## God as Creator and Sustainer

### А. God Created

The very first verse of Scripture reveals that God is the maker of all things (Gen 1:1). It is interesting to note that the Father (1 Cor 8:6; Heb 1:2), Son (Jn 1:3; Col 1:16), and Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2; Ps 103:30) were all active in this creative work.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Christian view on creation differs from the materialistic worldview that denies God’s existence and claims that all that exists is the physical world. For the thinking person, though, the improbability of this view is plain. It is difficult to disagree with microbiologist Michael Behe, who asserts that the invisible world of molecular systems abounds with examples of insurmountable complexity, that is, some systems have many complex parts, and all the parts must be present and active simultaneously for each part to function properly.[[2]](#footnote-2) This observation, along with other factors, strongly suggests the activity of divine design. For a more complete response to the atheistic worldview in general, see the first volume in this series.

Scripture employs various terms to describe Yahweh’s acts of creation. In Genesis 1:1, we encounter the Hebrew verb בָרָא (*bara*), translated “to create.” A synonym of בָרָא (*bara*), also used of God creating, isעָשָׂה (*asa*), which is usually rendered “to make.” In Nehemiah 9:6, it refers to creation: “You alone are Yahweh. You have made (עָשָׂה) the heavens.” A final key term is יָצַר (*yatsar*), meaning “to form,” but it is also used in reference to creation. The following verses employs these terms as synonyms in parallel:[[3]](#footnote-3)

- For thus says Yahweh, who created (בָרָא) the heavens [He is the God who formed (יָצַר) the earth and made (עָשָׂה) it] (Isa 45:18).

- Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created (בָרָא) for My glory, whom I have formed (יָצַר), even whom I have made (עָשָׂה) (Isa 43:7).

The New Testament has two terms for God’s act of creation. The first, found in Colossians 1:16, is κτίζειν (*ktizein*). The other is ποίεν (*poien*), which is usually translated “to make,” but also can mean “to create” (Acts 7:50; 14:15; 17:24; Heb 1:2).[[4]](#footnote-4)

Some distorted views of creation are worth noting. According to the biblical narrative, God Himself created the world.[[5]](#footnote-5) However, in the second century the Gnostic Marcion proposed that God had a series of “emanations” issuing out of Him, the last one of which created the world. Marcion equated this distant emanation as the God of the Old Testament, whose nature and character differs greatly from the “Ultimate God.” According to Marcion, the Ultimate God sent Jesus to reveal to the world the true nature of Deity.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Gnosticism in general works off a Neoplatonist worldview, which posits that a series of mediating powers, i.e., “emanations,” stand between God and the material world. The further an emanation is from the center, that is, from the “One,” the more it is subject to degradation and division. This distortion is the source of evil and disorder in the world.[[7]](#footnote-7) The Neoplatonic worldview is described in detail in Appendix A of this volume.

Another errant view is that God felt an obligation to create the world and humanity for the sake of fellowship. The truth is that God was under no obligation to create. He already enjoyed eternal fellowship within the Godhead as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is self-sustaining and is in need of nothing. He created out of His freedom.[[8]](#footnote-8) The section on “The Living God” in chapter 2 of this volume deals in more detail with God’s self-sufficiency.

God’s act of creation brings into focus several other aspects of His character. First, His creative act underscores His uniqueness (2 Kin 19:15). The Creator God is the true God (2 Chr 2:12). Second, Yahweh expresses His love thorough creation (Ps 136:5-9; 119:64). His faithfulness is also on display in the orderliness of creation (1 Pet 4:19; Ps 119:90-91). Furthermore, the Lord’s power displayed in the act of creation confirms that His is able to accomplish His plan and perform His will. Isaiah speaks often of this (Isa 42:5; 43:1; 44:24; 45:12; 51:13). God’s power, seen in creation, also inspires the fear of the Lord (Amos 5:8; Ps 75:3; 33:6-8: 1 Chr 16:26). Finally, God’s creative genius features the divine wisdom that inspired it (Job 26:7-14; 28:24-27).

### B. God Created All Things

Next, the Bible teaches that God created *all* things. Both the Old and New Testaments testify of this fact. Isaiah wrote, “It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it. I stretched out the heavens with My hands and I ordained all their host” (Isa 45:12). Paul is even more definite, “For by Him all things were created, {both} in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created through Him and for Him” (Col 1:16). We can also cite: Isaiah 66:1-2; Acts 17:24; Romans 11:36; John 1:3; Ephesians 3:9; and Revelation 4:11. Certain biblical terms and phrases express the all-encompassing nature of God’s creative act: (1) τά πάντα (*ta panta*), i.е., “all things,” (2) “heaven and earth,” and (3) κόσμος (*cosmos*), i.е., “the world.”[[9]](#footnote-9)

Yahweh did not create the world in chaos, but established order in it (Jer 5:22; 31:35-37). The psalmist exclaims, “Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved” (Ps 93:1; cf. 1 Chr 16:30). Isaiah adds, “He established it {and} did not create it a waste place, {but} formed it to be inhabited” (Isa 45:18).

The earth was made to provide humanity with every good thing. The Lord created it for human habitation: “The heavens are the heavens of Yahweh, but the earth He has given to the sons of men” (Ps 115:16). The Lord gave food “to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth” (1 Tim 4:3). All that He created was “very good” (Gen 1:31) and “nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude” (1 Tim 4:4), since “the earth is Yahweh’s, and all it contains” (Ps 24:1).

### C. God Created All Things from Nothing

The Lord not only created all things, He created all *from nothing*. He created by His Word: “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible” (Heb 11:3); “By the word of God {the} heavens existed long ago and {the} earth was formed out of water and by water” (2 Pet 3:5); “By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host” (Ps 33:6). Romans 4:17 hints at this truth: “(He) calls into being that which does not exist.“

The fact of creation from nothing rules out two false worldviews: dualism and pantheism. Dualism, a characteristic of Greek philosophy, teaches that matter exists eternally. It derives from an exaggerated view of God’s immutability (unchangeableness). Greek philosophers felt that since God was a perfect being, He could not change. If something changes, then it cannot be perfect, because either it changed from being imperfect to being perfect, or vice versa. God becoming “creator” indicts Him of change. This argument, though, is refuted in section A of chapter three above.

