

Science & faith booklist

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God: New Evidence. A Series of 6 brief online videos at www.focus.org.uk. It concerns recent scientific findings that point to the possibility of a Creator God. Well worth a look, despite the fact that I'm featured!

Who made God? Edgar Andrews, EP Books, 2009, ISBN 978-0-8523-4707-2, £10. This is a good one to start with – explains well why science is not the final word when it comes to reality. Up to date. Written by an eminent scientist who is also a Christian.

Just six numbers. Martin Rees, Phoenix, 1999, ISBN 0-75381-022-0, £7. This is a *secular* science book, written by a very eminent scientist (Martin Rees is a Fellow of the Royal Society), to describe how finely-tuned the Universe is to permit human life to exist. It describes clearly the evidence that points to a creator, although it isn't written with this intent! At the conclusion, Rees disregards the Providence option, and goes for a 'scientific' option to explain the fine-tuning. However he omits to mention that the option he goes for is purely scientific speculation.

The language of God. Francis Collins, Pocket Books, 2007, ISBN 978-1-84739-092-9, £9. This deals with the biological aspects of science and faith – the language in the title refers to the DNA code. Francis Collins led the human genome project in the States, and is an extremely eminent scientist (and Christian as well). Very well written and informed book. Also a personal one – it describes his own testimony of how he came to faith.

God's Undertaker – has science buried God? (Great title!) John C Lennox, Lion Books, 2007, ISBN 978-0-7459-5303-8, £15. John Lennox is an eminent mathematician at Oxford University. The book has been revised, so the ISBN may have changed. Deals with physics and biological aspects of science and faith. A bit heavy in places, but well-worth the effort. Lennox took on Dawkins in open debate, and got Dawkins to admit that there may be a God, but it wasn't a hypothesis that he subscribed to!

Real Scientists Real Faith. R J Berry (editor), Monarch Books, 2009, ISBN 978-0-8254-6289-4, £9. Eighteen eminent scientists come together to write individual chapters about how they marry their life as career scientists with their faith. Well worth a read – even though it (mostly) doesn't enter the debate.

The Grand Design – new answers to the ultimate questions of life. Stephen Hawking & Leonard Mlodinow, Bantam Books, 2010, ISBN 978-0-553-81922-9, £9. The latest 'epic' (in just 250 pages) from the Hawking stable – an admirable attempt to popularise the current scientific (and secular) view of the creation of the Universe. Hawking is recognised as one of the foremost theoretical physicists of our time, but in this book he exhibits a philosophical naivety which has drawn much criticism (see Lennox's critique below). I'm afraid to say that I found no 'new answers to the ultimate questions of life'. An account that is nevertheless worth a read.

God and Stephen Hawking – whose design is it anyway? John C Lennox, Lion Books, 2011, ISBN 978-0-7459-5549-0, £5. A response to Stephen Hawking's book 'The Grand Design'. Hawking's book claims to be the latest 'blockbusting contribution' to the 'New Atheist' debate, and asserts that God is superfluous in bringing the Universe into existence. However, Lennox demolishes Hawking's arguments (in the nicest possible way, of course). I have great admiration for Hawking as one of greatest scientific thinkers of our time – but I think Lennox's book illustrates that he should stick to the science, and not wander into the domain of philosophy.

Can we believe in Genesis today? Ernest Lucas, Inter-Varsity Press, 2001, ISBN 978-1-84474-120-5, £10. Issues of ‘who were Adam & Eve?’ and how the creation story in Genesis could be compatible with our current knowledge of genetics and evolution have always been a difficult one for me. So I picked this book up with interest to see if it could be of any help. Particularly helpful for those who struggle with the perennial debate about whether Genesis should be interpreted literally or otherwise.

The Genesis Enigma. Andrew Parker, Black Swan Books, 2009, ISBN 978-0-552-77528-1, £9. Written by a non-Christian scientist, this book argues that the scientific understanding of how the world, and all life on it, came to develop and evolve reflects exactly the order of events as set out in Genesis. It also relates at length the evidence that backs up this scientific understanding in layman’s terms. However, there is also significant space given to what might be referred to as the author’s ‘pet theory’, about the evolution of the eye which he believes is explicitly mentioned in the Genesis account. Clearly, this is matter of interpretation.

Seven Days that Divide the World – the beginning according to Genesis and Science. John C Lennox, published by Zondervan, 2011, ISBN 978-0-310-49460-7, about £10. This book addresses the issues of interpretation of the creation account provided by scripture and by science. It is written for people who have been put off considering the Christian faith because of perceived dispute between the two accounts. It is also written for the convinced Christian who is disturbed by the controversy. This book demands attention and concentration in the read, but the effort is well worthwhile. (*Added Note: John Bryant would not recommend this text because of Lennox’s poor showing with respect to his knowledge of the science of life!*)

Inventing the Universe – why we can’t stop talking about science, faith and God. Alister M^cGrath, Hodder, 2016, ISBN 978-1-444-79848-7, about £10. A wide-ranging text on the issues of science and faith, written in an accessible, balanced and personal style. I enjoyed reading this book, and feel I could offer it to atheist friends without antagonising them! M^cGrath firmly dispels the myth of rivalry between science and theology, and convincingly argues the case that they complement each other in understanding the universe and the human condition.

The following books I have not read personally, but may be worth looking at:

Is God just a human invention? Sean McDowell and Jonathan Morrow, Kregel, 2010, ISBN 978-0-8254-3654-3, £11.

Why God won’t go away. Alister M^cGrath, SPCK Books, 2011, ISBN 978-0-281-06387-1, £8.

Why there almost certainly is a God. Keith Ward, Lion Books, 2008, ISBN 978-0-8254-7843-7, £8.

Science and Theology – an introduction. John Polkinghorne, SPCK Books, 1998, ISBN 978-0-281-05176-2, £11.

Also, our very own ...

From the Big Bang to Biology – where is God? Graham Swinerd and John Bryant, November 2020, ISBN 979-8682034901. See our promotional website www.bigbangtobiology.net and Facebook page ‘Big Bang to biology’.

Happy reading!

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