

# Did God Create Humanoid Life-Forms On Other Planets?

I suppose it should not be surprising that this question arises so frequently with all the science fiction pot-boilers on the television these days. Yet it is a reasonable question and one that cannot be finally and definitely answered, since scripture is silent on the matter. However, despite the lack of definitive statements, there is enough teaching in the Bible to come to a reasonably safe conclusion. It is this information which I wish to examine here.

## **Silence**

The creation of a race of men on another planet is a sufficiently important subject to warrant some kind of mention in scripture, yet there is none. The Bible frequently mentions the creation of man in connection with all manner of subjects, e.g. marriage, so the creation of another type of mankind somewhere else would surely be important. It also mentions other life forms - angels, so why not mention a new race of men?

Furthermore, since the fall affected all earthbound humankind, why would God bother to restore man, at such a huge cost to himself, if there was another race of men somewhere else? The Bible often explains that redeemed mankind is to be the visible expression of the invisible God; we are to be a testimony to the God who made us and redeemed us (see later). If there was another race of beings elsewhere in the universe, they would also have been created to manifest the character of God, so why would God be so pre-occupied with our testimony? Why no mention of another testimony?

## **Atonement**

Perhaps the most important argument relates to the incarnation, humiliation and suffering of God's own Son for our atonement. All created sentient beings would fall, since they are not God. So God covenants with his Son to be the redeemer of mankind, whose fall is so vividly described in Genesis 3. The Son willingly gives his life for the people God gave him and dies at the hands of men. He is then raised and ascends back to God's throne, but this time united to a new humanity. Jesus is the firstborn of a new creation of men (Rm 8:29; Col 1:18; Heb 12:23; Rev 1:5).

Now this poses a significant problem to the proposal of the existence of other humanoids in space.

As created beings they would also fall and would need redemption like us. But they would have no redeemer. Hebrews repeatedly states that Jesus only died once (Heb 7:27, 9:12, 26,28) and put away the sin of earthly men by becoming a man and taking the punishment that was due to us. He can never die as a man again. His human nature is the model of a new spiritual mankind which we will also inherit at the second coming (1 Jn 3:2). Alien humanoids would have no saviour.

## **God's delight in the earth**

The Bible makes much of the pleasure which God's creation gives him. The realm of nature was pronounced 'very good' when it was originally made and it longs to be free of the futility imposed upon it by man's sin to serve God freely (Rm 8:20-22). The cattle on a thousand hills belong to God, he controls weather systems, rainfall, sunshine and all that is needed for sustenance on this earth. Why is there never a mention of God's equal pleasure in another creation of life elsewhere if there is one? In the descriptions of his power, why no mention of his lordship over alien life forms and alien weather systems?

### **God's primary purpose centred in mankind on earth**

The clear reason for the origin of the creation is to glorify God (Ps 19:1; Rm 1:20). Yet within this creation God continually testifies that his purpose centres on man. If God's primary purpose is focused upon human beings within the grand scheme of a universal creation, any other humanoid life-form would be redundant. There is no point in creating a lesser species for no purpose and God never does anything without an eternal purpose in mind (Eccles 3:14). Indeed, only man is said to have had eternity set in his heart by his creation (Eccles 3:11).

### **The eternal purpose and plan of God**

Understanding God's plan in creating a race of sons is crucial to giving the Christian life purpose and hope. Without this there are more questions than answers to our existence. God is perfect, and being such chooses to fill the universe with an expression of this perfection. Having first created a spiritual order of being to do his will and worship him in heaven, he creates a physical world for mankind to demonstrate his invisible character. Man was created to be the visible, living manifestation of the Creator, revealing his glory, love, justice, patience, kindness, faithfulness and so on. This is expressly stated in Eph 3:8-11:

*To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

We are to be like God: holy, since he is holy (1 Pt 1:15-16), loving since he is loving (1 Jn 4:16) etc. so that John could even say: *as He is, so are we in this world.* (1 Jn 4:17). The purpose of redemption is to procure a people chosen by God from eternity who are changed, by the atonement of Christ, into new creatures who love God and lead godly lives. The purpose of hell is to demonstrate the wrath and justice of God. Both are eternal in scope. The struggles of our life here and now are to so mould our character that we are perfectly fitted to be the people God wants us to be for eternity:

*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. (2 Cor 4:7-11).*

So if man was created to be the demonstration of God's character in the universe, what is the point of some other race of men on another planet in the same universe? Why does the Bible repeatedly state that God 'put all his eggs in one basket', the human race, if there was another race waiting in the wings?