Nonetheless, some Church Fathers were heavily influence by Greek philosophy. Origen, for example, proposed that God could not become something He was not previously, such as Creator. The universe, then, must have existed from eternity past without beginning. Athanasius, however, explained that the act of creation created no change in God, since it involved no alteration of His nature, but was simply an expression of His will. After the Lord created the universe, He remained the same in nature as He was prior to this act.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Pantheism holds that the universe is an expression of God’s being. In other words, He created all things from Himself. God and creation, in essence, are not distinct from one another. Yet, the Bible categorically rejects the pantheistic position. For a rebuttal of this view, see the discussion on Hinduism in volume 1 of this series.

When we state that Yahweh created all things from nothing, we must qualify that there are two types of creative acts: unmediated and mediated creation. Unmediated creation involved creation from nothing. For example, God created the earth from nothing. On the other hand, according to Genesis 1, the Lord created certain things from the pre-existing matter He already had created. This is “mediated creation.” Animals, for example, came from the dust of the earth (Gen 2:19).[[11]](#footnote-11)

### D. God Created All Things from Nothing in Six Days?

The most debated point in the doctrine of creation is whether God created the universe in six literal days about 6000 years ago. Many are more convinced by the scientific data advanced to support a much older earth and universe. It is claimed that astronomical, geological, and paleontological findings show that the universe is billions of years old, and humanity – millions of years.

The goal of this section is not to examine and evaluate the scientific data raised in this debate. At times, we will touch on some of these features to shed light on certain biblical passages. For a detailed discussion of the scientific side of the question, though, we recommend appealing to resources more specific to that area.[[12]](#footnote-12) Our goal is to evaluate the various theories to see which of them fits better with the biblical picture of creation. We will not attempt to reconcile our findings with possible contradictory claims from science.

We may enumerate the following general views on creation. Fiat Creationism states that Yahweh created the world in six 24-hour days. Adherents of this view interpret the biblical dates in a literal sense, understanding the word “day” in its conventional meaning of 24 hours.

Progressive creationism holds that the Lord created progressively. Billions of years ago, He created the heavens and the earth. After a long period of inactivity, He created the atmosphere and simple plants. After another period of inactivity, He continued His work and so on, until all was finished. Therefore, we date the beginning of the universe in the billions of years.

Theistic evolution asserts that God employed the process of evolution to create the world. This theory differs from progressive creationism in that the latter posits long periods of inactivity between creative acts. Theistic evolution, though, proposes a continuous progression of creation. Finally, atheistic evolution claims that evolution took place spontaneously without divine aid, since there is no God.

Believers in God differ in their opinions. Some hold to Fiat Creationism, others prefer Progressive Creationism, and still others – Theistic Evolution. All these groups seek to interpret Genesis 1 in a way that corresponds to their theory. To reconcile Progressive Creationism and Theistic Evolution with Genesis 1, adherents of these views employ the “Literary Theory,” the “Theory of Days of Revelation,” or the “Theory of Days as Epochs.”

Those who accept Fiat Creationism, but nonetheless believe that the earth is billions of years old, operate off the so-called “Gap Theory.” Those who believe in a young earth may employ the “Theory of Literal Days” or the “Theory of Ideal Time.” Before our examination of these interpretive approaches, we will make some general comments of the relationship of faith and science and some important exegetical observations on Genesis 1 and 2.

**1. Relationship of Faith and Science**

In answer to the question of the relationship of faith and science, Collins feels that we may consider the knowledge gained from scientific research as divine revelation.[[13]](#footnote-13) He cites Paul’s words in Romans 1:20 in support: “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made.” Therefore, observation of creation can reveal truths about God.

Bube takes this idea a bit farther.[[14]](#footnote-14) Along with Collins, he affirms that biblical truth and scientific truth should harmonize. He adds the thought, though, that both religion and science have their own domain to function in and their own expertise. They should not “intrude” on each other’s turf, but rather compliment one other.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Correspondingly, many feel that science should provide us with descriptions of natural phenomena, while religion should limit itself to ascertain the meaning and goals God is pursuing in creation.[[16]](#footnote-16) Van Till states it this way: the Bible is not designed for conducting scientific research, but for “training in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16). He also fears that the Church discredits itself when it rejects scientific discoveries and thereby weakens its witness to the world.[[17]](#footnote-17)

It is also commonly felt that, although the Bible does at times describe natural phenomena, we should accept these ideas as true only when the biblical text concretely *claims* that they are true.[[18]](#footnote-18) Therefore, if the Scriptures do not make straightforward claims about the mechanism of creation, then we are not obliged to take the biblical narrative authoritatively. Furthermore, Collins rejects the thesis that a symbolic interpretation of the Bible undermines the truthfulness or authority of God’s Word. A “literal” interpretation can include symbolism if the author intended to express his meaning in that way.[[19]](#footnote-19)

We may make several comments on these suggestions. Collins is correct about the use of symbolism in Scripture. The task of an interpreter is to faithfully distinguish when a biblical author is speaking literally, and when he is intending to use figurative speech. If the author is found to be speaking figuratively, then the interpreter must uncover what meaning he is trying to convey thereby.

Concerning the claim that the Bible is true only when it *claims* to be communicating truth, we advise caution. First, it is notoriously difficult to distinguish between a *claim* and a mere *description*. Second, it is problematic to say that the Bible can make true claims based on untrue descriptions. For example, if we assume that the Bible *claims* that God created the world, but inaccurately *describes* how He did it, how much confidence can we have in the claim that the God of Israel indeed performed the creative act? Does not the entire creation account becomes suspect?

