



GREAT COMMISSION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

COMMITMENT TO GOD AND HIS WORD

Creation and the Genesis Account

When two people are in an adversarial relationship, a tactic is for one to undermine the very first words that the other says or writes. So, too, Christians should not be surprised when the evil one plants seeds of doubt in people's minds about the first words of the Bible in Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Therefore, it is of utmost importance that we as believers proclaim and affirm the truth that God is the Creator. Dave Bovenmyer's article addresses this very important topic of Creation.



Creation and the Genesis Account

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Our newspapers and magazines frequently report on a battle that is occurring in the classrooms and courtrooms of our country. In years past, the battle concerned whether naturalistic evolution alone should be taught in our schools or whether the Biblical view of origins should be allowed. Recently, the battle has morphed into a battle between naturalistic evolution and intelligent design—essentially a battle between naturalism (nature is all that exists) and theism (a creator God exists).

Affecting this battle is the reality that materialistic naturalism has gained the predominate influence in our universities, scientific communities, educational system, and legal system. To a naturalist, God is not allowed a foot in the door. Any claims of the supernatural (including creation) are, by definition, not a part of “science” and therefore untenable. These social and scientific battles spill over into the church, which must defend and proclaim the Biblical concept of a creator God and the Biblical revelation of how He created the universe.

The original Great Commission Leadership materials did not address the doctrine of creation, and this doctrine is only briefly mentioned in the Great Commission Churches’ statement of faith. Since the creation/evolution controversy is so vigorously debated in American culture, and since this debate spills over into the church, the leadership of Great Commission Churches commissioned this paper addressing the subject for the GCLI Going Deeper program.

The approach of this paper will be to defend what the Scripture teaches about creation and the origin of all things, especially at points where culture is pressing against the teaching of Scripture. Particularly, it will address attempts to harmonize the creation account with modern scientific scenarios and will advocate a straightforward reading of Genesis chapters one through eleven.

The position taken in this paper is not a part of the doctrinal statement or core values statement of Great Commission Churches (GCC). Agreement with all aspects of this perspective is not required for membership in Great Commission Churches. On the other hand, the essence of the paper’s position is the prevalent teaching of the association’s churches and is shared by the majority of its pastors. Although not a doctrine essential for salvation or a core value, this is an issue of importance, prompting the association’s leadership to include this paper in our leadership training material.

The strength of these arguments is not meant to be a sign of disrespect for the godly Christian leaders, some within our movement and some in the greater evangelical church, who disagree with aspects of this position.¹ Although we are presenting a vigorous defense of a straightforward reading of Genesis, we must respect our brothers who disagree, and we must remain open to the possibility that there are

“In all its bearing upon scriptural truth, the evolution theory is in direct opposition to it. If God’s Word be true, evolution is a lie. I will not mince the matter: this is not the time for soft speaking.”

-C. H. Spurgeon

errors in our overall approach or in our understanding of the text. It is our hope that this paper will encourage continued study of the Scripture and continued dialog so that every Great Commission leader and believer will develop Biblical convictions concerning the important truths of Creation.

1. How important is the Scripture in understanding the origin of the world?

The church must guard against societal pressures that tempt us to accommodate the philosophies of the world; and that includes the world's philosophies of origins. In 1 Corinthians 1-3, Paul exhorts the Corinthian church, urging them to stop glorying in the "wisdom of men." He tells them that the wisdom of the world is "folly with God" (1 Corinthians 3:19, ESV²).

What is the difference between the wisdom of men and that of God? Is one "wisdom" intrinsically logical and the other illogical? Not necessarily. Paul seems to imply that the difference is in our starting point. The wisdom of men starts with man and his attempts to come to conclusions concerning the ultimate questions of life apart from the revelation of God. But the wisdom of God starts with God and His revelation. Paul spoke nothing among the Corinthians but "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (2:2, NASB³), the ultimate revelation of God. To the mature, Paul spoke in "words taught by the Spirit" (2:13, NASB), who alone knows the mind of God and reveals it to us. God's revelation gives us wisdom that is "not of this world," but is from God; "decreed before the ages for our glory" (2:6-7, ESV). If we start with God's revelation at the core of our assumptions, we will be able to "appraise all things" even spiritual things (2:15, NASB).

Therefore, God's revelation must be our starting point in evaluating and interpreting everything around us. Of utmost importance to the Christian is the question, "What has God revealed to us in Christ and through the words of the apostles and prophets inspired by the Spirit?" This paper, then, will focus on what the Biblical revelation teaches concerning the beginning of all things, concentrating especially on Genesis chapters 1-11.

2. How important is science in understanding the origin of the world?

One of the dictionary definitions of the word "science" is "the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of phenomena."⁴ So defined, science and the disciplines associated with it are certainly helpful, and even essential, in understanding the natural world God has created, including how things got the way they are today.

Yet, when looking at the distant past, science has an inherent weakness. No scientist was there to "observe, identify, describe or experiment with" what was happening. So, when the historical sciences (geology, paleontology, archeology, etc.) seek to interpret the past, unproven and un-provable assumptions must be made. One assumption that cannot be proven but seems reasonable is that the laws of physics and chemistry have remained the same (apart from miracles) since the creation. This is an assumption that Christian scientists tend to agree with. Other assumptions are more hotly debated, such as the question of how the earth's geological formations were formed; whether by processes similar to present-day ones (uniformitarianism) or by catastrophic disturbances of nature (catastrophism), such

"I thoroughly believe in a university education. Yet I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without a knowledge of the Bible."

-Dr. William Lyon Phelps

“Surely the essence of wisdom is that before we begin to act at all, or attempt to please God, we should discover what it is that God has to say about the matter.”

-D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

as a world-wide flood.⁵ Although all truth is God’s truth,⁶ whether discovered in the Scripture or from observation of the world, Scripture has a distinct advantage when it comes to understanding the past. First, there is the possibility that Genesis’ creation account was handed down through written or oral tradition from eye-witnesses who observed what happened in earth’s early history—in the garden of Eden, at the flood, and at the tower of Babel.⁷ Second, the Scripture is God’s revelation, having the overwhelming advantage of being inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Certainly, rightly interpreting the Scripture and discerning the author’s meaning present a challenge, since Scripture was written in a language and to a culture that is different than ours. Yet, the Scripture’s powerful advantages (eyewitness testimony and Divine inspiration) coupled with the weakness of historical science (unproven assumptions concerning the continuity or discontinuity of earth’s history) argue that we should give far greater weight to the Scripture’s statements concerning the past than to the hypotheses of the historical sciences.

3. On face value, what does Genesis 1-11 tell us about creation and the beginnings of all things?

Yahweh God, the God of Israel, created the heavens and the earth in six days, shaping and forming the earth and the universe and everything in them. God then rested on the seventh day. The order of God’s creative work was as follows:

Day 1 — God created the heavens and the earth⁸ in an initial state of chaos.⁹ He created light and separated it from darkness.

Day 2 — God created the firmament, separating the waters above it from the waters below it.

Day 3 — God formed land and created vegetation, plants and trees.

Day 4 — God created the sun, moon, and stars to give light to the earth, to separate light from darkness, and to act as signs for seasons, days, and years.

Day 5 — God created the creatures of the sea and the birds of the air. He blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply.”

Day 6 — God created land animals and the first man and woman, blessing them by again saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”

Day 7 — God rested from His work of creating. He blessed the seventh day and made it holy.

A few other observations from an initial reading of Genesis chapter one through chapter eleven include the following:

- God created man in His own image, distinguishing him from the animals and giving him authority to rule and care for the earth and its creatures (1:27).
- Repeatedly during the days of creation, God saw that what He had made was good. At the end of the sixth day, God saw that everything He had made was “very good” (1:31).

- God gave plants for food to mankind and to the beasts of the earth and birds of the air (1:29-30).
- According to a simple reading of the Biblical genealogies, creation occurred at approximately 4,000 BC. The genealogies at face value seem to give no room for added years or generations, since they indicate the age of each man when his son was born¹⁰ (5:1-32).
- Soon after creation, man sinned, death entered the world, and the earth was cursed (3:1-19).
- Mankind rapidly deteriorated morally and spiritually so that the earth was filled with violence, causing God grief that He had created man (6:1-8).
- One thousand six hundred and fifty six years after creation,¹¹ the earth was deluged and destroyed by a world-wide flood that destroyed all mankind and animal life except for eight people and the animals preserved on Noah's ark (6:1-9:7).
- After the flood, God promised Noah and his sons and every creature living on the earth never to send a flood on the earth again to destroy all flesh (9:8-17).
- After the flood, God gave "every moving thing that lives" to mankind for food, and animals, birds, and fish became afraid of man (9:1-5).
- As the earth repopulated after the flood, mankind was dispersed into various groups and nations by a confusion of languages at the tower of Babel (11:1-9).

"In science we have been reading only the notes to a poem; in Christianity we find the poem itself."

-C.S. Lewis

4. Why are the creation account and the early history of the world so important?

In his commentary on Genesis, Derek Kidner said, "There can scarcely be another part of Scripture over which so many battles, theological, scientific, historical and literary, have been fought, or so many strong opinions cherished."¹² There is good reason for this. The implications for our view of God, of ourselves, and of much of the rest of Scripture all hang on how we interpret the early chapters of Genesis. Here are some foundational doctrines established in the first eleven chapters of Genesis.

- The nature of God is revealed, including that He is one, that He is personal, and that He is sovereign.
- God is transcendent, but also immanent. He is awesomely powerful, yet relational, both with His creation (3:8) and within Himself (1:26).
- God is purposeful and orderly and cares for His creation.
- God is awesome in power, intelligence, and wisdom. He created the world through the power of His word.
- God is ruler over all creation and over man. Since God made us, He is truly our Father in the most profound sense. We do not belong to ourselves, nor is the purpose of human life to be determined by man. God created us for His purpose, and that purpose defines who we are and why we're here.

