

Appendices: Genesis Issues in Creation

Views of Creation¹

1. The major issue related to chapter one is the age of the earth: old earth vs. young earth.
2. All old earth views accept the legitimacy of scientific dating methods.
3. Young earth views reject scientific dating claims and hold to a consistent, literal interpretation of the Bible.
4. Two of the most compelling arguments for a young earth, 7-day creation come from Scriptures own interpretation of itself.

Exodus 20:11 models the Jewish work week and Sabbath observance on the creation week. If the days of creation aren't literal then the commandment becomes meaningless.

Gen. 2:17 compared to 1 Cor. 15:21 shows that all physical death entered history as a result of Adam's sin.

Old Earth Views of Origins (note: all ancient pagan mythologies are based on pre-existent matter, and a chaos to order theme).

The problem with all old earth views of origins is that things die physically prior to Adam's sin. This means that sin, suffering, death, are not the result of the fall but are natural processes. Thus it would be unnecessary for Jesus Christ to die for sin or to conquer physical death through resurrection since physical death would no longer be a consequence of sin.

1A **Naturalistic Evolution** (Darwinistic Evolution; Atheistic Evolution)

1B The View: Everything in the universe came into existence through purely natural processes without aid of any supernatural being, higher intelligence, or divine power and has evolved into its present form unaided by such a power.

2B Benefits of the View

1C It appears to explain the origin of everything

2C It offers a single, simple explanation of existence: evolution.

3C Provides an alternative to creation by God.

4C Eliminates accountability to God and exalts mankind.

¹ Cf., Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*, Appendix to Genesis, Libronix. I have modified his material for use in this outline.

3B Weaknesses and Problems

- 1C Cannot explain existence of matter, which becomes eternal.
- 2C Cannot explain the complexity of matter. Answer: Billions of years of evolution are responsible for the complexity of matter.
- 3C. Cannot explain the emergence of life. Answer: Primordial life evolved from bio-polymers that evolved from inorganic compounds.
- 4C. Cannot explain the appearance of God-consciousness in man. Answer: This too was the product of evolution.
- 5C Cannot explain universal, moral absolutes. Answer: these are social constructs or pragmatic developments learned through trial/error.

4B Evaluation of the view

- 1C Science is empirically evaluated and tested. Evolution cannot be observed or tested and is thus a faith position.
- 2C No scientific data exists to demonstrate its assumptions.
- 3C Argues mutations can be the mechanism for change from one species to another. There is no evidence for this.
- 4C This is mathematically, and statistically improbable.
- 5C Repudiates God's eyewitness account of creation.

5B Advocates

Most non-Christian scientists and many Christian scientists.

Assimilationist Views of Creation (these views seek to interpret the Bible on the basis of modern science, assuming modern scientific theories are accurate)

2A **Theistic Evolution**

1B View

God used the naturalistic process of nature to bring everything into existence over billions of years. At a minimum God created matter, then God created life. Everything else is the result of natural processes.

2B Benefits of the View

- 1C Attempts to unite broad general revelation about *ex nihilo* creation at the beginning and scientific claims.
- 2C The existence and presence of a Theistic God is preserved.

3B Weaknesses of the View

1C It presupposes the unproven assumptions of evolution.

2C It has death preceding the fall.

3C Fails to comply at any level with the biblical account of creation.

4B Evaluation of the view

1C Does not satisfy either the claims of evolution or the Bible.

2C Ultimately destroys the need for Christ, and the veracity of the Bible.

5B Advocates

Christians who have a weak view of God and the Bible.

3A **Progressive Creation**

1B Statement of the view

God created the world directly and deliberately, without leaving anything to chance, but He did it over long periods of time that correspond roughly to the geological ages.

Positive aspects of the view from the perspective of those who hold it

1C. It provides a reasonable harmony between the Genesis record and the facts of science.

2C. The translation of “day” as “age” is an exegetically legitimate one.

3C. It is a tentative conclusion and acknowledges that not all the scientific evidence is in and our understanding of the text may change as biblical scholarship progresses.

2B Problems with the view and answers by its advocates

1C. There are discrepancies between the fossil record and the order in which Genesis records that God created plants, fish, and animals.
Answer: Science may be wrong at this point, or Genesis may have omitted the earliest forms of life.

2C. Taking the six days of creation as ages is unusual exegetically.
Answer: This interpretation is possible and best here.

3C. “Evenings” and “mornings” suggest 24-hour periods. Answer: The sun did not appear until the fourth day.

4C. Death entered the world before the Fall. Answer: It took on its horror at the Fall but existed before that event. Death is related to the contextually defined “life,” (Heb. *Nephesh*) which is not equivalent to modern biological concepts of life.

