

Systematic Theology for the Local Church

#65-66—Anthropology—II-III¹

Key Creation Doctrines

Paul Karleen

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Helpful for the studies in biblical anthropology is House, section 46. Sections of Ham and Reymond referred to below are helpful for this study.

The question of the origin of the universe and particularly the origin of human beings has always been of interest to human societies. Because the Bible gives us information about this, Christians have rightly studied the Bible's presentation. But in the last few centuries and particularly in recent decades there has been a significant willingness to accept information from outside the Bible as determinative in interpreting the Bible itself. Ideas that have called themselves scientific have been the basis for radical reinterpretations—or ignoring—of the actual text.

It is very significant that the Bible begins by presenting God as an absolute sovereign, creating the universe by his own will and command. Because God the Holy Spirit is the author of Scripture, we have to conclude that there is a very good reason for this kind of opening. The Bible does not start with devotional material or poetry. It starts with the beginning of material things—first an unformed condition and then the creation of Adam as the pinnacle of God's creative work. We are left with the impression that we are seeing unique acts from the hand of a unique being. And yet today we are asked by many to water down that uniqueness and sovereignty and accept interpretations that are strongly influenced by humanistic thinking that at heart rejects the existence of a sovereign God. Can we—should we—participate in such a compromise?

This study will present basic biblical teaching on the origin of the universe and human beings as it is found in the biblical text. In any work of interpreting the Bible we are justified in looking at information from outside the Bible to use in illuminating the text. But we can never allow such information to move us from face-value interpretation of the words of Scripture. Sadly, this is exactly what happens when people allow so-called scientific information to move them away from accepting the plain text of the Bible.

This is part of a series of studies in systematic theology, and so we will be approaching the question of origins from the standpoint of the words of the early chapters of Genesis as they occur in their immediate contexts and the wider context that is the whole Bible. We are building on the teaching of the first study in biblical anthropology, in which we emphasized the need to accept Genesis at face value. The big issue for the Christian in the study of origins is whether or not we will be biblicists. Are we willing to trust a face-value reading of the Bible when outside evidence *seems to* contradict it?

There are many books available to help with issues surrounding the confrontation of evolutionism by biblical Christianity and it is good for you to utilize them. We will deal in these studies only with the key and central issues.

I want to relate to you a little story about an incident that I will never forget. When I was in college I studied under a biologist named Edward Deevey, whose area of specialization was paleolimnology, the study of lakes to determine ancient conditions as preserved in the lakes. During the course of study, we were doing lab experiments designed to demonstrate evolution. We put fruit flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*) in containers during one class and came back a few weeks later to see the result of their reproduction. This is an

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experiment that is widely used in courses to demonstrate the changes in the appearance of an organism over generations, since the reproductive cycle is about ten days. We were to examine the new flies under a microscope and observe changes from the parents. I can still hear Dr. Deevey say, as I brought the microscope into focus, “See, this proves evolution.” But I was very puzzled, because all I could see was differences in color, along with several examples of deformed flies—unusable wings, strange antennae. I was not a believer at the time. Now I know that what I was seeing was lateral change in an organism, along with downward change due to damaged DNA. This was no “proof” of evolution at all. I still saw fruit flies, not butterflies.

I am certainly not saying that a Christian should shun science. God created all things, and I believe that it is part of his original intention for human beings to explore what God made. In addition, he has given us the capacity to “do” science. The biblical account of origins will never ultimately be at odds with science that is done with strict adherence to good scientific method that consists of observation, collection of data, hypothesizing and experimentation aimed at verifying the hypothesis. But science that maintains conclusions without adequate observation or experiment or that embodies presuppositions or conclusions that are intrinsically contrary to Scripture is to be avoided.

My study of the early chapters of Genesis in the context of the whole of biblical revelation leads me to conclude that creation is recent and occurred instantaneously over six 24-hour days. For a person to believe this is not simplistic or naïve. It is a faith position that is buttressed by significant positive scientific evidence. Many Christians do not know that there is a large body of sound information that stands against evolution. I will approach the theology of origins through seven key questions:

1. Do we have a reliable source of information concerning the origin of the universe?
2. How long did it take for the universe to come into existence?
3. What did life forms look like when they were created?
4. Why were human beings created?
5. Where do non-material entities come from?
6. How do we account for apparent changes in the earth’s surface?
7. Is there any purpose for the earth?

I. Do we have a reliable source of information concerning the origin of the universe? The biblical record of Gen. 1-11 is an historical account.

