

# Genesis and Science

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Aims

*Usually, even a non-Christian knows something about the earth, the heavens, and the other elements of this world, about the motion and orbit of the stars and even their size and relative positions, about the predictable eclipses of the sun and moon, the cycles of the years and the seasons, about the kinds of animals, shrubs, stones, and so forth, and this knowledge he holds to as being certain from reason and experience. Now, it is a disgraceful and dangerous thing for an infidel to hear a Christian, presumably giving the meaning of Holy Scripture, talking nonsense on these topics; and we should take all means to prevent such an embarrassing situation, in which people show up vast ignorance in a Christian and laugh it to scorn. Augustine*

### 1.2 Terminology

- Creation
- Evolution
- Intelligent design

### 1.3 Thinking about science and the Bible

- The God of the Bible is the God of the natural world
- The different aims of the Bible and science
- The possibility of overlap and conflict
- The potential for getting the Bible wrong
- The potential for getting science wrong
- The history of the debate

## 2. Key issues in Genesis

### 2.1 The main issues

- The origin of the universe
- The start of life
- The development of species
  - Science:
    - Natural selection through random mutation (neo-Darwinian thesis)
    - Common Ancestry
    - Age of the earth

## 2.2 Understanding Genesis 1

- ‘Literal’ history
- Day-age approach
- Framework approach (‘Non-literal’)

<b>Starting point:</b> earth is ‘formless’ and ‘empty’ (1:2)	
<b>Forming</b>	<b>Filling</b>
Day 1: Light & Dark	Day 4: Sun, Moon, Stars
Day 2: Sky & Sea	Day 5: Flying Creatures & Sea Creatures
Day 3: Dry Ground & Vegetation	Day 6: Land Creatures & Mankind
Day 7: Completion - God Rests	

## 2.3 Key theological issues

- Mankind created in the image of God
- The place of death / suffering
- Historical Adam and Eve

## 2.4 The variety of positions

- Young-earth creationism
- Old-earth (progressive) creationism
- Theistic evolution