“I know of no finding in archaeology that’s properly confirmed which is in opposition to the Scriptures. The Bible is the most accurate history textbook the world has ever seen.”

***-Dr Clifford Wilson,
former director
of the Australian
Institute of
Archaeology***

- Morality and ethics are not arbitrary but were established by God in the beginning. They are woven into the very fabric of creation and what it means to be human. Therefore, morality or “rightness” is God’s purpose and goal for every human life. Violating that created intent is always wrong and will inevitably be destructive. It also offends God, who created us with the ability to choose whether or not to take part in that purpose (2:17).
 - God’s right to judge the world is founded on the fact that He made it and that we are His.
 - Man is God’s special, ruling agent, uniquely made in His image (1:27). This gives us value and defines our role in the creation (1:28). We are stewards of the creation and are called to use it as a resource to do good, thereby reflecting God’s character.
 - The proper functioning of society and life is founded in creation. God made things as He desired and that desire is to be followed. The understanding of what it means to be male and female (1:27), the definition of family (2:24), heterosexual marriage, the importance of work (2:15), and civil government (9:5-6) are all established in the first chapters of Genesis.
 - Man has a fallen, corrupt nature, not because of any imperfection in God’s original creation, but because he chose to rebel against God (3:1-4:16).
- Death, suffering, sickness, and disease are a result of man’s sin. They are not part of God’s original creation, but are unnatural enemies (2:17, 3:16-19). The Biblical creation account, supported in the rest of scripture, provides the only satisfying understanding of how an all-good, all-powerful God can rule over a world of injustice and suffering.
 - As a consequence of sin, the earth has been cursed, requiring man to work in “painful toil” (3:17 NIV¹³) simply for survival. The first chapters of Genesis tell us why we must endure so much sorrow and suffering and why our losses hurt so badly—we were created for a better world.
 - The creation account addresses rival and false theological concepts of the ancient world: idolatry; worship of the sun, moon, and stars; nature worship; and fertility rights. It also addresses rival and false theological concepts of our day: humanism, naturalism, evolution, and uniformitarianism.
 - God has intense wrath against sin, as revealed by the flood cataclysm (6:5-8). Recorded in the earth’s geologic layers, the flood stands as a powerful testimony and warning that God is indeed a God who judges. The flood also demonstrates that God’s warning of future judgment is completely within His character (2 Peter 3:3-7).
 - All men, no matter what race, nationality or language, come from the same root, being descendants of Adam and Noah, and are therefore equal in value and dignity before God. The tower of Babel account reaffirms this, while explaining the origin of different races and languages (11:1-9).

These foundational doctrines present perspectives about God, man, and the world that are essential to our faith. They are the bedrock of the gospel, establishing the goodness of God, the sinfulness of man, and the need of a Savior. We must not treat the creation account lightly.

5. Can the Genesis account be harmonized with the ideas of biological evolution and of creation over vast ages?

One problem with attempts to harmonize the creation account with evolutionary and uniformitarian scenarios is that the attempt itself might easily frustrate the primary goal of interpretation—discovering the author’s intended meaning for his original audience. In other words, proper interpretation does not allow us to superimpose modern assumptions on the text, unless it can be shown that those assumptions were part of the world view of the author and his readers. If we lose sight of this fundamental interpretive goal—to discern what the author intended to communicate to his readers—the Scripture (or any other communication for that matter) quickly loses its authority. Apart from this interpretive discipline, the reader becomes the author, the originator of meaning.¹⁴

Paul does say that the Old Testament was written for our instruction (Romans 15:4, 1 Corinthians 10:11). Yet even though it was written for us, it was not written to us. It was written to its original readers and we must first seek to understand what it meant to them before we can understand how it applies to us. As much as possible we must seek to put ourselves in the original reader’s place. What was his worldview? How would he have understood the words that were written? What would he discern the author’s meaning to be?

“If all the animals and man had been evolved in this ascendant manner, then there had been no first parents, no Eden, and no Fall. And if there had been no fall, then the entire historical fabric of Christianity, the story of the first sin and the reason for an atonement, upon which the current teaching based Christian emotion and morality, collapsed like a house of cards.”

-H.G. Wells

6. Who was the author of Genesis and when was it written?

There has been much debate concerning who wrote Genesis. For the purposes of this paper, I have assumed that Moses was the author, or at least the compiler, as follows.

- Both Jewish and Christian scholars have, from very early times, considered Moses to be the author of Genesis.
- Although still taught in secular universities, the documentary hypothesis has been countered and largely discredited by conservative scholars. This hypothesis was developed by liberal scholars in the 19th century as an attempt to explain differences in literary style throughout the Pentateuch (first five books), particularly the use of the names of God. It postulates that the Pentateuch was written by four or five different authors who wrote throughout Israel’s history.¹⁵
- Although the New Testament does not explicitly state that Moses wrote Genesis, it does imply it, especially since Jews of Jesus’ day viewed the Pentateuch as a unit written by Moses. For example, several times Jesus referred to the entire Old Testament, using the phrase “Moses and the prophets” (Luke 16:31, 24:27, 44). This implies that He viewed Genesis as part of what Moses had written.
- If Moses was the author, he may have incorporated prior written or oral accounts that had been passed down to him. The existence of prior source material could easily explain the variety in

***“Education is
useless without
the Bible.”***

-Daniel Webster

literary elements, such as the use of different names for God. Additionally, the words “These are the generations of”¹⁶ may point to a change of source material.

- Although Moses probably relied on prior sources when writing Genesis, he would have tailored the vocabulary and language to ensure that it was understandable to his readers. Therefore, in our interpretive efforts, we should look for Moses’ intended meaning as would be understood by the Hebrews leaving Egypt at the time of the Exodus.

7. Did Moses and his readers hold to an evolutionary perspective or to an assumption that God created over vast ages?

The secular cultures that Moses and his readers were familiar with were those of Mesopotamia and Egypt. The religions of these cultures were polytheistic with belief in a supernatural world and belief in personal gods who created the world, often in ways that were clearly mythological. There was no tradition in ancient Hebrew, Egyptian, or Mesopotamian culture of life arising from lower forms in an evolutionary process nor did these ancient creation stories suggest that creation occurred over vast ages.¹⁷ These concepts were simply absent from ancient Hebrew culture. So, Moses and his readers had no reason to think of the six days of creation as anything other than the normal days they were familiar with. Neither did they have any pressure to believe that man arose from lower life forms.

This is further confirmed by the fact that prior to the 17th century and the beginning of uniformitarian thinking, no Jewish or Christian expositors of the Bible interpreted the Scripture to teach creation through evolutionary process or vast ages.¹⁸ The apocrypha, the pseudepigrapha,¹⁹ and the writings of Josephus all assume the historicity of the creation account in six normal days, further showing that ancient readers saw nothing in the text pointing to creation through evolution or creation over vast ages.²⁰

The evolutionary and uniformitarian concepts that so thoroughly pervade our culture are recent and modern. Attempts to superimpose these modern concepts on the ancient author or readers of Genesis undermine the fundamental goal of interpretation, that of finding the author’s intended meaning to his original audience. When we lose this goal, Scripture loses its authority.

8. Did God accommodate Himself to the ignorance of the Hebrew reader?

Having just been rescued from slavery in Egypt, Moses’ audience probably didn’t include a high percentage of PhDs. And they lacked much of the scientific knowledge we have today. Perhaps God accommodated himself to the ignorance of the Hebrew reader. Additionally, concepts about God are often difficult, if not impossible for finite humans to grasp, and God often speaks in anthropomorphic language (ascribing to Himself human qualities). For example, when the Psalmist says that God’s eyes are attentive to the righteous and that His ears are attentive to their prayers (Psalm 34:15), he is not declaring that God has physical eyes or ears, but is referring to God in human terms that we can understand. God is beyond us and it would be difficult, if not impossible for Him to describe Himself to us without reference and comparison to things that we are already familiar with.

Yet an application of this argument to the creation account quickly breaks down when we stop to realize that there is nothing difficult to understand in the modern evolutionary or uniformitarian

scenario, which is taught to and understood by grade school children. The modern ideas—that God created over vast ages and that plants and animals arose through a process of gradual change from common ancestors—are not difficult for even the most uneducated to understand. Nothing in the modern scenario requires technical, scientific language. Using ancient Hebrew, Moses could have easily communicated the modern scenario to his listeners had he desired to do so. So, there was no need for accommodation. The modern scenario is just as easy to explain as the six-day creation scenario.

“Everything must be decided by the Scripture.”

-D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

9. One approach to harmonization is the idea that the creation account was mythical. Could this be true?

I’m using the word “myth” in the sense of a story that is not necessarily historical; that may never have actually happened in time-space history. The important elements of a myth are the concepts presented, not the truthfulness of the story.

Nothing in the text of Genesis suggests that Moses intended for the account to be mythical in the sense of non-historical. To a mind that is open to the supernatural and the existence of a creator God, there is nothing bizarre or extreme in the story, as there are in the creation myths of other ancient cultures. In his commentary on Genesis, Bruce Waltke says:

...the author of Genesis represents himself as a historian, not as a prophet who receives visions of events. He gives an essentially coherent chronological succession of events, using the Hebrew narrative verb form. He validates his material as much as possible by locating his story in time and space (e.g., 2:10-14), tracing genealogies (e.g., 5:1-32), giving evidence of various sorts that validate his history (e.g., 11:9), and citing sources (5:1).²¹

It seems, then, that Moses intended Genesis to be understood as history, not myth.