Information about creation itself, the flood and the Tower of Babel should be taken as intending to present actual history. There are many biblical reasons for accepting the early chapters of Genesis as actual history. The following are drawn from Robert Reymond:²

1. The frequent use of linguistic features characteristic of narrative as opposed to poetry, such as *waw* (‘and’) connecting the description of events, that points to authorial intention to create a historical account.
2. The use of the phrase “These are the generations of . . .” five times in Gen. 12-50 to present historical information and the same kind of use six times in Gen. 1-11 to preface new sections of information.
3. The use of specific geographic terms, personal names and terms for cultural items (e.g. mortar and brick), suggesting a real and not ethereal world.

² See Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of The Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), 117-118.

4. Judgments followed by grace, as seen in the protection of Cain, the rescue of Noah and the provision of the Noahic covenant, similar to the gracious call of Abraham in ch. 12, which is regarded by critics as genuine history.
5. The many biblical attestations of early Genesis as history, such as Ex. 20:11 and 1 Tim. 2:13:

For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

6. The genealogies in 1 Chron. 1 and Lk. 3 that present Adam as the first human.
7. The specific teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ as found, for instance, in Mt. 19:4-5:

⁴ “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ ⁵ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?”

Notice that Jesus said that the creation of two sexes occurred “at the beginning.” He is asserting the historicity of the direct creation of Adam and Eve at what must have been the starting point for human history.

II. How long did it take for the universe to come into existence? This is a crucial question. God carried out and completed his miraculous work of creation in six literal days.

I make no apologies for believing in creation as recorded in Genesis 1 and 2 in six 24-hour days. God did this instantaneously, out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) and by His own power. There are no long periods of time during Genesis 1 and 2 that might correspond in some way to long ages posited by evolutionists, periods of time during which God used natural processes to develop all existing matter. God’s instantaneous creative acts resulted in perfect entities (“God saw that it was good”) that were untouched by sin and so had no decay associated with them.

A. The days of Gen. 1-2

In attempting to reconcile the Bible with the claims of evolutionism, many have attempted to find long periods of time during or before Gen. 1-2. One way is to expand the ‘days’ so that they correspond roughly to the ages posited by evolutionists. There are many biblical reasons to take ‘day’ in Gen. 1-2 as meaning a 24-hour period. Here are some of those reasons:

1. Exodus 20:11 (above) clearly asserts the completion of creation in six days that are paralleled by the days of the week under the law.
2. The natural interpretation of the word day argues for 24-hour periods. The word is used in several senses in the creation narrative. In several places it is used to denote periods with segments of evening and morning. In 2:4 it is used of the whole creation period (“in the day they were created” in the AV). But in historical narratives in the Bible, when a number is used with ‘day’, a 24-hour period appears always to be intended. The use of ‘evening’ and ‘morning’ with ‘day’ points to a 24-hour cycle as we know it. The presence of the sun and moon from the fourth day onward argues for days as we know them. In the 858 occurrences of ‘days’ in the OT, ordinary days are always in view.
3. If the writer had intended to convey the idea of an age, he could have used another word.

A different kind of evidence for 24-hour days and not long periods of time is the symbiotic relation between organisms. For example, plants were made the third day, but animals were not made until the fifth and sixth days. Many plants cannot reproduce without animals, e.g. many need bees and other insects for pollination. If God created during long periods of time that supposedly correspond to the sequence of the days, then the objects of creation would be isolated from their needed symbiotic partners—a contradiction of their very existence.

Here is the content of the creation days:

1. First day:

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was^a formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

We cannot imagine what this looked like. Apparently the earth was a formless, empty watery mass after the first creative act in v. 1. Into this God introduced light, which immediately contrasted with darkness. The result was like this:

heaven/sky
watery mass

Notice the NIV’s nod to the gap theory (see below) in the alternative translation of ‘was’ in v. 2.

2. Second day:

⁶ And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” ⁷ So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸ God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

There was apparently a first (in the sense of close to us) heaven (= our atmosphere), with waters put above it later (vv. 8-20) and a second heaven or sky, with shining bodies put in it later, on the fourth day. The first sky or heaven was empty. On the second day water was placed above and below it. So to this point we have a kind of sandwich:

second heaven/sky
water
first heaven/sky
water

3. Third day:

⁹ And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

¹¹ Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation:

^a Or possibly *became*

plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

A land mass was created—dry ground. It touched the lower water mass under the heaven/sky. The land mass brought forth vegetation/plants that would reproduce after their kinds.

second heaven/sky
water
first heaven/sky
water with land mass touching it, with plants on the land mass

4. Fourth day:

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

Apparently it was in the second heaven that the sun, moon and stars were placed.

second heaven/sky with sun, moon, stars
water
first heaven/sky
water with land mass touching it, with plants on the land mass

We must underscore at this point that this order is radically different from that of evolutionism, which states that the earth came from the sun or some other previously existing matter in our galaxy. At this point, evolution has many problems. One in particular is that seven of the nine planets rotate one way on their axes, but Venus rotates the other way! In addition, Uranus rotates at a 98-degree angle from its orbital plane (it’s tipped on its side). Some of the moons in the solar system orbit in directions opposite the rest. Often evolutionists resort to cosmic collisions or accidents to explain these things.

