



*The Dynamics  
of Creature  
and Creation*

*Geoffrey C. Bingham*



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# **The Dynamics of Creature and Creation**

***Geoffrey Bingham***

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## **1. Introduction: Title and Thesis**

The title could be, “The Dynamics of God, Man and Creation”. Our thesis:– Man and creation are both dynamic (a) in relationship with God, and (b) in relationship with one another. By dynamic we mean ‘having power, being actional, being functional, working.’

For purposes of discussion we see man as part of creation, but use the terms ‘man’ and ‘nature’ to distinguish them.

## **2. God is Dynamical**

This is an axiom, a presupposition of all theology. However, the Biblical idea of God being power – ‘The Lord God Omnipotent’ – is not that of a deity having vast resources of power, but of God being true power itself (Himself).

God does not use power. He is power. He never acts powerfully apart from His true nature. He always acts consistently with that, ie. Himself.

Biblical references to His power are Psalm 62: 11, I Chronicles 29:11–12, Psalm 66:7, 110:3, Exodus 9: 16, II Chronicles 25:8, Psalm 147:5. Exodus 9:15, Nahum 1:2 refer to the use of power.

God’s power is shown in (a) creation: Jeremiah 10:11–12, (b) providence: Hebrews 1:3, (c) redemption: Romans 1:16–17, I Corinthians 1:18, 24, (d) the ultimate renewal of all things: Revelation 21: 1– 5.

God being dynamical it follows that all He is and does is dynamic. Creation – man and nature – are to be seen thus. God’s power and authority are inseparable.

### 3. Creation is Dynamic

- (i) Creation is constituted of (a) supernatural powers such as living creatures, seraphim, cherubim, orders of angels, other celestial beings; (b) man; (c) the animal kingdom; (d) the vegetable kingdom, and (e) the mineral kingdom. They all constitute a unitary universe. See II Corinthians 4: 18, Colossians 1:16 – ‘things visible and invisible’.
- (ii) Creation is of a fixed order but this order must not be seen to be static. See Psalm 148: Jeremiah 31: 35–36. Creation is wholly dynamic within this fixed order.
- (iii) Creation comes into being in a certain order (Genesis ch. 1). Each succeeding part of creation is ‘good’ (complete, useful), and all parts come together as ‘very good’, ie. functional (Genesis 1:31).
- (iv) All creation is ‘very good’, ie. nothing is evil, nothing wrong. Nothing is (of itself) unclean. All things are useful: I Timothy 4:4, 6:17, Romans 14:14, Genesis 1:31, Ecclesiastes 3:11. See also Acts 14:15, Psalm 33:5, I Corinthians 10:26.
- (v) All creation is purposeful (Proverbs 16:4, Isaiah 43:7, 21, Romans 11:36, Revelation 4:9). God has a purpose for all creation (Ephesians 2: 9–14).
- (vi) Creation is discrete, ie. ‘each according to its kind’ (Genesis 1), means that that there is a fixed order. Uniqueness is present in man.
- (vii) Creation is a continuing matter. Creation is going on all the time (Isaiah 44: 24, cf. Psalm 139: 13–18).
- (viii) Creation is unitary, ie. ‘the all things’ (OT ‘all thy works’) are all of one piece. They would not otherwise be truly functional and be purposive.
- (ix) All creation is true. The Creator is trustworthy, therefore so is the creation as made by Him (I Peter 4: 19). It is created by the word of God, ie. the word of truth, the word of love (Psalm 148: 5–6, Hebrews 11:3, Psalm 33:6, 9, cf. John 1:1–3, Hebrews 1:2–3).

