolution] not only in Orthodoxy, but also in Roman Catholic and Protestant circles’, where we encounter ‘such perverse misinterpretations’ of pre-nineteenth century church leaders.

With many statements throughout the book, Rose gives us a clear picture of the extent to which 20th century EO believers have compromised with evolution. There is much confusion in most of their minds about it (p. 382) and most appear to be theistic evolutionists, a fact which is confirmed by my own experience as a missionary in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union for 18 years. This is because (1) ‘they do not have a critical approach to the scientific “findings” (although, in full harmony with the modern spirit, they do have a critical approach to Scripture)’ and (2) ‘they do not understand the philosophical “spirit of the age”’ (pp. 291–292). Obviously, the same can be said of most Roman Catholics and Protestants.

The book is well-illustrated with icons (religious pictures) of all the ‘Holy Fathers’ (under which are dates of each life) whom Rose quotes, as well as many icons related to events

in Genesis 1–11. This is very helpful for the non-Orthodox reader not only in getting a handle on the history of interpretation but also in seeing a central aspect of Eastern Orthodox religious life (which is why they are in the book).

Throughout the work, both Rose and his editor show a very thorough knowledge of young-Earth creationist books (both adult and kids), journals, videos and organizations (*ICR*, *AiG*, *CRS*, etc.). All are referred to with great appreciation because they informed so much of his and the editor’s understanding of the scientific side of the debate. Clearly, the two most influential books in Rose’s thinking were Henry Morris’s *Scientific Creationism* (1974) and Morris and Whitcomb’s *The Genesis Flood* (1961).

The table of contents is detailed, making it easy to find your way around the book. Besides footnotes by Rose and the editor and endnotes by Rose, there is a thorough bibliography, an extensive subject and name index (which helpfully puts the page number of each person’s icon in bold) and a Scripture index. And the recommended reading list looks like the *AiG* or *ICR* catalogue. So this is a good reference book for every serious creationist library.

Weak points of the book

The book does not go back quite far enough in history. But since Eastern Orthodoxy was born only in the 4th century (p. 567) and is based on the writings of the eastern ‘Holy Fathers’ since that time, this is not surprising. Thankfully, there are other studies of Christian writers from the second and third century (as well as from the post-Reformation period).^{8–10}

There is considerable overlap of material, especially in later sections of the book, which will be wearisome to many readers. And it doesn’t seem all that helpful to have included Rose’s rough outlines of lectures (604–614). But it is understandable, given that the editor wanted to make public all the writings on this subject by this highly regarded monk.

The patristic evidence presented by Rose shows that they clearly believed the days of Creation were literal days and occurred only about 7,500 years ago and the Flood was global. We see a clear recognition by Rose that old-Earth geology and big bang astronomy are really philosophy rather than science. So, it is perplexing to find some conflicting statements by Rose on the length of the days. In 1975 he said that ‘the Holy Fathers say they were twenty-four-hour days’ (p. 329) but in 1981 he said, ‘most Fathers do not say anything at all on the subject’ (p. 97) and ‘we have seen that in the Patristic view the days of Creation—whatever their precise “length” may have been—were very short periods of time’ (p. 161).

Given the datedness of Rose’s material, it is not surprising that he is quite favorable to the canopy theory, though the Fathers’ comments on the firmament seem to argue against this (pp. 115–118, 493). Referring only to *The Genesis Flood* and Dillow’s *The Waters Above*, the editor is apparently unaware of more recent creationist thinking on (and rejection of or strong hesitancy about) this theory.¹¹

Some noteworthy, yet relatively, minor errors appear in the book. For example, the editor includes Dr Jonathan Wells (ordained member of the cultic Unification Church, *aka* the Moonies) under a discussion of ‘Biblical creationists’ (p. 43, footnote) and of ‘Creation Scientists in Defense of the Holy Fathers’ (p. 646). Rose calls Henry Morris a ‘professor of geology’ (p. 467), when his discipline was actually hydraulic engineering. He says that no one thought of evolution in ancient times (p. 338), although some of the ancient philosophers before Christ—such as Empedocles (d. 435), Democritus (d. 370), Epicurus (d. 270) and Lucretius (d. 55)—had evolutionary ideas that life arose spontaneously and that different life forms arose from one another.¹² Rose thought that historically the wide acceptance of evolution led to old-Earth thinking (p. 420), when it’s the other way round.

Though not an error, I think Rose

and other EO writers are confusing their audience when they talk about ‘continuous creation’ (pp. 82, 391, 624–625). On page 391 he does explain that the ‘Holy Fathers’ believed that the creation work of Genesis 1 was categorically different, because it was supernatural (e.g. Adam was the ‘first-formed man’—and Eve was the only other one—but Cain was the ‘first-born’ man), and God is not doing that kind of work any more (p. 473–474). But the issue is slightly confused by calling God’s ‘continuous Providence’ a ‘continuous creation’ (p. 625). Genesis 2:1–3 is clear that God finished His creation work, but the rest of the Bible makes clear that He is working redemptively and providentially in His Creation (which is what Jesus refers to in John 5:17). It is important to clearly distinguish these different ‘works’ of God.