It is important also to notice that God created the earth before the sun moon and stars. In evolutionism the earth comes last, an accident, with life an accident and mankind an accident. God starts with the earth and mankind is the climax.

Also, God made it clear that we owe our existence to Him, not to the sun, lest we worship it, as so many have done and do (see Job 31:26-28). Evolution may be a subtle form of sun worship. God designed celestial bodies to point to Him (see Ps. 8:3 and 19:1).

5. The fifth day:

²⁰ And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in

number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”²³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

God created animal life. He created distinct groups; apparently “kind” is larger in scope than our species. But this stands in stark contrast with evolution, which asserts that animal life is part of a continuum. The most telling argument here against evolution is that no links between major groups of animals have been found in the fossil record. Even today evolutionists resort to saltations, large jumps, such as between aquatic and land animals (we started in the water, remember).

second heaven/sky with sun, moon, stars
water
first heaven/sky
water with land mass touching it, with plants on the land mass
animal life

6. The sixth day:

²⁴ And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” ²⁹ Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Psalm 8 gives the poetic interpretation of the sixth day. God established human beings as rulers over the earth and put human beings over all other forms of life. This is one of the things that makes the fall so terrible. The evolutionist says that human beings are an accident, just another stage in the continuum of the development of life, part of a line with other animals.

The Bible gives human beings dignity and purpose. True, the Bible also shows that these have been marred, but not beyond redemption by God. We only have to reflect for a moment to realize that today in our country human beings have little value, and the only dignity they can see is what they see in themselves.

Those “Christian” views that attempt to reconcile with Bible with science, keeping the ages and stages of evolution, must make Adam the descendant of animals, a super ape. But human beings were made in the image and likeness of God. We were designed, purposely, to have fellowship with God. We are not accidents.

Human beings were made male and female, with the male first, and the female derived. There are many people today who do not want to accept anything like that, including Christians. Evangelical feminism asserts the total equality in function and person of male and female human beings. God says both can be redeemed and stand on the same spiritual ground before him, but he has given them different functions. God

made the woman as a helper for the man. In light of this, God is pleased when she fulfills that role. This is very unpopular today. But will we simply believe what the Bible says?

second heaven/sky with sun, moon, stars
water
first heaven/sky
water with land mass touching it, with plants on the land mass
animal life
human beings

B. Specific systems of inserting long periods of time into the biblical account

This is an issue of the amount of time in Gen. 1-2 (corresponding to the days) as well as an issue of the beginning point of creation. Evolutionism asserts that the universe is between 13.61 and 13.85 billion years old, with the earth at 4.54 billion. Presumably some Christians want to retain some belief in the Bible and at the same time connect that amount of time with Gen. 1-2. But what does the Bible teach? We will evaluate three approaches that allow for long periods of time in Gen. 1-2. These are attempts to interpret the text as referring to or allowing for specific periods of time. There are also approaches to Gen. 1-2 that assert that the text is not speaking historically and is only intended to be taken metaphorically. I believe that this evidences a great departure from the text of Scripture.

1. The Gap Theory

According to this view God created the original earth in Gen. 1:1 and populated it. Satan was made before Gen. 1:2, fell, and God destroyed the earth through a global flood or catastrophe. God recreated the earth starting in Gen. 1:2. The long ages of the geologic timetable fall into the “gap” between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2. Fossil remains were laid down during the judgment.

Here are the arguments or supports for the gap theory and their refutation:

- a. Argument: The verb translated “was” in Gen. 1:2 should be translated “became.”

Answer: This is an issue of Hebrew grammar. The best way to translate vv. 1 and 2 is:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,
with the earth formless and empty

or the earth being formless and empty

Thus v. 2 describes the condition of the earth at the original creation.

- b. Argument: The adjectives *formless* and *empty* (*tohu* and *bohu*) should be taken as referring to a post-judgment condition and describe the earth as being in a negative state.

Answer: The two Hebrew words *tohu* and *bohu* are used elsewhere in the OT. In Job 26:7 *tohu* should be translated ‘empty space.’ Isaiah 45:18 has been used in support of the gap theory under the assumption that *tohu* and its surrounding words should be translated “he did not create it empty,” meaning that the emptiness came later (in Gen. 1:2). But note the NIV:

¹⁸ For this is what the LORD says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: “I am the LORD, and there is no other.