- (x) Within and between the orders of creation there is relationship and dynamisms which are beyond man’s calculation (Ecclesiastes 3: 11). Job who thinks he knows enough is shown otherwise (Job chs. 38–41). Something of the order of creation can be seen in Psalm 104.
- (xi) Creation has a *telos*; is always a forward-moving thing. Especially in the New Testament do we see God has a *telos* for creation, ie. its goal and completion. So Ephesians 1: 3–14. We will see that the goal God has for creation is a unitary one (Ephesians 1:9–10, 4:10/1:23, Colossians 1:20, cf. 3:14). All things will be restored to their creational unity. (This argument is deduced from redemption, and is not part of the original order. Even so it indicates the original order. )
- (xii) Creation is a moral–physical matter. We mean that the moral order and the physical order are intimately related in nature and function. Isaiah 32: 9–10 shows this clearly. We have seen in Psalm 33:5 that ‘the earth is filled with the steadfast love of the Lord’, ie. creation is a love–thing. The renewal of creation (another argument from redemption) shows the link between the moral and the physical (Isaiah 11; 65: 17–25, 66: 22–23, Romans 8: 18–25, Revelation 21:1 – 22: 5).

### 4. God and the Dynamic Creation

We have seen that creation is wholly contingent upon God.

- (i) He creates it by His word. It has no essential nature of its own. It is not self–deriving or self–perpetuating (Hebrews 1:2–3, Colossians 1:16, I Corinthians 8:6, Hebrews 2:10, Revelation 4:11, John 1: 1–3).
- (ii) He sustains creation by His word (Hebrews 1: 3, Colossians 1: 16). He cares for it daily (Psalm 104,

Matthew 6: 25–34). It is clear that man primarily is the concern of God, but creation is wholly cared for by Him.

- (iii) Creation is the work of the Triune God, the Father initiating creation, the Son mediating creation, and the Spirit being the life-agent of creation (Psalm 33:6, 9, 148:5–6, Hebrews 11:3, 1:2–3, John 1:1–3, Colossians 1:15–17, Psalm 104:30, Job 26:13, 33:4, Ezekiel 37:1–14, II Corinthians 3:6, cf. Romans 8:4, 18–25). Providence or the upholding of creation is also a Trinitarian action.
- (iv) Job chapters 38–41 shows the dynamic nature of creation as brought forth by God, and as cared for by Him (Jeremiah 31:36, Psalm 89:36–37). This care is shown in using and maintaining the moral order of the creation (Psalm 78: 25–26, 65: 9–13, Isaiah 40: 26, 44: 24, 45: 12).
- (v) I Peter 4:19 is important ('trust your souls to a *faithful* Creator') for it means God is not careless of His creation. Isaiah 63:16 presupposes that God is Father, and that He is 'Redeemer from all eternity!', ie. God is inherently the One who cares for His entire creation, and will redeem it from any attacks it may sustain.
- (vi) God's intimate relationship with the creation is shown by the fact that it shows forth the nature of God (Romans 1: 19–20, Psalm 19: 1–3). In some ways this is a mystery since man rarely, if ever, sees God through the creation. However, the relationship must be close and creation dynamic in order to be the revelation of God.
- (vii) God shows His relationship with creation by planning its *telos* and bringing that *telos* to pass. Romans 8:18–25 (cf. I Corinthians 2:6–10, II Corinthians 4: 16–18, Revelation 21: 1–5) shows that creation will ultimately fulfil the purpose God has for it in its free worship and action.

## 5. God and the Human Dynamic

- (i) Man, with the rest of creation, is contingent upon God for his creation. He is made of the dust of the earth, and that is all he is essentially. The dust was made out of nothing, so man – of himself – is nothing. Yet God has made Him something (Genesis 1: 26f., Psalm 8:3ff., I Corinthians 11:7) and for something (Genesis 1: 28ff., Isaiah 43: 6–7, Ephesians 1: 9–14).
- (ii) Man – as all creation – is dependent upon God for life, breath, and everything, for he only lives, moves and has his being in God (Acts 17: 24–28).
- (iii) Man's being, made in the image of God, correlates with God as Father (man the son), as Creator (man the creature), and as King (man the subject and servant). His personal being, as also his general identity, is dependent upon God. Man has nothing which he has not received (I Corinthians 4: 7). He is a created gift of God, and possesses the many gifts he has been given.
- (iv) Man is part of creation. He is dust. God has breathed into him the breath of life (Genesis 2:7, Psalm 104:30, Job 33:4, 27:3). He is not above creation, although he has been put over it (Genesis 1: 28, Psalm 8:3f.).
- (v) Man is dynamic creature. He has eternal connotation (Ecclesiastes 3: 11) but is not *of himself* immortal. His immortality is not inherent, but a gift of God.
- (vi) Man has no moral dynamic of himself. His moral dynamic lies in his dependency upon God and his union with Him. Apart from God he is weak and is essentially deprived, ie. thirsty (Psalm 42: If.).
- (vii) Man may appear to be dynamic in his actions, but the *telos* of them is dependent upon God. Jeremiah 10:23 and Psalm 87:7 both show the source and direction of a man's life. God is the Fountain (Jeremiah 2: 13) and man the derived fountain (Proverbs 4: 23).
- (viii) Man not only has his being in God, but also

