

Biblical Narration of Creation in Genesis Supporting Old Earth Or Young Earth Creationism: Interpretations of Martin Luther and George Perner and Rejection of Theistic Evolution Theory”

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INTRODUCTION

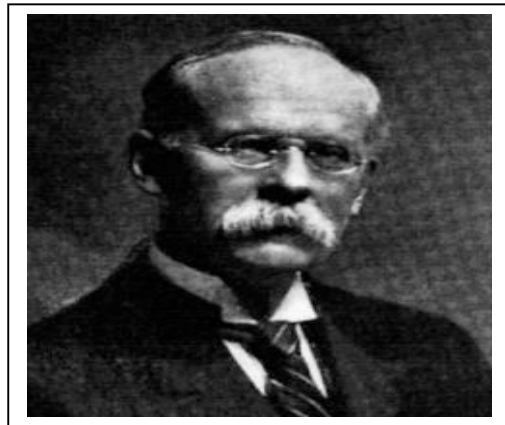
We live in a world today with so many races, ethnic conflicts, sectarian clashes, and ideological confrontations, many cultures with too many languages and a multitude of world views. However, we are united with God, the Creator spiritually since this spirituality is in essence the cementing glue to unite all people with God as it is bound to happen, as narrated in Revelation. We must accept the truth that the Kingdom of Jesus Christ will be established upon the return of the Son of God to rule the world. In the Bible, we see the narration of God’s creation and the creation of man as Adam and Eve in the first chapter of Genesis. We see today the bold views from evangelical theologians such as Dr. Dennis Lamoureux , even writing a book to prove to the world that Adam never existed and it was just historic (Lamoureux, 2009). In an essay recently, I have presented fossil evidence and speciation patterns in a group of crustaceans to prove the old earth creationism theory (George, 2013). Nevertheless, there is a growing school of thought in the western world to adhere to a new theory of theistic evolution, primarily based on the views expressed in the book (Collins, 2006) , entitled “Language of God” by Francis Collins. I am convinced that the theory of theistic evolution must be proven as an attempt to twist the Biblical truth in the name of Christianity to establish that Darwin was right after all and he presented the scientific facts to prove man really evolved (not created) from higher apes (chimpanzees). George (2014) wrote a clear rebuttal to the existing theories of physical anthropologists to show that man was created and did not evolve from Neanderthal man. We also see authentic books such as the one by Denis Alexander entitled “Creation or Evolution: Do we have to choose. “ Alexander (2008) eloquently explains that Darwinian evolution and Bible’s creation are not mutually exclusive.

The primary focus of this paper is two-fold. (A) To establish the truth that Martin Luther, based on the work of St. Augustine of the fifth century AD, argued in the ‘Heidelberg Disputation” that Plato and Aristotle disagreed with the former

accepting divine guidance in creation and the latter simply attributing his view under the pretext of 'reason' and (B) To prove that George Pember misinterpreted the Genesis narration of creation as two different events of God's creation in his classical book "Earth's Earliest Ages" (Pember, 1876). Pember (1876) believed that the geological and paleontological evidence of fossils can only be explained by the theory that the creation of all life on earth except man was made extinct in a period of millions of years as elucidated by the "Gap Theory" and it was in the second creation God created Adam and Eve. I have also concluded in this paper with a final third section on my convincing arguments to disprove, once and for all, the theory of "theistic evolution." Time has come not to establish a new paradigm but to initiate a paradigm shift bring God in the formula of all human endeavors through the new innovative concept of theoecology.



Martin Luther (1483 – 1546)



George Hawkins Pember (1837 – 1910)

A. Martin Luther's Interpretations

In the beginning of the 19th century, there was a wave of conceptual oscillations in the major branches of protestant Christianity that branched from Catholicism. The reformation period began with Martin Luther (10, Nov., 1483 to 18, Feb., 1546) and John Calvin (July 10, 1509 in Nyon, France to March 27, 1564 in Geneva, Switzerland). It was Martin Luther who in 1518 participated in the "General Chapter Meeting of the Augustine Order" in Heidelberg, Germany. The outcome of the Luther's Heidelberg encounters is often referred as "Luther's Disputation" (see Theodore Dieter's *Die Junge Und Arsitotles*). In essence, Luther divided the Heidelberg disputation into 27 theological theses and 12 philosophical theses (See Luther's *Weimares Ausgabe*). Luther endorsed the ideas of Plato and questioned the wisdom of Aristotle's conception of natural capacity of intellect to discern the truth from

creation and created order. This outright criticism of Aristotle is part and parcel of Luther's critiques of the so called "Scholastics" but necessarily the rejection of "reason" and therefore, we see in Luther the very first embryonic apologetics to bridge science and religion. This connectivity is basically the underlying cause for the new innovative idea of "theoecology" with its inherent goal to unite Biblical truth about creation and scientific facts on evolution.