Chapter one differs somewhat from the rest of the book with its beautiful literary elements and symmetrical structure. Yet the author’s evident literary skill does not require a mythical or non-historical interpretation. Even with these literary elements, chapter one is presented as a narrative and varies greatly from Hebrew poetry, as exemplified in the Psalms and Proverbs.²²

Unquestionably, Moses wrote to establish and emphasize important truths that refuted competing religious philosophies of the day. The Genesis narratives undergird the theology of the Law and of Israel as set forth in the rest of the Pentateuch. Yet if we focus solely on these theological truths and claim that they are all that is really important and let go of the historicity of the account, the “myth” loses its power. The author is then advancing theology that has no historical basis to it, thus robbing it of its credibility. The stories of Genesis were not fabricated by Moses in an effort to undergird and support the theology of the Law and of Israel. Rather, the theology of Israel was built upon the historical facts of creation, the fall, and God’s promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as recorded by Moses.

Finally, the Genesis account is understood to be historical throughout the rest of the Bible.²³ Jesus referred to the creation of Adam and Eve and the flood of Noah as real historical events (Matthew 19:3-6 & 24:37-39). So did Paul and Peter, often basing their doctrine upon the Genesis account (Romans 5:12-21, 1 Timothy 2:13-14, 1 Corinthians 15:45, 1 Peter 2:4-10, 3:4-7).

“... Probably, so far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Genesis 1–11 intended to convey to their readers the [idea] that creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience...”

*James Barr,
Oxford University*

10. Can the Bible’s teaching about creation be interpreted to describe an earth that is billions of years old by defining the word “day” to mean an age?

Many have tried to harmonize the Biblical account and modern science’s four-billion year-old earth by claiming that each “day” in Genesis chapter one can represent a vast age of hundreds of millions of years.

Before we look at the “days” of chapter one, let’s look at an even more problematic passage for this approach. Exodus 20:8-11 describes an event the Israelites witnessed firsthand, in which God spoke out of the thick darkness above Mount Sinai. Here Moses recalls and writes down the very words of God spoken out of the cloud above the mountain. “Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God...” The Lord goes on to explain the reason for this command: “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy” (ESV).

The word “day” is used identically in the Lord’s two sentences, one describing the days of the week, the other describing the days in which the Lord created the heavens and the earth. There are no indications from the grammar, syntax, or context that God used the word “day” in the first sentence to refer to a regular day and used it in the second sentence to refer to six ages. The Hebrew language has several terms to express the concept of “age” that God could have used had He wanted to.²⁴ If the world was indeed created in six ages, would not God have misled them by using the word “day”; the same word used in the previous sentence to describe their work week? How could they believe anything else? It’s hard to imagine a clearer statement concerning the length of creation. And it comes from the very mouth of God Himself.

Additionally, in His statement, God refers to creation as the basis, the reason, why the Israelites should work for six days and then observe the Sabbath. If this is interpreted to mean creation in six vast ages, the reason for observing the Sabbath is obscured, if not undermined. A creation in six ages with God resting for a seventh age would seem to argue that men should work for six decades and rest on the seventh (since the span of a man’s work and life tends to be seven decades).

Let’s move on to the word “day” in Genesis chapter one. Can it be interpreted here to mean an “age”?

The Hebrew word translated “day” in chapter one can have the following meanings according to the Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon:²⁵

1. day, as opposed to night
2. twenty four hours
3. a lifetime
4. a time period (general)
5. a year
6. temporal references such as today, tonight, tomorrow

In Hebrew, as in English, words such as “day” have various possible meanings depending on the grammar, syntax, and context of the word. To accurately understand the author’s meaning, it is not sufficient to look at the word’s possible meanings and choose whichever meaning we like, as though each meaning has equal validity. The grammatical form of the word, the syntax of the sentence, and the context of the passage determine which meaning is appropriate.

Although the Hebrew word for day, “yom,” can carry the meaning of an indefinite period of time, it only does so when used in a specific form or when accompanied by particular words in specific constructions. This form or these accompanying words are required to give it the meaning of a period of time. Examples would be “in that day” (Isaiah 2:11, NASB), “a day of darkness (Zephaniah 1:15, NASB),” or in some contexts, simply “that day” (1 Samuel 8:18, NASB). But none of the words or phrases that would give the word “day” the meaning of an indefinite period of time are used in chapter one’s description of the six days of creation.²⁶

Two of the meanings given in Strong’s are seen in Genesis 1:5, “God called the light ‘day,’ and the darkness he called ‘night.’ And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day” (NIV). Here, the meaning of the first use of the word “day” is clearly the first meaning—“day, as opposed to night.” It is contrasted with “night,” telling us that the first meaning is appropriate. But the meaning in the word’s second use best fits the second meaning—“period of 24 hours,” since it describes the first cycle of day and night or light and darkness. The words “evening” and “morning” confirm this. As in their normal usage, the word “evening” refers to the waning of the light and “morning” to the return of the light.

The text does not specifically highlight the length of the day as 24 hours. Rather, it emphasizes the cycling of light and darkness. Furthermore, the word “first” is used prior to the verse’s second use of “day” indicating that this was the very first “day” or cycle of light and darkness. The word “first” also indicates that there was only one cycle of light and darkness during the first day. This is further confirmed in verse 8, “And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day. It was not the tenth or thousandth or millionth cycle of darkness and light, but the second cycle. Each “day” consisted of one and only one cycle of darkness and light, evening and morning.

The description of events on each succeeding “day” is concluded with the same phrase, “and there was evening, and there was morning—the third day...fourth day...fifth day... sixth day.” This emphasis on light and darkness makes it extremely difficult to conclude anything other than that there were only six cycles of light and darkness throughout the six “days” of creation. It’s hard to see how any unbiased reader, ancient or modern, could read this in any other way than that it describes six cycles of light and darkness, six evenings and six mornings, and six normal days.

The sun was not created until day four. Because of this, some have argued that we cannot be sure the alternating periods of evening and morning are normal 24-hour days. However, the creation of the sun on day four actually establishes the author’s understanding of the length of the days, at least the length of days five through seven. Moses states that one of God’s purposes for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars was to measure time—to “serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years” (Genesis 1:14, NIV). So, even if there might be question about the length of days one through four, days five through seven must refer to 24-hour days as measured by the sun, moon, and stars. And since days 5-7 are 24-

“Many refuse to accept the reality of a personal God because they are unwilling to submit to His authority.”

-Kurt Bruner

“There is not the slightest possibility that the facts of science can contradict the Bible, and therefore, there is no need to fear that a truly scientific comparison of any aspect of the two models of origins can ever yield a verdict in favor of evolution.”

-Henry Morris

hour, sun-measured days, and nothing in the passage shows that the first four days were anything different, the ancient Hebrew reader would undoubtedly have concluded that the first four days were also of the same length.

Some have argued that the words “morning” and “evening” should be understood figuratively, referring to the beginning and ending of something else, perhaps the beginning and ending of God’s work during each period of time (which could be millions of years). But there is nothing in the passage to indicate this was the author’s intention. Actually, it is just the opposite. Initially there was darkness. Then God created light and separated it from the darkness, dividing it between two periods, one of light and one of darkness. It then defines that first cycle of light and darkness as the “first day.” This defining, in the passage itself, indicates the meaning of the word “day”—one cycle of light and darkness. So, the passage clearly indicates that the words “day,” “morning” and “evening” all concern the cycling of light and darkness, not the beginning and ending of God’s work²⁷ or some other beginning and ending.

So, if we let the passage itself define the meaning of the word “day,” it is impossible for the modern scenario to fit. Four billion years would require 1,460,000,000,000 cycles of light and darkness. Moses records that there were six.

11. Can the Genesis account be interpreted to show that the days of chapter one are intended to refer to indefinite periods of time and that the chronological order of the days is superseded by a literary “framework” that pervades the text?

There are various versions of the framework view, but some fairly common elements of this complex view are briefly presented here. The framework view argues that the literary structure of Genesis one and two point us toward a topical rather than a chronological interpretation. This literary framework is said to be clear enough to inform the reader that the language concerning time and sequence is figurative and that literal days and sequential order are not the intended meaning.

Genesis chapter two is said to be topical and non-chronological, showing that Genesis one should also be interpreted this same way. One example is Genesis 2:19 “Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them...” (NASB). This verse (with the word “formed” in the present tense, as in most translations) would seem to indicate that the animals were formed after man, thus contradicting the order of the account in chapter one.

Also it is argued that Genesis 2:4-7 indicates that between the creative acts of God, ordinary providence was at work, preserving what had been previously created. Ordinary providence is God’s providing, sustaining activity through natural rather than supernatural means. In this passage, which appears to be a retelling of the creation of man on day six, ordinary providence seems to be at work since the plants needed watering: “But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground” (2:6, NASB). The framework view argues that the creative acts of God should be limited to the spoken Word of God that brought things into existence, but the sustaining of things created was achieved through ordinary providence. Supposedly, this presents a problem with the order of creation

because the creation of light on day one would require something supernatural to sustain that light until the creation of the sun and stars on day four. Since Genesis 2:4-7 shows that God was using ordinary providence to sustain things, then we should conclude that days one and four are actually descriptions of the same creative events and not different chronological days. Additionally, the argument is made that since the sun, moon, and stars were created on day four to separate the light from the darkness, and that this separation also happened on day one, then days one and day four refer to the same creative concept or event. Also, it is noted that each day has one creative act, except days three and six, which have two, showing correspondence between them.

