

OUTLINE—Why I Believe in 24-Hour Day, Young Earth Creationism  
by Jud Davis

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## Introduction

My college recently hosted a conference on an Evangelical reading of Genesis 1-3. A generous private donation to the conference meant we could fly in many world-class scholars to present different views on Genesis 1-2. What surprised me most in all this was the difficulty we had in finding one single nationally known Old Testament scholar who would support a traditional, plain-language reading of Genesis 1-2.

A plain-language reading of the Bible produces the idea that Adam was created by God without biological ancestors, and God's creation of the universe occurred in the relatively recent past and happened over a period of six days similar to the ones experienced by the original audience of Genesis. However, for many evangelicals, a Copernican revolution has happened, and only backward, unthinking Christians would believe that the Bible teaches young-earth creationism. One prominent, lifelong evangelical Old Testament scholar even said on national TV about evolution, "To deny that reality will make us a cult, some odd group that is not really interacting with the real world."<sup>1</sup>

Within evangelicalism over the last century and a half, a number of Old Testament scholars, if not a majority, have taught that the Bible does not teach the traditional/plain-language view. The first of these teachings were the gap theory, then the day/age theory, and finally the framework hypothesis. Recently scholars, at times nuancing these first three views, suggest that genre considerations, ancient Near Eastern parallels and/or analogical days resolve the conflict. All six views agree on one basic point: Neither Moses nor God intended for readers to think of Genesis 1-2 as establishing a real, chronological segment of 144 hours of creative activity—an interpretation that, together with the genealogies of Genesis 1-11 and other chronological references in the Old Testament, would put the creation of the universe somewhere around 4,000 years before Christ.<sup>2</sup>

I find myself in the current minority. I do not think future church historians will accept the recent solution. The day will come when Christians must admit that Moses and God intended to present creation in the recent past. However, the current majority has solved the apparent antinomy between the Bible and science this way: the Bible does not teach the traditional/plain-language view of cosmology; rather, it teaches a view of cosmology that is indifferent to or allows for long ages of science and (for some) the evolution of Adam from biological predecessors. This majority view faces seven very difficult questions in my opinion.

## Seven Reasons

**1. Jesus and Cosmology.** Under this heading I have four points.

*A. Jesus read the text as history and accepted the plain-language meaning of Genesis 1-3.* Adam's creation was, according to Jesus, "from the beginning" (Matt. 19:4, 8; Mark 10:6).<sup>3</sup> Jesus states that Satan was a murderer "from the beginning" (John 8:44).<sup>4</sup> Luke 11:50-51 speaks of "the blood of the prophets having been poured out from the foundation of the orderly universe (kosmos)"<sup>5</sup> and interprets this as "from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah." These texts suggest that Jesus associated "in beginning" of Gen. 1:1 chronologically with the early events in Genesis. There was no physical human death before Abel's death. Adam and the events of his life were real events, and those events happened in the beginning. Furthermore, Jesus even makes a theological point depending on

that plain-language meaning of Gen. 2:7 in John 3:31;<sup>6</sup> just as Jesus was from heaven and is over all, speaking heavenly things, so Adam was from earth and thus speaks earthly things.<sup>7</sup> Adam was thus not from biological predecessors, he was created by God from the dust of the earth according to Jesus. Jesus's thinking on these points guided Paul who also understood Adam as a historical figure who started the human race.<sup>8</sup>

However, all of these things, and "the orderly universe" of Luke 11:50 in particular, could not be associated with the "beginning" if the vast majority of 13.7 billion years of the universe had passed. In fact, 4,000-6,000 years is at most 1/2,283,333 of the universe's history. By analogy, if the universal history were 24 hours, 6000 years would be three-hundredths of a second. Jesus would be placing an event at the very start of the day which in fact was less than one second from midnight at the day's end.

*B. Jesus was not just a man, but participated in creation as God.* Scripture affirms that all the fullness of deity dwells in Jesus in bodily form (Col. 2:8-9). Whatever makes God to be God, was true of Jesus as an incarnated man. This is the Christology that is at the heart of all Christian belief. To depart from such Christology historically has meant stepping away from authentic Christianity.

As an incarnated man, Jesus claims the attributes of God (omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence etc.).<sup>9</sup> Jesus affirms that he knows all the events that happened from the beginning (Matt. 24:21; Mark 13:19).<sup>10</sup> He knows what Solomon looked like in royal robes (Matt. 6:29). Jesus knew Abraham's reaction to seeing Jesus's day (John 8:56). Jesus is able to say that a certain future event will exceed all historical events and never be repeated (Matt. 24:21; Mark 13:19). According to his immediate audience, Jesus is claiming to know history in a divine way (John 8:57-59). Also, the New Testament affirms that the Logos/pre-incarnate Son participated in creation and that He currently holds all things together, causing and allowing their existence (1 Cor. 8:4-6; Col. 1:15-17; 2:8-9; Heb. 1:1-13; John 1:1-5; Rev. 4:11). My point is that the pre-incarnate Son, as co-creator of the universe, and as its sustainer, should know when and how that creation happened.

*C. Jesus allowed the Gospel of Luke to trace his genealogy to Adam.* The resurrected Jesus as God allowed the church to believe that he descended from a real person who was directly created by God. In Luke, Jesus's genealogy goes back to David (the point at which both Mary's and Joseph's genealogies join together). Ultimately it continues to Adam who is directly connected with God, not with biological ancestors prior to Adam. If Jesus did not want the church to believe that about Adam, why would he inspire Luke to include those words (Luke 3:23-38)? He could have had a genealogy given similar to that in Matthew, which does not go back to Adam. And in this allowance, Jesus orchestrated 1800 plus years of interpretation to assert the text (Genesis 1-11) as history. If Jesus intended the text to be understood in a non-historical matter (as evangelical Old Testament scholars today are suggesting), then Jesus would have missed his mark for over 1800 years.<sup>11</sup>

*D. Disciples follow Jesus, they do not teach Him.* I do not believe it is right for a servant to contradict his master. It is not right for a worshipper to gainsay his God. Luther in a similar way speaking of the Holy Spirit has wisely advised here,

But if you cannot understand how this could have been done in six days, then grant the Holy Spirit the honor of being more learned than you are. For you are to deal with Scripture in such a way that you bear in mind that God Himself says what is written. But since God is speaking, it is not fitting for you wantonly to turn His Word in the direction you wish it to go.<sup>12</sup>

If Jesus as God incarnate said that these things happened at the beginning, who am I to say anything different? Former Westminster Theological Seminary professor Peter Enns thinks he has found a way around Jesus's teaching when he writes,

Jesus was human but without sin, but that does not mean that he was not a product of his culture and embodied the limitations of any human being. The fact that Jesus showed fully all the marks of humanity is part and parcel of the incarnation—the atonement and resurrection depend on it. No element of humanity was withheld from him, other than sinfulness. In other words, any aspect of Jesus's life that speaks to his human limitation is not a function of his sinfulness but of his humanness, for example: that he bled, got hungry, got sick, did not know when the end would come, thought the world was flat, did not understand String Theory, could not speak French. These things do not make Jesus less the Son of God, but are part of what is inherent in Immanuel, God with us.<sup>13</sup>

Enns's statement is inconsistent with incarnational Christology as traditionally understood. I wonder if Jesus thought the earth was flat as He, in the unity of His person, held the molecules of the universe together, or when He, lying helpless in a manger, brought out the stars one by one and called each by name?<sup>14</sup> Enns's explanation works only if Jesus, as an incarnated man, did not have all the fullness of deity dwelling in him in bodily form contra Col. 2:8-9. Lane G. Tipton, current Systematic Theology Professor at Westminster, writes,

An orthodox incarnational analogy implies that the human, while real, is nonetheless secondary to the divine persons of the Son and Spirit, both in the incarnation and inspiration/inscripturation of the Word of God, . . . Enns' incarnational model, and the analogy he draws from it, is not consistent with a biblical and Chalcedonian approach.<sup>15</sup>

I do not see how within orthodox Christology, one could say that Christ taught error about creation and then justify rejecting Jesus's view by the incarnation and limitation of his human understanding. Such a view rests on a failure to recognize Jesus as fully divine. So the question that I have for everyone who would support a different view of Adam and early chronology is, How does your view not lead to the same place as Enns's view? And a further point, I am very much surprised at how little evangelical Old Testament scholars who support a non-traditional view interact with Jesus's view of creation and Genesis.

## **2. It is the most natural reading of the Hebrew text (not day/age, "God's workdays", or "non-chronological, 24-hour days").**

For example, the Hebrew of Gen. 1:5 "day one" is *yôm ʿehād* (hereafter, *yom echad*) which occurs ten times in the Hebrew Bible,<sup>16</sup> in Gen. 1:5; 27:45; Gen. 33:13; Num. 11:19; 1 Sam. 9:15; 1 Sam. 27:1; Ezra 10:17; Isa. 9:13; Jon. 3:4 and Zech. 14:7.<sup>17</sup> The normal, natural meaning is "a day/one day." Consider Gen. 27:45, "why should I be bereft of you both in a day (*yom echad*)?" Or ponder 33:13, "If they are driven hard for one day (*yom echad*), all the flocks will die." Num. 11:19-20 states, "You all will not eat it one day (*yom echad*) or two days or five days or ten days or twenty days—but for a month of days, until it comes out of your noses. . ." These usages show that any idea of *yom echad* inherently meaning long period of time is false. That is one among many reasons that the day/age view has not found widespread support among scholars, as we will see below. If *yom echad* normally means "a day/one day" elsewhere, that meaning should be the starting point for understanding Genesis 1. Moreover, it should remain the accepted meaning in Genesis 1 unless there is overwhelming evidence that it cannot be.

Those who support a nontraditional view of Genesis 1-2 believe that they have found this overwhelming evidence. The question I would ask is, "Who else has seen this overwhelming evidence?"

Is it in the ancient translations? Was it seen by a majority of the Rabbis? Was the overwhelming evidence so obvious that no competent ancient Jew would ever attempt to add up numbers to establish a chronology of original creation? Did the early Greek and Latin Fathers see such overwhelming evidence? Do critical scholars today because of this overwhelming evidence believe that the traditional view was not the intention of the original author/editor? Let us turn to this evidence to see.

None of the ancient interpretive translations of the Hebrew text (some of which were wildly interpretive) offer anything other than "day one/first day" for the text of Genesis 1:5. This is true of the Greek Septuagint,<sup>18</sup> the Latin Vulgate,<sup>19</sup> the Syriac Peshitta,<sup>20</sup> the Paris Aramaic Targum Fragment,<sup>21</sup> Vatican Targum Fragment,<sup>22</sup> Nürnberg Targum Fragment, Neofiti Targum,<sup>23</sup> Pseudo-Jonathan Targum<sup>24</sup> and Targum Onkelos.<sup>25</sup> For the latter examples (more paraphrases than translations), the writers assume that *yom echad* means a normal day and not ages or God's workdays. In fact, Targum Onkelos even says,

And the Lord said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heaven to distinguish between the day-time and the night-time and let them serve as signs and as fixed times *so that one may count by them the days and the years.*"<sup>26</sup>

Another ancient Aramaic paraphrase of the Bible is called Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. It paraphrases Genesis 1,

. . . to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs and as festival times, and for counting the reckoning of days, and for sanctifying the beginnings of months and the beginnings of years, the intercalations of months and the intercalations of years, the solstices, the new moon, and the cycles (of the sun). 15. And let them serve as lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth." And it was so. 16. God made the two great lights, *and they were equal in glory for twenty-one hours less six hundred and seventy-two parts of an hour.*<sup>27</sup>

Josephus, *Antiquities*, 1:27-29, is unaware that the days should allow for long ages, for he writes,

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. The earth had not come into sight, but was hidden in thick darkness, and a breath from above sped over it, when God commanded that there should be light. It came, and, surveying the whole of matter, *he divided the light from the darkness, calling the latter night and the former day, and naming morning and evening the dawn of the light and its cessation. This then should be the first day, but Moses spoke of it as 'one' day; I could explain why he did so now, but having promised to render an account of the causes of everything in a special work, I defer till then the explanation of this point also.*<sup>28</sup>

Josephus, in Ant. 8:60-62, thought that the text allows by simple addition to come the year of the deluge and even the year of creation,

Solomon began the building of the temple in the fourth year of his reign, in the second month, which the Macedonians call Artemisios and the Hebrews Iar, *five hundred and ninety-two years after the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, one thousand and twenty years after the coming of Abraham to Canaan from Mesopotamia, one thousand four hundred and forty years after the deluge; and from the creation of Adam the first man to the time when Solomon built the temple there elapsed altogether three thousand one hundred and two years.*<sup>29</sup>

There are a number of similar texts from the Babylonian Talmud which suggest the Rabbis took the days as normal days. The Babylonian Talmud is a collection of Jewish wisdom and commentary on Rabbinic Judaism's founding document, The Mishnah. Thus, the Babylonian Talmud is a kind of Jewish Study Bible and represents ancient mainstream Jewish belief. Consider the following from the Babylonian Talmud:

**Nazir 1.3b-c**

The days too are differentiated from one another, for lo, it is written, “And there was evening, and there was morning, one day” (Gen. 1:2). In that case it is not that they are distinct, but the verse serves to indicate *that a day with the prior night together count as a day*, though days are not distinct from one another.<sup>30</sup>

**Pesahim 88a**

Said R. Yohanan, “The ingathering of the exiles *is as great as the day on which heaven and earth were created*: ‘And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head and shall go up out of the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel’ (Hos. 2:2), and ‘*and there was evening and there was morning, one day*’ (Gen. 1:4).”<sup>31</sup>

**Hagigah 12a**

And said R. Judah said Rab, “*Ten things were created on the first day*, and these are they: heaven and earth, chaos and desolation, light and darkness, wind and water, *the length of day and the length of night*. . . “the length of day and the length of night: ‘And there was evening and there was morning, one day’ (Gen. 1:5).”<sup>32</sup>

**Shabbat 10a**

R. Hisda and Rabbah bar R. Huna were in session in court all day long. They felt weak. R. Hiyya bar Rab of Difti repeated for them the following Tannaite statement: “ ‘And the people stood about Moses from the morning unto the evening’ (Ex. 18:13)—now can it enter your mind that Moses was sitting and judging cases all day long? When would his study of Torah be carried out? But it is to tell you: Any judge who judges a case in truth and fidelity even for a single moment is regarded by Scripture as though he were turned into a partner of the Holy One, blessed be He, in the works of creation. For here it is written, ‘*And the people stood about Moses from the morning unto the evening*’ (Ex. 18:13), and elsewhere, ‘*And there was evening, and there was morning, one day*.’”<sup>33</sup>

**Berakhot 2a**

And this is the sense of the passage: *When is the time for the recitation of the Shema when one lies down? It is from the hour that the priests enter [a state of cleanness so as] to eat their heave-offering* [M. 1:1B]. And if you prefer, *I may propose that the usage derives from the order of the description of creation, for it is said, “And there was evening, and there was morning, one day”* (Gen. 1:5).<sup>34</sup>

We do have ancient cultic Jewish writings in the Pseudepigrapha. These show that even marginal Jews believed that Genesis 1 meant normal days. Consider,

**2 Enoch 27:4 says,**

<sup>4</sup> And I separated between light and between darkness, that is to say in the midst of the water hither and thither, and I said to the light, that it should be the day, and to the darkness, that it should be the night, and there was evening and there was morning the first day.<sup>35</sup>

Another collection of Jewish interpretations of the Old Testament is called the Midrash Rabbah. It is a kind of ancient anthology of Jewish comments on the Bible (think of something like a Jewish Matthew Henry). From the Midrash Rabbah, it is clear that some Jews believed that the world of

Genesis 1 was not the first world created (see Midrash Rabbah Genesis, 3.7), but this is what the Midrash Rabbah says about the world of Genesis 1 (Midrash Rabbah Genesis 3.8),

*ONE DAY: the Holy One, blessed be He, gave them one day, and which is that? It is the Day of Judgment [i.e., the Day of Atonement]. R. Tanhum said: It was on the day on which unique things were created, viz. heaven, earth, and light. R. Judan said: The day in which the Holy One, blessed be He, was One in His universe. This agrees with R. Joḥanan but not with R. Ḥanina. For R. Joḥanan said: The angels were created on the second day, as it is said, . . . R. Samuel b. Ammi said: from the beginning of the world's creation the Holy One, blessed be He, longed to enter into partnership with the mortals. For what will you: if it is a matter of time reckoning, it should say either one, two, three, or first, second, third, but surely not, one, second, third! When did the Holy One, blessed be He, repay them? At the erection of the Tabernacle, as it says, And he that presented his offering the first day (Num. VII, 12), meaning, the first of the world's creation, for God said, 'It is as though on that day I created My world.' That day took ten crowns: it was the first of the creation, first in respect of kings, the princes, the priesthood, and the Shekinah, (as it says, "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Ex. xxv, 8)); it was first in respect of blessing, sacrificial service, the prohibition of the high places, killing at the north [side of the Altar], and the descending of fire, as it is said, "And there came forth fire from before the Lord" (Lev. IX, 24).<sup>36</sup>*

If the text meant to imply something other than normal/plain-language days, none of the early translators/interpreters got that point. If "day one " and the text of Genesis 1-11 was not intended by Moses and God to describe chronological history, most of the people in antiquity missed it.

Moreover, Warkulwiz is certainly right when he writes,

If Moses wished to convey periods of time measured in millennia, as theistic evolutionists would have us believe, he could have certainly done it much more clearly and effectively in other words. For example, he could have used the Hebrew word *olam*, which means "a long indefinite time."<sup>37</sup>

It is clear that *‘olām* often means "ages" in the MT (Masoretic Text).<sup>38</sup> The plural of "age" appears ten times in Qumran which shows that the word could be used of multiple ages.<sup>39</sup> However, if *‘olām* might be objectionable because of its association with eternity, Moses could have used, *dôr wādôr* "generation and generation" as Isaiah uses in Isa. 61:4,<sup>40</sup> or *‘ad-šānê dôr wādôr* "to the years of many generations" as in Joel 2:2<sup>41</sup> or "many in years" *rabbôt baššānîm* as Moses himself uses in Lev. 25:51.<sup>42</sup> Or he could have written *wəšānîm rabbôt* "many years" as appears in Eccl. 6:13.<sup>43</sup>

In other words, Moses could have written, "age one," "a second age," "a third age," or the like, but he did not. And if Moses had written that, the majority of early church fathers would not have taught, as they do teach (see below), that world history spans but a few thousand years. If Moses had written "age one", the majority of classical Rabbis would not have affirmed the recent creation of the world.<sup>44</sup> However, Moses did not choose to so write, and that is why the traditional, majority view among the both the Rabbis and Christian interpreters until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century supported recent creation of the world. In fact today, orthodox Jewish chronology is that the fall equinox in 2011 started the 5,772<sup>nd</sup> year from the original creation.

There are, to be sure, members of a minority who hold different views, but writers who support long ages and/or theistic evolution must argue that on this point the vast majority of classical Rabbis did not recognize how to read their own language. The same assumption must be true of Josephus. Such modern scholars must also argue that the vast majority of biblical interpreters missed the intent of Moses and God on this point until the early 1800's. And they must argue that Jesus allowed this to happen.

### 3. The Plain-Language Reading is the Traditional View.

This plain-language reading assumes recent creation, not one where days "stand for" or "allow" or "are indifferent to" long ages of time. A recent Protestant scholar, James R. Mook, summarizes this way:

A natural reading of the Church fathers shows that though they held diverse views on the days of creation, and correctly gave priority to the *theological* meaning of the creation, they definitely asserted that the earth was created suddenly and in less than 6,000 years before their time. They left no room for the 'old earth' views promoted by Ross and other moderns.<sup>45</sup>

Roman Catholic scholar, Victor P. Warkulwiz, writes,

None of the Fathers of the Church believed in an ancient universe.<sup>46</sup>

Orthodox scholar, Seraphim Rose (1932-1982), who openly disdains conservative Protestant interpretation of Scripture, nevertheless writes,<sup>47</sup>

Some rather naive "theologians" try to say that the Six Days of Creation can be indefinitely long periods, that they can correspond to the different geological strata. *This, of course, is nonsense because the geological strata do not have six easily identifiable layers, or five or four or anything of the sort. There are many, many layers, and they do not correspond at all to the Six Days of Creation. So that is a very weak accommodation. As a matter of fact—even though it looks as though it might be terribly fundamentalistic to say it—the Holy Fathers do say that those Days were twenty-four hours long.* St. Ephraim the Syrian even divides them into two periods, twelve hours each. St. Basil the Great says that, in the book of Genesis, the First Day is called not the "first day" but "one day" because that is the one day by which God measured out the entire rest of the creation; that is, this First Day, which he says was twenty-four hours long, is exactly the same day which is repeated in the rest of creation. *If you think about it, there is nothing particularly difficult in that idea, since the creation of God is something totally outside our present knowledge. The accommodation of days to epochs does not make any sense; you cannot fit them together. Therefore, why do you need to have a day that is a thousand or a million years long? The Holy Fathers say again with one voice that the creative acts of God are instantaneous.* St. Basil the Great, St. Ambrose the Great, St. Ephraim and many others say that, when God creates, He says the word and it *is*, faster than thought. *There are many Patristic quotations about this, but we will not go into them here. None of the Holy Fathers say that the creation was slow.*<sup>48</sup>

*Thus the Patristic teaching is clearly that God, although He could have created everything instantly, chose instead to create it in stages of increasing perfection, each state being the work of an instant or a very short time, culminating in the creation of man, the king of creation; and the whole work is completed, neither in an instant nor in an indefinitely long time, but as it were a mean between these two extremes, precisely in six days.* St. Ephraim and St. John Chrysostom, in their commentaries on Genesis, clearly regard God's creation as being the work of six "literal" days, on each one of which God creates "immediately" and "instantly." And St. Basil the Great also, contrary to a widespread belief of "Christian evolutionists," viewing God's creations as "immediate" and "sudden," regarded the Six Days as being precisely of twenty-four-hour's duration.<sup>49</sup>

*There are those today who would like to use the order of man's creation in this verse to "prove" that man "evolved" from lower beasts: that his body or earthly nature came first in time, and his soul to state of being in God's grace came second. Such an interpretation is quite impossible if we accept the Patristic understanding of man's creation. To begin with, we have seen that in the Patristic view the days of creation—whatever their precise "length" may have been—were very short periods of time; that God's work in each of the days was swift, indeed, instantaneous; that at the end of the Six Days the world was still "new" and not yet given over to corruption and death.*<sup>50</sup>



Several moderate evangelical voices say the same. Dabney in 1871, wrote,

The advocates of the symbolic days . . . attach much importance to their claim that theirs is not an afterthought, suggested by geologic difficulties, but that the exposition was advanced by many of the 'Fathers.' After listening to their citations, we are constrained to reply that the vague suggestions of the different Fathers do not yield them any support, because they do not adopt their theory of explanation.<sup>51</sup>

Johannes Geerhardus Vos (1903-83), son of Princeton's Geerhardus Vos (1862-1949), writes,

Indeed, it safe to say that except for the pressure of desire to harmonize the statements of Genesis with the theories of geology, hardly anyone would hold that long periods of time are meant.<sup>52</sup>

Even very recently, Albert Mohler states,

What we have here in Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 is a sequential pattern of creation, a straightforward plan, a direct reading of the text would indicate to us seven 24-hour days, six 24-hour days of creative activity and a final day of divine rest. *This was the untroubled consensus of the Christian church until early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.* It was not absolutely unanimous. It was not always without controversy. But it was the overwhelming, untroubled consensus of the church, until the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>53</sup>

In other words, ask the question this way: Is there paleo-orthodox support for the view that Genesis 1-3 should be interpreted to mean or allow for long periods of time since the original creation? Is there paleo-orthodox support for the view that Genesis 1-11 does not present chronological history? Is there support that the genealogies do not intend to present a historical chronology from creation to Abraham?

Origen (ca. 185-253), usually forwarded as a star witness for the old age proponents, does not support old age earth, for he writes,

After these statements, *Celsus, from a secret desire to cast discredit upon the Mosaic account of the creation, which teaches that the world is not yet ten thousand years old, but very much under that, while concealing his wish, intimates his agreement with those who hold that the world is uncreated.*<sup>54</sup>

Lactantius (250-325) writes,

*Plato and many others of the philosophers, since they were ignorant of the origin of all things, and of that primal period at which the world was made, said that many thousands of ages had passed since this beautiful arrangement of the world was completed; and in this they perhaps followed the Chaldeans, who, as Cicero has related in his first book respecting divination, foolishly say that they possess comprised in their memorials four hundred and seventy thousand years; in which matter, because they thought that they could not be convicted, they believed that they were at liberty to speak falsely. But we, whom the Holy Scriptures instruct to the knowledge of the truth, know the beginning and the end of the world, respecting which we will now speak in the end of our work, since we have explained respecting the beginning in the second book. Therefore let the philosophers, who enumerate thousands of ages from the beginning of the world, know that the six thousandth year is not yet completed, and that when this number is completed the consummation must take place, and the condition of human affairs be remodeled for the better, the proof of which must first be related, that the matter itself may be plain.*<sup>55</sup>

Victorinus (4<sup>th</sup> century) says,

Even such is the rapidity of that creation, and which is called Genesis. God produced that entire mass for the adornment of His majesty in six days; on the seventh to which He consecrated it. . . . In the beginning God made the light, and divided it in the exact measure of twelve hours by day and by night. . . . The day,

as I have above related, is divided into two parts by the the number twelve – by the twelve hours of day and night.<sup>56</sup>

Ephrem the Syrian (306-373), who knew Hebrew, opines,

*Although the light and the clouds were created in the twinkling of an eye, still both the day and the night of the First Day were each completed in twelve hours.*<sup>57</sup>