Here in the NIV *tohu* is rendered ‘empty’ because the next line provides a contrast—inhabited. So this supports taking Gen. 1:2 as simply empty, or incomplete, not ruined or in a bad state.

Many proponents of the Gap Theory admit that Gen. 1:1-2 do not in themselves suggest any kind of judgment. It must be read into the passage from elsewhere.

These two words, then, just describe the earth as unfinished. God had more to do.

- c. Argument: God, who is the author of light, would not have created the earth in darkness. Thus the darkness (v. 2) is a result of judgment. Verse 2 finally brings something good on the scene.

Answer: The best answer to this is that the darkness was simply a stage on the way to further creation. It was the absence of light.

- d. Argument: The word translated ‘created’ in v. 1 (*bara*) means ‘created.’ Exodus 20:11, which seems to say that all was made in six days uses *asah*, which means ‘re-form.’ So Exodus is describing the refashioning after Gen. 1:1.

Answer: The problem with this is that the OT often uses them as synonyms (as in Gen. 1:26-27). Therefore Ex. 20:11 contradicts the Gap Theory, asserting that everything was made in six days.

- e. The Gap Theory cannot deal with the ‘very good’ of Gen. 1:31, since the world would already have been destroyed once and Adam would have been walking on an earth full of destroyed life.
- f. The Gap Theory assumes that life forms lived and died millions of years before Adam and the Fall. But the Bible teaches that Adam was the first man and that death entered the earth because of his sin. Note that under any old-earth view there must have been death long before the fall—something totally contradictory to Gen. 3. Romans 5:12 says that through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin. Sin is radically different for anyone who holds an old-earth view. Also, in Rom. 5, the sin of Adam is made the basis for and the pattern for the work of Christ on the Cross. His work loses its OT underpinnings under old-earth views.
- g. Rom. 8:20-22 tells us that the groaning and travailing in pain of the earth is a result of the curse of Gen. 3, which came after Adam’s fall.
- h. The Gap Theory makes Satan the original king of the earth, but Ps. 8 and Heb. 2:5-8 tell us that God made the earth for human beings.
- i. Under the Gap Theory the fossil record comes from the time before Gen. 1:2. Since God did a refashioning work in 1:2, later forms of life could have no continuous relation to earlier ones: the record would be gone.
- j. The Gap Theory makes Noah’s flood insignificant in its effects compared to the judgment flood before 1:2. But Peter in 2 Pet. 3:6 says that the world perished by water during Noah’s flood.

The Gap Theory is not a minor departure from the recent creation view. It introduces far-reaching theological and chronological problems. Furthermore, it has played an important—though negative—role in the history of the Church. Here is Ken Ham’s observation:³

³ Ken Ham, “What About the Gap & Ruin and Reconstruction Theories?” in Ken Ham, ed., *The New Answers Book* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), 62-63.

Many sincere Christians have invented reinterpretations of Scripture to avoid intellectual conflicts with popular scientific ideas. The gap theory was one such reinterpretation designed to fit in with scientific concepts that arose in the early 1800s and are still popular today.

In reality, though, the gap theory was an effective anesthetic that put the church to sleep for over 100 years. When the children who learned this compromise position went on to higher education, they were shocked to discover that this theory explained nothing. Many of them then accepted the only remaining “respectable” theory—evolution—which went hand-in-hand with millions of years. The results were usually disastrous for their faith.

2. Progressive Creationism (or Day-Age Theory)

This view asserts that God created the universe gradually over long periods of time, and so accepts the long time periods of evolutionism, but generally rejects evolution as a mechanism and asserts direct creation of organisms by kind. Ken Ham provides the following summary of the position:⁴

1. The big-bang origin of the universe occurred about 13-15 billion years ago.
2. The days of creation were overlapping periods of millions and billions of years.
3. Over millions of years, God created new species as others kept going extinct.
4. The record of nature is just as reliable as the Word of God.
5. Death, bloodshed, and disease existed before Adam and Eve.
6. Manlike creatures that looked and behaved much like us (and painted on cave walls) existed before Adam and Eve but did not have a spirit that was made in the image of God and thus had no hope of salvation.
7. The Genesis flood was a local event.

There are significant problems with this view, among which are the following:

1. This view clearly takes the days of Gen. 1-2 as other than 24-hour days, a position contrary to the biblical evidence.
2. It accepts evolutionism’s sequence of ages, yet the Bible presents a different order. For instance, under evolutionary theory life originated in the sea, yet the Bible says that life originated on land.
3. Nature is damaged by the fall and our understanding of it is fallible.
4. The view had death and disease before Adam, yet Scripture says that sin entered the world through one man, and death resulted (Rom. 5:12).