### **The angelic focus on earth**

It is clear that angels watch over the affairs of men on the earth as interested spectators. They are particularly focused upon the actions of believers in the church and the progress of the Gospel (Eph 3:11; 1 Pt 1:12; Lk 15:10) and this is one reason why wrong behaviour in church is a great offence (1 Cor 11:10). The church is to be a testimony to the powers above of what God is doing in its redemption and preservation. After their duties in heaven towards God, angels are pre-occupied with the earth.

Although there are long, colourful narratives of cosmic goings on involving angels, (e.g. in Revelation) there is never a mention of them going to investigate the behaviour of alien beings in another part of the universe.

### **The demonic focus on earth**

Satan is the arch-enemy of God and opposes all his works. His great desire is to ruin the testimony of God's people and spoil God's eternal purpose; although he only ever, eventually, supports this purpose in his antagonistic attempts. If there was an alien creation of God on another planet, Satan would certainly be interested in attacking this species as well. But not only do we never hear of such an attack, Satan focuses all his attention upon earthly mankind. His continual temptation of men has led to a world system which follows his corrupt character (Eph 2:2) and through which he is called, *the god of this world/age* or *the ruler of this world* (2 Cor 4:4; Jn 16:11). This does not mean that he has any rights over the earth, which belongs to God, but that he rules through the sin of wicked men who are opposed to God's law.

Satan fixes his plans on the earth because there is no other inhabited planet where he could express his wicked desires. The place of his habitation is called Tartarus, which is the domain of air surrounding the earth (2 Pt 2:4 = 'hell').<sup>1</sup> Although Satan was bound by God to this region<sup>2</sup> Satan clearly had some travelling ability before the cross. Job 1 and 2 finds him able to enter the presence of God. However, after the cross Satan was triumphed over (Col 2:15) and restricted to the atmosphere of the earth until his time of judgment. Satan is never stated to have inhabited or afflicted some other world where God's alternative creation lives happily ever after.

### **The lack of mention of aliens in the renewed heaven and earth**

The eschatological (end time) teachings of the Bible are truly cosmic and universal in their scope. The heavens are altered as well as the earth burned up and re-created (2 Pt 3:7-13). The whole universe is affected in this climactic event

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<sup>1</sup> In classical mythology, Tartarus was the deepest abyss of hades (the place of departed spirits), i.e. the lowest part of hell reserved for the worst offenders. Satan's current domain is in the aerial regions surrounding the earth from which he assails believers as the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2, the lower, denser air nearest the earth).

<sup>2</sup> Rev 12 intimates that Satan was restricted to the earth after the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. Rev 20 shows the binding of Satan to be after the cross and after he has already deceived the nations for a time, whichever view of the millennium is taken.

(Matt 24:29; Lk 21:25). If there was any human life on any other planet, it would surely be mentioned in this teaching which forms the consummation of our whole Christian existence. Yet there is no mention of such a life form at any point in the description of the winding up of the earth and time as it exists now.

### **What is the theological consensus on this matter?**

By far the majority of Christian thinkers and commentators feel that the creation of man is unique. Many historical figures (not all) did not even consider the concept of extra-terrestrial life forms. Most modern, conservative expositors would relegate the idea of aliens to the fascination of modern unbelievers with the paraphernalia of New Age ideas and science fiction.

However, a few have written obliquely on the subject, most notably Thomas Chalmers (*A Series of Discussions on the Christian Revelation Viewed in Connection with the Modern Astronomy*, New York, n.d.), John Polkinghorne (*Reason & Reality*, London, 1991) or C. S. Lewis in his science fiction novels and essays; but more specifically and recently: Paul Davis (*Are We Alone: Implications of the Discovery of Extraterrestrial Life*, London, 1995), John Jefferson Davis (*Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence and the Christian Doctrine of Redemption*, in *Science & Christian Belief*, 9.1, 1997) and Martin Thomson (*Extraterrestrial Life and the Cosmic Christ as Prototype*, Article in *The Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology*, 18:2, Autumn 2000).