Let me reproduce below Luther's disagreement and agreement on the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle.

Aristotle badly rebukes and ridicules the Platonic ideas [which is] better than his own philosophy.

That the philosophy of Plato is better than the philosophy of Aristotle appears from this, namely, that Plato always depends upon the divine and immortal, separate and eternal, insensible and intelligible, from whence he also recommends that singulars, individuals, and sensible things be abandoned because they cannot be known on account of their instability. Aristotle, being opposed to this in every way, ridicules the separable and intelligible things and brings in sensible things and singulars and thoroughly human and natural things. But, he does this most cunningly:

Firstly, because he cannot deny that the individual is transient [*fluxa*], he invents a form and different matter, and so the thing is not knowable as matter, but as form. Therefore, he says that the form is the cause of knowing [*causam sciendi*], and he calls this "divine, good, desirable" and he assigns the intellect to this. And so he frustrates every mind, while he examines the same thing in two ways.

Secondly, this "form" is a quiddity and the sum of his Metaphysics. So, he destroys all the ideas, putting in their place his own forms and quiddities conjoined to matter, ridiculing and denying [the existence of] the ideas separable from matter, as appears in many places, especially *Metaphysics* 1 and [*Nicomachean*] *Ethics* 1. But, it is well known by way of blessed Augustine, Iamblichus and all the Platonic disputants that the ideas of Plato are separate [from matter]. And so it is well known that the philosophy of Aristotle

crawls in the dregs [*reptat in faecibus*] of corporeal and sensible things, whereas Plato moves among things separable and spiritual.

Luther's first seven conclusions in this disputation offer scathing criticisms of Aristotle's doctrine of the mortality of the soul, the eternity of the world and others. Here, Luther sees Plato's philosophy as much closer to Christian truth than that of Aristotle. However, it seems that Luther's appraisal of Plato goes beyond a mere acceptance of the lesser of two evils. Rather, Luther sees in Plato's philosophy something similar to the *praeparatio evangelica* of Augustine. In another section Luther refers to Plato's argument in the *Parmenides* as a "most beautiful disputation" because in it Plato shows how all things must return to nothing in their return to the One. ⁴ Though this is only a short section of Luther's philosophical *probationes* one can see in the Eighth Conclusion an appreciation for the philosophical system that was partly responsible for the conversion of his order's founding father. Since the *probationes* were published there has been little mention or discussion of them in the academic literature. Surely, this positive appraisal of Plato should not represent an uncritical adoption of Plato. But, as Knut Alfsvåg argues, "Aristotle cannot for Luther function as a philosophical broadening of the perspective established by his insistence on the Christocentricity of human existence; Plato's emphasis on the unknowability and omnipresence of the infinite, however, works quite well."

B. George Pember's Interpretations

George Hawkins Pember (1837 to 1910) became a follower of 'Plymouth Brethren' founded in 1820 – to protest the ecclesiastical divisions of protestant Christianity. The question of adult baptism and rejection of infant baptism and the idea that we live in the end-times ("Dispensationalism") are two fundamental concepts that George Pember advanced. Pember wrote 2 books: 1) "Antichrist, Bablylon and the Coming Kingdom" and (2) "Earth's Earliest Ages."

The primary purpose of Pember's 2nd book is two-fold: (A) To remove some of the geological difficulties usually associated with commencing chapters of Genesis and (B) To show the characteristic features of the days of Noah, reappearing in Christendom and therefore, the days of the Son of Man could not be far distant.