3. Pre-creation Chaos

This view was apparently not based on a desire to get long ages into Gen. 1, but this it ends up allowing for them. It is found in some Jewish translations of the OT, in the New English Bible and in the New Revised Standard Version and was defended by Merrill F. Unger and Bruce K. Waltke⁵ (both of whom were Old Testament and Hebrew teachers that I studied under at Dallas Theological Seminary). Here is the first verse of the New Revised Standard Version:

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth,² the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

⁴ 76.

⁵ See, for example, Bruce K. Waltke, *Creation and Chaos* (Portland, OR: Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1974), 18.

And here is a translation by Harry Orlinsky:⁶

1 When God began to create the heaven and the earth—2 the earth being unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water—3 God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

In this translation v. 2 describes what existed *before* v. 1. Compare this with the view that Gen. 1:1 describes original creation out of nothing, as seen in this good translation by Reymond:⁷

1 In the beginning God created the well-ordered universe. 2 Now with respect to the earth, being originally created by God empty and formless, with darkness upon the face of the deep and the Spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters, 3 God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light.

In this translation/interpretation, v. 2 is a description of what exists *after* v. 1. In other words, v. 1 is the absolute beginning.

The pre-creation chaos view asserts that the syntax and semantics of vv. 1-2 demand that v. 2 be viewed as a condition accompanying the start of the work of creation in v. 1. In other words, something existed before the “create” of v. 1. Unger asserts that the condition described in v. 2 is due to Satan’s fall. Here is Unger’s view on “In the beginning”:⁸

These opening words of Genesis have been commonly assumed to refer to the original creation of the earth and the universe, and well they might. But the question is asked, May they not envision a *relative* beginning as to God’s creative activity of the earth in a much later period in preparation for earth’s latecomer man?

In the second of two articles on this view, Mark F. Rooker summarizes Waltke’s presentation of the view as having four main tenets:⁹

1. Genesis 1:1 constitutes a summary statement.
2. The Hebrew verb בָּרָא [‘created’] in Genesis 1:1 should not be understood as creation out of nothing (*creation ex nihilo*).
3. Genesis 1:2 describes something that is not good.
4. The Israelite view of creation out of nothing is distinct among the other cosmogonies of the ancient Near East.

Detailed refutations of this view can be found in Reymond¹⁰ and Rooker, who points out the following:

1. The grammar does not demand that v. 1 be taken as a summary statement, with v. 2 giving the accompanying condition.
2. בָּרָא is the most appropriate word to express creation out of nothing.
3. The context of v. 2, along with the words translated ‘without form’ and ‘empty,’ do not denote a negative condition.
4. Waltke’s position that Genesis emphasizes creation *ex nihilo* is actually undermined by his unexplained positing of the existence of matter before Gen. 1:1.

⁶ Harry M. Orlinsky, “The New Jewish Version of the Torah,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82 (1963): 252-53.

⁷ 391.

⁸ Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Bible Handbook*, Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1966, 37.

⁹ Mark F. Rooker, “Genesis 1:1-3: Creation or Re-Creation,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (1992), 316-23 and 411-27.

¹⁰ 384-92

While Waltke and Unger, as far as I know, have had no interest in attaching long periods of time to Genesis, their position certainly allows for doing that.

III. What did life forms look like when they were created? All plants, animals and celestial bodies were created complete and instantaneously.

Evolutionism asserts that life forms have progressed from simple organisms to more complex over long periods of time. The Bible asserts that God created living things by kinds that reproduce after their kind and that one kind does not change into another. However, if we think particularly of the celestial bodies—the earth, sun, moon and stars, there appears to be a need for long periods of time for certain processes to occur. For example, if God created the sun, wouldn't there be a period of time needed for its light to reach the earth. The problem is seemingly even more acute with the stars. Very long periods of time would be necessary for the light of stars—which are light years away—to reach earth. Therefore the earth must be much older than recent-earth creationists assert. How can we maintain a recent-creation position in the face of such physical relationships?

A. The creation of the universe involved miraculous acts by God that resulted in the **sudden existence** of complete organisms.

1. It involved creation of existing things out of what did not previously exist. This is called *creatio ex nihilo*. Remember that this is completely at odds with evolution, which says that everything developed over long periods of time, unaided by an outside source, without a plan and from previously existing materials—except for the very beginning, which no evolutionist can explain, and never will be able to!
2. This is supported within Genesis and elsewhere (Gen. 1:3 and Ps. 33:6, 9).
3. This means that Adam was a full-grown man when he appeared, trees were whole trees when they appeared and Betelgeuse in Orion was complete in Genesis 1.
4. This is paralleled by the miracles of Jesus. In Mk. 8:25 Jesus cured a blind man. While he did it in stages, each stage involved the immediate existence of something that didn't exist before.