We can further illustrate this point. Van Till and Poythress emphasize the thought that the goal of Genesis chapter 1 is to refute polytheism, which was prevalent in the ancient world and presented a real threat to the faith of God’s people.[[20]](#footnote-20) We heartily agree. Yet, how can we establish with confidence that refuting polytheism was the *only* goal or even the *major* goal of that chapter? Can we not assume that God also sought to communicate through Moses how He created the world?

Therefore, since the Bible does indeed make clear statements (or even claims) about natural phenomena, especially in regard to creation, we cannot content ourselves with dividing truth in half, assigning to science and Scripture each their own unassailable domain. One must take the Biblical descriptions of natural phenomena seriously and seek the author’s intention for including them. Collins correctly comments, “Did the author mean us to take Genesis 1:1–2:3 as history? The answer is certainly yes… the book of Genesis, a book that is concerned with historical matters.”[[21]](#footnote-21)

We readily acknowledge that God reveals Himself through nature. Still, we give pride of place to God’s special revelation given in Holy Scripture.

**2. Exegetical Features of Genesis Chapters 1-2.**

Before we begin our survey of different interpretations of Genesis 1, it will be important to clarify some exegetical question concerning its interpretation in general.

First, misunderstanding exists concerning the definition of the Hebrew verb בָרָא (*bara*). Some assert that it is used only in contexts where Yahweh creates from nothing. This term, though, appears with a wide spectrum of meaning.[[22]](#footnote-22) It may indeed indicate creation from nothing, as in Genesis 1:1, or may refer to creation out of already pre-existing material, as in the creation of humans (Gen 1:27, cf. 2:7). It is used as well for the creation of special circumstances or a new state of affair (Isa 45:7-8; 65:18; Ps 51:10).

We must also recall that בָרָא (*bara*) stands in parallel with עָשָׂה (*аsа*) and יָצַר (*yetsar*). The fact that בָרָא (*bara*) and עָשָׂה (*аsа*) appear as synonyms prevents us from concluding that the former is always used of creation from nothing and that the latter – of creation from pre-existing matter. The verb בָרָא (*bara*) appears in Genesis 1:1 (the creation of the heavens and the earth, сf. 2:4), verse 21 (creation of fish and birds),[[23]](#footnote-23) and verse 27 (creation of humans). Yet, according to Genesis 2:7, God created humans in a mediated fashion from the “dust of the ground.” It is also written that God both “created” (בָרָא) humans (v. 27) and “made” (עָשָׂה) them (v. 26).

We also note in Genesis 1 instances when creation from nothing is denoted by the verb עָשָׂה (*аsа*), namely when the “expanse of the heavens” was created (v. 7)[[24]](#footnote-24) and the heavenly bodies (v. 16). On the other hand, the creation of beasts of the earth from pre-existing material (v. 25, cf. 2:19) is also described as עָשָׂה (*аsа*). Therefore, there is significant overlap in how these verbs are used, as noted below.

Introduction (v. 1-2) - בָרָא (*bara*)

Day 1 - (יְהִי), i.e., “let there be”

Day 2 - עָשָׂה (*аса*)

Day 3 - (יְהִי), i.e., “let there be”

Day 4 - עָשָׂה (*аса*)

Day 5 - בָרָא (*bara*)

Day 6 - (creation of animals) - עָשָׂה (*аса*)

Day 6 - (creation of humans) - עָשָׂה (*аса*) and בָרָא (*bara*)

Interestingly, in the creation of light and plants, neither בָרָא (*bara*), nor עָשָׂה (*asa*) appears, but rather the verb (יְהִי - *yihi*), i.e., “let there be.” It seems, then, that יְהִי (*yihi*) can serve as a synonym for עָשָׂה (*asa*) and בָרָא (*bara*) as well. This command is God’s creative word (сf. Heb 11:3; Ps 148:5).

Finally, עָשָׂה (*аса*) and בָרָא (*bara*) appear in combination in Genesis 2:3: “Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created (בָרָא) and made (עָשָׂה).” Here, these terms serve more to compliment one another than as synonyms. A more precise translation would include recognizing the preposition ל (*lamed*) before the second verb: בָּרָא אְֶלֹהִים לַעְַשׂוֹת. Since ל (*lamed*) usually indicates “goal,” we may translate: “God created, in order to make.”

Another point to note is that the first day of creation differs from the rest. It is introduced not by the ordinal number רִאשׁוֹן (*rishon*), “first,” but by the cardinal numeral אֶחָד (*ehad*), “one.” Consequently, many translators prefer to render it “day one.” Scholars interpret this divergence in various ways. Some say that using the cardinal numeral indicates that this is a 24-hour day. Therefore, all the subsequent days should be so understood. Others assert the opposite – the indefinite nature of the word אֶחָד (*ehad*) shows that a longer period of time is in view and that this is true for all subsequent days as well.

We must also note, however, that אֶחָד (*ehad*) sometimes serves as an ordinal number,[[25]](#footnote-25) as in the listing of the rivers in Eden (Gen 2:11), the precious stones in the breastplate of the high priest (Ex 39:10), and the sons of Job (Job 42:14). Finally, it can denote the first day of the month (Gen 8:5) or the first year (2 Chr 36:22). When used in an enumeration of concrete entities, אֶחָד (*ehad*) (if it serves as an ordinal number) takes the definite article. Yet, the absence of the article in Genesis 1:5 is likely due to the poetic style of the material. The article, in fact, is omitted before other ordinal numbers in this chapter, except for the number “sixth.”

Collins introduces several other points of discussion.[[26]](#footnote-26). He feels that the first day of creation does not include Genesis 1:1-2 – this is the introduction to the chapter. The first day begins in verse 3. His point is worth considering if we assume that every new day must begin with the phrase “and God said…” and must conclude with “the first day,” etc. Mathews comes to the same conclusion: “…vv. 1–2 describe the absolute beginnings, the initial stage in the creation of the ‘earth’ that is brought to completion during the six days (vv. 3–31).”[[27]](#footnote-27)

So then, the words “heavens and earth” in verse 1 idiomatically refer to the entire universe. As the chapter progresses, however, they take on a more narrow meaning of the planet Earth and the space around it. This interpretation corresponds to the author’s goal in the chapter – to show how God prepared a place for human habitation.