Their main argument is as follows:

- Salvation is not earth-bound.
- The incarnation of Christ as a human does not limit him to only effecting the salvation of men.
- Christ was a cosmic prototype of salvation and man is only one type or image of that prototype; the priority of being lies with Christ not man.
- There could be other 'types' or images of God outside earth.
- The elect could include thus alien life-forms.<sup>3</sup>

Problems with this line of argument include:

- Scripture says absolutely nothing about this, yet it is a vitally important subject if it revolves around the doctrine of the being of Christ.
- Biblical statements on the renewed heaven and earth make no mention of these other life-forms, yet the whole, universal creation (including other worlds) is affected by the judgment (the consummation of salvation) and is widely described in scripture.
- Salvation is earth bound, rebellious angels become demons with no hope of redemption. The personal effects of salvation touch other life forms in earth's natural system, but not other worlds whether spiritual or physical.
- A principle aspect of human salvation is being joined in union with Christ. Converted man becomes a new creature (2 Cor 5:17) but this new creation is also described as 'man'. Christ is the new man in us, dwelling in our hearts (Eph 3:17, 4:24,). If alien beings were to be saved, it could not be by being

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<sup>3</sup> 'The Pauline Christology of Col 1:15-20 makes it unnecessary to postulate additional incarnations or atonements in order to conceptualise the possible reconciliation of any alienated extraterrestrials elsewhere in the universe. The once-for-all incarnation and death of Christ on the Cross has already provided the basis for such a reconciliation.' JJ Davis, *Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence*, p34.

united to Christ because they are not 'man'. As scripture states categorically that there is no salvation outside Christ, and that he is the firstborn of a new race of men only, there can be no aliens requiring salvation. There are either no aliens out there, or the aliens are (as C S Lewis postulated) in no need of moral salvation. This would be an affront to God who alone is perfect. All creative beings require his salvation. Aliens, therefore, cannot exist and this line of reasoning is false.

### **Miscellaneous scientific points**

#### *Life in the solar system*

It is widely conceded that there is no possibility for life, in almost any imaginable form, on the planets of our own solar system. They are either composed mainly of gas (as in all the planets beyond earth; e.g. Jupiter is made up of hydrogen and helium like the sun, even if it does have a solid core of iron). They are too cold (like the outer planets) or too hot (like Mercury), or have deadly atmospheres (like the carbon dioxide on Venus). Water, the vital constituent for life, has not been found on any planetary survey, although ice is likely to be present in the outer planets. We can safely assume that there are no humanoid life forms in our solar system; although speculation rages about the possibility of Europa (a moon of Jupiter) and Titan (a moon of Saturn) possessing some form of life.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Life in the galaxy*

SETI (The Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence) was established in 1960 to look for radio signals from alien civilisations. After 40 years of listening, there has been no sign of any sentient life. Surely ET would have 'phoned by now'?

Then there is the problem of other planets in the galaxy. While the profusion of stars would seem to statistically suggest that there are many planets, it appears that there are very few, if any. No other planet can be observed by earthly telescopes, the star systems are just too far away.<sup>5</sup>

In the mid 1990's, some astronomers declared that they had identified planets e.g. in the constellations: Ursa Major (the 'Plough'), Pegasus and Virgo. Various methods are used to identify potential stars, such as a noticeable wobble effect in star paths.<sup>6</sup> So far many such wobbles have been examined and these are often claimed to reveal the presence of a planetary gravitational pull. In all, by December 2000, astronomers had announced the discovery of 50 new planets circling nearby stars (called 'exoplanets'); 41 being detected in the last five years. They are all gas giants like Jupiter and most have elongated, elliptical orbits so that as they pass close to their sun any water would boil; when they move away

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<sup>4</sup> This, however, is mere speculation, largely stimulated by science fiction novels like those of Arthur C. Clarke.

<sup>5</sup> The nearest star (alpha centauri) is four light years away. One light year = 5,878,000,000,000 miles.)