*Although the grasses were only a moment old at their creation, they appeared as if they were months old. Likewise, the trees, although only a day old when they sprouted forth, were nevertheless like trees years old as they were fully grown and fruits were already budding on their branches. The grass that would be required as food for the animals that were to be created two days later was thus made ready. And the new corn that would be food for Adam and his descendants, who would be thrown out of paradise four days later, was thus prepared.*<sup>58</sup>

Basil the Great (ca. 330-379) states,

*“And the evening and the morning were the first day.” Evening is then the boundary common to day and night; and in the same way morning constitutes the approach of night to day. It was to give day the privileges of seniority that Scripture put the end of the first day before that of the first night, because night follows day: for, before the creation of light, the world was not in night, but in darkness. It is the opposite of day which was called night, and it did not receive its name until after day. Thus were created the evening and the morning. Scripture means the space of a day and a night, and afterwards no more says day and night, but calls them both under the name of the more important: a custom which you will find throughout Scripture. Everywhere the measure of time is counted by days, without mention of nights. “The days of our years,” says the Psalmist. “Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been,” said Jacob, and elsewhere “all the days of my life.” Thus under the form of history the law is laid down for what is to follow. And the evening and the morning were one day. Why does Scripture say “one day the first day”? Before speaking to us of the second, the third, and the fourth days, would it not have been more natural to call that one the first which began the series? If it therefore says “one day,” it is from a wish to determine the measure of day and night, and to combine the time that they contain. Now twenty-four hours fill up the space of one day—we mean of a day and of a night; and if, at the time of the solstices, they have not both an equal length, the time marked by Scripture does not the less circumscribe their duration. It is as though it said: twenty-four hours measure the space of a day, or that, in reality a day is the time that the heavens starting from one point take to return there. Thus, every time that, in the revolution of the sun, evening and morning occupy the world, their periodical succession never exceeds the space of one day. But must we believe in a mysterious reason for this? God who made the nature of time measured it out and determined it by intervals of days; and, wishing to give it a week as a measure, he ordered the week to revolve from period to period upon itself, to count the movement of time, forming the week of one day revolving seven times upon itself: a proper circle begins and ends with itself. Such is also the character of eternity, to revolve upon itself and to end nowhere. If then the beginning of time is called “one day” rather than “the first day,” it is because Scripture wishes to establish its relationship with eternity. It was, in reality, fit and natural to call “one” the day whose character is to be one wholly separated and isolated from all the others. If Scripture speaks to us of many ages, saying everywhere, “age of age, and ages of ages,” we do not see it enumerate them as first, second, and third. It follows that we are hereby shown not so much limits, ends and succession of ages, as distinctions between various states and modes of action. “The day of the Lord,” Scripture says, “is great and very terrible,” and elsewhere “Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord: to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness and not light.” A day of darkness for those who are worthy of darkness. No; this day without evening, without succession and without end is not unknown to Scripture, and it is the day that the Psalmist calls the eighth day, because it is outside this time of weeks. Thus whether you call it day, or whether you call it eternity, you express the same idea. Give this state the name of day; there are not several, but only one. If you call it eternity still it is unique and not manifold. Thus it is in order that you may carry your thoughts forward towards a future life, that Scripture marks by the word “one” the day*

which is the type of eternity, the first fruits of days, the contemporary of light, the holy Lord's day honoured by the Resurrection of our Lord. *And the evening and the morning were one day.*"<sup>59</sup>

Ambrose (337[340]- 397) teaches,

*Scripture established a law that twenty-four hours, including both day and night, should be given the name of day only, as if one were to say the length of one day is twenty-four hours in extent. . . . The nights in this reckoning are considered to be component parts of the days that are counted. Therefore, just as there is a single revolution of time, so there is but one day. Thus were created the evening and the morning. Scripture means the space of a day and a night, and afterwards no more says day and night, but calls them both under the name of the more important: a custom which you will find throughout Scripture.*<sup>60</sup>

Even Augustine (354-430), usually the darling of old age proponents, can affirm,

For as it is not yet six thousand years since the first man, who is called Adam, are not those to be ridiculed rather than refuted who try to persuade us of anything regarding a space of time so different from, and contrary to, the ascertained truth?<sup>61</sup>

See also,

They are deceived, too, by those highly mendacious documents which profess to give the history of many thousand years, though, reckoning by the sacred writings, we find that not 6000 years have yet passed.<sup>62</sup>

Many church fathers believed that the days of creation also foreshadowed coming history. Many of them, using the Septuagintal text, thought that about 6,000 years had passed before the birth of Christ. The Hebrew Text puts the number closer to 4,000. Some using primarily the Latin Vulgate thought creation was instantaneous and therefore tried to understand the six days as really one day. Nevertheless, it is clear that they were all submitting to the date which they thought the text was teaching from the creation of man to their own time. In other words, they read Genesis 1-11 as including chronological history.<sup>63</sup> To continue our survey, the Venerable Bede (673-735) says,

At this point one day is completed, namely, twenty-four hours.<sup>64</sup>

Luther (1483-1546) affirms,

*What were you a thousand years ago? What were heaven and earth six thousand years ago? Nothing, just as that which will never be created is nothing.*<sup>65</sup>

Hugh Latimer (1485-1555) offers,

I will not say otherwise but a man may make provision for his house, and ought to do the same; but to make such provision to set aside God's word and serving of him, this is naught; to set the heart so upon the riches, as though there were no heaven nor hell: how can we be so foolish to set so much by this world, knowing that it shall endure but a little while? *For we know by scripture, and all learned men affirm the same, that the world was made to endure six thousand years.* Now of these six thousand, be passed already five thousand five hundred and fifty-two, and yet this time which is left shall be shortened for the elect's sake, as Christ himself witnesseth.<sup>66</sup>

Calvin (1509-1564) states,

We must not be moved by the profane jeer, that it is strange how it did not sooner occur to the Deity to create the heavens and the earth, instead of idly allowing an infinite period to pass away, during which

thousands of generations might have existed, while the present world is drawing to a close before it has completed its six thousandth year.<sup>67</sup>

Ursinius (1534-1583) says,

Lastly, God created the world, not eternally, but at a certain and definite time; and, therefore, in the beginning of time. 'In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth.' (Gen. 1: 1.) *According to the common reckoning, it is now, counting from this 1616 of Christ, 5534 years since the creation of the world.*  
 . . .

[Ursinius includes here the estimated dates of Melanchthon, 3,963, Luther, 3960, Geneva Bible, 3,943, and Beroaldus, 3,929, for estimates of the Biblical chronology from creation to the birth of Christ].

These calculations harmonize sufficiently with each other in the larger numbers, although some years are either added or wanting in the smaller numbers. According to these four calculations, made by the most learned men of our times, it will appear, by comparing them together, that the world was created by God at least not much over 5,559 or 5,579 years. The world, therefore, was not created from everlasting, but had a beginning.<sup>68</sup>

Henry Ainsworth (1571-1622),

Both large days, of 24 hours, from sun-setting to sun-setting; and strict, of 12 hours, from sun-rising to sun-setting, as is observed before on ver. 5, a special use whereof is shown in Psal. civ. 19-23.<sup>69</sup>

The Westminster Divines (1643-46), affirmed the traditional view. Consider Westminster Theological Seminary's statement:

*Even though Calvin, Ames, and the authors of the Westminster Standards, with few exceptions, if any, undoubtedly understood the days to be ordinary days, there is no ground for supposing that they intended to exclude any and all other views, in particular the view that the days may be longer.*<sup>70</sup>

Notice that the official position of WTS (which does not limit views on Genesis 1-3) nevertheless states that perhaps all of the Westminster divines and their immediate predecessors held to the basic traditional position. One of those divines was John Lightfoot (1602-1675) who writes,

*Twelve hours did the heavens thus move in darkness; and then God commanded, and there appeared, light to this upper horizon,—namely, to that where Eden should be planted [for, for that place especially is the story calculated]; and there did it shine other twelve hours, declining by degrees with the motion of the heavens to the other hemisphere, where it enlightened other twelve hours also; and so the first natural day to that part of the world was six-and-thirty hours long. So long was Joshua's day; and so long was our Saviour clouded under death.*<sup>71</sup>

It is hard to avoid the conclusion of Robert L. Dabney (1820-1898) who teaches,

The narrative seems historical and not symbolical; and hence the strong initial presumption is, that all its parts are to be taken in their obvious sense. . . . The sacred writer seems to shut us up to the literal interpretation by describing the day as composed of its natural parts, 'morning and evening.' Is the attempt made to break the force of this, by reminding us that the 'evening and the morning' do not make up the whole of the civic day of twenty-four hours; and that the words are different from those just before, and commonly afterwards employed to denote the 'day' and the 'night,' which together make up the natural day? We reply: it is true, morning and evening do not literally fill the twenty-four hours. But these epochs mark the beginnings of the two seasons, day and night, which do fill the twenty-four hours. And it is hard to see what a writer can mean, by naming evening and morning as making a first, or a

second 'day'; except that he meant us to understand that time which includes just one of each of these successive epochs:--one beginning of night, and one beginning of day. These gentlemen cannot construe the expression at all. The plain reader has no trouble with it. When we have had one evening and one morning, we know we have just one civic day; for the intervening hours have made just that time. . . . It is freely admitted that the word day is often used in the Greek Scriptures as well as the Hebrew (as in our common speech) for an epoch, a season, a time. But yet, this use is confessedly derivative. The natural day is its literal and primary meaning. Now, it is apprehended that in construing any document, while we are ready to adopt, at the demand of the context, the derived or tropical meaning, we revert to the primary one, when no such demand exists in the context.<sup>72</sup>

To bring the debate down to the modern day, Gerhard F. Hasel (1935-1994) concludes,

This paper investigated the meaning of creation "days." It has considered key arguments in favor of a figurative, non-literal meaning of the creation "days." . . . The cumulative evidence, based on comparative, literary, linguistic and other considerations, converges on every level, leading to the singular conclusion that the designation *yom*, "day," in Genesis 1 means consistently a literal 24-hour day.<sup>73</sup>

If long ages and/or theistic evolution were the proper interpretation of the Biblical text, I would expect websites and books with page after page of similar historical giants who affirm in clear language with large quotes that the text teaches such.

Even within the early translations of the Hebrew text themselves, there is evidence that the translators were adding up the numbers and thinking of them as history because some of the translators "correct" the numbers to avoid theological difficulties. One such difficulty is the MT's chronology; Abraham's life overlaps that of Shem by 150 years (not a problem in and of itself). In fact according to the MT, Abraham is born just 2 years after Noah dies, and he outlives Shem by only 25 years.<sup>74</sup> However, this overlap between Abraham and Shem makes Terah and Abraham's idolatry much more culpable since there was a living voice from the flood to proclaim the true God (Gen. 11: 10-26; Josh. 24:2). This overlap apparently is corrected by the Septuagintal translators who separate Shem and Abraham by over 700 years. For another example, the Samaritan Pentateuch shortens the pre-flood chronology, but it also shortens Lamech's age so that he dies in the year of the flood. Also, the Samaritan Pentateuch fixes the apparent problem of Terah's death at 205, his fathering Abraham at 70, yet Abraham leaving Haran at 75, by changing Terah's death to 145. Qumran fixes this by making Terah 145 at the migration to Haran and Abraham leaving before Terah dies sixty years later.<sup>75</sup> Philo apparently offers a different explanation.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, these texts show that Jewish interpreters worked with the numbers to establish all kinds of chronological links. Some did this all the way back to original creation. These texts also show that the scribes expected one to add the years up and reconcile the timeline.