The Eastern Orthodox orientation of the book may be unfamiliar to most *TJ* readers, so a few comments are appropriate. On pages 148–149 we find the EO distinction between the image of God and the likeness of God in man (the former given to all by God, the latter attained by some men through human effort combined with God’s grace), which the parallelism of the phrases in Genesis 1:26–27 and 5:1–3 does not support. Rose refers to the apocryphal book, *Wisdom of Solomon*, as ‘Scripture’ (pp. 414, 443).¹³ Orthodox beliefs about the Virgin Mary (essentially the same as the Roman Catholic view) being ‘most Holy Mother of God’ and ‘incorruptible’ peek out occasionally (pp. 215, 392, 418). These are contrary to New Testament teaching, and indeed to the teaching of the church leaders in the first few centuries.¹⁴

Protestant readers will likely disagree with the Orthodox that the ark of Noah is symbolic of the church (p. 260), rather than Christ, the Saviour. They might also wonder at the following two statements—which have no Biblical foundation: that Adam and Eve had no sexual thoughts or passions before the Fall (p. 187), although God had commanded them

to multiply and fill the Earth (Genesis 1:28), and that Ham had a child on the Ark (although Genesis 8:18 and 1 Peter 3:20 says that only eight people were saved on board), but that the others had no sexual relations on the voyage (p. 269). Also surprising will be the EO belief that the original Paradise was both destroyed and still in a sense exists—and can be and has been visited by Orthodox saints (in an ‘out of yourself’ exalted state), some of whom have even brought back apples for other monks to eat (pp. 189–190, 328, 477, 495).

However, one of the most important aspects of EO theology that comes through this book is also its greatest weakness. Certainly, it is historically very helpful to have this summary of the writings of the EO ‘Fathers’. Christians who lack knowledge of church history are weak and those who interpret the Bible privately with no concern for the views of earlier interpreters will almost inevitably fall into doctrinal error.

But while EO theology affirms that Scripture is divinely inspired, that Genesis is ‘the only inerrant account of Creation the world has ever known’ (p. 586), and that we should not ‘accept every word of the Fathers’ (p. 83), in reality EO locates its supreme authority in the writing of the ‘Holy Fathers,’ who were also ‘God-inspired’ (p. 409). They believe that the ‘Holy Fathers’ had (and some have today) the light of ‘Divine vision (*theoria*)’, by which Moses received the text of Genesis, and so are ‘the only sure interpreters of Moses’ text’ (pp. 43, 586), as Rose and his editor *repeatedly* emphasize (e.g. ‘the whole world outlook and philosophy of life for an Orthodox Christian may be found in the Holy Fathers’ [p. 393], ‘the unquestionable authority of a Holy Father’ [p. 415] and ‘our only wisdom comes from the Holy Fathers, and all that contradicts it is a lie’ [p. 453]). Connected to this is the editor’s intriguing label of Orthodox creationists as ‘non-Biblical’ in contrast to the Protestant ‘biblical creationists’ (p. 43).

But the ‘Holy Fathers’ were not without error and disagreement. Rose acknowledged that some of the scientific understanding of the ‘Fathers’ was in error, as we would expect from the overall progress of scientific knowledge. But their theology is considered trustworthy. Nevertheless, he points out that ‘the Blessed Augustine’ (Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430)) was in error about the nature of man, an ‘extremely important Orthodox teaching’ (pp. 432, 434). But this is probably because EO denies the doctrine of Original Sin, which they wrongly claim was invented by Augustine, although he merely expounded upon the Biblical teaching in passages such as Romans 5:12–19. Rose himself disagreed with St Ephraim about what was created on the first day (p. 113). And he notes several instances where the ‘Holy Fathers’ disagreed with (even contradicted) each other over the interpretation of some passages of Scripture (pp. 160, 499, 623).

So, it would be unfortunate if any reader of this book was attracted to join the Eastern Orthodox Church, (EOC) for it, like the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), is committed to the supreme authority of church tradition, rather than the Scriptures. While the writings of the Church Fathers prove that the early Christians were essentially all young-Earth creationists, some of their ideas also led the EOC and RCC away from important doctrines (e.g. the supreme authority of Scripture and justification by faith alone¹⁵) and into some very anti-Biblical doctrines and practices (e.g. the veneration of icons, saints and Mary), which have kept many in spiritual darkness (as any missionary working in Orthodox countries can attest), just as many false doctrines in Protestant and Roman Catholic churches are keeping people in bondage.