<sup>6</sup> Any light from a planet could not be seen next to the intense glare of a star, so scientists search for the planetary 'tug' on a star, first this way then that. This squeezes and stretches light waves from the star, making it look slightly bluer, then redder (the 'Doppler shift'). However, it should be remembered that many matters can confuse the result: stars pulse rhythmically causing their own internal wobble, sun-spots can change the colour of stars as they rotate and spectrometers are subject to many errors, e.g. from temperature changes. The results are entirely dependent upon the software that analyses them. Some of the supposed planets are more likely to be small stars, especially the one in Virgo which is probably a brown dwarf star.

from it any water would freeze.

It must be stated that there is no proof that these wobbles are definitely caused by planets and not some other phenomenon. The most important astronomical discovery of all, and possibly the secondary cause (after God) of the galaxies themselves, is that of the gigantic black holes which feature in all galaxies; yet these phenomena were only discovered in the last few years. It is simply too early to say that minor shifts in stars prove that there are definitely other planets present. And even if there were a few, we cannot know if they are habitable, indeed most of the newly discovered 'planets' are stated to be unable to sustain life.

So even if there are millions of other planets, to be habitable they have to have the same favourable conditions of the earth to support carbon based life-forms<sup>7</sup>. Earth is uniquely fitted, by God, for the sustenance of life; indeed scientists accept that it is a combination of exceptional circumstances which guaranteed an environment able to sustain life. Arthur Custance notes that, '*So many phenomena have conspired toward the provision of this habitat that it is difficult to believe it can be accidental*'.<sup>8</sup> A few items include:

- The position of the Earth is at just the right distance from the sun to receive the proper amount of heat to support life.
- • The rotation of the Earth is exactly right, any change in the rate would make life impossible: e.g. if it were to rotate at 1/10th the present rate, all plant life would burn in the day and freeze at night.
- • Temperature variations are kept within reasonable limits due to the nearly circular orbit around the sun. Extremes are further moderated by water vapour and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which produces a greenhouse effect.
- • The Moon revolves around the earth causing tides. If the moon was located at 1/5th of its present distance, the continents would be submerged twice a day.
- • The thickness of the earth's crust and the depth of the oceans are carefully designed. Increases of only a few feet would drastically alter the absorption of oxygen and carbon dioxide so that plant and animal life couldn't exist.
- • The axis is tilted at 23 degrees, this combined with the earth's orbit produces the seasons which are vital for food production.
- • The ozone Layer shields us from lethal ultra violet radiation.

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<sup>7</sup> Scientists consider carbon to be necessary to life as it is such a versatile chemical. It makes many different and complex compounds and it's the fourth most abundant element in the universe. Carbon compounds literally litter the cosmos, but in far less quantities than hydrogen and helium (see later).

<sup>8</sup> Arthur C Custance, *Science and Faith*, p35, Zondervan, Grand Rapids (1978). Fred Hoyle, the famous astronomer and novelist emphatically stated that the earth and the life on it was made of '*the wrong stuff*' i.e. it was cosmically rare (see Custance, p36). Hydrogen and helium are common in the universe and form the basis of planets and suns, other elements occur in less than 1% of the total universal mass (in fact, 0.001%); but on earth hydrogen and helium make the same contribution as highly complex atoms like iron, calcium, silica, magnesium and aluminium. Hoyle avers that material torn from the sun could not have made planets like earth. The stars and interstellar gas are not composed of material like earth. Even the carbon which we are made from is extremely rare in the universe. Iron and other building materials, as well as oxygen are little more than trace elements in the cosmos. Dennis Sciama considered that the earth, in cosmic terms, was a weak impurity speck.

- • The atmosphere protects the earth from 20 million meteorites that enter each day at speeds of 30 miles per second.
- • The earth is the perfect size and mass to support life, affording a careful balance between gravitational forces (which hold water and atmosphere) and atmospheric pressure.
- • The balance of nitrogen (78%) and oxygen (20%) in the air is critical for all life forms.
- • The magnetic field of the earth protects us from cosmic radiation.
- • The earth has a stable orbit and receives a stable amount of energy from the sun.
- • Jupiter is now found to be a catcher of comets and large asteroids, protecting the earth from being hit.
- • Rarity of nearby supernova stars: the universe has many such exploding stars, but none of them are near us.
- • The earth has just the right mix of metals for life to exist.
- • The moon keeps the earth's tilt stable. It is the largest moon in the solar system.
- • There is a bountiful supply of water, the key substance to support life. Water exists in liquid form. A very small change either closer or further away from the sun would make the oceans boil or freeze.