Another debated question is what Genesis is referring to in saying: “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Yahweh God made earth and heaven.” The entire book of Genesis is divided into sections by the phrase אֵלֶּה תוֹלְדוֹת, “this is the account” (see 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2). Collins thinks that this verse introduces what is to follow. He adds that it is improper to divide the verse, as if the first part applied to what precedes, and the second part – to what follows. The verse is structured in the form of a chiasm, which is improper to rupture into parts, but must be taken as a whole:

This is the account of the heavens

and the earth

when they were created

in the day that Yahweh God made

earth

and heaven

In light of what has been said, we can conclude that the second creation account begins with verse 4 of chapter 2, where we encounter the formula “this is the account…”. The passage Genesis 2:4-25 details God’s creative work on day 6. Nonetheless, why is plant life absent on the sixth day (2:5), and why are birds created on that day (2:19)?

We assert that Genesis 2:5 does not recount the creation of plant life in general, as in Genesis 1:11-12, but of the initiation of agricultural activity, which did not exist until God created humans “to cultivate the ground.” Keil and Delitzsch argue that phrases “shrub of the field (שָׂדֶה)” and “plant of the field (שָׂדֶה)” differ from the plants in general coming from the earth (Gen 1:11-12). The word שָׂדֶה (*sade*) refers to a certain plot of land, namely the Garden of Eden.[[28]](#footnote-28) They write,

The “shrub of the field” consists of such shrubs and tree-like productions of the cultivated land as man raises for the sake of their fruit, and the “herb of the field,” all seed-producing plants, both corn and vegetables, which serve as food for man and beast.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Mathews agrees:

Thus 2:5–6 does not speak to the creation of overall vegetation but to specific sorts of herbage in the world to follow. The language of cultivation, “work the ground” (2:5), anticipates the labor of Adam.[[30]](#footnote-30)

Mathews adds the thought that “plants yielding seed” in Genesis 1:11 differ from “plants of the field” in that the former grow by themselves, while the latter require human care.[[31]](#footnote-31) Other commentators note that Genesis 2:5-6 contrasts with Genesis 3:17-18, 23, where again humans are needed to work the soil, only now with the earth under a curse.[[32]](#footnote-32)

What about animals and birds made from the ground in Genesis 2:19 after Adam’s creation? Keil and Delitzsch propose that the author is looking back on what God had already done in 1:24:25.[[33]](#footnote-33) In support, we note that the Hebrew verb in 2:19, *וַיִּצֶר* (*wayitser*), “formed,” stands in the grammatical tense “waw-imperfect.” This tense can have the function of the pluperfect tense in referring to a event in the distant past before the other events in the context took place. For example, in Numbers 1:47-48, we read: “The Levites, however, were not numbered among them by their fathers' tribe. For Yahweh had (already) spoken (וַיְדַבֵּר) to Moses, saying…”[[34]](#footnote-34) In this light, we may translate Genesis 2:19: “Out of the ground Yahweh God (had already) formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought {them} to the man.”

According to Mathews, the author intentionally makes mention of animal creation after human creation for the sake of literary style. His goal is to contrast animals, who were unfit partners for Adam, with woman.[[35]](#footnote-35) Other commentators suggest that Genesis 2:19 speaks not of all animals created in 1:24-25, but only of those in a closer relation to humans.[[36]](#footnote-36) Hugh Ross holds to the opinion that God specially created these types of animals and birds after Adam.[[37]](#footnote-37)

A final point of interest: it is well known that in Genesis 1:1-2:4, God is אְֶלֹהִים (*Elohim*), while in Genesis 2:5 and following, He is יהוה (*Yahweh*). Based on this, some wrongfully conclude that these chapters were written at different times by different authors (i.е., the “documentary hypothesis”). We refute this suggestion in chapter 13 of volume 2 in this series. As Collins argues, אְֶלֹהִים (*Elohim*) is God in “in his role as Creator and Ruler of the world”, but יהוה (*Yahweh*) is God’s personal name, “the one that he uses in entering into a relationship with humans.”[[38]](#footnote-38)

Finally, the meaning of the Hebrew word יוֹם (*yom*), “day,” in Genesis 1 is much discussed. We will address this issue later in this chapter.

**3. Old Earth Theories**

As mentioned above, commentators vary in opinion about the age of the earth. Those who posit an old earth draw on certain scientific observations supporting their view. In this chapter, however, we will examine the biblical data cited in support of this position. We recommend appealing to material specializing in a scientific treatment of creation for an investigation of that side of the question.

Before examining the specific theological views defending an old earth, we can list general arguments for an old earth that support any of these views. Newman, who embraces progressive creationism, makes the following observations.[[39]](#footnote-39) In 1 John 2:18, it is written that the “end times” have already come. If the “end times” can extend for more than 2000 years, then the years preceding the end times must be much longer. Moreover, in Revelation 16:18, we read of “a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth.” Could the expression “since man came to be upon the earth” refer to a time when there were no people on the still evolving planet?

Romans 5:12 is of special interest: “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.” If progressive creationism or theistic evolution is correct, then the death of plants and animals occurred before Adam’s sin. Yet, adherents of this view respond that Romans 5:12 speaks only of the death of *people*. The same is seen in 1 Corinthians 15:22: “In Adam all (implying “people”) die.”[[40]](#footnote-40) So then, the death of animals does not result from the Fall. Predators, in fact, whom God Himself feeds (see Job 38:39-41; Ps 104:21), existed from the beginning.[[41]](#footnote-41)

Boyd cites several passages of Scripture that could be interpreted to support an old earth:[[42]](#footnote-42)

- He stood and surveyed the earth; He looked and startled the nations. Yes, the perpetual mountains were shattered, the ancient hills collapsed. His ways are everlasting (Hab 3:6).