In contrast to the Orthodox view, the church leaders right after the time of the Apostles, and before the Orthodox ‘Holy Fathers’, saw Scripture as supreme, as did the one they call ‘the Blessed Augustine’, as well as even some of the Orthodox ‘Saints’ them-

selves such as Athanasius (c. 296–373) and John Chrysostom. In the middle of second century AD, Tertullian wrote:

‘In the Lord’s apostles we possess our authority, for even they did not of themselves choose to introduce anything, but faithfully delivered to the nations the doctrine which they have received from Christ.’

Similar statements about the vast difference between the Apostles and later Christian leaders can be found in the second century writings of Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp.¹⁶

For a well-informed Evangelical perspective on Eastern Orthodoxy, I recommend the following. *Credenda Agenda* (Vol. 6, No. 5), published by Community Evangelical Fellowship (P.O. Box 8741, Moscow, ID, 83843, USA), is available on the Web at <www.credenda.org/old/issues/cont6-5.htm> or in hard copy from the publisher. Don Fairbairn’s *Eastern Orthodoxy through Western Eyes* (to be published by Westminster John Knox Press) will be out in October 2002. Also see Daniel Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), which is a very gracious (some would say too gracious) Evangelical critique of EO. A good introduction to the history, doctrines and practices of the Eastern Orthodox Church, written from the EO side, is by Timothy Ware.⁴

Comments on Johnson’s Introduction

Philip Johnson continues to be somewhat of a mystery to me. While all creationists are very thankful for his brilliantly insightful and well articulated criticisms of biological evolution and philosophical naturalism, many are puzzled by his persistent ignoring of the age of the Earth and the book of Genesis. He writes in his introduction of this book (pp. 50, 62):

‘To avoid endless confusion and distraction and to keep attention focused on the most important point, I have firmly put aside all questions of Biblical interpretation and religious authority, in order

to concentrate my energies on one theme. My theme is that, in Fr Seraphim’s words, “evolution is not ‘scientific fact’ at all, but philosophy.” The philosophy in question is naturalism (the doctrine that nature is “all there is”), which for this purpose is identical to materialism (the doctrine that reality consists of nothing but the particles that physicists study) ... Uniformitarianism, like naturalism, is a philosophical assumption, not a fact.’

Consider this statement now in light of Rose’s book. Rose makes it clear that he and the ‘Holy Fathers’ believed in recent literal days of Creation, the creation of the Sun and other heavenly bodies after the Earth, and the global catastrophic Flood. They believed that Genesis was absolutely foundational to the Christian worldview. Rose also declares all of evolution theory (astronomical, geological and biological) to be based on naturalistic, anti-Biblical, philosophical interpretations of the facts (e.g. pp. 383–385, 420). The editor summarizes Rose’s thinking this way (p. 585) this way:

‘For those who choose faith in Christ over faith in the world, rejecting naturalistic Darwinian evolution is only a beginning ... True faith in Christ means rejecting the core of evolutionary philosophy itself, which reaches far beyond Darwinism and is in fact “the key to the philosophy of Antichrist.” When this underlying philosophy is abandoned, not only does the idea of biological evolution fall away (whether naturalistic or “God-guided”), but so do the other corollaries of evolutionary philosophy, including the evolutionary/uniformitarian time scale and the evolutionary cosmology.’

One wonders, therefore, when Johnson will see the contradictory nature of his repeated assertions and insistence over the past decade that the age of the Earth and what Genesis says are not really very important; rather, *the* issue is naturalism’s control of sci-

ence. Uniformitarianism (a term generally used only in geological science) is just another name for naturalism, not something different from naturalism, despite what Johnson seems to think above. All old-Earth thinking (whether in Christian minds or not) is based squarely on *naturalistic* assumptions in geology and astronomy. But Johnson seems to equate 'evolutionary naturalism' only with 'Darwinism' (p. 49). We need to clearly grasp the fact that all toleration of old-Earth interpretations of Genesis is the toleration of *naturalism's* stranglehold on the interpretation of the Bible and the geological and astronomical evidence.

If Johnson does see this point, one wonders why he gives every impression of not seeing it by distancing himself from young-Earth creationists and instead attracting old-Earthers to the IDM. His 'Don't worry about the age of the Earth' (at least not now) approach has blinded many other Christians from seeing the control of naturalism in geology and astronomy and so they have ignored the Word of God in Genesis, just as Johnson has. I suggest that the reason for this apparent blindness may be partly related to Johnson's overly optimistic vision of the future of science, namely that, if we keep working at our criticisms of evolution step by step, maybe in this century science will be 'more modest and hence more realistic' (p. 51). Rose and his editor clearly believe otherwise—that science will increasingly depart from atheism and fall under the control of New Age ecumenism ultimately under the control of the Antichrist, resulting in equally (or even more) bizarre explanations of the history and nature of the creation that do not acknowledge the transcendent Creator God and His holy Word.

