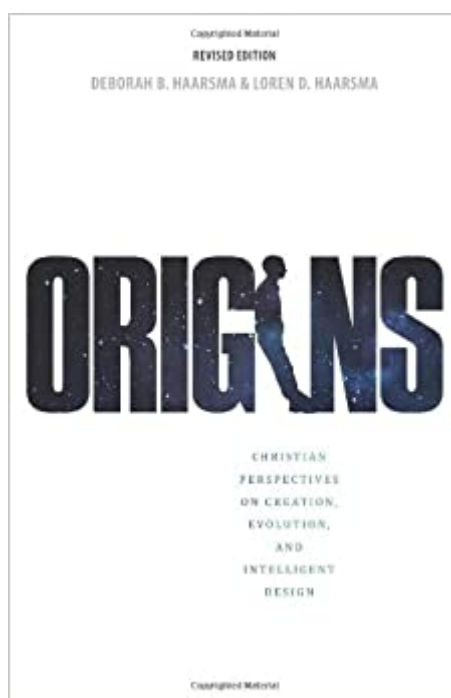


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# Origins: Christian Perspectives On Creation, Evolution, And Intelligent Design



## Synopsis

When it comes to the history of the universe, many believe that science and faith are mutually exclusive. But in this revised version of *Origins*, physics professors Loren and Deborah Haarsma explore what God's Word and God's world teach us about creation, evolution, and intelligent design. Clearly explaining the science, the authors focus on areas where Christians agree. They also present the strengths and weaknesses of areas where Christians differ. *Origins* helps you develop a deeper understanding of the origins of the universe and sort out your own views on faith and science. Small group discussion questions follow each chapter. A companion website provides resources for further study.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The Haarsmas approach this very controversial topic with a perfect mix of scientifically and biblically accurate information, theological depth, intellectual modesty, and a charitable spirit toward views they do not share themselves. Pastors, laypeople, and scientists will all find much to value here." --Edward B. Davis, Distinguished Professor of the History of Science, Messiah College

"Origins, Revised presents a perspective on origins of the universe, the earth, life on earth, and of humans that is faithful to the Bible and to science. In an easy to understand style of writing, the Haarsmas' provide a valuable resource for schools, churches, and anyone interested in origins." --Randall D Isaac, Executive Director, American Scientific Affiliation

"The Haarsmas provide a comprehensive perspective on science and its challenges viewed through a lens of firm belief in

God, which illuminates the issues and offers straight ways forward. Christians will be encouraged by their faithful and convincing approach." --Daniel M. Harrell, PhD, Senior minister of Colonial Church, Edina, Minnesota, Author of "Nature's Witness: How Evolution Can Inspire Faith""Origins, Revised presents a perspective on origins of the universe, the earth, life on earth, and of humans that is faithful to the Bible and to science. In an easy to understand style of writing, the Haarsmas' provide a valuable resource for schools, churches, and anyone interested in origins." --Randall D Isaac, Executive Director, American Scientific Affiliation"The Haarsmas provide a comprehensive perspective on science and its challenges viewed through a lens of firm belief in God, which illuminates the issues and offers straight ways forward. Christians will be encouraged by their faithful and convincing approach." --Daniel M. Harrell, PhD, Senior minister of Colonial Church, Edina, Minnesota, Author of "Nature's Witness: How Evolution Can Inspire Faith"

When it comes to the history of the universe, many believe that science and faith are mutually exclusive. But in this revised version of Origins, physics professors Loren and Deborah Haarsma explore what God's Word and God's world teach us about creation, evolution, and intelligent design. Clearly explaining the science, the authors focus on areas where Christians agree. They also present the strengths and weaknesses of areas where Christians differ. Origins helps you develop a deeper understanding of the origins of the universe and sort out your own views on faith and science. Small group discussion questions follow each chapter.

A great book that is an excellent starting point for further research and discussion, or a broad enough overview if you want to stop there. To respond to some other reviews, if you are looking to this book to give you all the answers, you will be disappointed. But if you look to almost ANY one book for all the answers you'll be disappointed. The authors consider multiple views, provide additional resources for further study, and provide questions for further consideration. I read this book for a class and then had the privileged to hear one of the authors speak. Anyone looking for more information should check out [biologos.org](http://biologos.org)

This has to be one of the best books I have ever read on the topic. The authors' approach is very irenic, non polemical, conducive to learning and appreciative of different views. I also found the websites the authors made reference to, to be very helpful.

The authors do a great job of explaining complicated issues regarding science and God in simple,

concise language. They use clear examples and have reference to further, more in-depth, examples and discussion on their free website. The 6 video series is a briefer overview and serves great as a discussion starter for classes. While the authors do shy away from expressing their own views, they explain the range of views held by Christians and briefly discuss the strengths and weaknesses each. Overall, I found this book very useful for everyone from junior high students to those of us with advanced degrees who want an overview of the topic.

If you have time to read just one or two books on the subject of the intersection of Christian faith and science (particularly biological evolution), I would suggest this one, or *Creation or Evolution: Do We Have to Choose?* by Denis Alexander. I understand that this book is used as a textbook at many Christian schools. Both authors of this book are professors at Calvin College. The authors use clear, non-confrontational language to describe the many varied positions that Christians have taken on creation over the centuries, along with the history of each approach. For each one, they guide the reader through an examination of his or her own beliefs and whether they are truly founded on what the Bible teaches, or what various schools of Christian religion teach. God is active in the world and in our lives. Sometimes He works in a miraculous way and sometimes He chooses not to. Can He cause events to occur without breaking the laws of physics? Of course! Almost a thousand years ago, St. Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica* made the distinction between God acting as a first cause and God working through secondary causes in nature. The primary cause (of everything!) is God. God certainly can invoke a miracle directly as a primary cause. But when God caused the earth and waters to bring forth life in Genesis chapter 1, does the diversification of this life into thousands of species on Earth require the miraculous, sudden appearance of each one? Charles Darwin wrote, “To my mind, it accords better with what we know of the laws impressed on matter by the Creator, that the production and extinction of the past and present inhabitants of the world should have been due to secondary causes. Even today, I believe that God brings about truly miraculous healings and other events, and that these miracles serve the same purpose that they did in Biblical times – to make known the authority of God. But when God chooses to work through the laws of nature, that action is a secondary cause. God can also bring about a rainstorm, a healing, or a subtle change of events without resorting to a miracle. Some physicists suggest that God accomplishes this in a way that is completely undetectable by working at the quantum level. As Christians, we understand that God is sovereign over all events. God is not only the primary cause, but also the secondary cause of every natural activity in the universe. This is God’s providence.

While both authors are scientists, they have here stretched across many scientific disciplines, and it occasionally shows to the detriment of their arguments, though not fatally. They do a reasonably good job of surveying and succinctly describing the various viewpoints re the many topics covered. Both scientists and theologians will be disappointed in the superficial nature of the discussion at times, but it serves all well to recall that the arguments need not be in complete depth, but only adequate for basic understanding. All, and perhaps esp. young-earth creationists (on the basis of the strong arguments recognized in favor of an old earth and older universe), will be annoyed at times, but a calm and considerate reader will recognize that the authors have done their best to be fair and reasonable to all positions. Recommended for all educational leaders in the church.

The book was new, just as advertised. I thought this book was fairly objective and avoided dogmatism, given that the authors do subscribe to theistic evolution.

Interesting read on science and Faith and how they can complement each other in explaining our origin as a species.

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