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Book Review: *Old Earth or Evolutionary Creation?* Percentage Read: 80%

Religion and science are not always in opposition to each other. While it may seem like there are two sides to how the Earth got created, if looked at and understood properly, science and religion often say the same thing or work together to create a common answer about how the world came to be. In *Old Earth or Evolutionary Creation?: Discussing Origins with Reasons to Believe and BioLogos*, Kenneth Keathley, 2017, it breaks down the different theological and scientific standpoints of creation. Each chapter takes on a new subject or block of evidence. Within each section is discussion amongst theologians and scientists arguing what parts of the bible are scientifically accurate and what pieces of evidence support that. This book is theologically important because it explores many of the different arguments and views about creation and allows both Christians and Non-Christians to explain their standpoints. After they do this, they can discuss what they agree and disagree on, and figure out what can be done to further their agreement and respect for each other.

The thesis of any book is the main argument of the entire novel. This book did not display a singular thesis. The goal of the book was to generally discuss creation from religious and scientific standpoints. It is organized into an introduction, eleven sections or questions, and a conclusion. Each of the eleven sections starts with an introduction to a new topic or a new question presented by a professor of theology. Each side is given the opportunity to respond. The two sides were Reasons to Believe and BioLogos. Reasons to Believe proposed the religious or

more theological responses to the questions whereas BioLogos proposed the more scientific standpoint. After each side was given a chance to explain, they were asked a follow up question and both got a second chance to respond. A person who is affiliated with neither side then writes somewhat of a conclusion, explaining what each side said and how they correlate to each other. This allows each of the subjects to be given an agreed upon conclusion without silencing either side. This book is created for a wide variety of participants; both Christians and Non-Christians are able to read it and interpret the arguments to their own understanding. It is meant to be moderate and fair, leaving the audience to be wide.

The author, Kenneth Keathley, did an amazing job with the organization of each topic. The book was extremely easy to understand due to the organization of each page and the attention to details. When an author is introduced we get a few questions. Biologos were asked questions such as , “What is your mission?”(Keathley 9), “How does your view compare to others?”(Keathley 10), and “How do your views compare to those of RTB?”(Keathley 12). Reasons to Believe were asked similar questions as well. This organization makes it extremely easy for the readers to fully grasp each author’s views. Kenneth Keathley also organized the questions from the third party perfectly. The third party asks multiple questions to each company then to both. BioLogos’ author Deborah Haarsma is then able to respond to all of the questions that were asked to them. For example it states, “ For Deborah: Does ‘evolutionary creationism’ differ in practice in ‘Theistic evolution’ or is it merely a linguistic distinction?”(Keathley 19). Biologos’ response to this question was, “ The difference between the terms ‘evolutionary creation’ and ‘theistic evolution’ is both semantic and substantive. The terms share the same core meaning: that God used the process of evolution to create living things.” (Keathley 20). The answers to the questions are straight and to the point which makes it easier for the reader. The

third party asked a very great question to both companies which was, “Your organizations appear to share one overarching value: a commitment to legitimate science. Yet there are also distinct differences between your groups. BioLogos's audience is both Christians and non-Christians, while RTB's audience is primarily unbelievers. BioLogos's purpose is to show that there is no contradiction between science and Christian faith, while RTB's purpose is to use science, properly done, to evangelize. Do you recognize your groups in these descriptions? (Keathley 20).” There are differences between the two companies but they both acknowledge science. By asking them the same question we get to see what each company believes and how they differ. The organization of the book allows for us to create our own opinions of each company.

The author Keathley does not have a side that he prefers more. The book stays fair throughout its entirety. This is not a bad thing but this is rare when reading books. The reader is put in a spot that they are not used to, which is picking a side without bias. This causes the author Keathley to not be convincing because he gives both sides a fair chance to win over the reader. The authors that are being asked questions during the book also have a lot in common and a ton of respect for each other so there is not much convincing done in this book.

In conclusion, *Old earth or evolutionary Creation* by Kenneth Keathley is a very well organized book that discusses the different theological and scientific standpoints of creation. The book was so well put together that you have to appreciate the great work done by Keathley. The organization also helped with absorbing information easier. Biologos and Reasons to Believe have similar takes on the beginning of the Earth and they agree on many different aspects. This book gives the reader, no matter Christian or non Christian, a ton of information and lets them decide what side they are on which is perfect because it allows for the target audience for this

book to be anybody that is interested in learning about the beginning of the Earth which is just about anyone. All in all this book was a great way to explore creation from a religious and scientific standpoint.