#### **4. Even Modern Critical Scholars think the Traditional View Reflects the Authorial Intent of the Text.**

As we look at this, there are two issues. The first is: 1) Are the days normal 24-hour days, and 2) Are those days part of a chronologically historical reading of Genesis 1-11? Although there may be some today who would argue for a day/age view, this view has been largely rejected by wider scholarship.<sup>77</sup> For a representative quote, Marcus Dods (1834-1909) affirms of the Genesis text,

If, for example, the word 'day' in these chapters, does not mean a period of twenty-four hours, the interpretation of Scripture is hopeless.<sup>78</sup>

Compare this to John Collins, who says the days are 24 hours but then also believes some days are not 24 hours and that some elements of the gap theory are right.<sup>79</sup> This seems to be an inconsistency in his thought to me. John Skinner says of such views,

The interpretation of [day] as *aeon* . . . is opposed to the plain sense of the passage and has no warrant in Heb. usage.<sup>80</sup>

Even some of those who argue for the possibility of long ages, nevertheless affirm 24-hour days.<sup>81</sup> Many of these would qualify that they believe the 24-hour days are consistent with long ages of science.<sup>82</sup> Critical scholars do not support this nuance. Consider James Barr, former Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford University, who writes,<sup>83</sup>

. . . 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 Gen. 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that (a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience (b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story (c) Noah's flood was understood to be world-wide and extinguish all human and animal life except for those in the ark. Or, to put it negatively, the apologetic arguments which suppose the 'days' of creation to be long eras of time, the figures of years not be chronological, and the flood to be a merely local Mesopotamian flood, are not taken seriously by any such professors, as far as I know.<sup>84</sup>

And he states,

In fact the only natural exegesis is the literal one, in the sense that this is what the author meant . . . he was deeply interested in chronology and calendar.<sup>85</sup>

He also opines,

But, putting it in broad terms, the Old Testament is clear in placing the date of creation somewhere within the period 5000-4000 BC. The Jewish calendar still works on this basis, though with somewhat lower figures. . . . According to the biblical world view, the created world, in this year 1983, is roughly six thousand years old.<sup>86</sup>

In other words, the Hebraist whom many would rank as one of the top Hebraists in the world, thinks that the chronological view is clearly the intent of the biblical writer(s). James Barr does not believe in inerrancy. This is what he says of evangelicals who try to accommodate the Genesis 1 text to long ages:

We have to distinguish between literal intention and historical, factual truth. The figures are not to us, historically, scientifically or factually true, but they were literally intended. A year to them was the same period as it is still to us. The figures do not correspond with actual fact, that is, they or some of them are legendary or mythical in character, but the biblical writers in overwhelming probability did think that they corresponded to actual fact. When, in modern times, people began to say that these passages were 'not to be taken literally', *this was really a cowardly expedient which enabled them to avoid saying that, though they were literally intended, they were not literally true. They were literally intended: they were chronological statements of numbers of years and made no sense otherwise. . . . To say this is not to deny that the figures may be also symbolic: some of them certainly are. But this is not a symbolism that departs from the literal sense, it is the symbolism of the literal sense—to take the most obvious case, that of Enoch, who lived 365 years and then, instead of dying, was taken away by God, it is just obvious that 365 years, the number of full days in a solar year, and a period quite different in length from the lifespan of others in the same list, is 'symbolic' in some way, but the symbolism is the symbolism of the fact that Enoch lived that number of years, or, more correctly, the*

*symbolism of the fact that the biblical writer thought that he lived that number of years, of actual years."*<sup>87</sup>

I sent a copy of Barr's letter to Hugh Williamson, the current Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, and this is his gracious response:

So far as the days of Genesis 1 are concerned, I am sure that Professor Barr was correct. The climax in the seventh day as prefiguring the sabbath seems pretty conclusive, as well as the reference to evening and morning in each of the previous days. I have not met any Hebrew professors who had the slightest doubt about this unless they were already committed to some alternative by other considerations that do not arise from a straightforward reading of the Hebrew text as it stands.<sup>88</sup>

I summarized Barr's letter and emailed it to Emanuel Tov, the J. L. Magnes Professor of Bible, Hebrew University in Jerusalem. I wish that I had worded this a little differently, but this is what I asked:

Do you have an opinion about the interpretation of Genesis 1-3 in terms of the authorial intent of the original author/redactor? Many within evangelical circles suggest that the authorial intent should be interpreted as follows:

1. The early material in Genesis 1-11 is intended as mythical and non-historic.
2. The genealogies are non-chronological up until the monarchical times,
3. The flood is a local Mesopotamian flood, and
4. The days of creation week are long eras of time.

Professor Tov was kind enough to type out a hurried email. This is what he wrote:

Prof. Barr was a great thinker and who am I to go against his view? I am sure that these chapters as well as many other ones are difficult for any religion, Judaism included. Religions will try explanations such as the ones listed above, while critical scholars take the stories at face value. I am not sure there is an opposition between myth and history as in your point 1. For the biblical people this was history, difficult as it is for us to accept this view. History is not what really happened, but they believed this happened.<sup>89</sup>

If I understand this, Tov is saying that he believes the writer/redactor thought that he was writing history. I.e., "For the biblical people this was history . . . they believed this happened." Pete Williams, Warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge, agrees,

Although the Young Universe Creationist position is not widely held within secular academia the position that the author of Genesis 1 maintained that the world was created in six literal days is nearly universally held.<sup>90</sup>

Consider too these writers; Carl F. Keil (1807-1888) and Franz Delitzsch (1813-1890) write,

The reckoning of days from evening to evening in the Mosaic law (Lev. 23:32), and by many ancient tribes (the pre-Mohammedan Arabs, the Athenians, Gauls, and Germans), arose not from the days of creation, but from the custom of regulating seasons by the changes of the moon. *But if the days of creation are regulated by the recurring interchange of light and darkness, they must be regarded not as periods of time of incalculable duration, of years or thousands of years, but as simple earthly days.* It is true the morning and evening of the first three days were not produced by the rising and setting of the sun, since the sun was not yet created; but the constantly recurring interchange of light and darkness, which produced day and night upon the earth, cannot for a moment be understood as denoting that the light called forth from

the darkness of chaos returned to that darkness again, and thus periodically burst forth and disappeared. The only way in which we can represent it to ourselves, is by supposing that the light called forth by the creative mandate, "Let there be," was separated from the dark mass of the earth, and concentrated outside or above the globe, so that the interchange of light and darkness took place as soon as the dark chaotic mass began to rotate, and to assume in the process of creation the form of a spherical body. *The time occupied in the first rotations of the earth upon its axis cannot, indeed, be measured by our hour-glass; but even if they were slower at first, and did not attain their present velocity till the completion of our solar system, this would make no essential difference between the first three days and the last three, which were regulated by the rising and setting of the sun.*<sup>91</sup>

Samuel R. Driver (1846-1914) adds,

Here and elsewhere the expression 'creation of *man*' has been used designedly in order to leave open the possibility that the 'days' of Gen. 1 denote periods. *There is however little doubt that the writer really meant 'days' in a literal sense, and that Pearson was right when he inferred from the chapter that the world was represented as created '6000, or at farthest 7000,' years from the 17th cent. A.D. (cf. pp. 19, 20–22, 26).*<sup>92</sup>

Hermann Gunkel (1862-1932) states,

Naturally, the 'days' are days and nothing else.<sup>93</sup>

Herbert C. Leupold (1891-1972) states,

There ought to be no need of refuting the idea that *yôm* means period. Reputable dictionaries like Buhl, B D B or K. W. know nothing of this notion.<sup>94</sup>

C. A. Simpson (1892-1969) writes,

There can be no question but that by Day the author meant just what we mean – the time required for one revolution of the earth on its axis.<sup>95</sup>

Gerhard von Rad (1901-1971) teaches,

The seven days are unquestionably to be understood as actual days and as a unique, unrepeatable lapse of time in the world.<sup>96</sup>

Contemporary writers offer the following; Robert Davidson (1973) says,

The flexibility in the usage of the word *day* is well illustrated in verse 5. In its first occurrence it means day time as distinct from the darkness of night; in the closing refrain it means the whole twenty-four hour cycle embracing both evening and morning. *Attempts to make it still more flexible, to mean different aeons or stages in the known evolution of the world, and thus reconcile Genesis 1 with modern scientific theory, are misguided.*<sup>97</sup>

Gordon Wenham (1987) says,

There can be little doubt that here 'day' has its basic sense of a 24-hour period.<sup>98</sup>

Allen P. Ross (1988) writes,

The meaning of the term "day" (*yôm*) in this chapter has received varying interpretations. Although the word normally means a twenty-four-hour day, it can also mean a longer general period of time (Isa. 61:2)



or an idiom “when” (as in Gen. 2:4). *In this chapter, however, it must carry its normal meaning. Support for this view includes the following: (1) elsewhere, whenever *yôm* is used with a number, it means a twenty-four-hour period; (2) the Decalogue bases the teaching of the Sabbath day on the six days of creation and the seventh day of rest; (3) from the fourth day on, there are days, years, signs, and seasons, suggesting that the normal system is entirely operative; and (4) if *yôm* refers to an age, then the text would have to allow for a long period of “day” and then a long period of “night”—but few would argue for the night as an age. It seems inescapable that Genesis presents the creation in six days.*<sup>99</sup>

Victor P. Hamilton (1990) writes,

Whoever wrote Gen[esis] 1 believed he was talking about literal days.<sup>100</sup>

John Stek (1990) adds,

Surely there is no sign or hint within the narrative itself that the author thought his 'days' to be irregular designations — first a series of undefined periods, then a series of solar days — or that the 'days' he bounded with 'evening and morning' could possibly be understood as long eons of time. His language is plain and simple. . . . and he speaks in plain and simple terms of one of the most common elements in humanity's experience of the world.<sup>101</sup>

John H. Sailhamer (1990) says,

That week, as far as we can gather from the text itself, was a normal week of six twenty-four hour days and a seventh day in which God rested.<sup>102</sup>

C. John Collins (1999) writes,

Generally speaking, the Hebrew word *yom* ("day") has several attested senses. In the singular it can designate (1) the period of daylight, (2) a period of 24 hours, and (3) a period of time of unspecified length. To be lexically responsible, we should try to indicate criteria by which a reader would discern one sense or another in a given context. Senses 1 and 2 are fairly easy to discern, in Hebrew as well as in English; that is to say, these are the senses that require the least supporting information from the context. Sense 3 exists in English, too; and we detect it in both languages based on qualifiers such as "day of the Lord," "day of Jerusalem," "day of wrath," "in that day," etc. Such qualifiers are not present here in Genesis 1:1-2:3, so it would be better to find an interpretation that does not rely on sense 3. . . . we may also say that [the day-age] view asks too much harmonization with *modern* scientific theories for us to see its connection with what the *ancient* account was actually for.<sup>103</sup>

John Walton (2001) avers,

We cannot be content to ask, "Can the word bear the meaning I would like it to have?" We must instead try to determine what the author and audience would have understood from the usage in the context. With this latter issue before us, it is extremely difficult to conclude that anything other than a twenty-four hour day was intended. It is not the text that causes people to think otherwise, only the demands of trying to harmonize with modern science. Perhaps, however, after the functions approach to the text has been understood, the twenty-four-hour day will not be seen as posing the problem it has in the past—but that discussion will have to wait until the end of chapter 1.<sup>104</sup>

Arnold G. Fructenbaum (2008) in a Messianic Jewish commentary offers the interesting comment,

The *light*, which came into existence on the first day, is distinct from the *light* of the sun, because the sun would not be created until the fourth day. What this did was to provide light for the first three days, and this was a necessary first step because of the darkness that was part of the chaos of verse 2. This light was probably the *Shechinah* Glory light, the light mentioned in II Corinthians 4:6: *Seeing it is God, that said,*

*Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* The rabbis also recognized that this was a unique light, not the light of the sun. In rabbinic theology, this was a special light that functioned only during these seven days of creation, and then it did not function thereafter. The phrase *Let there be* is one word in Hebrew: *yehi*. The phrase *and there was* is also in Hebrew one word: *vayehi*. Both words, *yehi* and *vayehi*, are related to God's Name, which is the four Hebrew letters of *YHVH*, which is the source of the Hebrew word "to be." So God, Who is the I AM, said: *Let there be ... and there was*. This was God's first spoken word, *yehi, let there be*, and this word is also related to the very Name of God. According to rabbinic interpretation of this verse, when God said: *Let there be light*, it was to reveal that God will ultimately illuminate Israel with the light of the Messiah of Whom it is written [quoting Isaiah 60:1], the light being, of course, the Messiah. Therefore, both this phrase, as well as Isaiah 60:1, was given clear messianic overtones in rabbinic theology.<sup>105</sup>

Genesis 1:5b gives the completion of the first day: *And there was evening and there was morning, one day*. The *evening* comes first, because in Jewish reckoning the day begins with the *evening*. The day is from sundown to sundown, from sunset to sunset. This phraseology "evening and morning" simply does not allow for anything but a twenty-four hour period. The verse concludes with *one day*; in Hebrew that is *yom echad*. Here the number *one* is found in its cardinal form, *one*, in place of the ordinal form, *first*. All the other days are used in their ordinal form: second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh, rather than day two, day three, day four, day five, day six, day seven. Thus, it does not read the first day, but *day one*. One explanation the rabbis give comes from Rashi, who claims that this verse should be translated as "the day of the One" since no one existed but God and only God could benefit from this day. According to Rashi's thinking, angels were created only on the second day. But Rabbi Nachmanides declared that the word *first* implies the precedence of another when both are in existence. In this case, the second had not yet come. There was no second day yet. Therefore, instead of saying "first," He said "day one." Now, again, this is rabbinic theology, which can sometimes be fanciful. The word *echad* can mean an absolute one or it could mean a compound one. The same word is used in Deuteronomy 6:4, *Jehovah our God is one (echad Jehovah)*. In 1:5b, *one* is referring to a compound one, because two entities make up this *one: evening and morning*.<sup>106</sup>

Thus, it is very difficult for me to believe that it was not the intent of the writer (in my view Moses) to write normal history, and to have the genealogies be added up to make certain chronological points.

Some in the evangelical majority would like to retain the idea of 24-hour days, but they would add that these days do not fix the chronology of the first week to a normal week. And the modern majority affirms that the years in the genealogies of Genesis 1-11 were not meant by the author with that week to be added up to a chronological history fixing creation at around 4,000 years before Christ. It would seem that not only is the history of Rabbinic and Christian interpretation against them, but on the point of authorial intent, critical scholarship as well.