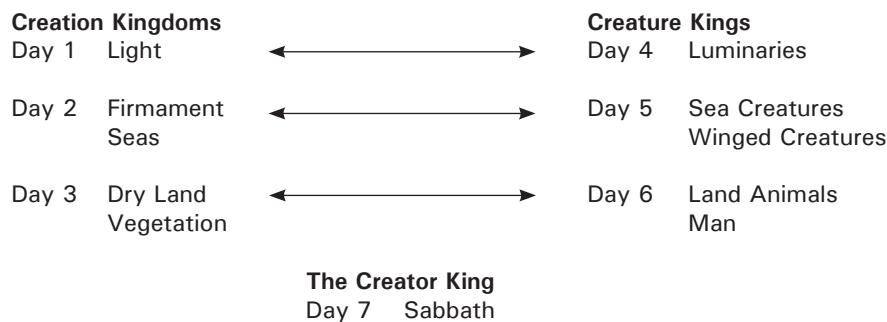
It is argued that the organized symmetry of the text argues for a non-literal, non-narrative, non-chronological interpretation. Also, the words, “day,” “evening,” and “morning” are considered to be anthropomorphic or figurative attempts to explain an unexplainable concept about God and his work in limited human terms.

In summary, the framework view purports that the first three days of creation correspond to the second three days, indicating that each pair of days (1&4, 2&5, and 3&6) are referring to the same creative act or concept and that the author was intending the account to be non-literal in regard to the elements of time and sequence. The following chart illustrates the supposed correspondence of the creation days, which, it is argued, would inform the reader that each pair of days was a single creative act.

“Men became scientific because they expected Law in Nature, and they expected Law in Nature because they believed in a Legislator. In most modern scientists this belief has died: it will be interesting to see how long their confidence in uniformity survives it.”

-C. S. Lewis

Lee Iron’s & Meredith G. Kline’s Framework View



A weakness of the framework view is that one of the most obvious elements of the text is its chronological arrangement. Ordinal numbers are used (first, second, third) indicating clear chronological progression. The chronological arrangement of the text is also clear in its logical progression. Light is created prior to the luminaries that govern it. The firmament is made prior to the luminaries that fill it. The seas are made prior to the creatures that fill them. Land is formed prior to the vegetation and creatures that inhabit it. The entire account climaxes with the creation of man to rule over the earth. It is difficult to think that any reader would disregard this obvious chronology because chapter two, verse 19 appears to speak of the creation of the animals out of chronological order. Also, the tense of

“What can be more foolish than to think that all this rare fabric of heaven and earth could come by chance, when all the skill of art is not able to make an oyster!”

-Jeremy Taylor

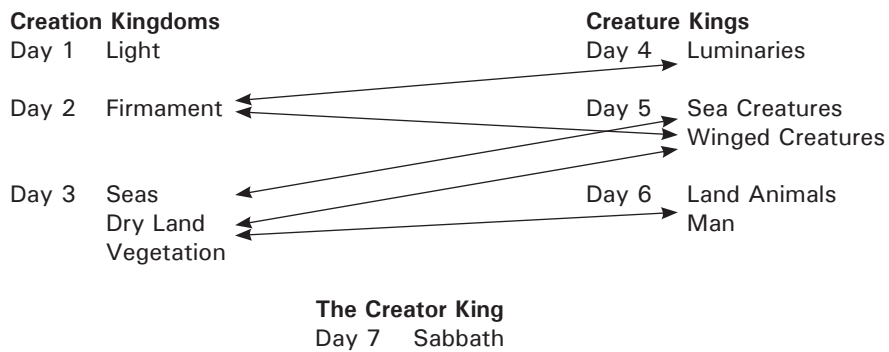
the word “formed” in Genesis 2:19 (which seems to say that the animals were created after man) apparently can be translated “had formed,” since the NIV translates it as past tense and the ESV shows this as a possible marginal reading.

Another weakness of the framework interpretation is that apparently no one saw this literary framework prior to the last couple decades. If we are to put ourselves in the place of the original reader, can we really say that this supposed framework is such an obvious literary device that Moses intended his readers to hold to it in spite of his clear and obvious chronological arrangement (first, second, third, etc.)? The framework theory is shadowy at best, shadowy enough that apparently no interpreters saw it until the recent clash between Genesis and modern scientific scenarios.

The concept of a framework is not as straightforward as presented. Actually, the luminaries created on day four are not placed in anything created in the supposedly corresponding day one, but in the firmament created in day two.

Similarly, sea creatures created on day five are placed in the “seas” created on day three,²⁹ not in the widely dispersed waters of the supposedly corresponding day two. Also, the flying creatures created on day five are placed both in the firmament created on day two and on the land created in day three. So, although it is clear that God created the environments for His creatures prior to creating them (which makes sense), there is no strict correspondence between the days that would point the reader to believe that days one & four, two & five, or three & six are referring to the same creative events or concepts. The following chart more accurately represents the correspondence between the environments created in days one through three and the inhabitants of those environments in days four through six. (Actually vegetation, created on day three, isn’t an environment, but an inhabitant of the earth.)

A More Accurate Look at the Genesis Account



Upon closer examination, the supposed correspondence between the days breaks down. All the correspondence that remains is that days one and four both involve separation of light and darkness and days three and six both involve two creative statements. Any additional correspondence is shadowy at best.

Concerning the source of light before the sun: even if Genesis 2:4-7 does indicate that ordinary providence was at work during the creation week, nothing in chapters one or two argues against God's use of extraordinary, supernatural providence as well. Clearly, God worked in ways during the creation week that were very different from how He has worked since that time. In the midst of all the supernatural activity of the creation week, it should not surprise us that God might create and sustain light through extraordinary providence prior to the creation of the sun, moon, and stars.

Additionally, the modern hard and fast distinction between the natural and supernatural have largely resulted from the influence of naturalism. Moses and his readers most likely had a fuzzier conception than we do of the line between the natural and supernatural and would probably not have been concerned whether God was using natural providence or supernatural means to sustain the light present on days one through three. Again, we need to put ourselves in the place of the author and his readers to understand the author's intended meaning and not place our modern scientific grid on the text. J. Ligon Duncan III and David W. Hall, in their response to the framework view in the book *The G3N3S1S Debate* ask the following question:

*Can we really believe that Moses intended to signal pre-modern hearers of Genesis that his account of the days was non-sequential by stating that the sun's creation was on the fourth day? Could such an "exegetical marker" have made sense to anyone in the second millennium B.C.?*³⁰

But even if we were to conclude that God only used ordinary providence to sustain created things in between his creative acts, nothing in the text excludes the possibility that the light on day one was somewhat "natural," perhaps stellar material that had not yet been divided. Day four would then involve dividing and organizing the stellar and other material into the sun, moon, and stars and putting them in their places. This would fit with the differentiating, organizing activity of God that occurs throughout the chapter.

The fact that chapter one has a highly organized structure and symmetry does not mean that it should be interpreted as figurative or as not having actually occurred in the sequence indicated. Other narratives in Genesis and throughout the Bible are highly organized and yet straightforward narrative.³¹

Interpreting the timing elements of chapter one as figurative and the other parts of the chapter as literal is arbitrary. Why should the chronology and duration of the creation narrative be interpreted as figurative, while the rest is taken literally? Concerning the Framework theory's figurative approach, Joseph A. Pipa from Westminster Theological Seminary says:

Moses' style in chapters two and three is as figurative if not more so than chapter 1 (description of the creation of man; a talking serpent; God's making clothing): why are not these acts made symbolic? Why are not chapters two and three made nonliteral? Why is the flood account a

"I have always been suspicious of Christian intellectuals whose primary agenda seems to be to remove embarrassment about being an evangelical and to assure their colleagues that they are really acceptable, rational people in spite of their evangelicalism. While we need to be sensitive to our unbelieving friends and colleagues, we should care far less about what the world thinks than about what God thinks of our intellectual life."

-J. P Moreland

“The Bible is no mere book, but a living creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it.”

-Napoleon

chronological narrative and Genesis 1 is not? Or why do we allow for supernatural intervention later in the Pentateuch (the plagues, crossing the Red Sea, the clothing of the children of Israel not wearing out) but demand that only ordinary providence has been at work in the midst of the omnipotent creating work of God? It seems to me the method has no exegetical brakes. Each decision is made on the basis of the presuppositions of the interpreter. Is this the way we want to instruct young men and women to interpret the Bible? ³²

One final weakness of the framework theory is that once you say that days four to six refer to the same events as days one through three, you have a cycle of four events, not seven. This violates the sabbatical week that is established upon the events of creation.

12. Can the Biblical account be interpreted to show that Noah’s flood was a local flood, confined to the region of Mesopotamia?

At face value, Genesis 6-9 teaches a worldwide flood of the entire earth. Such a flood is inconsistent with evolutionary and long-age histories for the earth, since it would radically alter modern science’s approach to geology, paleontology, archeology and many other sciences. If there was a catastrophic world-wide flood, as the Bible describes, the vast majority of all fossils would have been deposited, not over vast ages, but in a little over a year during the flood. Since all these buried plants and other creatures would have existed at the same time, there could be no evidence in the fossil record for evolution. And if there was a worldwide flood, the vast majority of all geological formations would have been formed in it, effectively nullifying any geological evidence for an earth that is millions or billions of years old. Therefore, there is little more threatening to an evolutionist or old-age proponent than the idea of a cataclysmic world-wide flood of Biblical proportions. Those who attempt to harmonize the Genesis account with modern scientific ideas almost universally try to show that the flood was only a local flood. But can Genesis 7-10 be interpreted to refer to a local flood? Genesis 7:19-23 says:

They (the waters) rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered. The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than twenty feet. Every living thing that moved on the earth perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark (NIV).