- Listen, you mountains, to the indictment of Yahweh, and you enduring foundations of the earth, Because Yahweh has a case against His people; even with Israel He will dispute (Mic 6:2).

- Of wisdom it says, “Yahweh possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. From everlasting I was established, from the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth” (Prov 8:22-23).

Another participant in this debate is Hugh Ross.[[43]](#footnote-43) In his opinion, God created the world “good,” but not “perfect.” He introduced decay into the universe from the beginning, since it is necessary for the operation of many natural processes. He reasons that in Jeremiah 33:25, “the fixed patterns of heaven and earth” that God established include the principle of decay (entropy). He assumes the same in Romans 8:21, where we read about the “slavery to corruption.” The goal of creation was not the establishment of perfect conditions for human habitation, but conditions that would lead to victory over evil. A perfect world will come only after the Day of Judgment, when the old world order is done away with.[[44]](#footnote-44)

Ross, then, considers that the presence of the principle of entropy is part of God’s original plan for this creation and supports the thesis of an old earth. God used this process to bring order to the universe after the “Big Bang.” The process of cooling and condensing the atomic elements took billions of years. Ross sees in biblical references to God “spreading out” the heavens indications of the Big Bang.[[45]](#footnote-45) Furthermore, he interprets the words “in his (Peleg’s) days the earth was divided” (Gen 10:25) as describing the separation of Asia and North America at the Bering Strait about 9000 B.C., which means that the earth is older than 6000 years old.

Ross also notes that the genealogy of Genesis 11:12 omits the name Cainan, which Luke includes (Lk 3:36). He suggests that many other names are also omitted in Genesis. Therefore, the enumerations in Genesis chapters 5 and 11 are not reliable to determine the times of Adam and Eve. Other biblical genealogies show the same tendency for omission. So then, he concludes that people have been on the planet more than 6000 years.

We will critique several of these points. First, one must consider that the phrase “end times” is a technical expression for the time leading up to Christ’s coming, which is intended not for measuring the age of the earth, but for urging people to be ready for that great event. In addition, Revelation 16:14 does not speak of a time when there were no people on the earth, but only when there *were* people on the planet.

Second, the words “perpetual (Hab 3:6),” “enduring (Mic 6:2),” and “old” (Prov 8:22-23) have relative meaning. They describe a condition that is older than something else, in this case, than the people who lived when these verses were written. There is no indication of how long the “mountains” or “wisdom” existed before that time.

Third, certain factors require us to take the genealogies in Genesis seriously. First, between Luke’s genealogy and the lists in Genesis, only one omission is noted. It is difficult to posit thousands of lost years on the basis on one missing name. Second, unlike other biblical genealogies, in Genesis chapters 5 and 11, it is specifically stated at what age the descendants were born and how long their father lived after that, which fixes the precision of this dating. This means that whether Shelah was the son of Arphaxad or his grandson makes no difference, since we know that Arphaxad lived 403 years after his birth.

**а. Literary Theory**

One of the theories offered in defense of an old earth in the literary theory. It is proposed that the description of creation in Genesis 1 is not so much historical as poetic. The author’s goal was not to lay out the event in chronological order, but to give it a literary style according to the following structure:[[46]](#footnote-46)

Place Contents

Day 1 = light Day 4 = sun, moon, stars

Day 2 = heaven and seas Day 5 = birds, fish

Day 3 = earth Day 6 = land animals

In other words, the first three days describe the general structure of the universe, while the final three indicate what fills that space. Therefore, Genesis 1 does not provide a historical or chronological account, but a schematic representation of God’s creative act. In addition, the Bible gives no indication as to how long this process required.

Boyd and Eddy mention a different approach used by some for analyzing the structure of Genesis 1.[[47]](#footnote-47) Genesis presents a dilemma that the subsequent texts resolves: “The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep.” The problem of “darkness” was solved by the creation of light. The problem of the “deep” – by the separation of sea from heaven. The problem of “formless” – by the creation of dry land. The problem of “void” – by the creation of birds, fish, and animals. Yet, the time factor is missing. The “days” are symbolic.

The literary theory is defended as follows.[[48]](#footnote-48) First, the Gospels employ a similar approach. The Gospel writers do not always lay out their material chronologically, but often group events by topic. Second, the order of events in Genesis 2 differs from that of Genesis 1, which may indicate that the latter is not chronological. Third, the Ancient Near Eastern literature shows a similar structure. It is thought that the author of Genesis 1 used a conventional literary approach from antiquity to express how the true God made the universe.[[49]](#footnote-49)

In evaluation of the approach, we must acknowledge the striking correspondence between days 1-4, 2-5, and 3-6. Other considerations, though, weigh against this theory. First, Genesis chapter 1 reads like a historical account, and the enumeration of the days strongly suggests sequence. Second, in Exodus 20:11 and 31:17 we receive confirmation of a literal six-day creation period: “In six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth.” This literal six day period, in fact, serves as the basis for establishing the Sabbath as a day of rest. We also note that the New Testament refers about 60 times to the first part of the book of Genesis as literal history. This leads one to believe that chapter 1 is meant to be taken as true history as well.

Finally, any resemblance between Ancient Near Eastern literary conventions and Genesis 1 does not force the conclusion that the latter borrowed from the former. If the Genesis 1 account is truly historical, then one would expect to see a resemblance in the tradition preserved in the Ancient Near East, with varying degrees of precision. Why must we assume that pagan nations are the source for the creation narrative? It is very likely that the Ancient Near Eastern creation accounts simply reflect a tradition passed down from the beginning, while the biblical account contains a more precise description of the event given by divine revelation.