his *telos*. Man is purposeful (Proverbs 16:4), God having created him for it (Isaiah 43:6–7). As God directs his steps (Jeremiah 10:23, Proverbs 16: 9) man is fulfilled. God’s *telos* for him is glorification and the elements which pertain to this (eg. mankind becomes a kingly priesthood or priestly kingdom, reigning for ever: Revelation 5: 10, 21: 5).

(ix) Like nature, man needs to be in union with God to be truly himself. He is then dynamic in the useful, functional, purposive and teleological way. He is thus fulfilling his ontology.

## 6. Man, Nature and their Dynamics

- (i) Genesis chapters 1 and 2 show God’s *modes* in creating nature and man. Creation is carried out in phases and periods. Each creature is ‘after its own kind’, ie. unique as species, and with a fixed order of reproduction. Man is the peak or apex of this creation. Only then are all things ‘very good’, ie. truly functional, purposeful, forward–moving, interrelated.
- (ii) Man has a defined relationship with nature. Genesis 1:28f. and 9:1f. (cf. Psalm 8:3f.) show that man is over the creation, and responsible to populate it, having lordship over it, but in that way which is best for it. This relationship is not an optional one. It is both responsible (given by mandate) and functional, i.e. true creation cannot operate properly apart from it.
- (iii) Man’s relationship with nature is shown in the naming of the creatures (Genesis 2: 18–24). God formed the beasts: man was called upon to name them, ie. to ponder and discern their identity and nominate them accordingly. This showed both his lordly and prophetic nature. It showed that man is inseparably linked with these fellow–creatures.
- (iv) We have seen that man’s moral nature relates to the nature of creation. This is seen in passages which show that evil desolates a land, and godliness

brings literal fruitfulness. It is linked with the ultimate liberation of man from evil (Romans 8: 18–25), thus showing the inherent relationship of man to nature.

- (v) The world (universe, eternity) has been put into man’s heart (Ecclesiastes 3: 11) and this doubtless when God breathed into man the breath of life (Genesis 2: 7, cf. Psalm 87: 7). Man then is concerned with the world. He cannot escape nature. At the same time he must not give it worth beyond its true functional situation (Romans 1:25, cf. Exodus 20:1f.).
- (vi) Both man and nature are contingent upon God, but in a secondary sense nature is contingent (for its welfare and being) upon man, the appointed lord of it. Man cannot therefore live to himself either as a person or race. He must consider nature which is under his lordship, tutelage, and care (cf. Genesis 2: 15).

## 7. The Emergent Perverse Dynamic: The Angelic and Human Fall

When we see that creation is unitary by creational origin and nature – God being love and Creator – then we see that this structure must not be disturbed. All things within creation must be congruent with the Creator and His pattern for creation.

The celestial and terrestrial (heavenly and earthly) elements of creation are unitary both as to function and purpose. Things unseen are no less real than things seen. They are all one, though they differ in their operative functions. Likewise all creatures are one – rightly understood.

The fall of angelic powers arose from rebellion against the order of creation given by God. Passages such as Revelation 12:1–10, Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28 give hints of rebellion. Satan is depicted in Job chapters 2 and 3 as opposed to God. In the New Testament he

is seen as seeking to deceive men and nations, and has a host of fellow-creatures who try to subvert man from God. He has a system of his own.