## 5. Theistic Evolution's God is not the God of the Bible.

Theistic evolution is not the view of all, but it is the trajectory of non-chronological views. If we ask the question, "In broad strokes, how would the Bible describe God?" A few key verses would probably come to mind; The God of the Bible is "light in whom there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). He takes "no pleasure in the death of anyone" (Ezek. 18:32). Can these verses really be applied to the God of theistic evolution? The God of the Bible will restore future Eden to its non-carnivorous, original state when "the lion will lie down with the lamb" (Isa. 11:6; 65:25 in contrast with Gen. 9:3 and 1:29-30). For the God of theistic evolution there was no original non-carnivorous state. The God of theistic evolution is one who, to paraphrase what D. James Kennedy said decades ago, looks at millions of years of history, red with gore and blood, with animals hacking each other to death tooth and claw, and says, "This is very good." I cannot offer a theodicy for such a god.<sup>107</sup>

Making a similar point, Wayne Grudem has recently offered the following comment in his foreword to Norman C. Nevin's recent book:<sup>108</sup>

It may at first seem easy to say 'God simply used evolution to bring about the results he desired', . . . However, the contributors to this volume, both scientists and biblical scholars, show that adopting theistic evolution leads to many positions contrary to the teaching of the Bible, such as these:

1. Adam and Eve were not the first human beings, but they were just two Neolithic farmers among about ten million other human beings on earth at that time, and God just chose to reveal himself to them in a personal way.
2. Those other human beings had already been seeking to worship and serve God or gods in their own ways.
3. Adam was not specially formed by God of 'dust from the ground' (Gen. 2:7) but had two human parents.
4. Eve was not directly made by God out of a 'rib that the Lord God had taken from the man' (Gen. 2:22), but she also had two human parents.
5. Many human beings both then and now are not descended from Adam and Eve.
6. Adam and Eve's sin was not the first sin.
7. Human physical death had occurred for thousands of years before Adam and Eve's sin—it was part of the way living things had always existed.
8. God did not impose any alteration in the natural world when he cursed the ground because of Adam's sin.

. . . What is at stake? A lot: the truthfulness of the three foundational chapters for the entire Bible (Genesis 1–3), belief in the unity of the human race, belief in the ontological uniqueness of human beings among all God's creatures, belief in the special creation of Adam and Eve in the image of God, belief in the parallel between condemnation through representation by Adam and salvation through representation by Christ, belief in the goodness of God's original creation, belief that suffering and death today are the result of sin and not part of God's original creation, and belief that natural disasters today are the result of the fall and not part of God's original creation. Belief in evolution erodes the foundations.

. . . now theistic evolutionists tell us that Christians can just surrender to this massive attack on the Christian faith and safely, inoffensively, tack on God, not as the omnipotent God who in his infinite wisdom directly created all living things, but as the invisible deity who makes absolutely no detectable difference in the nature of living beings as they exist today. It will not take long for unbelievers to dismiss the idea of such a God who makes no difference at all. To put it in terms of an equation, when atheists assure us that ***matter + evolution + 0*** = all living things, and then theistic evolutionists answer, no, that ***matter + evolution + God = all living things***, it will not take long for unbelievers to conclude that, therefore, ***God = 0***.

I was previously aware that theistic evolution had serious difficulties, *but I am now more firmly convinced than ever that it is impossible to believe consistently in both the truthfulness of the Bible and Darwinian evolution. We have to choose one or the other.*<sup>109</sup>

If modern evangelical Old Testament scholars want to accommodate the Bible to a chronology which allows for vast ages, I do not understand how those views do not result at least some of the above problems.

## **6. New Views about Genesis 1-2 Are Inconsistent with Inerrancy as Traditionally Interpreted.**

Many have raised in the past issues about Scriptural authority and non-traditional views of Genesis. G. K. Beale in a recent book on inerrancy writes,

There is afoot an attempt to redefine what is an "evangelical view of scriptural authority." In 1949, the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) was founded, and its doctrinal basis was formulated in the following way: "The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs. . . The bylaw . . . essentially referred members to the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy for advice "regarding the intent and meaning of the reference to biblical inerrancy in the ETS Doctrinal Basis."<sup>110</sup>

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy touches on the issue of cosmology in Article 12,

We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.

The proposer (Henry Morris) of this wording meant to exclude theistic evolutionary views that are based on long ages.<sup>111</sup> Those who signed the document were given the freedom to note exceptions with their signatures. Some accepted the Chicago Statement with scruples on certain points. One can examine those scruples in the archives of Dallas Theological Seminary.<sup>112</sup>

In a similar way, Robert L. Dabney in the 19<sup>th</sup> century offered sound advice to those who did not accept the Westminster Standards statement on creation:

I would beg you to notice how distinctly either of the current theories contradicts the standards of our Church. . . . Our Confession is not inspired; and if untrue, it should be refuted. But if your minds are made up to adopt either of these theories, then it seems to me that common honesty requires of you two things; to advertise your Presbyteries, when you apply for license and ordination, of your disbelief of these articles; that they may judge whether they are essential to our system of doctrine; and second; to use your legitimate influences as soon as you become church rulers, to have these articles expunged from our standards as false.<sup>113</sup>

What does the outside world think, when a scholar signs his name saying he believes the Chicago Statement, Article 12, but that person does not believe that the text affirms history in Genesis 1-3 or chronology in Genesis 3-11? The outside world would accuse us of the equivocal use of language or of self-interpreting confessional words.<sup>114</sup> J. Gresham Machen, in another context, censoriously condemned such confessional equivocation a century ago as less than honest.<sup>115</sup> As noted above, Dabney said the same thing. Each man must answer for himself before God for his own actions, and I do not venture to judge someone else's motives. But Machen, Dabney and Beale raise an issue: Do new views conflict with the intent of our evangelical creed as it currently stands? Personally, I could not sign the Chicago Statement, Article 12, if I held to some of the views proposed by modern evangelical Old Testament scholars. I subscribe to Article 12 as it was intended by Morris.

## **7. There are Highly Educated Geologists and Paleontologists who Affirm the Possibility of Young Earth Creationism.**

Some theological writers on the age of the earth and theistic evolution state that young earth creationism is not scientifically tenable. Time will certainly tell, but it is odd that there are highly educated scientists who disagree. Kurt Wise, whom I count as a personal friend, has a B.S. from the University of Chicago, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Paleontology from Harvard. He believes that it is

possible to reconcile the physical data and young earth creationism. His mentor, Stephen J. Gould, though of course rejecting Wise's view, knew of his belief, and still granted his Ph.D. According to Wise, Gould admitted that it was not simply science but also worldview issues which caused him to favor his own rather than Wise's position. That fact tells me that young earth creationism is not "preposterous" or "absurd" as I have seen some theologians suggest. Geologists Andrew Snelling, Steve Austin, Marcus Ross and John Whitmore also come to mind. John D. Baumgardner worked at the Los Alamos National Laboratory and believes science is compatible with a young earth.<sup>116</sup> These are all eminently educated scientists who believe it is possible to reconcile the traditional view with the scientific data. These men make me question the assertion of theologians that traditional chronology is simply scientifically impossible.

## Conclusion

It is clear that for those who wish for the Scripture to be the first guide in understanding cosmology, the best interpretation of the intent of the text is 24-hour day, young-earth creationism. In this regard, I am reminded of another quote in a different context by Waltke, Houston and Moore, which states,

Like Psalm 19, Psalm 22 provides an example of how many modern commentators have distanced themselves from the tradition of the Christian Fathers. The spectrum has widened to include both Jewish and Christian commentators who have embraced secularism and those whose religious faith has been trumped by the authority of the academy. These contrast with those who seek continuity with the traditional rabbis or fathers of the church.<sup>117</sup>

I think that Waltke should take his own advice on Psalm 22 apply it to Genesis 1-3 as well.

## Three Other Good Summaries from Scholars Supporting 24 Days

Johannes Geerhardus Vos (1903-83) was the son of Princeton's Geerhardus Vos (1862-1949). The younger Vos helped his father publish *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 1949). J. G. Vos with much of the senior's gift for clarity, writes on Genesis as follows,

Indeed, it safe to say that except for the pressure of desire to harmonize the statements of Genesis with the theories of geology, hardly anyone would hold that long periods of time are meant. For those interested in a rather complete summary of what can be said on both sides of the this question, the reader is referred to Dr. Louis Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*, a one-volume edition, pages 152-155. Both views have been held by orthodox Bible scholars who believe in the plenary inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. The repeatedly used expression 'and there was evening and there was morning' strongly favors the view that the days were literal 24-hour days. If long periods of geological time were meant, each 'day' would then have thousands or millions of evenings and mornings. According to the view that the days were long periods of time, the terms 'evening' and 'morning' are merely figures of speech for 'end of a period' and 'beginning of a period,' but such usage would be highly sophisticated and contrary to the simplicity of language used in the early chapters of Genesis.

Another strong argument for the literal 24-hour day interpretation is found in the institution of the Sabbath. God worked six days and rested on the seventh day. If the seventh day was an ordinary 24-hour day, then by implication the previous six days were also ordinary 24-hour days. We cannot suppose that the Sabbath was a period of thousands or millions of years, and it would be highly arbitrary to hold that only this one day was a 24-hour day while the previous six were geological periods.

Another argument for the literal 24-hour interpretation is based on the fact that on the first day, nothing was done but to create light and separate the light from the darkness. If this first day was a long period of

time, the question arises why should it require thousands or millions of years to create light and divide it from darkness? In the case of this first day, the geological-period idea is very unnatural and forced. Still another argument consists in the consideration that the fifth, sixth, and seventh days must have been ordinary days of 24 hours each because they were determined by the sun, just as days are today. If these last three days were ordinary days, then the presumption is that the previous four days were also days of 24 hours each.

Although neither view is without its difficulties, it would seem that on the whole the literal interpretation is to be preferred. Accordingly, in the subsequent lessons of this series, we shall regard the days of Genesis 1 as literal 24-hour days.<sup>118</sup>

Another helpful work is that of Trevor Craigen.<sup>119</sup> Craigen summarizes John Whitcomb's arguments as follows,

Arguments in support of a literal seven-day creation week were introduced into Dr. Whitcomb's lectures and appeared in his writings. In his book, *The Early Earth*, for example, four main observations were made: (1) when *yôm* is used with a numerical adjective it always restricts the meaning to a literal 24-hour day in the Old Testament, (2) the accompanying, qualifying phrase 'the evening and morning' in Genesis 1 also indicates a normal 24-hour cycle of the earth rotating on its axis in reference to a fixed astronomical light source, (3) the analogy for the cycle of human work and rest in Exodus 20:8-11 would be meaningless, if the creation 'week' were made up of long, indefinite periods of time, and (4) two well-known units of time, 'days' and 'years,' are linked in Genesis 1:14, their duration being determined 'by the fixed movements of the earth in reference to the sun.'<sup>120</sup>

Louis Berkhof clearly thought through many of these issues, and he writes,

2. THE ORIGIN OF THE ACCOUNT OF CREATION. The question as to the origin of the narrative of creation has been raised repeatedly, and the interest in it was renewed by the discovery of the Babylonian story of creation. This story, as it is known to us, took shape in the city of Babylon. It speaks of the generation of several gods, of whom Marduk proves supreme. He only was sufficiently powerful to overcome the primeval dragon Tiamat, and becomes the creator of the world, whom men worship. There are some points of similarity between the narrative of creation in Genesis and this Babylonian story. Both speak of a primeval chaos, and of a division of the waters below and above the firmament. Genesis speaks of seven days, and the Babylonian account is arranged in seven tablets. Both accounts connect the heavens with the fourth epoch of creation, and the creation of man with the sixth. Some of these resemblances are of little significance, and the differences of the two accounts are far more important. The Hebrew order differs on many points from the Babylonian. The greatest difference is found, however, in the religious conceptions of the two. The Babylonian account, in distinction from that of Scripture, is mythological and polytheistic. The gods do not stand on a high level, but scheme and plot and fight. And Marduk succeeds only after a prolonged struggle, which taxes his strength, in overcoming the evil forces and reducing chaos to order. In Genesis, on the other hand, we encounter the most sublime monotheism, and see God calling forth the universe and all created things by the simple word of His power. When the Babylonian account was discovered, many scholars hastily assumed that the Biblical narrative was derived from the Babylonian source, forgetting that there are at least two other possibilities, namely, (a) that the Babylonian story is a corrupted reproduction of the narrative in Genesis; or (b) that both are derived from a common, more primitive, source. But however this question may be answered, it does not settle the problem of the origin of the narrative. How did the original, whether written or oral, come into existence? Some regard it simply as the natural product of man's reflection on the origin of things. But this explanation is extremely unlikely in view of the following facts: (a) the idea of creation is incomprehensible; (b) science and philosophy both equally oppose the doctrine of creation out of nothing; and (c) it is only by faith that we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, Heb. 11:3. We therefore come to the conclusion that the story of creation was revealed to Moses or to one of the earlier patriarchs. If this revelation was pre-Mosaic, it passed in tradition (oral or written) from one generation to another,

probably lost something of its original purity, and was finally incorporated in a pure form, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the first book of the Bible.