**b. Theory of “Days of Revelation”**

According to this theory, God did not create the world in six days, but rather revealed His creative work to Moses over that period of time. That is, on the first day God revealed to Moses that He created light. The next day, He revealed His creation of the expanse of the heavens, etc. Yet, we see no evidence of this in the Genesis text. We also recall that Exodus 20:11 and 31:17 also speak of a six-day creative act.[[50]](#footnote-50)

**c. Gap Theory**

The Gap Theory is another attempt to reconcile the biblical data with the old-earth claim. Adherents propose that a pre-Adamic civilization existed, which perished due to rebellion against God. Genesis 1:1, then, describes this original creation, while Genesis 1:2 records God’s judgment of the pre-Adamic world: “The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep.” Proponents of the Gap Theory, however, translate: “The earth *became* formless and void.”

Therefore, God created the universe billions of years ago, but our civilization, which is the second made by Yahweh, has not long inhabited the planet.[[51]](#footnote-51) A “gap,” therefore, exists between the events described in Genesis 1:1 and those in Genesis 1:2.[[52]](#footnote-52)

To support this theory, proponents note the use of the Hebrew terms תֹהוּ (*tohu*) and בֹהוּ (*bohu*), i.е., “formless and void,” in Isaiah 34:11, 45:18, and Jeremiah 4:23-26 to describe the Lord’s judgment. Isaiah 45:18 renders the word בֹהוּ (*bohu*) “a waste place.” Applying this to Genesis 1:1-2 supposedly reveals that God did not originally create the world in the condition described in verse 2, but it became that way after Yahweh judged the pre-Adamic civilization. In Isaiah 34:11, the word בֹהוּ (*bohu*) is translated “emptiness” and again is found in a context of the judgment of God. Both terms are used in Jeremiah 4:23-26 in the same sense.

This theory also cites an expression used by Christ in Matthew 13:35: “…since the foundation of the world.” The Greek term here, καταβολής (*kataboles*), consists of two parts: κατα (*kata*), meaning “down,” and βολής (*boles*) from the verb βάλλω (*ballo*), meaning “throw.” So then, Jesus allegedly spoke of a time when God “threw down” the world, that is, judged the pre-Adamic civilization.[[53]](#footnote-53)

Genesis 9:15 is also viewed as indicating a pre-Adamic civilization: “…never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.” Peter’s words are interpreted the same way: “…through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water” (2 Pet 3:6)*.* Moreover, the rabbis inserted into the Hebrew text a disjunctive accent between the first two verses of Genesis, which could indicate a contrast intended between them. So then, Genesis 1:1 is the creation of heaven and earth, while Genesis 1:2 describes God’s judgment.[[54]](#footnote-54)

Boyd and Eddy note other arguments used in support of the Gap Theory.[[55]](#footnote-55) In the religions of Mesopotamia, the “deep” was an anti-God power, which may indicate a conflict occurring in this text between God and His first created beings. It is thought that when the Spirit “hovered over the waters,” He was opposing that force. In addition, the literature of the Ancient Near East records a conflict supposedly taking place before the creation of the world.

Additionally, humans received the commission from the Lord: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it” (Gen 1:28), which may imply that certain rebellious forces were still at work in the earth. The term “subdue”, i.е., כָּבַשׁ (*kavash*), can describe a violent subjection of something.[[56]](#footnote-56) Moreover, Adam needed to “keep” (שָׁמַר - *shamar*) the Garden (Gen 2:15). Body and Eddy describe the Gap Theory’s position: “One of the tasks God gave humanity, it seems, was the task of keeping the earth from falling back into the satanic bondage that led to its initial destruction.”[[57]](#footnote-57)

The following passages of Scripture also speak of conflict between God and nature in connection with creation: Psalm 74:12-17; 89:8-12. It is thought that these passages symbolically represent the overthrow of the pre-Adamic civilization. Predators on the earth today are remnants of this earlier world that somehow survived its annihilation.

Numerous factors, however, stand in opposition to this teaching. First, it boasts little Scriptural support. The Bible nowhere mentions the existence of a pre-Adamic civilization. Second, the best translation of Genesis 1:2 is not, “the earth *became* formless and void,” but “the earth *was* formless and void” (see below). Third, Genesis 9:15 and 2 Peter 3:6-7 are referring to the flood in Noah’s time. Furthermore, the term καταβολής (*катаболэйс*) never means “thrown down,” but is always used in the sense of “create.”[[58]](#footnote-58)

Let us discuss further verse 2 of Genesis 1. Adherents of the Gap Theory translate the Hebrew verb הָיָה (*haya*), i.е., “to be,” as “to become.” Thus, the earth “became” formless and void. However, the verb הָיָה (*haya*) is translated “become” only when the next word in the sentence begins with the preposition ל (*lamed*), as in Genesis 2:7: וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה, which translates, “…man became a living being.”

There are exceptions to this rule, however. Sometimes הָיָה(*haya*) can be translated “to become” without the accompanying preposition ל (*lamed*), but such examples are few. One such example is in Genesis 3:20: “…Eve, because she was (or “became”) the mother of all {the} living.” Yet, as a rule, הָיָה(*haya*) without the preposition ל (*lamed*) means “to be.” Therefore, the preferred translation is “…the earth *was* formless and void.” Consequently, this verse does not describe a pre-Adamic catastrophe, but the condition of creation before God gave order to it.

The fact that the Ancient Near Eastern literature describes a conflict before creation carries no weight, since it finds no confirmation in the Old Testament.[[59]](#footnote-59) As discussed above, any resemblance between the Ancient Near Eastern creation accounts and Genesis is due to the preservation of the creation story among pagan nations, but not with the precision found in God’s revealed Word. Whenever the two sources conflict, we always give preference to God’s Word.