Satanic powers seek to alter the fixed order of the universe, to use its creatures, elements and gifts to effect rebellion against God. In Genesis 3 we see the seduction of Eve and the effective temptation of man by the serpent. As a result mankind comes under the curse. The earth is affected by this. This would be when the creation was 'subjected to futility [emptiness, pointlessness, vanity], *not of its own will* but by the will of him who subjected it in hope'. Thus futility is then described as 'its bondage to decay'. Nature then was changed in some sense, although not essentially. (See Romans 8:18-25, keeping in mind man's union-link with nature: man falls, creation 'falls'.)

We can now analyse the perverse dynamics of man and creation: –

- (i) Man is now evil. In defiance of Jeremiah 10: 23 (cf. Psalm 87: 7) man plots his own path of life, independently of God.
- (ii) Man does not think he is evil. In accordance with Genesis 3: 5, 22 man assumes he knows what is good and what is evil. He does not need God to show him this.
- (iii) Man's evil affects nature. It affects his internal relationships. Man and woman, instead of being 'one flesh' (one being: united, unitary), are now two entities. The 'man and woman problem' has now arisen.
- (iv) The Fall has affected family relationships, so that internal family relationships are disturbed, eg. Cain and Abel.
- (v) Man deliberately departs from the creational mandate and living norm. Genesis 11:4 shows man denying that mandate, seeking to establish his autonomy.
- (vi) Man, at this point, is depicted as being so competent that 'there is nothing he will not be able to

do' (Genesis 11:1-9).

- (vii) Man has departed from true nature. In that sense he has departed from the grace of creation. He sees nature, God and himself from a false vantage point. He is forced to do this. Hence he 'worships and serves the creation rather than the Creator', for he has 'exchanged the truth of God for a lie'. Man lives only in the lie (Romans 1: 18-32).
- (viii) Man is still in the image of God. 'The image of God in man is irreducible but reversible' (M.G. Klime, *New Bible Dictionary*. London: IVP, 1970). Man then is dynamic, but in a perverse way. Rebellious earthly and heavenly creatures are all dynamic, but perversely.
- (ix) Ephesians 2:1-3 (cf. I John 5: 19, II Timothy 2:26, John 8:44) depicts man as under the power of Satan, forced to follow him and his 'lifestyle'. Verse 2 speaks of Satan 'now at work in the children of disobedience'. In Philippians 2: 12-13 believers are exhorted to work out their salvation, 'for God is at work in you,' in 'energising within you'. This can be either (a) man is given direction by Satan or God, or (b) man is given energy (power) by Satan or God. Man then is never alone in any evil he may perform, just as, creationally, he is never alone in any good he would perform.
- (x) Fallen man is able to sin, but incapable of doing actual good. This is seen by Romans 3: 10-12. Romans 5:6 speaks of man being totally weak, ie. in regard to (a) doing good, and (b) wanting or achieving salvation. Man is utterly helpless. This accords with Romans 7: 18, 'Nothing good dwells in me, that is in my flesh'. Man then can be dynamic in evil, but is helpless in good. Note:– Man may do what we call 'relative good', but not actual good. Cf. 'A weed is a plant out of place.'
- (xi) Man, as we have seen, has adversely affected creation. Being evil he does not seek the true welfare of creation. His 'naming' is the giving of 'other names'. This springs from man's ideas of

‘good’ and ‘evil’. Good is what man thinks he gets, and not what he gives. *Evil*, in man’s thinking, is that which does not serve him.

(xii) Man then is a disoriented creature, using his natural gifts selfishly, and not really being a man, but is a wayward creature, an abdicated person, an erstwhile son, creature and servant, thus denying his essential self, and the rich union he could have with God and nature.