3B Evaluation of the view

This view takes the biblical text quite seriously but adopts some unusual interpretations of that text to harmonize it with scientific data.

4B Modern advocates of the view

Many evangelicals who have been strongly influenced by science hold this view including Davis A. Young, *Creation and the Flood* (1977). James Boice, Bernard Ramm, Robert Newman, Herman Eckelmann, and Hugh Ross also hold this view.

4A The Old-Earth Gap Theory

1B Statement of the view

Between Genesis 1:1 and 2 there was a long, indeterminate period in which we can locate the destruction of an original world and the unfolding of the geological ages.

Positive aspects of the view from the perspective of those who hold it

1C. It rests on an exegetical, biblical base.

2C. It is consistent with the structure of the creation account itself.

3C. It is possible to translate the Hebrew verb translated “to be” in verse 2 “become.”

4C. “Formless and void” in verse 2 may be a clue to God’s pre-Adamic judgment on the earth.

5C. It provides a setting for the fall of Satan.

2B Problems with the view and answers by its advocates

1C. It is an unnatural explanation since the text implies only an original creation in Genesis 1:2 and following (cf. Exod. 20:11). Answer: This interpretation is a superficial conclusion.

- 2C. The exegetical data that supports this view is far from certain.
Answer: These interpretations are possible.
- 3C. This theory does not really settle the problems posed by geology.
Answer: The universal flood may have produced some to the geological phenomena.

3B Evaluation of the view

While this view grows out of a high view of Scripture, several of the interpretations required for it rely on improbable exegesis.

4B Modern advocates of the view

Many conservative evangelicals including Arthur Pink, C. I. Scofield, C. S. Lewis, M. R. DeHaan, and D. G. Barnhouse held this view. See also Arthur C. Custance, *Without Form and Void* (1970).

Young Earth Six Day Creation Views

The student should be aware that there are some who hold the first view, the Chaos-Restoration view who allow for old-earth dating schemes preceding Genesis 1:2.

5A Young-Earth Gap or Creation-Chaos-Restoration view

1B Statement of the view

Genesis 1:1 states the original creation of the universe, “the heavens and the earth.” The fall of Satan and the angelic revolt resulted in a divine judgment on that universe which is depicted in v. 2. Beginning in 1:3 God restores the planet and the universe restoring the planet for the habitation of man. The time gap between 1:1 and 1:2 is not very long and no geologic ages, or pre-Adamic life forms are inserted.

Positive aspects of the view from the perspective of those who hold i.

- 1C It is based on a exegetical, and sound biblical basis.
- 2C It takes into account that “good” does not equate to moral or righteous.
- 3C It provides a basis for understanding “Eden, the garden of God” to be located on earth.
- 4C “Formless and void,” “darkness” and “deep” all have ominous overtones of judgment.
- 5C Recognizes that the stars are not created until the fourth day.

6C The view that a gap exists between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2 to explain the time of Satan's fall goes back to at least the Targum of Jonathon.

2B Problems with the view.

1. Critics argue that the grammar is not that determinative. Answer: These exegetical possibilities are legitimate and possible.
2. The fall of Satan must be after Gen. 2:4 because God said everything was "very good." Answer: But "good" is not a moral evaluation, as in it was not good for man to be alone. "Good" indicates that the result was what God intended.

3B Evaluation of the View

This view recognizes the clear Scriptural evidence that the earth is young, avoids all assimilation with evolution, and provides a better time frame for understanding the fall of Satan. Further, this view accords with recent findings of creationist scientists which support a young earth geology.

4B Modern Advocates of the View

This is a fairly recent view. Many creationists reject it because of their hostility to the old-earth gap view. Arnold Fruchtenbaum holds this view as do a number of other pastors who formerly held to an old earth gap view.

6A Six-Day Creationism

1B Statement of the view

Genesis 1 describes one creative process that took place in six consecutive 24-hour periods of time not more than 6,000 to 15, 000 years ago.

Positive aspects of the view from the perspective of those who hold it

- 1C. It regards biblical teaching as determinative.
- 2C. It rests on a strong exegetical base.
- 3C. It is the most literal (normal) meaning of the text.

2B Problems with the view and answers by its advocates

- 1C. Data from various scientific disciplines (i.e., astronomy, radioactive dating, carbon deposits, etc.) indicate that the earth is about 5 billion years old and the universe is about 15-20 billion

years old. Answer: God created the cosmos with the appearance of age.

2C. A universal flood cannot explain the geologic strata fully. Answer: It can explain most if not all of it, and the remainder may have been a result of creation.