It is also not convincing to assert that the use of the terms תֹהוּ (*tohu*) and בֹהוּ (*bohu*) in contexts speaking of God’s judgment supports the Gap Theory. Any word can be used with different senses in different contexts. The fact that תֹהוּ (*tohu*) and בֹהוּ (*bohu*) can refer to destruction by God’s hand of judgment in no way forces the conclusion that they always carry that connotation. We can say the same for the word כָּבַשׁ (*kabash*), “subdue,” in Genesis 1:28 and שָׁמַר (*shamar*), “keep,” in Genesis 2:15. In particular, the word שָׁמַר (*shamar*) can mean “to care for.”[[60]](#footnote-60)

Finally, Psalm 74:12-17 and Psalm 89:8-12 were not written to unveil God’s judgment of the pre-Adamic world, but to show Yahweh’s power and authority over nature. It is difficult to see in “Leviathan” and “Rahab” symbols of a pre-Adamic world.

In light of our discussion above, we conclude that Genesis 1:1 relates the account of God’s creative act, and that Genesis 1:2 and following describe the development that subsequently took place, that is, how the Lord formed concrete entities in the heavens and on earth.[[61]](#footnote-61)

**d. Theory of “Days as Epochs”**

Among those who believe in an old earth, the most popular explanation of Genesis 1 is the theory “Days as Epochs.” Here, it is asserted that the word “day” in Genesis 1 indicates a long period of time. The Bible elsewhere states, “With the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day” (2 Pet 3:8; сf. Ps 90:4). Consequently, “six days” may be millions or billions of years.

Although all advocates of this teaching agree that a Genesis “day” is more than 24 hours, they vary among themselves as to its meaning. Those who hold to Theistic Evolution claim that God used the process of evolution to create the world. This means that the six days of creation represent an uninterrupted process of the progressive development of all things.

For proponents of Progressive Creationism, though, these days represent specific times when God launched a new initiative in the progressive creation of the universe. Between these “days,” God was inactive and undertook no new initiatives. No one knows exactly how much time transpired during these creative periods. It is possible, however, that they consisted of a literal 24 hours.[[62]](#footnote-62)

In support of Progressive Creationism, Newman calls the six days of creation “insertions,” which means that God acted only in six concrete periods to make something new.[[63]](#footnote-63) He proposes that these “days” symbolize the moments when the Lord gave the commands, “Let there be…” According to Newman, the sixth day extends to the present time, and the seventh day has not yet come. Newman agues that fossil record does not yield sufficient transitional forms to justify the claims of Theistic Evolution. He also appeals to the so-called “Cambrian explosion,” when supposedly nearly all types of animals appeared in the fossil record over a relatively short period of time.[[64]](#footnote-64) This seems to correspond to a special creative act.

Van Til proposed a radical variant of Theistic Evolution.[[65]](#footnote-65) He believed that God created the world with inherent capacities to develop and evolve. Even living creatures spontaneously evolved. His view is that besides the initial creative act and endowing creation with these inherent powers, God did not supernaturally intervene in creation from that point on. On the other hand, the conventional understanding of theistic evolution is that God actively directed the process of evolution.

Finally, the evolution of apes into humans contradicts Genesis 2:7, which records that Adam was made “from the dust of the ground.” The use of the word “dust” in relation to death confirms that we must take that term literally in relation to Adam’s creation.[[66]](#footnote-66)

Along with arguments in support of an old earth, all advocates of the “Days as Epochs” theory hold to a non-literal interpretation of the word “day” in Genesis chapter 1.[[67]](#footnote-67) In some cases, in fact, the Hebrew word for “day,” i.e., יוֹם (*yom*), does refer to a longer period of time: “day of calamity” (Deut 32:35; Job 21:30), “day of the Lord” (Amos 5:18; Zech 14:1), “day of harvest” (Prov 25:13).

Especially significant for our discussion is Genesis 2:4. The word יוֹם (*yom*) there covers the entire period of Genesis chapter 1: “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day (יוֹם) that Yahweh God made earth and heaven.” We also consider Psalm 90:4: “For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes by, or {as} a watch in the night.” In Hosea 6:2, a “day” represents a period of time in the history of Israel: “He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day, that we may live before Him.” Although the Hebrew language has a specific word for “period of time,” namely עוֹלָם (*olam*), it more commonly denotes eternity and therefore would be less appropriate to describe the days of creation.

Supporters of this theory insist on their position for logical reasons as well. For example, they doubt that Adam could have named all the animals in one 24-hour period, since there exist thousands of species. In addition, since the sun did not appear until day 4, there was no way to measure 24-hour days.[[68]](#footnote-68)

In addition, the seventh day does not end with the conventional formula, “…there was evening and there was morning.” In the light of Hebrews 4:1-11, some suggest that the seventh day is not yet complete. The idea of “Sabbath,” in fact, can apply to an entire year (Ex 23:10-11; Lev 25:1-7) or a period of 50 years (Lev 25:8-17). So then, if the seventh day can extend so long, then the other days of creation may as well.

Hugh Ross points out other inconsistencies in the literal day theory.[[69]](#footnote-69) First, if God created the stars only 6000 years ago, how would the light that they emit from many light years away reach the earth by now? Second, plants created on day 3 could not survive without the sun, created on day 4. Third, if God placed the sun in the solar system after making the earth, the gravitation force thus introduced would have destroyed all climatic conditions necessary on earth for life.

Ross proposes that God had already made the heavenly bodies at the beginning of creation in accordance with the Big Bang Theory. Yet, the dense atmosphere of that time did not allow the sunlight to penetrate (see Job 38:8-9). On day 1, the atmosphere cleared sufficiently for sunlight to appear. By the fourth day, the sun itself became visible. In Genesis 1:16, where we read that on the fourth day “God made the two great lights,” this occurred beforehand, but was inserted at this point in the narrative.

Collins advances a similar theory of how the heavenly bodies appeared.[[70]](#footnote-70) When it says, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens” (Gen 1:14), the phrase “let there be” does not necessarily mean that something new appeared. It could imply that the item already existed. For example, in 1 Sam 20:13 we read, “May Yahweh be with you.” This does not mean the Yahweh only began to be with David. Furthermore, when Genesis 1:16 claims, “God made the two great lights,” it could be implying that at that time God merely appointed the heavenly bodies to serve “for signs and for seasons and for days and years.”