## 8. God, Man, Nature and Grace

- (i) Redemption is not a calculated expedient to meet a (bad) contingency, but God’s plan which preceded creation. It was His plan for creation. Isaiah 63:16 shows that Redeemerhood is inherent in Fatherhood. This is also true (naturally enough) on the human plane. See II Timothy 1:9, I Corinthians 2:6f; Ephesians 1:3:8, I Peter 1:18–20. Ephesians 1:11 and 3:11 show that God works everything according to (the counsel of) His own will.
- (ii) Redemption is not calculated only to ransom man from evil, to remove the penalty and guilt of sin, but to restore man to his true self, and take him on to glorification. This action of God is not inherent in nature, but is the pure grace of God.
- (iii) Redemption is understandable in the light of I Peter 4: 19. For God to be a faithful Creator, He would also be Redeemer. He is not forced to be Redeemer. in the nature of things grace must be free, ie. unforced. Yet grace is not only not inconsistent with God’s attributes of righteousness, truth, goodness, and holiness, but with love it is consistent with all these. It is – marvellously enough – the very expression of them. Creation then was with a view to the fall and the revelation of the grace of God (Ephes. 1: 5–8, 2: 7), by which God achieves and ensures the unity in which (and for which) creation was brought into being.

- (iv) The Son who comes as Jesus the Messiah is truly man, being the paradigm of true man. He not only reveals the nature of God (as Father, King, Redeemer and Creator) but also the nature of (true) man. He fights the forces which seek to fissiparate creation (nature and man), and defeats them, thus laying open the path to ‘man’s restoration. Man then is in union with God, with nature, and with himself.
- (v) It is creative, redeeming, renewing love at the Cross which gets its (planned) opportunity to (a) destroy evil, (b) liberate man, (c) unite man to man, as man to God, (d) reconcile all things in the universe (man to man, to God, to nature, nature to man), and finally recreate (renew) all things (see Colossians 1: 22, 3:14, Colossians 3:9–10, Ephesians 4:20–24).
- (vi) The ultimate renewal of all things is eschatological at the end time. Prior to this and leading up to it is the judgemental and overcoming work of Christ, the True and Faithful Witness. I Corinthians 15:24–28 is a précis of all Revelation, especially chapters 5–22. The reconciliation of all things requires the judgement and defeat of evil, the purging of impurity from all creation, and then the total renewal of all things. The dynamic for this is the dynamic of the Atonement (the Cross, Resurrection and Ascension).
- (vii) The ultimate renewal of all things gives man his dynamic hope which is also the power for present action, as man is energised by the Father (Philippians 2: 12–13), led by the Spirit (Romans 8: 14–15, Galatians 5: 16–26), and directed under the Lordship of Christ (II Corinthians 4:5, Romans 10:9, 14:7–9, Revelation 5:1ff; 19:15f.):
- (viii) The former principles obtain – as at creation – that man is still a contingent creature. Romans 7: 13–25 shows that even redeemed man has no power of himself to do good. Romans 8 shows us that man needs the Spirit to empower him to good works, and to living his true life. Ephesians 6:10–18 shows that this new life of man is contested fiercely by evil powers. Redeemed man is always open to pride (I

Timothy 3:6–7, cf. II Timothy 2:24–26, II Corinthians 12:20ff.). Man needs to know his weakness in order to apply to the grace of God. Man is strongest in his weakness.

- (ix) The positive side of man's dynamic works is the motivation of love (II Corinthians 5: 14, John 14: 15, cf. I John 4: 19, I John 4:9). Everything must be done in love (I Corinthians 16: 14), for even doing things by faith is not enough (I Corinthians 13:3, Galatians 5:6). Faith, hope, and love all work together. The power for action must lie in a number of things: (a) the power which the Spirit brings (Acts 1:8, cf. Romans 5:5ff., I Thessalonians 1:5, I Corinthians 2: 1–5); (b) the natural power that lies in the image of God as in man as man is. We mean operations in and through that image are now reversed and he is congruous with his true self. We must keep seeing that man has no power of himself, but only in union with God, but then *he is not truly man apart from union with God*; hence the true man is dynamic.
- (x) Man, renewed and in union with God, now relates to nature in the [creations] way. God loves the world: so does man. He enjoys the earth and its fruits (I Timothy 4:4, 6:17, I Corinthians 10:26, 31 *passim*, Acts 14: 15) but does not exploit them. He renews his partnership in the mandate of God (Genesis 1:28f., 9:1f.).