3C. Creation with the appearance of age casts doubt on the credibility of God. Answer: Since God evidently created Adam, plants, and animals with the appearance of age He may have created other things with the appearance of age too.

4C. There is no reason why God would have created things with the appearance of age. Answer: He did so for His own glory, though we may not fully understand why yet.

3B Evaluation of the view

This view rests on the best exegesis of the text, though it contradicts the conclusions of several branches of science.

Modern advocates of the view

Many conservative evangelicals hold this view. See also Robert E. Kofahl and Kelly L. Seagraves, *The Creation Explanation* (1975).²

APPENDIX B

The Names of God in Genesis

The names of God in Genesis reveal much about His character and His attributes. Names for the Hebrew are not simply terms of designation but are terms of description and reveal the nature of the object named.

1. *El, Elohim* אֱלֹהִים

El is the standard, or generic name in Semitic Languages for deity, for god. *Elohim* is the plural, often said by scholars to be the plural of majesty. However, the frequent use of plural pronouns along with the use of a singular verb with the plural noun when it refers to God surely indicates that the Old Testament writers understood the plurality of the Godhead in the Old Testament.

²Tom Constable. *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*, Ge 50:22. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003.

2. *YHWH*, יהוה

The sacred tetragrammeton, the personal name of God related to His Covenant with Israel. So when the name *YHWH* is used this would have particular meaning to the Jew. Although God does not reveal the meaning of this name until Ex 3:14. This is a form of the Hebrew verb, *hayah*, meaning “to be, to exist” and the name of God refers to His self existence. He is the self-existent One. This name is specifically associated with God in His covenant relationship with Israel.

Jews do not pronounce this name due to respect. In ancient times they substituted the name *Adonai*, today, some read *HaShem*, “the Name.” Out of respect you will see some write this as G-d.

To remind readers to substitute *Adonai*, the vowels from *Adonai* were placed under the consonants for *YHWH* or *JHWH*. Translators of the Old Testament in the Reformation era did not understand this and so invented a new word, *JeHoVaH*, which combined the consonants of *YHWH* with the vowels of *Adonai*. Jehovah is not a biblical name for God.

The modern name Jehovah originated *ca.* 1520 by Italian Franciscan monk, Peter Galatinus, a baptized Jew. and was propagated by Paulus Fagius among scholars. Recent research has shown that Raymon Martin’s “Pugio Fidei” written in 1270 contained this hybrid.

3. *YHWH Elohim*, יהוה אֱלֹהִים LORD God.4. Lord God Most High, *El Elyon*, אֱלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן ,

“Most High”, Gen. 14:18, 19, 20, 22.

The name emphasizes the exalted status of God, His overwhelming power, His supreme majesty. It was the sin of Lucifer to be like the Most High God. It is Elyon who is the place of shelter, the rock in the midst of adversity, our ever present help in time of trouble. It is Elyon, who has the deepest concern for Zion, (Psa 46:6; 87:5)

“Possessor of Heaven and earth,”

qoneh, “owner, possessor” from *qanah*, “to get, acquire, purchase, own.”

5. *El Rai*, Gen. 16:13, God Who Sees, אֱלֹהֵי רָאִי,

“God knows,” that is, the future (Hagar uses this name after God’s prediction about her future).

6. *El Shaddai*, אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי Gen. 17:1; 35:11; God the Almighty. This title is used 48x in the Old Testament. Most often in Job (31x). The LXX translates this with *pantokrator*, “all powerful” and it emphasizes God’s Omnipotence, His ability to perform whatever He desires. The Rabbi’s analyzed the word as: the one who is self sufficient.

7. *El ‘Olam*, אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם

The Eternal God, The Everlasting God, Gen. 21:33; Emphasizes God’s eternity. God has neither beginning nor ending.

8. YHWH Yereh, or Jehovah Jireh אֱלֹהֵי יִרְאֵה

In the KJV; Gen. 22:14, *The Lord Will Provide*. From the verb *ra’ea* “to see,” this is related to *El Rai*, but the emphasis here is on God seeing our need and meeting our needs

9. YHWH the God of the heavens, אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם *Yhwh Elohim Hashamayim*, Gen 24:7;

Emphasizing God as the ruler of the heavens and thus ruler of the earth and the affairs of man.

10. *El Elohe Israel*, אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל God, the God of Israel.

11. *Ro’h*, *‘eben Israel*, רֹעֵה אֶבֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל

The Shepherd, the Rock of Israel; Gen. 49:24 This emphasizes God in His role as leader and protector of Israel.