3. THE INTERPRETATION OF GEN. 1:1, 2. Some regard Gen. 1:1 as the superscription or title of the whole narrative of creation. But this is objectionable for three reasons: (a) because the following narrative is connected with the first verse by the Hebrew conjunction *waw* (and), which would not be the case if the first verse were a title; (b) because, on that supposition, there would be no account whatsoever of the original and immediate creation; and (c) since the following verses contain no account of the creation of heaven at all. The more generally accepted interpretation is that Gen. 1:1 records the original and immediate creation of the universe, Hebraistically called "heaven and earth." In this expression the word "heaven" refers to that invisible order of things in which the glory of God reveals itself in the most perfect manner. It cannot be regarded as a designation of the cosmical heavens, whether of the clouds or of the stars, for these were created on the second and on the fourth day of the creative week. Then in the second verse the author describes the original condition of the earth (comp. Ps. 104:5, 6). It is a debatable question, whether the original creation of matter formed a part of the work of the first day, or was separated from this by a shorter or longer period of time. Of those who would interpose a long period between the two, some hold that the world was originally a dwelling place of angels, was destroyed as the result of a fall in the angelic world, and was then reclaimed and turned into a fit habitation for men. We shall refer to this restitution theory in another connection.

#### B. The Hexaemeron, or the Work of the Separate Days

After the creation of the universe out of nothing in a moment of time, the existing chaos was gradually changed into a cosmos, a habitable world, in six successive days. Before the work of the separate days is indicated, the question as to the length of the days of creation calls for a brief discussion.

1. CONSIDERATION OF THE THEORY THAT THEY WERE LONG PERIODS OF TIME. Some scholars assume that the days of Gen. 1 were long periods of time, in order to make them harmonize with the geological periods. The opinion that these days were not ordinary days of twenty-four hours was not entirely foreign to early Christian theology, as E. C. Messenger shows in detail in his learned work on *Evolution and Theology*. But some of the Church Fathers, who intimated that these days were probably not to be regarded as ordinary days, expressed the opinion that the whole work of creation was finished in a moment of time, and that the days merely constituted a symbolical frame-work, which facilitated the description of the work of creation in an orderly fashion, so as to make it more intelligible to finite minds. The opinion that the days of creation were long periods came to the foreground again in recent years, not, however, as the result of exegetical studies, but under the influence of the disclosures of science. Previous to the nineteenth century the days of Genesis were most generally regarded as literal days. But, of course, human interpretation is fallible, and may have to be revised in the light of later discoveries. If traditional exegesis conflicts, not merely with scientific theories—which are themselves interpretations—but with well established facts, re-thinking and reinterpretation is naturally in order. It can hardly be maintained, however, that the assumed geological periods necessitate a change of front, since they are by no means generally recognized, even in scientific circles, as well established facts. Some Christian scholars, such as Harris, Miley, Bettex, and Geesink, assume that the days of Genesis are geological days, and both Shedd and Hodge call attention to the remarkable agreement between the record of creation and the testimony of the rocks, and are inclined to regard the days of Genesis as geological periods.

The question may be raised, whether it is exegetically possible to conceive of the days of Genesis as long periods of time. And then it must be admitted that the Hebrew word *yom* does not always denote a period of twenty-four hours in Scripture, and is not always used in the same sense even in the narrative of creation. It may mean daylight in distinction from darkness, Gen. 1:5, 16, 18; daylight and darkness together, Gen. 1:5, 8, 13 etc.; the six days taken together, Gen. 2:4; and an indefinite period marked in its entire length by some characteristic feature, as trouble, Ps. 20:1, wrath, Job 20:28, prosperity, Eccl. 7:14, or salvation 2 Cor. 6:2. Now some hold that the Bible favors the idea that the days of creation were indefinite periods of time, and call attention to the following: (a) The sun was not created until the fourth

day, and therefore the length of the previous days could not yet be determined by the earth's relation to the sun. This is perfectly true, but does not prove the point. God had evidently, even previous to the fourth day, established a rhythmic alternation of light and darkness, and there is no ground for the assumption that the days so measured were of longer duration than the later days. Why should we assume that God greatly increased the velocity of the earth's revolutions after the light was concentrated in the sun? (b) The days referred to are God's days, the archetypal days, of which the days of men are merely ectypal copies; and with God a thousand years are as a single day, Ps. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8. But this argument is based on a confusion of time and eternity. God *ad intra* has no days, but dwells in eternity, exalted far above all measurements of time. This is also the idea conveyed by Ps. 90:4; and 2 Pet. 3:8. The only actual days of which God has knowledge are the days of this time-space world. How does it follow from the fact that God is exalted above the limitations of time, as they exist in this world, where time is measured by days and weeks and months and years, that a day may just as well be a period of 100,000 years as one of twenty-four hours? (c) The seventh day, the day in which God rested from His labours, is said to continue up to the present time, and must therefore be regarded as a period of thousands of years. It is God's sabbath, and that sabbath never ends. This argument represents a similar confusion. The whole idea of God's beginning the work of creation at a certain point of time, and then ceasing it after a period of six days, does not apply to God as He is in Himself, but only to the temporal results of His creative activity. He is unchangeably the same from age to age. His sabbath is not an indefinitely prolonged period of time; it is eternal. On the other hand, the sabbath of the creation week was a day equal in length to the other days. God not only rested on that day, but He also blessed and hallowed it, setting it aside as a day of rest for man, Ex. 20:11. This would hardly apply to the whole period from the time of creation up to the present day.

2. CONSIDERATION OF THE VIEW THAT THEY WERE LITERAL DAYS. The prevailing view has always been that the days of Genesis 1 are to be understood as literal days. Some of the early Church Fathers did not regard them as real indications of the time in which the work of creation was completed, but rather as literary forms in which the writer of Genesis cast the narrative of creation, in order to picture the work of creation—which was really completed in a moment of time—in an orderly fashion for human intelligence. It was only after the comparatively new sciences of geology and palæontology came forward with their theories of the enormous age of the earth, that theologians began to show an inclination to identify the days of creation with the long geological ages. To-day some of them regard it as an established fact that the days of Genesis 1 were long geological periods; others are somewhat inclined to assume this position, but show considerable hesitation. Hodge, Sheldon, Van Oosterzee, and Dabney, some of whom are not entirely averse to this view, are all agreed that this interpretation of the days is *exegetically* doubtful, if not impossible. Kuyper and Bavinck hold that, while the first three days may have been of somewhat different length, the last three were certainly ordinary days. They naturally do not regard even the first three days as geological periods. Vos in his *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* defends the position that the days of creation were ordinary days. Hepp takes the same position in his *Calvinism and the Philosophy of Nature*. Noortzij in *Gods Woord en der Eeuwen Getuigenis*, asserts that the Hebrew word *yom* (day) in Gen. 1 cannot possibly designate anything else than an ordinary day, but holds that the writer of Genesis did not attach any importance to the concept "day," but introduces it simply as part of a frame-work for the narrative of creation, not to indicate historical sequence, but to picture the glory of the creatures in the light of the great redemptive purpose of God. Hence the sabbath is the great culminating point, in which man reaches his real destiny. This view reminds us rather strongly of the position of some of the early Church Fathers. The arguments adduced for it are not very convincing, as Aalders has shown in his *De Eerste Drie Hoofdstukken van Genesis*. This Old Testament scholar holds, on the basis of Gen. 1:5, that the term *yom* in Gen. 1 denotes simply the period of light, as distinguished from that of darkness; but this view would seem to involve a rather unnatural interpretation of the repeated expression "and there was evening and there was morning." It must then be interpreted to mean, and there was evening preceded by a morning. According to Dr. Aalders, too, Scripture certainly favors the idea that the days of creation were ordinary days, though it may not be possible to determine their exact length, and the first three days may have differed somewhat from the last three.



The literal interpretation of the term “day” in Gen. 1 is favored by the following considerations: (a) In its primary meaning the word *yom* denotes a natural day; and it is a good rule in exegesis, not to depart from the primary meaning of a word, unless this is required by the context. Dr. Noortzj stresses the fact that this word simply does not mean anything else than “day,” such as this is known by man on earth. (b) The author of Genesis would seem to shut us up absolutely to the literal interpretation by adding in the case of every day the words, “and there was evening and there was morning.” Each one of the days mentioned has just one evening and morning, something that would hardly apply to a period of thousands of years. And if it should be said that the periods of creation were extraordinary days, each one consisting of one long day and one long night, then the question naturally arises, What would become of all vegetation during the long, long night? (c) In Ex. 20:9–11 Israel is commanded to labor six days and to rest on the seventh, because Jehovah made heaven and earth in six days and rested on the seventh day. Sound exegesis would seem to require that the word “day” be taken in the same sense in both instances. Moreover the sabbath set aside for rest certainly was a literal day; and the presumption is that the other days were of the same kind. (d) The last three days were certainly ordinary days, for they were determined by the sun in the usual way. While we cannot be absolutely sure that the preceding days did not differ from them at all in length, it is extremely unlikely that they differed from them, as periods of thousands upon thousands of years differ from ordinary days. The question may also be asked, why such a long period should be required, for instance, for the separation of light and darkness.

3. THE WORK OF THE SEPARATE DAYS. We notice in the work of creation a definite gradation, the work of each day leads up to and prepares for the work of the next, the whole of it culminating in the creation of man, the crown of God’s handiwork, entrusted with the important task of making the whole of creation subservient to the glory of God.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bruce Waltke interviewed on ABC News April 16, 2010. You can see the interview at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UdEr5DpA-gE>.

<sup>2</sup> Many evangelical scholars have begun to support higher criticism's view that "Moses and God" are archaic in regard to authorship of the Pentateuch, and one should speak of redactors and editors.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 19:4-5 says, ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε ὅτι ὁ κτίσας ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς; καὶ εἶπεν· ἕνεκα τούτου καταλείψει ἄνθρωπος τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα καὶ κολληθήσεται τῇ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν. Notice that the ὁ κτίσας ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, "the one having created from the beginning" echoes the Gen. 1:1 text in either Hebrew or Greek, מֵאֲרֵכְלָא בְרָא תִשְׁבְּרָא or ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς, both of which use "beginning" as an anarthrous noun for original creation.

See similarly, Matt. 19:8 which says, λέγει αὐτοῖς ὅτι Μωϋσῆς πρὸς τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ὑμῶν ἐπέτρεψεν ὑμῖν ἀπολυῖσαι τὰς γυναῖκας ὑμῶν, ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς δὲ οὐ γέγονεν οὕτως. Mark 10:6 has, ἀπὸ δὲ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς.

John Collins suggests that this verse does not establish the issue. C. John Collins, *Science & Faith. Friends or Foes?* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 105-107. On p. 106, he writes, "If this argument is sound, I'm in trouble, because for reasons I have already given I cannot follow this reading of Genesis 1. On the other hand, I firmly believe in the traditional Christian doctrine of Christ, and tremble at the thought of doing anything to undermine it. But the argument is not sound. It finds its credibility from the way the English "from *the* beginning" seems so definite; but the Greek is not so fixed in meaning."

However, this argument misses that "beginning" (תִּשְׁבְּרָא, ἐν ἀρχῇ) is anarthrous in both the Greek and Hebrew version of Gen. 1:1 and how it is referenced in John 1:1-5.

On the issue of Jesus and the age of the earth, see Terry Mortenson, "Jesus, Evangelical Scholars, and the Age of the Earth," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 18 (2007): 69-98. See too Douglas F. Kelly, *Creation And Change: Genesis 1.1 - 2.4 in the Light of Changing Scientific Paradigms* (Fearn, UK: Mentor, 1997), 129-34.

<sup>4</sup> John 8:44 states, ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν. ἐκεῖνος ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἦν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλήθεια ἐν αὐτῷ. ὅταν λαλήσῃ τὸ ψεῦδος, ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων λαλεῖ, ὅτι ψεῦστης ἐστὶν καὶ ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ.

This puts the first murder ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, "from beginning."

<sup>5</sup> The Greek text is τὸ αἷμα πάντων τῶν προφητῶν τὸ ἐκκεχυμένον ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου.

William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 561, who write, "③ **the sum total of everything here and now, the world, the (orderly) universe**, in philosophical usage . . . πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κ. εἶναι *before the world existed* J 17:5. ἀπὸ καταβολῆς [κόσμου] *from the beginning of the world* Mt 13:35; 25:34; Lk 11:50; Hb 4:3; 9:26; Rv 13:8; 17:8. Also ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κ. Mt 24:21 or ἀπὸ κτίσεως κ. Ro 1:20.—B 5:5 ἀπὸ καταβ. κ. evidently means *at the foundation of the world* (s. Windisch, Hdb. ad loc.). πρὸ καταβολῆς κ. *before the foundation of the world* J 17:24; Eph 1:4; 1 Pt 1:20."

<sup>6</sup> Compare מְדַבְּרֵי מַזְלֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲלֵהֶם וְיִצְרָן and καὶ ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς with ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐστὶν καὶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς λαλεῖ. ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐρχόμενος [ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν]. Elsewhere in John, Jesus picks up the "breathed into their nostrils the breath of life" καὶ ἐνεφύσησεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοὴν ζωῆς when Jesus does a similar thing in 20:22, τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησεν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον. Jesus may also be echoing the promise of Ezek. 36:22-36, 37:9 which uses the same rare word.