In the book "Earth's Earliest Ages", Pember attempted to reconcile the [Genesis](#) account of the world's creation with the emerging fossil evidence in geological

science about the age of the earth. Pember argued a position known as "The [Gap Theory](#)", and which had been previously proposed by the Scottish theologian [Thomas Chalmers](#) (1780–1847). In this theory, God originally created the universe but due to the rebellion of some angels led by [Lucifer](#) (or [Satan](#)) the earth descended into chaos and life was destroyed. Pember's position was that the first chapter of Genesis was giving an account of God restoring or recreating the world after the collapse of the original creation. So proponents of the Gap Theory like Pember propose that a "gap" exists between the first two verses in Genesis chapter one which allows for all the extra time needed to include the ancient fossil and geological evidences. The geological fossils were creatures that lived in the original creation and were destroyed when Lucifer fell into [sin](#). The biblical story of [Adam](#) and [Eve](#) is about a later recreation of the world.^[16] Pember's argument for the "Gap Theory" is an example of how some evangelical Christians in the nineteenth century tried to reconcile geological evidence for an old earth with the book of Genesis and without embracing [Charles Darwin's](#) theory about the [evolution](#) of the species.

The other major feature of Pember's *Earth's Earliest Ages* was his argument that the emergence of rival non-Christian religious groups were evidence that end times biblical prophecies were being fulfilled. Three particular religious movements were pinpointed as being examples of the spiritual deception that are characteristic of the biblical signs of the end times: the [Spiritualist](#) churches, the [Theosophical Society](#), and [Buddhism](#). Pember criticized these three movements on the grounds that their teachings were contradicted by the Bible. These religious groups were classified by Pember as modern-day [heresies](#). Pember's interpretation of the Spiritualist churches and of the Theosophical Society as prophetic signs of anti-Christian spiritual deception represents a nineteenth-century style of argument that has been subsequently developed and refined in Christian [Countercult](#) literature. As Pember's book defends the creation account of Genesis and rejects Darwinian evolutionary theory it is a work of [Christian apologetics](#), and the latter part of the book is an early example of that genre of literature produced in evangelical Countercult apologetics.

GAP THEORY REEVALUATED AND REJECTED

George (2013) discussed and supported the "Old Earth Creationism Theory" in an essay written in *Theoecology Journal*. This essay was based on scientific facts from the origin and evolution of a Crustacean Order Isopoda and takes into account fossil evidence and speciation process over a long stretch of millions of years. Let me now discuss how the ideas of George Pember support that the six

natural days as narrated in genesis chapter 1 are really not 24hrs-days but rather 'gaps' of millions of years and therefore, Pember's gap theory is synonymous with "Restoration Creationism." Karl Popper (1902 to 1994) from the London School of Economics endorsed George Pember's gap theory and concluded that the universe is 13.8 billion years old and the earth is 4.6 billion years old. He also pointed out that first Christian theologian to advance the view of old creationism was St. Augustine in his original writing "*De Genesi ad Litteram*" St. Augustine declared "Days in Genesis could not be literal days, if only because genesis itself tells us that the Sun was not made until the fourth day." This implies that God, the Creator, said in Genesis 1: 2: "Let there be light. And there was light". He separated on the first day the light from darkness (day and night). In Genesis 1: 1 we read that God first created heaven and earth, the latter was formless. Dark and just water and "Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."

We must recognize from Genesis Chapter 1 that that God created TIME (in the beginning), SPACE (heaven) and MATTER (earth/universe). WE see in Genesis 1: 31 that "God saw everything he made and behold it was very good."

The first theologian to propose the "Gap Theory" was a Scottish scholar Thomas Chalmers (1780 – 1847) and evidently George Pember got his ideas from Chalmers.

John Calvin (1809 to 1864) linked Genesis Chapter 1: 1-3 on creation to Genesis Chapter 13: 1-3 and he said: "Moses taught us that Abraham did not rest until he had returned to Bethel crossing over the dessert of Negeb but he pitched his tent finally in Bethel although he pitched his tents in many places and he did not stay there permanently and he returned to the last "Alter" in the land of Canan.

C. Theory of Theistic Evolution Questioned and Rejected

I must admit that geneticist Francis Collins in his book "Language of God" (Collins, 2006) opened the 'Pandora's Box' by concluding that the ATCG base pair sequence in DNA is essentially the language of God and his theory is also questioned by other scientists (Styron, 2014). Collins was an agnostic who became an atheist and then was convinced by a Methodist pastor on moral laws and became a Christian. The concept of theistic evolution is the basic core of Collins' book on 'Language of God'. Frankly I am not questioning here Collin's faith or fear of God but I am rejecting his theistic evolution theory. He has

addressed nicely bioethics, based on moral chores in medicine and I really applaud his views. This is why President Bill Clinton chose him to head National Institute of Health (NIH). My disagreement with Francis Collins is his attempt to advance in a gingerly manner Darwin's theory of man and apes sharing the same origin, under the pretext of the so called language of God.