B. Creation involved an appearance of age or history

This means that when Adam was made he was a grown man and looked like any grown man today who has a history of passing through time to reach the present. But Adam had no history. This means that trees were full sized with branching and bark that appeared to have history, as today, but did not. This means that light from stars and the planets reached earth immediately, as if it had been traveling for a long time. I believe that the universe is no more than about 10,000 years old, and maybe much less. This means that the light from visible stars appeared at the time of creation to have traveled a great distance.

Any creation by God involves an appearance of age. Assume that he used natural processes, as the theistic evolutionist asserts. To start it off he had to create atoms of something. They would have appeared to have history, since they would have been complete atoms! So creation with the appearance of age is not a trick of the recent creationist; it is inherent in *any* creative act of God! If this were not true then there could have been no original creation by God at all. If God created even the simplest atoms, they would have the appearance of some age. Any creative activity by God demands the appearance of age.

This is again paralleled by Jesus' miracles. John Whitcomb shows how this was true in two incidents in John's Gospel:¹¹

¹¹ John C. Whitcomb, *The Early Earth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House), 1972, 31-32.

The ninth chapter of John tells of a man born blind to whom Jesus gave perfect vision. The rulers of Israel refused to believe that the man brought before them could have had a past history of congenital blindness—until they consulted his parents. Their perplexity is understandable. . . .

In like manner, Jesus created in Lazarus of Bethany the appearance of a man who had not yet died. Who, in his right mind, would have imagined that the recent history of this man sitting at a table in Bethany (Jn. 12:2) included four days of decomposition in a tomb?

Whitcomb summarizes the meaning of creation with an appearance of age this way:¹²

If Scripture be our standard in all truth, then creation with appearance of age is not deceptive, but glorious. Did Jesus deceive the ruler of the feast when He changed water to wine? The Word of God provides the answer for us: This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory. The glory of Christ was revealed in this miracle because it involved the supernatural and sudden creation of a complex entity apart from natural processes. And this, we believe is how the Lord Jesus Christ revealed His glory in the creation of the world.

IV. Why were human beings created? Human beings were created in the image and likeness of God and with purposeful existence.

Adam was the first of a race that God had special purposes for, including bearing his image and ruling over the earth. Adam was the first human being and had no ancestors of any kind. There were no sub-humans before him who didn't have the image. To believe otherwise destroys the parallel between Adam and Jesus in Rom. 5 and 1Cor. 15.

It is important to remember that evolutionary views, which deny God's direct creation of human beings in His image and likeness, lead to absolving individuals of their responsibility toward God. The human race is an accident, the product of nature's 'wisdom' (not God's), not a royal race placed on earth to rule it as kings for God.

V. Where do non-material entities come from? The universe was created with non-material constants and capacities.

The evolutionist is unable to explain the existence of intangible laws that affect all human beings and without which we could not function. Physicists observe constants in the universe that they conclude operate the same way in all places. Among these are the laws of gravity, the laws of motion and force. Mathematics could not function without constants such as the fact that $2 + 2$ always equals 4. In the random universe that underlies evolution, why wouldn't it sometimes equal 7 and other times 225.6? Logicians depend on intangibles such as non-contradiction ("A exists" and "A does not exist" can never both be true), or consequence (A stands in a relationship to B such that B's existence flows from A's existence).

And then there are the invisible capacities that human beings operate with all the time, such as the idea or sense of oughtness (there is necessity or obligation attached to something; under evolutionism there is no reason for anything to be obligatory) or the idea of desire (under evolutionism there should be no preference for one thing over another, since all is random) or the sense of value (under evolutionism no such thing could exist). For the evolutionist to say even that under evolution it is "good" for the fittest to try to survive involves the generation or invention of a value that can have no basis.

The Bible tells us that such capacities and constants have been built into the universe or human beings by God. They are, in fact, part of his original creation.

VI. How do we account for apparent changes in the earth's surface? Because of sin the current earth is not the same as the one that was created.

The evolutionist asserts that the earth came into existence as a result of cataclysmic galactic collision of forces, after an initial big-bang that brought about the existence of matter. Its geologic history is the result of natural processes fueled by the sun, gravity and the internal composition of the earth (hot magma).

According to the Bible the original creation has been altered due to sin. As a result all material things are undergoing decay, disease and extinction. Observable features of the earth's surface are largely a result of the flood and came into existence since original creation, not during long periods of time before Gen. 1:1, between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2 or during Gen. 1-2.