It is hard to imagine language that could more clearly communicate the world-wide nature of the flood. All the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered to a depth of more than twenty feet. Every living thing that moved on the earth perished (this fact is repeated three times). Noah and those with him in the ark are the only land dwelling creatures that survived.

In addition to contradicting the clear wording of the passage, the idea of a local flood also has numerous logical fallacies:

- If the flood was local, why did Noah have to build an ark? He and his family could have walked to the other side of the mountains and been safe. Even traveling a long distance would have been far easier than spending many years building a huge ocean-going vessel.
- If animals had populated the earth for millions (even thousands) of years, they would have migrated during that time to remote parts of the world. Why would it be necessary to have them on the ark since similar animals would have lived in other parts of the world?
- Why was the Ark big enough to hold two of every kind of animal? If only Mesopotamian animals were aboard, the Ark could have been much smaller.³³ The ark was approximately 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high with a gross tonnage of 14,000 tons—in the same category as today’s ocean-going vessels.
- Why were birds sent on board? These could simply have winged across to a mountain range away from the local area.
- If the Flood was local, how could the waters rise to twenty feet above the mountains? Water seeks its own level. It couldn’t rise to cover the local mountains while leaving the rest of the earth untouched.
- How could a local flood last almost a year after the rains quit falling and the subterranean waters ceased to flow?³⁴
- The source of water was not only from rain, but “all the springs of the deep burst forth” (Genesis 7:11, NIV). The water came both from above and below, something not typical for local floods and possibly implying that the oceans rose to flood the earth.
- The world known to the Hebrew reader was much larger than Mesopotamia. They were very familiar with Egypt. It would have been difficult for them not to include Egypt in their interpretation. Any flood that would simultaneously cover all the mountains of Mesopotamia and Egypt would certainly have to be a worldwide flood.
- Presumably, the readers were familiar with Ararat. Whether in Turkey or northern Iran, these mountains are much farther away than a local flood could possibly reach.³⁵
- Many ancient cultures have recollection of such a flood. Josephus believed in a world-wide flood and quoted from numerous pagan sources to show that the flood occurred.³⁶
- If the flood was local and if fossils are formed primarily through flooding, fossils should be confined to Mesopotamia, when, in fact, they have been found on all continents. The huge fossil graveyards in Wyoming and Colorado and many other places in the world show evidence of catastrophic flood deposition that could only be the result of rapid burial of colossal scope, a scope unknown to floods today.

“All that is not eternal is eternally out of date.”

-C.S. Lewis

Genesis 9:9-11 describes the promise that God gave to Noah never again to send a universal flood to destroy the earth. The language God uses unmistakably reaffirms the worldwide nature of the flood.

“The New Testament is the very best book that ever was or ever will be known in the world.”

-Charles Dickens

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth” (NIV).

God refers to the ark-inhabiting creatures as “every living creature on earth.” There were no other living creatures remaining on earth, except those who were with Noah in the ark. Also, in verse eleven, he promises to never again cut off all life by the waters of a flood, nor to ever destroy the earth again with a flood. Verses 16 and 17 further reinforce the global nature of the flood:

“Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth. So God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth’” (NIV).

It was necessary for God to make a covenant with “all life” because He had just destroyed “all life” from the face of the earth. Also, the rainbow covenant is not given just to Noah and the creatures with him, but applies to all who see the rainbow down through subsequent generations. Yet there have been many and devastating local floods throughout the history of the earth since Noah’s day, showing that Noah’s flood was unique, destroying both the earth and all creatures under the entire heavens.

In 2 Peter 3:3-7, Peter affirms the historicity and world-wide nature of the flood

First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.” But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men (NIV).

If we view the flood as a local flood, should we not view the coming judgment as a local judgment as well, perhaps one only for Israel? No! Peter describes both as world-wide conflagrations, the first destroying “the world at that time,” and the second to destroy the “present heavens and earth.”

Interestingly, Peter’s description of the coming scoffers’ statement fairly accurately describes the uniformitarian assumption behind much of the historical sciences, “Everything goes on as it has from the beginning of creation.” But Peter refutes this idea by pointing out the dramatic, world-wide destruction brought about by the flood.

13. Can the creation account be interpreted to harmonize with evolution, in what is called theistic evolution?

Theistic evolution is the belief that God created all living things over millions of years through the process of evolution. Thus all living things, including man, evolved from other living things. But Gen-

esis 2:7 says that the Lord “formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (NASB), indicating that man did not arise from other life forms, but was created from the dust of the earth. Genesis 3:19 reaffirms this: “By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” (Genesis 3:19, NASB). Other verses that affirm that man was created out of dust are Job 10:9; 34:15, Psalm 90:3, 103:14, Ecclesiastes 12:7, and 1 Corinthians 15:47-49. Additionally, Ecclesiastes 3:19-21 says that the animals also came from dust, not from lower life forms. Psalm 104:29 affirms this as well.

*“Thou hast created us
for Thyself, and our
heart is not quiet until
it rests in Thee.”*

-Augustine

Another contradiction between the idea of theistic evolution and the Genesis account is that Genesis 1:11-12, 20-21, 24-25, 7:14 & 8:19 all state that God created plants and animals to reproduce after their “kind,” not to produce any type of creature other than their own kind. These statements contradict the idea of macro-evolution.³⁷

14. How would acceptance of theistic evolution affect our understanding of God’s goodness and salvation?

At the end of His creative work, God said that everything He had made was very good. Yet, the geological and fossil records contain abundant evidence of each of the following:

- Death (and burial) of both animals and men.
- Cancer and other diseases in the creatures that were buried.
- Carnivorous activity (some animals were buried while fighting or devouring one another).
- Earthquakes (geology seems to indicate that the mountains were pushed up by the collision of the plates of the earth, which would certainly cause earthquakes).
- Floods (fossils are not formed unless plants and animals are rapidly buried, and the formation of massive fossil graveyards required massive flooding).

So, theistic evolution, which teaches that the fossil record was deposited prior to the fall of man, must view these calamities as part of God’s “very good” creation. Theistic evolutionist Dr. Howard Van Till summarizes the issue like this:

“It is an incontrovertible scientific fact that there is a long history of life and death for a period of billions of years before people like you and I appeared on earth. So physical death before the fall must be accepted as a fact of science.”³⁸

But what does this supposed “fact of science” tell us about the character and nature of God? How can a good God create a world with such massive amounts of suffering, disease, struggle, violence, and pain? How would a theistic evolutionist answer Harvard anthropologist Irven DeVore:

I personally cannot discern a shred of evidence for a benign cosmic presence. I see indifference and capriciousness. What kind of God works with a 99.9 percent extinction rate?³⁹

“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen. Not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else.”

-C.S. Lewis

Theistic evolution teaches that God created through a process involving the death of enormous numbers of creatures and the extinction of vast numbers of species. What kind of God would create in this way? What kind of God would use death and the struggle for survival as a kind of creative force? The indifferent and capricious God of theistic evolution must have created, as His original design, a world filled with death, violence, suffering, and pain. It is difficult to conclude that such a God is a good God, a God of joy, peace, love, and life.

But beyond obscuring the goodness of God, theistic evolution strikes right to the core of the Christian message. This is boldly confessed by, Thomas Ambrose, an Anglican Priest, who reveals where the acceptance of theistic evolution has taken him theologically.

Fossils are the remains of creatures that lived and died for over a billion years before Homo sapiens evolved. Death is as old as life itself by all but a split second. Can it therefore be God’s punishment for Sin? The fossil record demonstrates that some form of evil has existed throughout time. On the large scale it is evident in natural disasters. The destruction of creatures by flood, ice age, desert and Earthquakes has happened countless times. On the individual scale there is ample evidence of painful, crippling disease and the activity of parasites. We see that living things have suffered in dying, with arthritis, a tumor, or simply being eaten by other creatures. From the dawn of time, the possibility of life and death, good and evil, have always existed. At no point is there any discontinuity; there was never a time when death appeared, or a moment when evil changed the nature of the universe. God made the world as it is; evolution as the instrument of change and diversity. People try to tell us that Adam had a perfect relationship with God until he sinned, and all we need to do is repent and accept Jesus in order to restore that original relationship. But perfection like this never existed. There never was such a world. Trying to return to it, either in reality or spiritually, is a delusion. Unfortunately it is still central to much evangelical preaching.⁴⁰

This clergyman is candid about how his evolutionary philosophy led him to reject the very core of the gospel. Theistic evolution views death, not as an enemy needing to be defeated through the death and resurrection of Christ, but as a natural part of life and of God’s “very good” created order. And if death is good, why do we need a Savior? If there has never been a world without sin, suffering and death, and if the world we see is all that has ever been, it would be foolish to think that there ever will be a different world. Whatever salvation is, it cannot be a place of perfection, free from pain, suffering, violence, and death. Although not all theistic evolutionists are as consistent as Ambrose in accepting the implications of their beliefs, it is hard to see how theistic evolution does not undermine the very foundations of the gospel.

15. Some believers have rejected macro evolution, but accepted a local flood and an earth that is billions of years old in the idea of “progressive creation.” Does this solve the theological problem?

Progressive creation, as popularized by astronomer Hugh Ross, theorizes that God created plants, animals, and man in their various kinds and from the dust of the earth²⁰ rather than through an evolutionary process. Yet progressive creation understands Him to have done this over millions of years, with each creation “day” extending over vast ages.⁴¹

Progressive creationists can be commended for rejecting macro-evolution and accepting Genesis' statements that God created creatures to reproduce after their "kind." Progressive Creation also avoids theistic evolution's problem of God using death and the struggle for survival as a creative force. In its belief that God created life from the dust of the earth, it also soundly rejects naturalism and embraces the reality of the supernatural. Also, it teaches that Adam and Eve actually existed as the very first humans, that there was a first temptation, a first sin, and a subsequent judgment upon mankind and the earth. Therefore it teaches that there was once a world without human death, suffering, or disease.