## 9. God, Man and the Renewed Creation

- (i) The renewed creation in which renewed man dwells is the *telos* God has set prior to the creation itself. No matter how drastic the rebellion of men and angels, all things have been moving towards this consummation. The statements of God's sovereignty in Isaiah 46:8–13, 48:3–8, 43:6–7, Ephesians 1:3–14, and 3:11 all show that what God had planned He determined to fulfil. The advent of sin did not alter this fact, and the Cross in truth was part of the plan

(Acts 2:23–24).

- (ii) The nature of the *telos* we have seen in Isaiah 11, 65, 66, and Revelation 21 (amongst other scriptures). In these passages we note the serenity of the new heavens and earth. Nature and man and all angelic creatures live in a rich and beautiful harmony. All death is abolished (II Timothy 1: 10, I Corinthians 15: 26, 55–56), and with it suffering and pain. This is the true nature of creation.
- (iii) What we need to note is (a) there could be no such *telos* without grace; (b) it becomes a true *telos* because of suffering love (II Corinthians 3:18 = II Corinthians 4: 16–18, Romans 8: 17–25), for it is by such suffering love that man grows in stages of maturity and glorification, for then he becomes like God. Man needs such because he is to emerge as a son (Revelation 21: 7), as a priestly community (Revelation 1:6, 5:10, 22:4–5), worshipping God (I Peter 2:5, 9–10, Revelation 7: 14f. ) and in royal command of the creation (Revelation 1:6, 5: 10, 22: 5).
- (iv) Creation is to be beautifully free, ie. man and nature. This is seen from Romans 8: 18–25. *The glorious liberty of the sons of God is also the glorious liberty of all nature.* This proves the union between man and nature. This liberty, sonship, new creaturehood, priestly and prophetic community all speaks of the operation of new dynamics within eternity.

## 10. The Current Process and Progress in the Acts of God

When we compare the creation untarnished by the rebellion of angels and the sin of man we see how perfect it was. When we realise that this creation was intended to be glorified, and so made functional for the uses of eternity, then we see how important is the redemption that renews man and nature.

We need to see that history is both processive and

progressive. We might think it to be otherwise. Faith, however, sees what evades human sight. Biblically we can see that:-

- (i) All things will be unified in Christ, in who, by creation, they were initially one (Ephesians 1:9-10, cf. Colossians 1:15-17, John 1:1-3).
- (ii) All things will be filled up by Christ. Romans 8:20 shows them as being subjected to emptiness. Christ will fill them, doubtless with his being and his love (Ephesians 1:23 *passim*, 4: 10). They will then be substantial.
- (iii) All things will be reconciled through the dynamic love of the Cross (Colossians 1: 19-21, cf. II Corinthians 5: 19- 21).
- (iv) All things will be harmonised by love (Colossians 3: 14).

Note that unifying, filling, reconciling and harmonising are all the one thing, and achieve the true *telos*.

What we now have to see is that Christ unifies all things by means of his church. Also he fills all things by the fulness he has given to his church. They are the objects and means (both) of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:20 + Colossians 1: 21). It is the ministry of love in the church through the Father, the Son and the Spirit that – so to speak – the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, the Sanctuary of God is built. Love edifies, that is it builds (I Corinthians 8:1, Ephesians 4:10-16, Romans 14:15, 19, cf. 15:1-3, I Corinthians 13). It is building *something*, and as we are fellow-workers (builders) with God (I Corinthians 3: 9) then we must be building something, and something which lasts.

Love then is the true dynamic of, and for, building. Nothing that it builds is lost. Whilst God is fashioning the Holy City, so are His people – in love. They do not see the process, nor estimate the progress, but it is happening. The judgements in the Revelation are not contrary to the building, but, rather, essential to its progress. They, too, are

part of the process. Love destroys that which is evil, and builds that which is good.

When the consummation has taken place, when all things are made substantial by unification, filling, reconciliation, and harmonising, then the true dynamics of God, man, and creation will be seen. Then, too, the ardent and glorious worship of creation – men, celestial creatures, and indeed all nature – will arise in ceaseless adoration and service. In this will be seen the true and eternal nature of all things.