For life to exist, all these conditions (and more) would need to exist on any newly discovered planet. Recently discovered 'planets' are too close to their sun or have other unfavourable conditions to support life.

### **What about recent evidence of life from other planets?**

Very recently some unknown bacteria were found in the filter of a high balloon ten miles above the earth, but suggestions that these are alien are premature. It is more likely that the organisms were lifted to great heights in the skies which multiplied and adapted to extreme conditions rather than being alien spores which fell from a passing comet. Anything falling through the earth's atmosphere would be burned up by intense friction-generated heat.

The media repeatedly run stories on life arriving, emerging or originating from Mars. Apart from the lack of any evidence, the problem is that it is so cold on Mars that any biological functions would be very slow. Any proposed evolution of life would take longer than it is supposed to on earth, which is already too long for evolutionary theory.<sup>9</sup> As for the rock from Mars which contained 'life' - the much hyped rock had no life on it at all, just marks made by geological processes which looked like basic organisms, described by some as being formed by '*bacterially precipitated minerals*'.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the supposed evidence of life on the Antarctic meteorite was due to contamination by earth's own materials and organisms. The result of the analysis by the *Scripps Institution of Oceanography*

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<sup>9</sup> Evolutionists are already troubled that there was not enough time for life to evolve on the earth. For instance, the supposed evolution of the horse requires over 6 billion years but the earth is stated (by evolutionists) to only be 4½ billion years old.

<sup>10</sup> Detailed analysis showed that the rock contained carbonate materials and a globule which superficially resembled a bacterium (it also resembled dried out mud). There was no life, only circumstantial evidence. If it had been a bacterium, it would have been smaller than any known, and too small to have a nucleus, therefore, unable to reproduce. Neither was the rock definitely from Mars, in fact its mineral composition does not match that of 11 other Martian meteorites.

revealed that any 'signs of life' had a terrestrial origin.

As to life originating in the stars, the problem is that the long interstellar travel time would subject any life form to intense radiation and destroy its DNA.

Even if some basic form of life were found in space, such as bacteria, this would be no proof that intelligent, humanoid beings exist elsewhere.

The opinion of some of the most informed scientists like Carl Sagan and G. G. Simpson was that the chances of finding life (let alone intelligent life) elsewhere in the universe was '*Effectively nil*'.<sup>11</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Taking everything into consideration, it is my belief that we can say, with reasonable certainty, that there is no other humanoid type of life form on any other planets in the universe. Whatever the case, we have sufficient work to do on earth and enough subjects to study with profit, to prevent us wasting much time on such speculative matters as the possibility of alien life forms.

As the world rushes in its end time decline, it will become more preoccupied with all sorts of novel and fantastic ideas, some of which will develop into scientific abominations, like cloning (a man-pig has already been cloned which survived for nearly a week). This thirst for novelty helps to lead society into a distrust of old moral paths and a decline in genuine, constructive, worthwhile learning. As the church becomes more worldly, it too follows in this craving for novelty at the expense of understanding solid truth; but it is only the truth which sets us free (Jn 8:32) not a preoccupation with fantasy.

Many modern Christians could tell you more about the characters in the latest TV soaps than they could about the prophets or Jesus' disciples. The loss of Biblical understanding is having the most crippling effect upon the church and weakening its members. Truth builds up, novel speculation is (at best) a relaxing recreational activity. Let's not follow the world in this current focus upon unimportant issues and begin again to understand what God requires of us, that we may provoke one another to love and good works (Heb 10:24), which in itself follows holding fast to sound teaching (Heb 10:23).

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<sup>11</sup> G G Simpson, *Evolution and Hominization*, Ed. G Kurth; Fischer, Stuttgart 2nd ed. (1968), p15.