<sup>7</sup> Paul teaches the same in 1 Cor. 15:47-48.

<sup>8</sup> F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 145-46, writes, "To Paul, Adam was no doubt a historical individual, the first man from whom all other men descended. But he was more: he was what his Hebrew name signifies--'mankind'. The whole of mankind is viewed as originally existing in Adam."

Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1998), 292, writes, "Finally, it is debated whether Adam is a historical or a mythological figure here. There is little doubt that Paul believed he was historical."

Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1997), 307, writes, "Genesis 3 describes a historical event; Adam and Eve were historical people who sinned against God in time and space. The historicity of this event is essential if an analogy is to be seen in Romans 5:12-21. If Adam was not a real creature who brought sin into the human race at one point in history, then there is no point to Jesus's redeeming humanity at another point in history. Christ's own testimony, however, confirms Genesis 3 as a historical event (Matt. 19:3-5)."

Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), 213, avers, "From the standpoint of logic, it is virtually impossible to accept the authority of Rom. 5 ('By one man sin entered into the world . . . without inferring that the entire human race must have descended from a single father. . . . It was certainly taken as historical by Christ and the apostles."

Even Peter Enns of Biologos writes, "There is really little doubt that Paul understood Adam to be a real person, the first created human from whom all humans descended." -- <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-i/>. Compare however Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam. What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say About Human Origins* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012), 79-92.

<sup>9</sup> See the careful discussions in Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 547-52; Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Bellingham: Logos, 2004), 704-05; G. C. Berkouwer, *The Work of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 235-37; and Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938), 324.

<sup>10</sup> On Jesus and ignorance of the end times (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32), see Athanasius, *Four Discourses Against the Arians*, 3.46, NPNF 24:419; Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity*, 9.58-62, NPNF 2.9:175-77; Augustine, *On the Trinity*, 1.12.23, FC 45:34-35; and the Westminster Confession of Faith 8.2.

The above explanations are not simply academic subtleties, rather they are the standard views presented even in popular evangelical study Bibles; see for example, *The ESV Study Bible*, p. 1875, note on Matt. 24:36; and *The Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible*, p. 1588 note on Matt. 24:36, and p. 1700.

<sup>11</sup> On the issue of second Cainan, see Travis R. Freeman, "Do the Genesis 5 and 11 Genealogies Contain Gaps," in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, pp. 279-314, particularly pp. 308-314.

<sup>12</sup> Ewald Martin Plass, *What Luther Says: An Anthology* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959) 3:1523.

<sup>13</sup> <http://peterenonline.com/2009/09/13/fleshing-out-an-incarnational-model-of-the-bible/>.

<sup>14</sup> Compare Enns's view with that of Gregory of Nazianzus, *Theological Oration*, 29.20, NPNF 2:309.

<sup>15</sup> See Sara Pulliam's, "Westminster Theological Suspension," in *Christianity Today* (online version only)

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<sup>16</sup> תְּנָחַם דַּי!

<sup>17</sup> Zech. 14:7 is picked up in Rev. 21:23 and 22:5. It is the time-bound creation passing into the timeless eternity of God (it is the plot symmetry of the timelessness of the eternal God passing into to the time-bound days of the first week of creation).

<sup>18</sup> *καὶ ἐγένετο ἑσπέρα καὶ ἐγένετο πρωὶ ἡμέρα μία* which Pietersma and Hiebert translate, "And it came to be evening, and it came to be morning, day one."

<sup>19</sup> The text is, *Factumque est vespere et mane dies unus*, according to R. Weber et al., *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983). Bishop Richard Challoner, *The Holy Bible. Douay-Rheims Version* (Charlotte: Saint Benedict Press, 2009), translates this, "and there was evening and morning one day."

<sup>20</sup> The text according to the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon website is **מַמְרָא וּמְרָא מַמְרָא** **מַמְרָא וּמְרָא מַמְרָא**. This is also the text of the *Aramaic Old Testament: Commonly Known as the Peshitta Tanakh*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2003). Currently, I am waiting for my volumes of the critical Peshitta: S. P. Brock et al., *The Old Testament in Syriac: According to the Peshitta Version* (Vetus Testamentum Syriace; Leiden: Brill, 1972-). George M. Lamsa, *Holy Bible: From the Ancient Eastern Text* (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman, 1933), translates Gen. 1:5, "And there was evening and there was morning, the first day."

<sup>21</sup> The text according to Stephen A. Kaufman, *Fragment Targum, Recension P, MS Paris 110. A Palestinian Aramaic Version* (Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project; Hebrew Union College, 2005), is **וְהוּא רְמַשׁ וְהוּא צִפְר** **וְהוּא רְמַשׁ וְהוּא צִפְר**. My translation is "and there was evening, and there was morning, and it was the order of the work in the beginning of the first day."

<sup>22</sup> The text according to Stephen A. Kaufman, *Fragment Targum, Recension VLN, Vatican Ebr. 440, Nuernberg and Leipzig B.H. Fol. 1* (Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project; Hebrew Union College, 2005), is **וְהוּא רְמַשׁ וְהוּא צִפְר**. My translation is "and there was evening, and there was morning, order of the work in the beginning of the first day."

<sup>23</sup> The text of the Neofiti Targum according to Stephen A. Kaufman, *Targum Neofiti* (Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project; Hebrew Union College, 2005), is **וְהוּא רְמַשׁ וְהוּא צִפְר עֵבֶד בְּרֵאשִׁית יוֹם קְדָמָא**. There is a scholarly translation of Neofiti available; see Martin McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis* (The Aramaic Bible; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), who translates this, "And there was evening and there was morning: (*in*) the order of the work of creation, first day."

McNamara, *Targum*, 53 n. 8, adds, "'the order of the work of creation'; possibly an allusion to the use of this pericope in a Synagogue *ma'amadah* reading linking a section of the Israelite people with the Temple courses of priests."

<sup>24</sup> The text of Pseudo-Jonathan according to Stephen A. Kaufman, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* (Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project; Hebrew Union College, 2005), is **וְהוּוּא רְמַשׁ וְהוּוּא צִפְר יוֹמָא חֲדָא**. There is a scholarly translation of Pseudo-Jonathan available; see Michael Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* (The Aramaic Bible; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), who translates this, "And there was evening and there was morning, one day."

Maher, *Targum*, 17 n. 12 adds, "Ps.-J. and Onq. translate the words 'one day', literally, while Nf, P, V, and N translate them as 'the first day,' thus bringing 'one day' (cf. v. 5) into line with the 'second day,' 'third day,' etc. The use of 'one day' in v. 5 was the occasion of some speculation (cf. *Gen. R.* 3.8; Josephus, *Ant.* 1 § 29; *Gen. R.* 3.9; *b. Nazir* 7a (21))."

<sup>25</sup> The text of Onkelos according to Stephen A. Kaufman, *Targum Onkelos* (Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project; Hebrew Union College, 2005), is **וְהוּוּא רְמַשׁ וְהוּוּא צִפְר יוֹם חֲד**. There is a scholarly translation of Onkelos by Bernard Grossfeld, *Targum Onkelos to Genesis* (The Aramaic Bible; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1988) translates this, "and it was evening and it was morning, one day."

<sup>26</sup> This is the translation of Grossfeld, *Onkelos*, 42. The text is **וְהוּוּא רְמַשׁ וְהוּוּא צִפְר יוֹמִין וְשִׁנִּין בְּהוּוּן וְלִמְנִין וְלִמְנִין וְלִמְנִין**.

<sup>27</sup> This is the translation of Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, 18.

<sup>28</sup> The text is that of H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus in Nine Volumes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978). Thackeray adds on p. 13 n. b, "This projected work on 'Customs and Causes' . . . was apparently never completed."

<sup>29</sup> Thackeray and Marcus, *Josephus*, 5:603. See too Josephus, *Ant.* 1.33, 48 and 109.

<sup>30</sup> Jacob Neusner, *The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2011), 10:21.

<sup>31</sup> Neusner, *Babylonian*, 4:423.

<sup>32</sup> Neusner, *Babylonian*, 7:45-46.

<sup>33</sup> Neusner, *Babylonian*, 2:33.

<sup>34</sup> Neusner, *Babylonian*, 1:2.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Henry Charles, *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, (Bellingham: Logos, 2004), 2:446.

<sup>36</sup> The translation is from H. Freedman, *Midrash Rabbah. Genesis* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition; New York: Soncino, 1983), 24-26. Freedman adds this note p. 25 n. 2, "The creation narrative should either state, one day, two days, three days, etc., or the first day, the second day, etc. Instead of which it states 'one day', and continues with 'the second day', 'the third day', etc. Hence 'yom ehad' (one day) really means: the day when He designed to be at one with man, His handiwork.—the world thus requires the harmonious co-operation of God and man, and its harmony and unity are broken when man sins."

<sup>37</sup> Victor P. Warkulwiz, *The Doctrines of Genesis 1-11. A Compendium and Defense of Traditional Catholic Theology on Origins* (Caryville, TN: The John Paul II Institute of Christian Spirituality, 2007), 169. See particularly pp. 164-88, "Doctrine Six: God created the world in six natural days," and pp. 189-219, "Doctrine Seven: God created the world several thousand years ago."

<sup>38</sup> See Ps. 154:13, כָּל־עֲלָמִים, "all the ages." Dan. 9:24 has צְדִקַּת עֲלָמִים, "righteousness of the ages." See too Deut. 32:7, "Remember the days of the age" יָמֹת עוֹלָם. Or ponder Eccl. 1:10, "Is there a thing of which it is said, 'See, this is new'? It has been already in the ages before us," לְעֲלָמִים, literally, "to the ages." Job 22:15, has, "Will you keep to the old way that wicked men have trod?," הַאֲרָחָה עוֹלָם, literally, "the way of the age." Rev. 20:10 has εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων "into the ages of the ages." In Hebrew this would be עַד־עוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים, "to the ages of the ages" or לְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים. The Syriac Peshitta reflects this in its translation, לחם לחם, "to the age of ages."

On a related point, see Allan A. MacRae, "Olam" *TWOld Testament*, 672, who writes, "Though 'ôlām is used more than three hundred times to indicate indefinite continuance into the very distant future, the meaning of the word is not confined to the future. There are at least twenty instances where it clearly refers to the past. Such usages generally point to something that seems long ago, but rarely if ever refer to a limitless past."

<sup>39</sup> 1Q19 Frag. 2:6; 1Q20 2:4, 7; 4:3; 10:10; 16:12, 14; 20:13; 21:10; 21:12.

<sup>40</sup> דָּוָר וְדָוָר.

<sup>41</sup> עַד־שָׁנֵי דָּוָר וְדָוָר.

<sup>42</sup> רַבּוֹת בְּשָׁנִים.

<sup>43</sup> וְשָׁנִים רַבּוֹת.

<sup>44</sup> See for example Seder Olam and the material cited in Modercai Cogan, "Chronology, (Hebrew Bible)," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 1:1002-1011.

<sup>45</sup> James R. Mook, "The Church Fathers on Genesis, the Flood, and the Age of the Earth," in Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury. *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*. (New Leaf Publishing Group, 2008), 26.

<sup>46</sup> Warkulwiz, *Doctrines*, 189. Warkulwiz writes on p. 165 n. b., "The Pontifical Biblical commission, in a response issued in 1909, rejected the idea that the first three chapters of Genesis 'contain allegories and symbols destitute of any foundation in objective reality but presented under the garb of history for the purpose of inculcating religious and philosophical truth' ([Henry Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*] DZ, no. 2122)."

<sup>47</sup> Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation and Early Man: The Orthodox Christian Vision* (Platina, CA: Saint Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2000). See too p. 71, 84, 161, 401.

<sup>48</sup> Rose, *Genesis*, 326-27.

<sup>49</sup> Rose, *Genesis*, 401.

<sup>50</sup> Rose, *Genesis*, 161. See too, Rose, *Genesis*, 84, "Finally, if it is true that modern science is capable of throwing some light on the understanding of at least a few passages of Genesis—for we do not need to deny that in some areas the truths of these two spheres overlap—I think that it is no less true that the Patristic understanding of Genesis is also capable of throwing light on modern science and gives some hints on how to understand the facts of geology, paleontology, and other sciences concerned with the early history of the earth and of mankind."

<sup>51</sup> R. L. Dabney, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 255.

<sup>52</sup> Johannes Geerhardus Vos, *Genesis* (Pittsburgh: Crown & Covenant Publishers, 2006), 22-23.

<sup>53</sup> For a transcript of Dr. Mohler's talk, see <http://biologos.org/resources/albert-mohler-why-does-the-universe-look-so-old> and the actual webcast at <http://www.christianity.com/ligonier/?speaker=mohler2>.

<sup>54</sup> Origen, *Against Celsus*, 1:19, ANF, 4:404. See too

<sup>55</sup> Lactantius, *Institutes* 7.14, in ANF, 7. See Mook, "Fathers," 28 for comments on many of these passages.

