

Ask the beasts and they will teach you;  
the birds of the air, and they will tell you;  
ask the plants of the earth and they will teach you;  
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.  
Who among these does not know  
that the hand of the Lord has done this?  
In his hand is the life of every living thing,  
and the breath of every human being. (Job 12:7-10)

- I. The dilemma: a missing leg of the stool  
dominion, dualism, natural-supernatural division
- II. Scientific knowledge: descent with modification / evolution - the tree of life
- III. Theological wisdom: creation  
*creatio originalis, creatio continua, creatio nova*

And in this [Christ] showed me something small, no bigger than a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed to me, and it was as round as a ball. I looked at it with the eye of my understanding and thought: What can this be? I was amazed that it could last, for I thought that because of its littleness it would suddenly have fallen into nothing. And I was answered in my understanding: It lasts and always will, because God loves it; and thus everything has being through the love of God.  
~ Julian of Norwich, *Showings*

Continuous creation: what is needed is a robust pneumatology. The Holy Spirit, Giver of life, dwells in all creatures, including plants and animals, vivifying their life, empowering their action, grieving their suffering and death, and promising them a blessed future. Think wind, fire, water. Think Wisdom. Think "God is love" (1 Jn 4:16).

The Creator "makes all things and keeps them in existence from moment to moment ~ not just like a sculptor, who makes a statue and leaves it alone, but like a singer who keeps her song in existence at all times."  
~ Herbert McCabe, *God, Christ and Us*

I, the highest and fiery power, have kindled every living spark and I have breathed out nothing that can die. ... I flame above the beauty of the fields; I shine in the waters; in the sun, the moon and the stars, I burn. And by means of the airy wind, I stir everything into quickness with a certain invisible life which sustains all. ... I, the fiery power, lie hidden in these things and they blaze from me.  
~ Hildegard of Bingen: *Mystical Writings*

God is in all things; not, indeed, as part of their essence, nor as an accident, but as an agent is present to that upon which it works. ... Now since God's very essence is being, created being must be God's proper effect; as to ignite is the proper effect of fire. Now God causes this effect in things not only when they first begin to be, but as long as they are preserved in being; as light is caused in the air by the sun as long as the air remains illuminated. Therefore as long as a thing has being, God must be present to it, according to its mode of being. But being is innermost in each thing and most fundamentally inherent in all things ... . Hence it must be that God is in all things, and innermost.  
~ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1.8.1

Let your mind roam through the whole creation; everywhere the created world will cry out to you: "God made me."  
... Go round the heavens again and back to the earth, leave out nothing; on all sides everything cries out to you of its Author; nay, the very forms of created things are as it were the voices with which they praise their Creator.  
~ Augustine, *On the Psalms*

[Creation's praise is not an extra, an addition to what it is, but the shining of its being, the meaning it has in pointing to its Creator simply by being itself. The very forms of plants and animals are their voice of praise.]

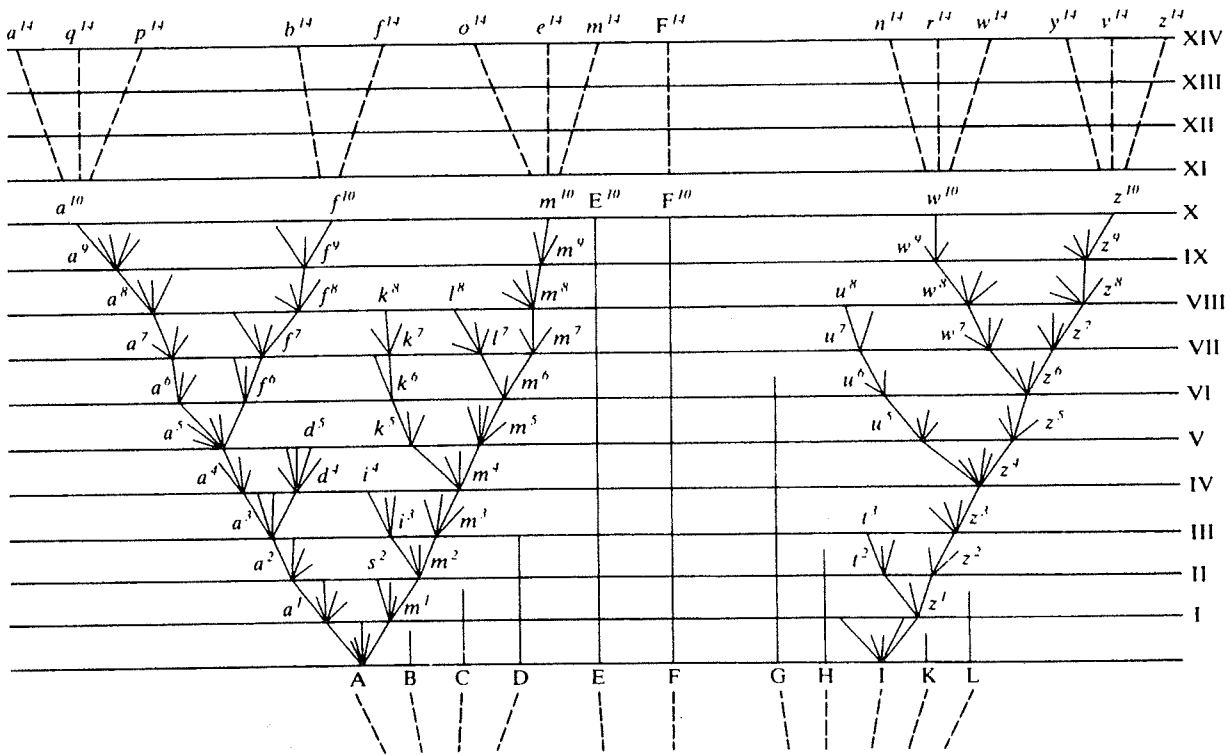
The community of creation - The tree of life is the dwelling place of God, a sacrament of divine goodness, a book that reveals God's wisdom and power, the bearer of a great promise.

Wisdom 11:24-12:1, Job chapt. 38-41, Psalms 104 and 148, Romans 8: 18-25

Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (1859)

It is interesting to contemplate an entangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. (489)

Schema of the tree of life:



There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved. (490)

“Hurrahing in Harvest,” Gerard Manley Hopkins  
 These things, these things were here and but the beholder  
 Wanting; which two when they once meet,  
 The heart rears wings bold and bolder ....