However, progressive creation agrees with theistic evolution that the fossil record (except for human fossils)⁴² was laid down over millions of years prior to the end of creation day six. Although rejecting the death of humans prior to the fall, it teaches that animals died, suffered, and devoured one another prior to God's curse of the earth. These conditions with animals were part of God's original "very good" created order. This is no small problem, as shown by the following:

- It continues to compromise the goodness of God. Atheistic schools in the Soviet Union used to show elementary students videos of carnivores attacking, disemboweling, and eating cute and defenseless animals. The shocked and traumatized children were then told that there was no good God who would create such a world of struggle and violence. Those who believe in carnivorous activity prior to the fall and curse would have difficulty answering such challenges to the goodness of God.
- Many of the Hebrew readers were shepherds familiar with carnivorous animals. As they read the book of Genesis, they would find that their forefather Jacob bore the loss of animals to carnivores himself, rather than report them to his father-in-law (31:38). As they continued reading, they would come across God's promise in Leviticus 26:6 that if they obeyed Him, He would eliminate harmful beasts from the land. Then they would come to Deuteronomy 32:24, where God warned that disobedience would result in the multiplication of these animals, devouring both livestock and humans. Could they possibly have considered such behavior by animals to be part of God's original "very good" creation, as progressive creation and theistic evolution teach?
- Isaiah 11:6-9 describes the coming new order, "The wolf will live with the lamb... They will neither harm nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (NIV). This implies that the hurting and destroying of animals by one another is not consistent with God's perfect plan which will be restored in the future.
- Death from old age and the processes of disease and parasites in animals are biologically parallel, if not identical, to what happens with man. It seems somewhat incongruous to say, on the one hand, that these processes in animals are part of God's pre-fall, "very good" creation and to say, on the other hand, that they are a result of the fall and the curse in man. And what does this say about the profession of the veterinarian? If death and disease among animals is part of God's "very good" creation, is the veterinarian fighting against the plan of God?

***"Another century
and there will not be
a Bible on earth!"***

***-Voltaire (1694-1778)
whose home was later
used as a distribution
center for Bibles in many
languages.***

“I follow the example of St. Augustine, who was . . . the first and almost the only one who determined to be subject to the Holy Scriptures alone.”

-Martin Luther

- Toward the end of creation day six, God gave mankind the job of ruling over the animals. Yet progressive creation envisions that fish, birds, and animals had been killing each other for millions of years prior to this. It would seem that Adam, who was given the responsibility of being a caring, protecting ruler, would have tried to prevent them from killing each other. But wouldn't such a protective desire on Adam's part go against God's well-established and "very good" created order?
- Progressive creation also has to consider earthquakes and floods to be part of God's "very good" creation, since they are recorded in the geologic record. Yet these do untold damage in our world, destroying the lives of men and animals.
- Progressive creation effectively diminishes the traditional Christian understanding of the curse's effects. It tends to reduce the curse to a diminishing of the ground's productivity, as stated in Genesis 3:17-19. Yet, Romans 8 states that the creation awaits the revealing of the sons of God and that God subjected the creation to futility. This passage seems to envision a much larger release of creation from "it's bondage to decay" (Romans 8:21 NIV) than simply increased productivity of the ground.

Minimizing the effects of the curse on creation is no small error. How do we answer people who are angry at God because their property or pets or livestock have been destroyed in a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, flood, or forest fire? How do we comfort people devastated by a tsunami resulting from an earthquake? Do such disasters occur because God has cursed the earth as a judgment on us for our sin, or should we consider them wonderful blessings; part of the original created order of a "good" God? If we believe that God, Himself, created them, our ability to defend the goodness of God is seriously compromised.

16. Can the Biblical account be harmonized with the actual scientific data?

What we observe in the world around us ought to line up with the actual history of how things came to be. It should not be a surprise, then, that when we assume that God exists, that creation involved supernatural acts on His part, and that the earth was at one time flooded in a huge cataclysmic event, the scientific data can, by and large, be interpreted to support a young earth and world-wide flood. Certainly, creationist and young-earth scientists still have problems to solve and work to do. Yet a few privately-funded scientists have been making significant progress toward finding solutions to some of the tension points between the scientific data and a straightforward reading of the Biblical creation account. On the other hand, scientists who believe in evolution, in spite of their massive amounts of funding and decades of research, continue to have massive problems correlating the scientific data to the evolutionary, uniformitarian scenario. If, indeed, the book of Genesis accurately describes the history of the early earth, the scientific data will continue to support it, and increasingly so as additional research is undertaken. Already, the evidence has forced many geologists to turn from a strict uniformitarian position toward more catastrophic scenarios. Also, evolutionists are being challenged by the lack of evidence for evolution and the lack of a viable mechanism for its accomplishment. In the end, the full scientific data, rightly interpreted, will universally support the true history of the earth and

universe. I believe that this will ultimately line up with a straightforward reading of the Genesis account.

Here are a few very brief arguments and some resources that support the young-earth creationist position:

Evolution: Creationists agree with evolutionists in regard to what has been referred to as “micro-evolution”—changes within a gene pool or Biblical “kind.” But creationists have consistently pointed out the lack of evidence for macro-evolution—an addition of new information leading to new “kinds.” Darwin predicted that the fossil record would eventually show numerous transitional fossils. Yet even a century and a half later, evolutionists can only point to a handful of dubious examples. Additionally, scientists have no viable evidence that constructive genetic information has been added or is being added to any gene pool. All known changes and differentiation can be attributed to a loss or sorting of information, rather than an increase in it. An excellent summary of creationist arguments against evolution can be found in Jonathan Sarfati’s books, *Refuting Evolution I* and *Refuting Evolution II*. These books are a response to National Academy of Science’s educator’s guidebook *Teaching about Evolution and the Nature of Science*. Sarfati’s books are available online at: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/RE1/index.asp> and <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/RE2/index.asp>.

The Flood: If a world-wide flood of Biblical proportions did occur, surely we ought to be able to see evidence for it in the geological formations on earth. Such evidence is abundant and persuasive. The *Genesis Flood* and *The Young Earth* (see bibliography) are a good place to start. A list of online articles can be found as follows:

World-wide flood: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/faq/flood.asp>.

Geological evidences: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/faq/Geology.asp>

Catastrophic plate tectonics (rapid movement of the plates of the earth) as a possible mechanism for the flood: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/faq/tectonics.asp>.⁴³

The Age of the Earth: For a list of online articles giving evidence for a young earth from astronomy, atmospheric science, botany, geology, glaciology, human history, and oceanography, see: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/Home/Area/faq/young.asp>.

Ancient starlight: Starlight from distant galaxies, apparently billions of light-years away, has been a difficult issue for young earth scientists to explain.⁴⁴ A few articles addressing this issue can be found at: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/search/Default.aspx?qt=starlight>

Interestingly, starlight and time pose a problem for the big bang theory as well: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v25/i4/lighttravel.asp>

Radiometric dating: Radiometric dating has tended to be extremely inconsistent. For example, rock from the lava dome at Mount Saint Helens, which was formed during October 1986, returned Potassium-Argon “ages” ranging from 340,000 to 2.8 million years.⁴⁵ Yet these rocks are only twenty years old! The Creation Research Institute has recently completed a multi-year project studying radiometric

‘We have no acceptable theory of evolution at the present time. There is none; and I cannot accept the theory that I teach to my students each year. .. I teach the synthetic theory known as the neo-Darwinian one, for one reason only; not because it’s good, we know it is bad, but because there isn’t any other.’

-Professor Jerome Leieune

"I am an ardent evolutionist and an ex-Christian, but I must admit that... the literalists are absolutely right. Evolution is a religion.... Evolution therefore came into being as a kind of secular ideology, an explicit substitute for Christianity."

-Michael Ruse

dating. Their research presents several lines of physical evidence suggesting that radioactive decay rates were much higher in the past than they are today. This would require much younger radiometric dates, pointing to an age for the earth in the thousands rather than billions of years. The research has also verified that measurable carbon 14 is found in coal and even diamonds, placing their age at a few thousand years. See online resources at: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/faq/dating.asp>

17. If the scientific data can be interpreted to support a world-wide flood, a recent creation, and the creation of "kinds" rather than macro-evolution, why do the vast majority of scientists believe in evolution and an earth that is billions of years old?

This may be one of the most important questions addressed in this paper. Imagine with me that 50% of the scientific community believed in and strongly argued for a sixthousand-year-old earth and a world-wide flood. How would this affect Christians' interpretation of Genesis chapter one? Would many, if any, Christians interpret chapter one in any way other than its straightforward reading? The truth is, we are intimidated by the fact that over 95% of scientists believe in evolution and an earth that is billions of years old.

Yet bias in the scientific community is common and in this case is often obvious. For example, it's ironic that scientists look at pictures of horizontal marks on the cliffs of Mars and speculate that Mars, which currently has little, if any, liquid water, was at one time flooded with water. Yet, the scientific community tends to scoff at the idea of a world-wide flood, even though the earth is three quarters covered with water and has enough water to cover its surface two miles deep if the earth's surface was leveled. Marine fossils are found on the highest mountains, indicating that they must have at one time been flooded by water. Why does the scientific community scoff at the idea of a world-wide flood of the earth, yet readily accept the idea that Mars, a planet evidently drier than the Gobi desert, was once flooded with water?