<sup>56</sup> Victorinus, *On the Creation of the World*, ANF 7:341.

<sup>57</sup> Ephrem the Syrian, *Commentary on Genesis* 1.1, FC 91:74.

<sup>58</sup> Andrew Louth and Marco Conti, *Genesis 1-11*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture OT 1. (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 15, quoting *Commentary on Genesis* 1.22.1-2.

<sup>59</sup> Basil, *Hexaemeron*, 2:8, NPNF 7:64-65.

<sup>60</sup> Ambrose, *Hexaemeron* 1.10.3-7, FC, 42:42-43.

<sup>61</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 18.40.1. Compare this with Augustine, *City of God*, 11.4-7.

<sup>62</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 12.10.2. See too Augustine, *City of God*, 16.8.

<sup>63</sup> See too Victorinus, *On the Creation of the World*, ANF 7:341.

<sup>64</sup> Michael Glerup, *Commentaries on Genesis 1-3*, Ancient Christian Texts (Downers Grove: IVP, 2010), 118.

<sup>65</sup> Luther, *Works*, 43:210; see too Luther, *Works*, 1:5.

<sup>66</sup> Hugh Latimer and John Watkins. *The Sermons of the Right Reverend Father in God, and Constant Martyr of Jesus Christ, Hugh Latimer* (London: James Duncan, 1824), 2:235-36.

<sup>67</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, 1:14.1.

<sup>68</sup> Zacharias Ursinius, *The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinius on the Heidelberg Catechism*. Trans. by G. W. Williard, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Columbus: Scott & Bascom, 1852), 145.

<sup>69</sup> Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations on the Pentateuch* (Ligonier, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1991), 1:6.

<sup>70</sup> Compare all the following: William S. Barker, "The Westminster Assembly On the Days of Creation: A Reply to David W. Hall," *Westminster Theological Journal Volume* 62 (2000): 114-20. J. V. Fesko, "The Days of Creation and Confession Subscription in the OPC," *WTJ* 63 (2001): 233-249. Mark D. Futato, "Because It Had Rained: A Study of Gen 2:5-7 with Implications for Gen 2:4-25 and Gen 1:1-2:3," *WTJ* 60 (1998): 1-21; James B. Jordan, *Creation in Six Days: A Defense of the Traditional Reading of Genesis One* (Moscow: Canon Press, 1999); Robert Letham, "'In the Space of Six Days': The Days of Creation from Origen to the Westminster Assembly," *WTJ* 61 (1999): 149-74; and Joseph A. Pipa and David W. Hall, eds., *Did God Create in Six Days?* (Taylors: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999).

<sup>71</sup> John Lightfoot, *The Whole Works of the Rev. John Lightfoot*, ed. John Rogers Pitman (London: J. F. Dove, 1822), 2:333-34.

<sup>72</sup> Robert Dabney, *Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 254-55.

<sup>73</sup> Gerhard Hasel, "The 'Days' of Creation in Genesis 1: Literal 'Days' or Figurative 'Periods/Epochs' of Time?" *Origins* 21 (1994):5-34.

<sup>74</sup> Seth dies 2158 after the creation of the world while Abraham dies 2183 years after according to the MT.

<sup>75</sup> Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Revised and extended 4th ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 301-02, translates, "[Terah] was one hundred and for[ty-five years old when he went forth with them] from Ur of the Chaldees and came to Haran (11:31). Now Ab[ram was se]venty years old and for five years Abram dwelt in Haran. And afterwards Abram went forth to the land of Canaan. Six[ty-five years] ... the heifer and the ram ... [the torch of] fire when it passed over ..."

Bibleworks 9.0 has this version of the text: "Terah was one hundred and forty years old when he left <sup>9</sup>Ur of the Chaldees and went to Haran and Ab[ram was s]eventy years old. And Abram dwelt five years <sup>10</sup>in Haran. Then [Terah died] six[ty years after Abram] went out [to] the land of Canaan [. . .] <sup>11</sup>the heifer, the ram, and the

go[at . . .] Abram to (or did not) [ . . . ]<sup>12</sup>the fire when it passed [ . . . ] he took for himself [ . . . ]<sup>13</sup>for Ab[ram] to go out [to the land of ] Canaan to [ . . . ]."

<sup>76</sup> See Philo, *Som.* 1.47 compared with *Mig.* 1.177.

<sup>77</sup> See for example, Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, trans. by Mark Biddle (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 108, also says "the application of the days of creation to 1,000-year periods or the like is, thus, a very capricious corruption from entirely alien circles of thought." Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1972), 65; Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 1:19; Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 109; John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," in Frank E. Gaebelien, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with New International Version: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 2:95. See too Koehler and Baumgartner, *HALOT*, 2:399; Holladay, *CHALOT*, 130; Saeboe, *TDOT*, 6:23-25; Jenni, *TLOT*, 2:528; Verhoef, *NIDOTTE*, 2:420-21. Brown-Driver-Briggs, *Lexicon*, 398; Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:28, 30; Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 115, and Hasel, "Day," *ISBE*, 1:877.

<sup>78</sup> Marcus Dods, *The Book of Genesis* (New York: Armstrong, 1902), 1:4.

<sup>79</sup> Collins, *Science*, 105, "I have argued that we cannot get from the creation days any biblical position on how old the earth and the universe are supposed to be. All we can say for sure is that the beginning of the first day (Gen. 1:3) may be some unknown amount of time after the absolute beginning of the universe (Gen. 1:1), and that the creation 'week' for earth (Gen. 1:3-2:3) had to be longer than an ordinary week in order for Genesis 2:5 to make any sense."

<sup>80</sup> Skinner, *Genesis*, ICC, 21.

<sup>81</sup> See Victor Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, The New International Commentary of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 53; C. John Collins, "Reading Genesis 1:1-2:3 as an Act of Communication: Discourse Analysis and Literal Interpretation," in *Did God Create in Six Days?* ed. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. and David W. Hall (Taylors, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999), 147-48; and John H. Walton, *Genesis*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 81-82.

<sup>82</sup> Hamilton, *Genesis*, 54-55, "The third approach to 'day' in Gen. 1 is the literary interpretation. This approach leaves open the possibility for taking 'day' literally or nonliterally. . . . A literary reading of Gen. 1 still permits the retention of 'day' as a solar day of 24 hours. But it understands 'day' not as a chronological account of how many hours God invested in his creating project, but as an analogy of God's creative activity." See too, p. 254, "Applying this observation to Gen. 5 leads us to believe that the names of Gen. 5 need not be understood sequentially. Thus the figures cannot be added to arrive at the age of mankind."

Collins, "Reading," 148 n. 44, "As can be seen in the discussion of the exegetical factors for interpreting the days of Genesis 1 above, there are certain clear features of the text and context which can be taken without violence to the text point away from 'literal' 24-hour days." See too p. 150, "Under my exegesis the questions lose their centrality because the Bible is not concerned with the age of the earth as such"; and p. 142, "This text [Exod. 20:8-11] in no way sets up any identity between the length of our work-week and the length of God's; instead, the whole operates on the principle of analogy: our work and rest are analogous to God's . . . and whatever the degree of overlap and topical arrangement, still they are 'broadly sequential,' and extend over some span of elapsed time."

Collins, *Science*, 89, writes, "So, as I said, we should take the creation week as having been longer than an ordinary week. The only ways for that to be true are if the days aren't ordinary days, or if the days have spaces of times between them. . . . If we put all of these things together, we see that the best explanation is the one that takes these days as not the ordinary kind; they are instead 'God's workdays.'" And on p. 89-90, see, "The length of these days is not relevant to this purpose, but we have to conclude from Genesis 2:5-7 that some of them (at least) were longer than our ordinary days. How much longer we can't say, except that days 1-5 have to add up to a fair number of years in order to establish the seasonal cycle seen in 2:5-7. . . . And if the only price you have to pay for all these benefits is to give up ordinary days—well, that's not too bad, is it?"

John Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009), 95, writes, "the point is *not* that the biblical text therefore supports an old earth, but simply that there is no biblical position of the age of the earth." And see p. 138, "If Genesis 1 does not require a young earth and if divine fiat does not preclude a long process, then Genesis 1 offers no objection to biological evolution. Biological evolution is capable of giving us insight into God's creative work."

<sup>83</sup> The whole letter, and all of the two following emails are available online from Answers in Genesis. Note here that Barr does not believe in inerrancy; he is simply affirming the authorial intent of Genesis 1-3.

<sup>84</sup> For Collin's assessment of this letter, see Collins, *Science*, 364-367.

<sup>85</sup> James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), 42.

<sup>86</sup> James Barr, *Beyond Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), 131. See too p. 137.

<sup>87</sup> James Barr, "Biblical Chronology: Legend or Science?" The Ethel M. Wood Lecture 1987 (London: University of London, 1987), 5.

<sup>88</sup> Email to the author, Jan. 7, 2011.

<sup>89</sup> Email to the author, Dec. 28, 2010. Tov's original email was written in all small case letters with sparse punctuation.

<sup>90</sup> P. J. Williams, "Genesis: The No-Agony-Before-Adam View," paper given at University of Aberdeen, Dec. 17, 2008, p. 1, n. 1.

<sup>91</sup> Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), Ge 1:5.

<sup>92</sup> S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis, With Introduction and Notes* (New York; London: Edwin S. Gorham; Methuen & Co, 1904), xxviii, n. 1.

<sup>93</sup> Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, translated by Mark Biddle (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 108, also says "the application of the days of creation to 1,000-year periods or the like is, thus, a very capricious corruption from entirely alien circles of thought."

<sup>94</sup> H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis* (Columbus, OH: Wartburg Press, 1942), 56-57.

<sup>95</sup> Cuthbert A. Simpson and Walter Russell Bowie, "The Book of Genesis," in George Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Bible: General articles on the Bible. General articles on the Old Testament. Genesis. Exodus*. Abingdon Press, 1951), 1:471.

<sup>96</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1972), 65.

<sup>97</sup> Robert Davidson, *Genesis 1-11*. Cambridge University Press, 1973), 18.

<sup>98</sup> Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 1:19.

<sup>99</sup> Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 109.

<sup>100</sup> Victor Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, The New International Commentary of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 53.

<sup>101</sup> John Stek, "What Says Scripture?" in Howard Van Til et al., *Portraits of Creation: Biblical and Scientific Perspectives on the World's Formation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 237-238.

<sup>102</sup> John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," in Frank E. Gaebel, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with New International Version: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 2:95.

<sup>103</sup> C. John Collins, "Reading Genesis 1:1-2:3 as an Act of Communication: Discourse Analysis and Literal Interpretation," in *Did God Create in Six Days?* ed. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. and David W. Hall (Taylors, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999), 147-48.

<sup>104</sup> John H. Walton, *Genesis*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 81-82.

<sup>105</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariel's Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 1st ed. (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2008), 44-45.

<sup>106</sup> Fruchtenbaum, *Genesis*, 46.

<sup>107</sup> For more analysis, see Terry Mortenson, "Christian Theodicy in Light of Genesis and Modern Science," *Answers Research Journal* 2 (2009): 151-67.

<sup>108</sup> Norman C. Nevin's book, *Should Christians Embrace Evolution? Biblical and Scientific Responses* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2011): 9-10.

<sup>109</sup> Norman C. Nevin's book, *Should Christians Embrace Evolution? Biblical and Scientific Responses* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2011): 9-10.

<sup>110</sup> G. K. Beale, *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism. Responding to New Challenges to Biblical Authority* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 19. See too pp. 161-218.

<sup>111</sup> In a telephone conversation, John Whitcomb told me that Henry Morris was the proposer of the language. Both were signers of the Chicago Statement.

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<sup>112</sup> The original sheets of signatures are available in the Dallas Theological Seminary archives and include the scruples at various points.

<sup>113</sup> Dabney, *Lectures*, 256.

<sup>114</sup> Notice the statement of Westminster Theological Seminary, *Affirmations and Denials Regarding Recent Issues*, Dec. 3, 2008, p. 3, "We affirm that, in the context of subscription by voting faculty and Board members, the meaning of any particular teaching in the Standards is determined by the Board, by referring to the historical record of the orthodox Reformed tradition, and is not determined by the private interpretation of any one individual faculty member." For a complete text, see <http://files.wts.edu/uploads/images/files/Board%20Affirmations%20and%20Denials.pdf> .

<sup>115</sup> J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, New Edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009)1-2, and particularly 138-150.

<sup>116</sup> For a fuller list, see Answers in Genesis, <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/bios/>.

<sup>117</sup> Bruce K. Waltke, James M. Houston and Erika Moore, *The Psalms as Christian Worship: A Historical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 376.

<sup>118</sup> Johannes Geerhardus Vos, *Genesis* (Pittsburgh: Crown & Covenant Publishers, 2006), 22-23.

<sup>119</sup> Trevor Craigen, "Can Deep Time Be Embedded in Genesis?" in Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury. *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*. (New Leaf Publishing Group, 2008), 193, see too particularly 194-95, 200-202.

<sup>120</sup> Craigen, "Embedded," 195.

<sup>121</sup> Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938), 150-55.