

“An eye for the truth!”

A review of
The Genesis Enigma
by Andrew Parker
Random House,
Melbourne, 2009

Barry Tapp

The puzzle for Professor Parker is the difficulty of reconciling why the creation account in the first chapter of Genesis so accurately correlates with what he perceives to be the current evolutionary understandings in science. The enigma he sets out to explore is that the “latest understanding of how the world and all life on it came to develop and evolve, as demonstrated by solid evidence based science, reflects exactly the order of events as set out in Genesis” (p. ix). Given that current evolutionary biological science is the product of the past 150 years of endeavour, then naturally it beggars belief that the first page of the Bible could contain objective truth. “How did the writer of this page come to write the creation account?” (p. 238).

For Parker evolution is fact, it is definitely not a theory (pp. 212, 214) and “As a scientist [he] would never entertain the ‘seven day’ creation story” (p. xii). In fact creationism, in his view, is quite irrational. In similar vein he points out with candour that he does not need “the comfort of religion” (p. xv).

Although the book purports to be an argument from the perspective of science, for me the “subtext” is about a scientist who is seeking to come to terms with the direction of his research. I can do no better than to quote the text in this regard.

“The one real question the book asks is: ‘could it be that the creation account on page one of Genesis was written as it is *because* that is how the sequence of events really happened? If that were true

what could it mean? Since we know the scientific account to be correct through repeatable proven experiments, it surely follows that the Genesis account must be correct too. But the astonishing point is that the Genesis account has *no* right to be correct. Consider the identity of the writer—when and where he lived; there’s no way he could have guessed this thesis as it stands” (p. xiii).

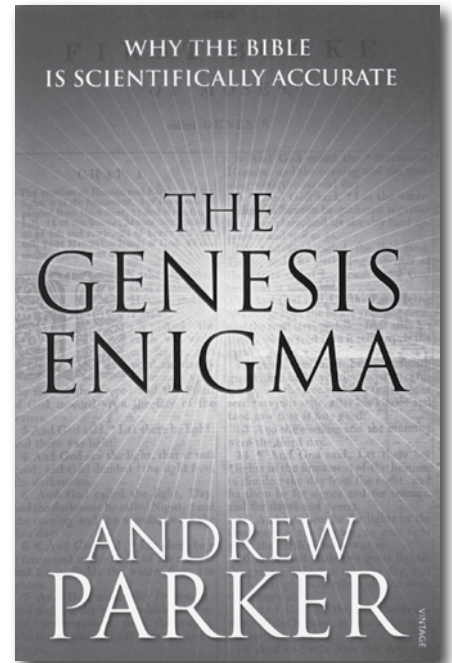
However, origins issues are not repeatable testable science and his other claims are not supported by the evidence.

A problem of forced correlations

A summary of the creation account and its supposed relationship to the scientific history of the earth is shown on page three of the text. However, Bible scholars would detect that there is not the correlation that Parker states as fact. For example, when God said “let there be light” (Genesis 1: 3), the author takes this to mean the formation of the sun which the text actually states occurred later in the Creation Week (Genesis 1: 14). This later verse is considered by Parker to mean that the first image forming eye came into being whereby light could be distinguished from darkness. Day 5 of Creation Week (Genesis 1:20) is taken to refer to the “Cambrian explosion”, when life seems to suddenly appear in the geologic column. The supposed correlation is therefore forced more than real.

Part true but not all?

Much of the book then reiterates evolutionary dictums set out in terms of this supposed relationship to the biblical account. The material here has been rebutted on many occasions by creationist authors and there is little point in reiterating the author’s substantially orthodox evolutionary stance and the refutations. However,



there are some chapters that are testament to the author’s search for truth. In fact, the first chapter is titled “Truth”. In it Parker summarises a wealth of archaeological evidence for the historical truth of the Bible. If one then accepts that the Bible is true, at least in its historical evidences, then the author poses the question as to why cannot the creation account in Genesis one also not be taken as factual truth. He takes this further by suggesting that the scientific evidence provides more evidence that the Bible is indeed true.

I don’t think any creationists would argue the truth of this point, although what is purported to be scientific truth is a moot consideration. Parker argues that the testable part of the Bible is indeed true as it relates to chronological events and real people, and also the science as he views it. But if Genesis does reflect the God given account then the issue of purpose is raised. “But to accept purpose in the universe, and consequently the existence of God, is inevitably to take on an element of faith” (p. xv).

Is science God’s method?