Conclusion

I recommend this book for *Bibli-cally mature* Christians. Young-Earth creationists will find encouragement that their understanding of Genesis is both exegetically and historically sound. Old-Earth compromisers who

love the truth will be challenged to reconsider and abandon their views.

But if the reader feels drawn to Eastern Orthodoxy (as a small but increasing number of Evangelicals in the West are), I would strongly urge that he read the Evangelical responses to EO in the books and journal that I mentioned above. Given the corrupt, compromised and spiritually impotent state of much of the church, even Evangelical churches, in the West, I can understand the temptation to want to join the EO church, where there seems (on the surface at least) to be such a long history of stable doctrine and practice. But the solution is not to join the EO Church, where there are different widespread and serious doctrinal and behavioral problems and at best a muddled understanding of the Gospel.

We need to return (again and again) *not* to the writings of the 'Holy Fathers' (or of the Reformers) but to the only divinely inspired source of inerrant and infallible truth, the 66 books of the Old and New Testament. We need to do this personally, and we need to work for the Biblical reformation of our local church and the worldwide church. And the written Word of God, alone, must be our final authority and the means by which we test the ideas of all other people, regardless of how 'holy' they are (or were) and by which we allow others to test our own views.

References

1. Father Seraphim (Eugene Rose): A prophetic voice <www.angelfire.com/pa3/OldWorld-Basic/FrSeraphim.html>, downloaded 3 September 2002.
2. See Wieland, C., AiG's views on the Intelligent Design Movement, <www.answersingenesis.org/IDM>, 30 August 2002.
3. Lewontin, R., Billions and billions of demons, *The New York Review*, 9 January, 1997, p. 31; <www.answersingenesis.org/lewortin>.
4. Ware, T., *The Orthodox Church*, Penguin Books, London, pp. 307–309, 1997. Timothy Ware (b. 1934), aka Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia, is a former Anglican and a leading Orthodox theologian in the UK.
5. Rather than 'appearance of age'—see Wieland, C., *The Earth: how old does it look?* *Creation* 23(1):8–13, 2000.
6. For a defence of the superiority of the Masoretic Text see, Williams, P., Some remarks preliminary to a Biblical chronology, *CEN Tech. J.* 12(1):98–106, 1998. The LXX is demonstrably inflated, and contains the (obvious) error that Methuselah lived 17 years after the Flood.
7. Rose criticizes Thomas Aquinas (1224/5–1274) for disagreeing with the point about fecal matter. Modern young-Earth creationists, to my knowledge, have not addressed this issue. But they do share the belief that the effect of the Fall on man's body was very significant.
8. Duncan, J.L. and Hall, D., The 24-hour view; in: Hagiopan, D.G., *The Genesis Debate*, Crux Press, Mission Viejo, CA., pp. 47–52, 99–106, 2001; reviewed by Kulikovskiy, A., *TJ* 16(1):41–44, 2002.
9. Mortenson, T.J., British Scriptural geologists in the first half of the nineteenth century: Part 1, historical setting, *CEN Tech. J.* 11(2):236–240, 1997.
10. See also chapters 3–5 in David Hall's studies, 'Holding Fast to Creation', at <www.capo.org/holdfast0.html>
11. For example, see Batten, D. (Ed.), *et al.*, *The Answers Book*, Master Books, Green Forest, Arizona, 1999.
12. The evolutionist Henry Fairfield Osborn in his book, *From the Greeks to Darwin* (1929), also pointed out that evolutionary ideas had a long history. Henry Morris, *The Long War Against God* (1989, pp. 197–218), has also argued that anti-Biblical religions are fundamentally evolutionary in nature.
13. This is likely because the Orthodox tend to use Septuagint (LXX) and the apocrypha is included in it, although these books were/are not considered Scripture by the Jews.
14. Sarfati, J., The Virginal Conception of Christ, *Apologia* 3(2):4–11, 1994; <www.answersingenesis.org/virgin>.
15. A great modern Orthodox theologian, John Meyendorff, has written, 'Byzantine theology did not produce any significant elaboration of the Pauline doctrine of justification expressed in Romans and Galatians. The Greek patristic commentaries on such passages as Galatians 3:13 ("Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us") generally interpret the idea of redemption by substitution in the wider context of victory over death and of sanctification. They never develop the idea in the direction of an Anselmian theory of "satisfaction";' Meyendorff, J., *Byzantine Theology*, Fordham U. Press, New York, p. 160, 1979.
16. Edwards, Brian, *Nothing but the Truth*, Evangelical Press, Durham, UK, p. 169, 1993.