We all know that science cannot explain the existence of God. Collins proposes that the universe originated before 'big bang'. This is not a question that church should get engaged but church should focus on the relationship of man with God, the Creator. Sooner or later we need to put an end to the war of worldviews going on today and the purpose of theocology ideas is precisely to bring an end to this ongoing war on world views. This noble goal can be achieved over a decade but it may take a generation or a century. We need to initiate a paradigm shift.

Collin's grandiose idea of founding the 'BioLogos' is to propagate his belief in the 'God of gaps' and also his appeal to all that God or faith and science can coexist in harmony. I agree that God and science are mutually not exclusive but not in the terms of Collins' preposterous theory of theistic evolution. Collin argues convincingly that Darwin's 'Natural Selection' served as the agent to unfold evolutionary pathways to create biodiversity and complexity. I am of the opinion this is true in the microevolution or speciation process. But "major kinds" of animals and plants as narrated in Genesis chapter 1 is really megaevolution and not microevolution as Darwin implied.

Let me now address more specifically my concerns about theistic evolution theory. First of all, Collins has integrated God into the evolutionary philosophy and he is not accepting God as the omnipotent (Jeremiah 32: 17), the 'Triune God' existing before time, universe and matter. Bible reveals God as absolutely perfect (Mathew 5:48) and truly holy (Isaiah 6:3). According to apostle John, God is Love (1 John 4: 6). God's creation is described as perfect (Deuteronomy 32:4) and also 'very good' (Genesis 1: 31).

In theistic evolution, the only workspace allotted to God is that part of nature which evolution cannot explain since Collins (2006) reduced the Father Almighty in heaven as the 'God of gaps'. The most appalling proposition in theistic evolution is the idea that God Himself has evolved and therefore, God is not absolute and refutes the concept of 'Nil Ergo'. By and large, theistic evolution theory in its soul has the same desire, which is undoubtedly not a pure desire but clear case of an evil desire just as the 'Intelligent Design' theory.

In 2 Timothy 3:16, we see vividly that the Bible is the source of truth authored by God with a clear link between Old Testament and New Testament, like a state High way leading to an Interstate High way (John 20: 8-11). Genesis Chapter 1 is not a myth or an Allegory but it is the most authentic history report on creation. Jesus, Son of God, when he was in the earth in flesh referred to the facts of creation (Mathew 9: 4-5). But Collins book and the doctrine of theistic evolution undermines the Biblical truth of creation. Evolution knows no sin as in the Biblical sense of missing one's purpose in relation to God.

Incarnation of God through His Son Jesus is the most significant teaching of the Bible that states: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1; 14 and Phillipians 2: 5-7). Theistic evolution does not acknowledge Adam as the first man, nor that Adam was created directly from the dust of the ground by God (Genesis 2:17). Theistic evolutionists regard the creation account as being merely a mythical tale, albeit with some spiritual significance. We now know that theistic evolutionary theory mythologizes Adam and therefore undermines the Biblical basis of Jesus' work of redemption. Galatians 4:4 points out that the most outstanding event in the history of the world as narrated as follows: "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son" and this happened 2014 years ago. In Genesis 1 we see that God created the earth first and on the fourth day God added the moon, the solar system, our galaxy and all the star systems. Evidently this sequence conflicts with all ideas of cosmic evolution (big bang cosmology), as supported by Francis Collins (2006) in his book on 'Language of God.'" Theistic evolution ignores the Biblical narration of creation and created order and replaces the Biblical truth with evolutionary notions and hence, contradicts and opposes God's omnipotent act of Creation.

I have taken many of the conceptual disagreements to theistic evolution, as earlier presented in a coherent fashion in Chapter 8 "The Consequences of Theistic evolution by Dr. Werner Gift in his book "*Did God use Evolution*" (Christliche Literatur-Verbeitlung V. Postfach, Bielefeld, Germany.

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