

Creation *Ex Nihilo*

Dear Reader,

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, and the 150th anniversary of his book, *The Origin of Species*, which promotes the theory of evolution.

Until this book appeared, most Christians believed the Biblical account of creation (Genesis 1-2) to be historical fact: God created the world in six 24-hour days. He did so by creating *ex nihilo*, “out of nothing.”

Darwin’s book led many Christians to explain the origin of the universe by rejecting Genesis 1-2 as literal history and appealing to the theory of evolution, adding that God governed the evolutionary process.

All churches with the name “Reformed” officially confess, even if they do not still teach, that Darwin’s view is wrong. In the words of our Heidelberg Catechism, Answer 26, the Reformed believer says: “who *of nothing* made heaven and earth, with all that is in them.” And in Article 12 of our Belgic Confession: “We believe that the Father . . . by His Son hath created *of nothing* the heaven, the earth, and all creatures . . .”

Written in the 1500s, these documents set forth the view of Reformed churches then. Since then, no Reformed denomination has officially updated its confession by deleting these words. Creation *ex nihilo* remains the confessional teaching of Reformed churches.

Silly? Absurd? Not to the believer.

In the rest of this leaflet, I aim to defend the glory of the one true God who created all things out of nothing, and who, in His written Word, told us *how* He did so.

The consistent testimony of Scripture.

That God created all things out of nothing, in six days of 24 hours, is not the teaching only of Genesis 1-2.

In Exodus 20:11, it is presented as the reason why God’s people must observe one day a week as a holy day. God created in six days! It comes as no surprise that those Christians which profess that the world in its present state evolved over long periods of time, have also lost much regard for the Sabbath day.

In Romans 4:17, God’s calling things out of nothing is given as the reason why Abraham believed in the resurrection of the dead. In raising our bodies, Christ will re-create them, out of nothing, instantaneously!

Hebrews 11:3 specifically rules out evolution of any sort as the explanation for the present world: *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* Men (things which are seen) did not come from monkeys (things which appear).

To deny that God created *ex nihilo* requires one to reinterpret much of Scripture, not only Genesis 1-2.

The Word of the Creator Himself.

Someone once told me that I had no right to defend creation *ex nihilo* because I was not present at creation. As God silenced Job by reminding Job that he was not present when God created (Job 38:4), so must I be silent.

But: did not God then proceed to tell Job that which Job, not being there, did not know?

And Job responded by acknowledging God's power (Job 42:2).

Though men penned the words of the Bible in human language, the Bible is God's Word to His church. In it, He tells us how the world began. No, we weren't there. So should not we listen to God, who was there, tell us how He created the world?

Genesis 1 as Literal History.

Many respond by saying that Genesis 1-2, and following chapters as well, are God's Word - but are not meant to be taken literally.

True, at times in Scripture God speaks figuratively - in the prophetic books, or poetic books, for instance.

But Genesis 1 is neither prophecy nor poetry. It is history. It portrays itself as history. Until recently, the church has always understood it as history. *Jesus* understood it as history (Matthew 19:4, Mark 10:6).

The real implications.

Our understanding of Genesis 1-2 has implications for our understanding of all of history and God's work of salvation.

Was man created in God's image? Is sin the transgression of God's law? How was this law given? Even more, how can Christ be the second Adam? How do we know that the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are historical, and not myths - and that God has really prepared a salvation from sin for His people in Jesus Christ? What hope can we really have that God has prepared heaven for His people, and will dwell with us there after our death?

The theory of evolution does not give a satisfactory answer to such questions. Only God's Word, rightly understood, does!

Pastor Douglas Kuiper

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

Psalm 33:6

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Revelation 4:11