Regarding geology, the Bible tells us that we should not expect the earth to look like original creation, because God brought a worldwide flood on the earth that radically changed its appearance. The evolutionist operates under the assumption that the universe has developed on its own according to constant processes and without outside interference. This is uniformitarianism. The Bible asserts catastrophism due to divine intervention.

With regard to life forms, what we know about genetics indicates that more complex forms of life involve the injection of more information and greater usefulness. But most observed mutations involve loss of information and no gain in usefulness. For evolution to be true, there would have to be huge numbers of beneficial mutations occurring at opportune times.

This fits with biblical teaching, which tells us that sin has damaged creation both spiritually and physically. Human beings have been altered by the Fall—in their bodies and in their spirits. We should expect a decrease in genetic accuracy as generations go by.¹³

VII. Is there any purpose for the earth? God is moving human history and earth history to a re-creation of the original earth (Rev. 21-22)

For the evolutionist there can be no possible meaning to attach to the events on earth and no meaning for personal existence. The idea that because survival of the fittest has brought us to this point and so should continue to be our base motivation is little consolation for a person seeking personal fulfillment. There can be no reason for life under evolutionism: everything is accidental.

I believe that God's basic purpose is to bring a group of people into his presence to enjoy him forever. To bring this to pass he created the universe as a theater for the outworking of this purpose. This is supported in part by Gen. 1-2, where the creation of Adam is more important than the creation of his abode. The language of Rev. 21-22 indicates that God will reverse sin's damage of the original created heavens and earth. The climax of biblical history is the creation of a new heaven and new earth, with sin removed and the Redeeming Lamb at the center of the eternal dwelling place of the elect of all ages. The new heaven and new earth will be secondary to the enjoyment of God by the redeemed—and his enjoyment of them.

¹³ Bodie Hodge, "Are Mutations Part of the 'Engine' of Evolution?" in Ken Ham, ed., *The New Answers Book 2* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books), 2008, 32.

Questions for Further Study

1. What kinds of approaches do people use to reconcile Genesis with the claims of evolutionism?
2. What are some of the specific problems that arise under such attempts?
3. What is the Gap Theory?
4. What is Progressive Creationism? How is it different from the Gap Theory?
5. How do the Gap Theory, Progressive Creationism and The Pre-Creation Chaos View differ in where they place a long period or long periods of time? How do the time periods compare?
6. What problems does creation with an appearance of age address?
7. What is the issue with non-material entities?
8. What is the relation of a universal flood to the claims of evolutionism?

Running compilation of key definitions

1. Systematic theology: The organized presentation of all that the Bible teaches about God and His works.
2. Exegesis: The actual practice of studying or interpreting a document or other message to determine its meaning.
3. Context: Context in a document or utterance is the surroundings of a portion of a word, a word, or a group of words.
4. Bibliology: The doctrinal study of the nature of the Bible.
5. Biblical authority: The quality inherent in Scripture by virtue of which human beings are completely answerable to its content.
6. Revelation: The information about Himself given by God to human beings.
7. General revelation: God's disclosure of Himself, available directly to everyone, given through means other than dreams, visions, direct words and Christ Himself.
8. Special revelation: The disclosure of information from God that is not available directly to all human beings.
9. Inspiration: A term applied to the Bible denoting that it is the product of God's creative activity, figuratively breathed out from Him (2 Tim. 3:16); applies to the process of recording Scripture, not specifically to the people involved; actually, *expiration* would be a better term to reflect the concept of 2 Tim. 3:16; the result is *inerrancy*.
10. Textual criticism: The science and art of attempting to discover the original text of a literary work for which the original document does not exist. It is especially important for biblical studies, and the foundational endeavor to all subsequent investigation of the Scriptures.
11. Canon: Transliterated from a Greek Word meaning 'standard'; as used of the Bible, it refers to books authenticated as possessing divine origin and therefore authoritative; the Jewish canon consists of thirty-nine books, the Protestant of sixty-six and the Catholic of eighty (including apocryphal books).
12. Inerrancy is a term applied to the Bible, although not specifically found in it; it denotes that the Bible, as originally written, possessed no humanly induced deviations from the message God intended to be recorded and that it is true in every respect; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:19.
13. Infallibility: Although some assert that this term has a different meaning from inerrancy, the two terms are, for purposes of biblical study, synonymous; the Bible is infallible because inerrant, and inerrant because infallible.
14. Illumination is the teaching ministry of the Spirit of God that imparts understanding of the message of Scripture to the believer; not to be confused with inspiration, which in the Bible is used of the work of God in giving Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16); 1 Jn. 2:20; Jn. 16:13.
15. Spirituality: God is not physical, but immaterial, incorporeal, invisible and alive.
16. Self-existence/Aseity: God exists independently of anything else. He is self-existent.
17. Immensity: God is infinite in relation to space.
18. Eternality: God is infinite with regard to time.
19. Simplicity: God is not a plurality and cannot be looked at as divisible into parts.
20. Pure actuality: There is nothing about God that is potential. He is not unfinished in any way.
21. Necessity: God is uncaused and exists because he must exist.
22. Immutability: God is unchanging and unchangeable.
23. Impassibility: God is incapable of being changed or disturbed by what he experiences and is incapable of suffering.
24. Transcendence: God and the world are distinct; he is not part of the world, and the world is not part of him.
25. Immanence: God is present in the world.
26. Infinity: There are no limits to God's person and his perfections.
27. Omnipotence: God can do whatever he wills.
28. Omniscience: God knows everything there is to know.
29. Omnipresence: God is present everywhere in his creation
30. Holiness: God is morally pure and separated from all moral evil and sin.