The thesis adopted by Professor Parker leaves no other option other than that God is the God of all causes, a

point of view that goes back at least as far as Erasmus Darwin. In other words, science is God's method. But here evolutionists again are confronted with a problem. Evolutionists argue that speciation occurs because of genetic mutations; errors in the process of gene replication. But these are errors, so what is the explanation for errors in a God directed process? (p. 213). In Parker's view errors surely provide evidence against creation since God's system should be error free.

This then leads to the nub of what I see as a fundamental flaw in the book, the lack of any spiritual, or theological if you prefer, thinking. Does spirituality exist and if so is it from God, or did it also evolve?—a horrendous thought. What is the meaning of the Fall in an evolutionary context?

But Goedel's theorem proves that from within any system one can never logically prove the starting points, they are arbitrary perceptions and assumptions. Hence no matter how rational one considers themselves to be, the conclusion reached will be determined by the starting points not the excellence of the logic.¹ Stretching the text of Genesis 1 to accommodate a theory of eye development (Parker's Light Switch Theory, 1998) is not a good starting point.

References

1. De Bono, E., *Think! Before It's Too Late: Twenty Three Reasons Why World Thinking is So Poor*, Ebury Publishing, London, 2009.

The struggle to survive

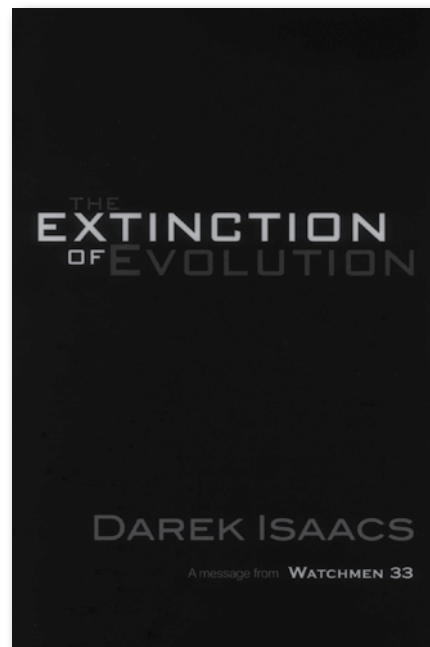
A review of
The Extinction of Evolution
by Darek Isaacs
Watchman 33, Jacksonville,
AL, 2008

Lael Weinberger

From its title, I expected *The Extinction of Evolution* to be a popular-level critique of evolutionary biology, or something along those lines. It is not. *The Extinction of Evolution* has little to say about evolutionary theories of origins per se, but much to say about evolutionary visions of the future. The focus is on evolution's implications for society. Darek Isaacs has written a creative critique of evolutionary ethics that uses a fictional protagonist, an evolutionist philosopher giving a lecture series, to demonstrate the evil that results from logically applying evolution to society.

Sin and evolution

Isaacs does not make anyone guess about where he is coming from. The book starts with a chapter on the rejection of God. If we know that God exists and that we are sinful, then the logical consequence is the fear of God. Fear is not a pleasant condition, and thus God is an offense to sinful man. The natural response of sinful man is thus to find a way out of believing in God. Isaacs then brings in the naturalistic, Darwinian, evolutionary account of origins as modern man's solution. He seizes upon quotations from the noted evolutionary biologist E.O. Wilson, where he uses the phrase "blind force" to describe the origins of life (p. 9). "Some blind force created the animals, and subsequently created us?" Isaacs rhetorically asks. "Talk about blind faith!" (p. 10). The purpose of *The Extinction of Evolution*, Isaacs writes, is to expose the true colors of



evolution: not as science, but as sinful man's filter for viewing the world.

The Extinction of Evolution primarily consists of fictional lectures by Isaacs' protagonist, the cleverly named Dr Iman Oxidant. We are told that Oxidant was educated in philosophy, theology, and sociobiology at the finest universities in Europe and moved to Boston in 1996 to found a think tank, the Institute of Progressive Lineage. Under the auspices of this organization, Oxidant delivered an online lecture series on evolution in society.

In the first lecture, he promises to explain four "sub laws" of evolution, "drawn directly from the kernels of Darwinian thought" (pp. 23, 28). Evolution, he proclaims, is recognized as "a fact of nature". Yet "the stunted intellects of those who oppose scientific progress are becoming a threat to our advancement as a species and a culture" (pp. 24–25). His thesis is that society must begin to conform to the "truths" we learn from evolution.

"I believe it is time for principles, derived from evolutionary science, to become the guiding light of