Could it be that the scientific community's bias stems from its presuppositions and its a-priori acceptance of evolution and rejection of God as creator? Romans chapter one states that unredeemed humans tend to flee from God and reject the knowledge of God and whatever truths remind them of God or His glory. The world of men is at war with God and this includes many scientists. The apostle John states that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. Should we be surprised, then, when we find that scientists, our culture's primary thinkers and intellectual leaders, are deceived by and influenced by the devil's schemes and philosophies?

Romans one is just as true today as during the days of idolatry. Men suppress the truth in unrighteousness. We tend to worship the creation rather than the creator. In Paul's day, idolatry tended to envision gods who were personifications of the forces of nature. So, the mythology of ancient paganism could almost be seen as an attempt to avoid the Creator God and see the world as self-creating, just as today's naturalistic evolution does. Humanism, atheism, and agnosticism are no less culpable and irrational than idolatry— they are just more sophisticated.

Another factor is that the scientific community has become deeply entrenched with the presumption of evolution. There have been few scientists researching the young earth, world-wide flood model and they have been poorly funded. Significant young-earth arguments and evidences are either not yet well developed or are relatively new and unknown. Additionally, scientists are becoming increasingly specialized in narrow fields of study. Many have been taught evolutionary concepts and assume that others have done the work or research to support it and simply don't feel the need to seriously reexamine it.

18. How should Christians relate and interact with scientists or others who strongly believe in evolution and uniformitarianism and who scoff at those who don't?

When trying to persuade people committed to naturalism, wisdom would normally advise us to follow the lead of the intelligent design movement by focusing discussion on the idea that creation proves the existence of an intelligent Creator. Just as we don't typically lead with the issue of women's roles when presenting the gospel to people committed to feminist thinking, so it is normally unwise to lead with the idea that the earth is young and all fossils were laid down in a world-wide flood. The gospel is the power of God for salvation. Often, people can come to faith in Christ while still holding to theistic evolution and uniformitarianism. Afterwards, they may desire to re-examine their belief in evolution and an old earth.

However, since the gospel is the power of God for salvation, care should be taken not to undermine the gospel or present a weakened gospel that fails to state that God created all things and so has authority to judge us. Also, we must proclaim the Biblical understanding that God created a perfect world without sin, suffering, and death and that sorrow and suffering are present in the world as a result of our sin. However, these concepts can often be shared without specifically refuting evolution or discussing the age of the earth.

In some instances, a person may be unwilling to embrace the gospel because he sees the incongruity between the Genesis account and the prevailing scientific opinion. In such cases, we may need to interact and point him to evidence that supports the Biblical account so that He can believe in God and His word with intellectual integrity.

19. If the Scripture is so clear regarding the creation week and world-wide flood, why are many respected Christians open to attempts at harmonizing the creation account with evolutionary and uniformitarian thinking?

Godly and respected Christian leaders of the past, such as C. S. Lewis, Bernard Ramm, and Francis Schaeffer, as well as present leaders, such as Norman Geisler, John Ankerburg, Charles Colson, Walter Kaiser, and others have expressed openness to theistic evolution or to progressive creation. Hugh Ross' Reasons to Believe web site lists 41 Christian leaders of the present and past who have expressed openness to an old earth perspective or to theistic evolution. Yet, to be fair to these men, we must acknowledge that most have not actually advocated theistic evolution or an old-earth position, but

“Everything Scripture teaches about sin and redemption assumes the literal truth of the first three chapters of Genesis. If we wobble to any degree on the truth of this passage, we undermine the very foundations of our faith.”

-John MacArthur

“The human body has been called the microcosm of the universe, a little world of wonders and a monument of divine wisdom and power, sufficient to convince the most incredulous mind of the existence of the Great Designer.”

-A. B Simpson

simply expressed some openness to it. Some on the list seem to have simply used the Big Bang Theory as an argument that the universe had a beginning.

There are probably many and varied reasons that godly Christian leaders might disagree with the thrust of this paper or with the strength that it has argued for a straightforward reading of Genesis. I haven't thoroughly studied each person's position and don't want to speak for anyone else. But here is a list of possibilities that I can think of.

- Some may agree that both the Scripture and science reveal truth but disagree with this paper's conclusion that Scripture is a far more reliable witness for early earth's history than are the historical sciences.
 - Some may not have considered the theological and practical ramifications of attempts to harmonize Genesis with evolutionary and uniformitarian scenarios. They may not see the importance of making this a battleground. Or they may not agree that these ramifications exist.
 - Common principles of Biblical interpretation have not been fully agreed upon in evangelical Christianity. Some may disagree with this paper's insistence that the goal of interpretation should be to find the author's intended meaning as it would be understood by his original audience. Or some may disagree with certain specific points of interpretation.
- Some may make different assumptions concerning the authorship of Genesis, the time period in which it was written, or the world view of the author and his readers.
 - Much of the increasingly persuasive, but recent scientific data and theories that support a young earth and a world-wide flood may have been unavailable to them or have not been seriously studied by them. Some may have unanswered questions about scientific data that, at face value, might point toward evolution or a billion-year-old old earth.
 - Some may not want the gospel to be ridiculed or Christians to be branded as ridiculously stupid. Young earth creationists and their teachings tend to be ridiculed by much of the scientific community. Some believers' attempts to harmonize the Bible with modern scenarios, at least in part, stem from a commendable desire to win people to Christ and not to unnecessarily alienate them.
 - Some may not have seriously considered how secular man's rejection of God blurs his objectivity. They may be intimidated by the scientific community's wholesale acceptance of evolution and a four billion-year-old earth.

20. What should our attitude and approach be toward Christians who disagree with us on the interpretation of these key passages?

Since many of these creation issues are not core doctrines necessary for salvation, we should treat Christians who disagree as brothers and sisters in Christ, love them, respect them, and work shoulder to shoulder with them whenever possible. Christians must be able to disagree on doctrines not essential for salvation and remain united. On the other hand, we should not yield what we consider to be clearly taught, important truths to a sense of ambiguity simply because people we respect disagree.

We should humbly teach and preach what we believe is important without disparaging our brothers who disagree.

If someone who disagrees is interested and open to dialog, we should seek to interact with them and encourage them to investigate the scientific and textual evidence for a straightforward reading of Genesis. We could also encourage them to remain true to the Scriptures regardless of pressures from the scientific community. We should seek to correct any exalted opinions of secular “science” that they may have, pointing them to the true wisdom that stems from the revelation of God as Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 1-3 & Colossians 2.

Also, we should remain open to the possibility that we may have wrongly interpreted Genesis or misunderstood the author’s intended meaning.

*“Thou hast created us
for Thyself, and our
heart is not quiet until
it rests in Thee.”*

-Augustine

21. If these creation issues are non-essential, are they worth debating?

Some have argued that the issues addressed in this paper are not important enough to debate. The presumption is that we can hold divergent views on evolution and the age of the earth and remain largely unaffected by possible deception. But how do we know which doctrines are important and which are not? Are we really so wise that we can judge which doctrines are crucial and which peripheral? The creation account clearly and straightforwardly addresses the issues this paper has discussed. The creation account is clearer and better attested than many other important doctrines; for example the deity of the Holy Spirit or the differing roles of men and women or the proper use of the Old Testament by those living under the New Testament. Should not the clarity of the passages themselves show that they are important enough to debate and defend?

Consider what might happen if all Christians believed in an earth that was merely thousands of years old. What powerful effect might this have on us? Might we better understand the goodness of our God, who recently created a world that was “very good” in every way? Might we better perceive the horrendous consequences of our fall into sin? Might we realize that history is very short and its culmination imminent? Might it have some effect in combating worldliness, as we realize that not only are we, as individuals, aliens and strangers on earth, but that the entire history of the human race is exceedingly short and that the entire race is, in a sense, an alien and a stranger on this damaged earth?

What effect does it have if we yield the interpretation of these passages to ambiguity? What would this say about our ability to interpret the rest of the Bible? If Christians hear their leaders say that Genesis 1-11, Exodus 20, 2 Peter 3, etc. are so ambiguous that we can’t really know what they say and yet themselves read something so straightforward and clear, does this not seriously compromise their confidence in their own and their leader’s ability to understand the Scriptures?

A. W. Tozer has said, “We should and must learn that we cannot handle holy things carelessly without suffering serious consequences.”⁴⁶ We may not always know or understand what the consequences may be, but they will affect us none the less. Although most of these contemporary issues concerning creation are not addressed in our doctrinal statement and are non-essentials in regards to saving faith, we ought to be slow to consider any clear teaching of Scripture an unimportant doctrine not worthy of serious defense and debate.

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Endnotes

¹ To my knowledge, no Great Commission leader believes in macro evolution or rejects supernatural miracles within creation and beyond.

² The Holy Bible : English Standard Version. 2001. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

³ New American Standard Bible : 1995 update. 1995. LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

⁴ The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company.

⁵ Today, scientists who hold to uniformitarian views tend to believe that the processes now operating are sufficient to explain the geological history of the earth, but that the rates and intensity of these processes may have varied in the past, allowing for the possibility that the earth's history may have included catastrophic upheavals.

⁶ See, the GCLI paper The Bible and Psychology, Sociology, Science, and Business Principles (year 1, session 2) for further thoughts on the relationship of the Bible and science.

⁷ If a straightforward reading of the genealogies is accepted, the possibility that the Genesis account is eyewitness testimony is strengthened. Adam's grandson lived until Noah was 80, and Noah lived until the birth of Abram. The longevity of these men allowed them to protect the integrity of their testimony and accurately pass it on to future generations.

⁸ Whether the heavens and earth were created on day one or sometime prior to day one has been a matter of some debate. So has the question of whether verse one describes a separate creative act or functions as a title summarizing God's work in the six days that follow. See Word Biblical Commentary, by Gordon J. Wenham, pp. 11-15.