31. Goodness: A quality that describes or includes his love, benevolence, mercy and grace
32. Truth: God's person, actions, knowledge and revelations correspond to reality
33. Love: God's continual communication of himself to his creatures.
34. Benevolence: God's goodness toward his creatures.
35. Mercy: God's goodness toward those who are helpless.
36. Grace: God's goodness toward sinners.
37. Glory: The greatness of God's perfections.
38. Trinity: There is only one true God, existing as a single Being comprised of three Persons who are equal in every way, yet distinct in their tasks and relations to humanity.
39. God's decree: The decree of God is his plan for the universe that includes all things and is certain to come to pass.
40. Providence: God's care for and upholding of his creation.
41. Sovereignty: God's control over his universe.
42. Christology: The study of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.
43. Incarnation: The joining of deity and humanity in one person forever. The word is based on the Latin word for flesh: the Lord Jesus Christ is God joined with human flesh.
44. Pre-existence: Used of the Son, it means that he existed before Bethlehem.
45. Theophany: An appearance of God.
46. Christophany: An appearance of Christ.
47. Priesthood: The system that God established to remedy the problem of alienation between a holy God and sinful human beings.
48. Son of God: A name for Jesus that describes his deity and his approval by the Father at the resurrection.
49. Son of Man: A messianic name for Jesus that emphasizes his humanity backed by deity and his role of taking humans to God through suffering and humiliation.
50. Messiah: A transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning 'anointed one'; used of the expected national deliverer of Israel; the linguistic equivalent of Greek *christos*, 'Christ'.
51. Efficacious grace: Efficacious grace is the working of God in an individual that cannot be thwarted and that leads that person to faith in Christ. It is also described as effective calling and irresistible grace.
52. Regeneration: Regeneration is the unseen and unfelt work of the Holy Spirit that overcomes depravity and brings spiritual life and the capacity to please God and exercise faith.
53. Spirit baptism is the nonphysical act of the Spirit of God that places a believer in the Body of Christ and makes him a partaker, along with all other believers, of the work and merits of Christ; should be distinguished from filling, sealing, and indwelling; cannot be felt or noticed, and hence must be appropriated by faith; there is no warrant in Scripture for assuming a second act of God for power, a 'baptism,' after salvation.
54. Sealing is a guarantee that the believer will persevere in Christ all the way to entrance into heaven, when God completes his work of purchasing the individual. It begins at the moment of salvation when the Father places the Holy Spirit in the believer for permanent indwelling. It is unseen and unfelt and should result in praise and obedience to the Spirit.
55. Indwelling is the spiritual presence of the Holy Spirit in every individual who has placed personal trust in Christ as Savior. Described in Jn. 14:17, this is the basis of His other ministries to the believer, such as sealing, anointing and filling and establishes the believer as a part of the spiritual temple that God is building today.
56. The filling of the Spirit is 1) A constant characteristic of a believer's life that consists of regular control by the Spirit that produces Christlikeness through Scripture; 2) A special enablement at particular times for service during the first century.
57. A spiritual gift is a God-given ability for service.
58. A cessationist (with regard to spiritual gifts) is a person who holds that the miraculous gifts are not present in the Church today as part of God's plan.
59. A continualist (with regard to spiritual gifts) is a person who holds that the miraculous gifts are present in the Church today as part of God's plan.

60. An angel is an individual, personal spirit being originally created by God to assist him in his plan for saving the elect.
61. The cosmos is Satan's organized spiritual system, in rebellion against God.
62. A demon is a fallen angel that is free to assist in carrying out Satan's plan of opposition to God.
63. Biblical anthropology is the study of what the Bible teaches about the nature and purpose of human beings.