⁹ The "gap theory," postulates an indeterminate period of time between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. The gap theory is not widely held today, since it has significant interpretive problems and doesn't harmonize well with modern geological perspectives. A critique of the gap theory can be found at <http://www.answersingenesis.org/Home/Area/AnswersBook/gaptheory3.asp>.

¹⁰ There is Biblical evidence that some genealogical lists in the Bible skip a few generations. It appears that the purpose of at least some of the genealogies was to prove ancestry, not necessarily to give a complete list of all the ancestors. Yet a list that includes gaps of thousands or millions of years would not serve well in proving ancestry either. Even if there are gaps, it would be hard to stretch the lists more than a few thousand years. Arguments that gaps are possible can be found in The Genesis Flood, by John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris, pp 474-489 and in Genesis in Space and Time, by Francis A. Schaeffer, pp 122-124. For an argument that the text cannot support gaps in the early genealogies of Genesis, see http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/magazines/tj/docs/v17n3_Chronogenealogies.pdf.

¹¹ This is assuming that there are no gaps in the genealogies. Also, it is based on the Hebrew text. The Samaritan text gives this as 1,307 years and the Greek Septuagint as 2,262 years.

¹² Kidner, Derek. Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, p. 9.

¹³ The Holy Bible : New International Version. 1996, c1984 (Ge 1:4-5). Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

¹⁴ For a defense of the idea that the goal of interpretation should be to discern the author's intended meaning, see the first chapter of Validity in Interpretation by E. D. Hirsch, Jr.

¹⁵ A fairly concise summary of the different schools and approaches to authorship and literary structure of the Pentateuch can be found in Creation and Blessing, by Allen P. Ross, pp. 23-36. A thorough critique of the documentary hypothesis can be found in Gleason Archer's A Survey of Old Testament Introduction. A brief critique can be found at: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v20/i4/moses.asp>.

¹⁶ This phrase, as translated by the ESV appears ten times in Genesis, dividing the book into eleven sections (Genesis 2:4, 6:9, 10:1, 11:10, 11:27, 25:12, 25:19, 36:1, 36:9, 37:2).

¹⁷ A brief overview of Egyptian and Mesopotamian creation stories can be found at: <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ab83#2000>.

¹⁸ In his book A Matter of Days, astronomer Hugh Ross gives evidence that a few early Christian and Jewish expositors (particularly Augustine and Philo) either found allegorical meaning in the days of creation or did not interpret them literally (Augustine preferred the idea that God created in an instant.) Yet Ross gives no evidence that any church father or Jewish expositor believed in vast ages for creation or that anyone interpreted the days of Genesis chapter one to be long periods of time. In defending the Scriptures from accusations of error, some church fathers did speculate that God's warning to Adam that he would die "in the day" he ate of the fruit was fulfilled allegorically in that Adam failed to live a thousand years (an allegorical day), but Ross does not show that any of the fathers applied this thousand-year allegory to the "days" of Genesis one.

¹⁹ The pseudepigrapha is a body of texts written between 200 BC and 200 AD and spuriously ascribed to various Old Testament prophets and kings.

²⁰ For a description of references to creation in Josephus, the Apocrypha, and the pseudepigrapha, see Biblical Creationism, by Henry M. Morris, pp 233-248.

²¹ Waltke, Bruce K. Genesis, a Commentary, p 29.

²² The difference between Hebrew narrative and poetry is clear and discernable as shown by Dr. C. Taylor in Linguistics, Genesis, and Evolution: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v4/i1/linguistics.asp>.

²³ For an analysis of how Genesis is viewed as historical and foundational throughout the rest of the Bible, see *Biblical Creationism*, by Henry M. Morris.

²⁴ For a list of Hebrew words that refer to a long period of time, see *How Long Were the Days of Genesis One?* by Russell Grigg. <http://www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v19/i1/days.asp>.

²⁵ Strong, J. (1996). *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (electronic ed.) (H216). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.

²⁶ A more thorough analysis of the forms of the Hebrew word “day” in Genesis chapter one can be found at <http://www.answersingenesis.org/tj/v17/i2/numbering.asp#f2>. Also, in Genesis 2:4, the Hebrew word “day” is used in a prepositional form: “in the day when the Lord made the heavens and the earth.” Used in this prepositional form, the word often refers to an indefinite period of time, as indicated by the translation of this phrase as “when” in the NIV, NLT, GNT, and NCV.

²⁷ Actually, an interpretation that “morning and evening” refer to the beginning and ending of God’s work hurts the day-age proponent. During the first day, God said, “Let there be light,” and “there was light.” The language is dramatic and strongly implies that God’s work was accomplished instantaneously. The only events that occurred on the first day were that God spoke, light was instantly produced, and God named the light and darkness. If the morning and evening refer to the beginning and ending of God’s work, then the length of the first day would appear to be a few seconds, certainly not millions of years.

²⁸ *The G3N3S1S Debate*, edited by David G. Hagopian, p.224.

²⁹ The preceding chart is in error when it indicates that the seas were created on day two. They were created on day three (Genesis 1:9-10).

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 261.

³¹ As an example, see *Genesis, A Commentary*, by Bruce K. Waltke, pp. 18-21.

³² *Chaos to Cosmos: A Critique of the Framework Hypothesis*, Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., Ph.D., Westminster Theological Seminary/California, <http://capo.org/cpc/pipa.htm>.

³³ See <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/answersbook/arksize13.asp> for a discussion on the adequacy of the ark to hold creatures of every “kind.”

³⁴ For a chronology of the flood, see the commentary on Genesis 6:19-7:5 in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary.

³⁵ Josephus and other ancient authors located Ararat either in Turkey or Northern Iran. See <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/flood/ch7.asp>

³⁶ Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1996, c1987). *The works of Josephus : Complete and unabridged*. Peabody: Hendrickson., *Antiquities I*, iii 6.

³⁷ Macro-evolution would involve an addition of genetic information resulting in evolution (change over time) that crosses the boundary of a “kind.” In contrast, micro-evolution is change over time within certain limits (i.e. within a “kind”) and coming from a loss or sorting of genetic information. An example of macro-evolution would be invertebrate animals developing a backbone. An example of micro-evolution would be the variations in the sizes and shapes of finch beaks that Darwin observed on the Galapagos Islands or as observed in the breeding of domestic animals.

³⁸ Van Till, Howard. Audio taped debate held on October 27, 1988, quoted by James Stambaugh, M.Div. in *Death Before Sin*, <http://www.icr.org/index.php?module=articles&action=view&ID=295>.

³⁹ DeVore, I., *Astronomy Might be refashioning Images of God*, *Times-News Weekender*, May 1, 1999. This commonly cited figure is exaggerated — it is based on the evolutionary assumption concerning the many transitional forms that ‘must have existed.’ There are only about 250,000 known fossil species <http://www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v21/i4/oldearth.asp>.

⁴⁰ Ambrose, Tom, *Just a pile of old bones*, *The Church of England Newspaper*, A Current Affair Section, Friday October 21, 1994

⁴¹ See Hugh Ross’ books *Creation and Time*, 1994, Navpress and *A Matter of Days*, 2004, Navpress.

⁴² The progressive creation organization *Reasons to Believe* teaches that fossil hominids, such as

Neanderthal man, *Homo Erectus*, and other human-like fossils were not truly humans and not descendants of Adam. Adam was the first hominid with a soul, created by God perhaps 40-50 thousand years ago. See http://www.reasons.org/resources/apologetics/wieland_sarfati_statement.shtml.

⁴³ I’ve heavily sited the *Answers in Genesis* web site, not because I prefer it to the *Institute of Creation Research* web site (www.icr.org), but because it has some excellent lists of young-earth creationist articles from many online sources.

⁴⁴ The *Creation Research Institute* is attempting to raise funds to develop a cosmological model in some ways similar to the Big Bang that would support a six day creation and answer the problem of ancient star light as proposed in Russell Humphries book *Starlight and Time*. See <http://www.icr.org/article/2468/>.

⁴⁵ <http://www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v23/i3/radiodating.asp>.

⁴⁶ A. W. Tozer *The Best of A. W. Tozer*, p. 64. Compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe. Quoted from *Tozer’s God Tells the Man Who Cares*.

CREATION AND THE GENESIS ACCOUNT**Exercise**

1. Why is it important that we understand and uphold the truth that God is our creator? Why might our hearts sometimes rebel against this idea? Why should we rejoice in it?

2. This paper argues that the goal of interpretation should be to find the author's intended meaning as it would have been understood by its original audience. Why is it important that we adopt and pursue this goal? What can we do to try to avoid reading the scriptures through the lenses of our own modern worldview?

3. Did you find persuasive the arguments against interpreting each "day" of Genesis as an age? Why or why not? Which arguments were most persuasive to you? Can you think of other arguments that might apply to this issue?



CREATION AND THE GENESIS ACCOUNT

Exercise

4. Why is a worldwide flood such an important issue in understanding the story of the earth's beginning? Why do you think almost all Christians who adopt an evolutionary viewpoint deny a worldwide flood? Do you think the biblical account of Noah's flood can rightly be interpreted to be a local flood? Why or why not?

5. In what ways might an evolutionary scenario and a young-earth creation scenario of the origins of the world produce very different views of God, man, the world, and the future?



CREATION AND THE GENESIS ACCOUNT

Exercise

6. Does it bother you that the vast majority of scientists believe in amoeba to man evolution? If the straightforward biblical account is actually the truth, why do so many scientists disagree with it?

7. How strongly should we defend the straightforward biblical story, and how should we use wisdom in addressing this issue with unbelievers and fellow believers who disagree with it?