Our evaluation of the Days as Epochs approach is as follows. Concerning the claim that God created the heavenly bodies before day 4, it does seem necessary from a scientific point of view for the sun to appear before life is created on earth. Yet, this interpretation is problematic from an exegetical point of view. It does not say that on day 4 the heavenly bodies “appeared” or “became visible,” but that God created them by His Word. As we noted earlier, in Genesis 1 the verb יְהִי (*yehi*), “let there be,” serves as a synonym for the verb בָרָא (*bara*) and is, in fact, God’s creative Word. The example from 1 Sam 20:13, “May Yahweh *be with you*,“ does not compare with the issuing of God’s creative Word. In addition, in Genesis 1:16, the verb עָשָׂה (*asa*) does not mean to begin to serve in some capacity. As noted earlier, this word also serves as a synonym for בָרָא (*bara*) and means “to create.”

It is also highly improbable that Genesis 1:16 describes something that occurred before day 1. Genesis chapter 1 observes a strict ordering of events: first day, second day, third day, fourth day, etc. Moreover, we do not observe any other deviation of this type in the other creation days. Finally, it is written that the heavenly bodies were placed “in the expanse of the heavens,” which was not created before day 1, but only on day 2.

This theory hangs upon the claim that יוֹם (*yom*) indicates a long period of time. In our discussion of Fiat Creationism, we will return to this question.

**4. Young Earth Theories**

**а. Theory of “Ideal Time”**

The Theory of Ideal Time claims that God created universe about 6000 years ago, but He made it in such away that it appears to be billions of years old. In support, proponents of this view appeal to Jesus changing water into wine. Since the process of fermentation takes a long period of time, Jesus “accelerated” this process to make something new appear old.[[71]](#footnote-71) Morland also argues that God had to originally create some things in their already adult form, such as trees, people, light from the stars, etc.

On the other hand, we must ask what goal God was pursuing in creating the appearance of a billions-year-old universe? Moreover, astronomers observe various changes in the condition of stars.[[72]](#footnote-72) If the light to reach the earth was created along with the stars, then God created a false history of these star formations/ degradations. Those celestial events never really occurred.[[73]](#footnote-73) In addition, can we justify God creating the false appearance of age in general, thereby employing deception?

**b. Theory of “Literal Days” (Fiat Creationism)**

The most well-accepted view among young-earth adherents is the Theory of Literal Days. According to this view, God created all things in six 24-hour days, and the biblical account is taken as literal history. Many supports of this view date God’s creative act at about 4000 B.C., while others are willing to assign to the earth 10,000 – 50,000 years.[[74]](#footnote-74) All adherents, though, assign the features apparently pointing to an old earth to the effects of the flood of Noah.

The Theory of Literal Days accepts the occurrence of microevolution, but not macroevolution.[[75]](#footnote-75) Microevolution is the process by which organisms may change within their genus or species, but not beyond them. Macroevolution, however, involves alteration of an organism to the point that it creates a new genus or species. Genesis 1 informs us that God made all things “according to their kind.” Therefore, we do not expect organisms to exceed those limitations. Indeed, in nature we do not observe such changes, and the fossil record can boast few if any such examples.[[76]](#footnote-76)

In order to defend the Theory of Literal Days, one must demonstrate the literal used of the word יוֹם (*yom*), i.е., “day,” in Genesis 1. In the biblical text, when the word יוֹם (*yom*) is accompanied by a numeral, it always indicates a 24-hour day. Only one exception exists. In Hosea 6:2, we read, “He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day.” Here, it is clear from context that the time of Israel’s restitution is in view.[[77]](#footnote-77) However, some see in this saying an allusion to Christ’s resurrection as well, which did occur on the literal third day.[[78]](#footnote-78)

Moreover, in Genesis 1:16 the sun was made “to govern the day.” The sun, of course, does not govern ages, but literal days. At the same time, we acknowledge, as was noted before, that in Genesis 2:4 the word יוֹם (*yom*) does cover the entire period described in Genesis chapter 1: “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day (יוֹם) that Yahweh God made earth and heaven.” We also recognize that יוֹם (*yom*) applies to longer periods of time in the expressions: “day of calamity” (Deut 32:35; Job 21:30), “day of the Lord” (Amos 5:18; Zech 14:1), “day of harvest” (Prov 25:13). At the same time, these examples are all qualified by expressions like “calamity,” “harvest,” etc. This makes it evident that a longer period of time is meant. Such qualifications are absent in Genesis 1.[[79]](#footnote-79)

When the Scripture says that with the Lord “a thousand years… are like yesterday” (Ps 90:4), the text itself demonstrates that a non-literal meaning is meant. In addition, it does not state that “one day is 1000 years,” but that to the Lord one *literal day,* יוֹם (*yom*), is like a thousand years. Furthermore, in Zechariah 14:7 we encounter the same grammatical construction translated “one day” in Genesis 1:5: “For it will be a unique day (יוֹם־אֶחָד) which is known to Yahweh.” The text of Zechariah speaks of one literal, 24-hour day.[[80]](#footnote-80)

Also in support of the literal day theory are references to the Sabbath. We read later in the Torah, “For in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth” (Ex 20:11; 31:17). The people of God were to work six literal days ant rest one day in imitation of what God did in Genesis 1.[[81]](#footnote-81)

The phrase “and there was evening and there was morning” is also highly significant for defining the word יוֹם (*yom*). This formula is very atypical. A similar one, though, is found in 1 Samuel 17:16, where it refers to a 24-hour day: “The Philistine came forward morning and evening for forty days and took his stand.”

Collins makes an interesting comment on this phenomenon.[[82]](#footnote-82) In 1 Samuel 17:16, emphasis is on the light of day, when men go to war. Therefore, we see the order “morning and evening.” Genesis 1, however, has the reverse order, “evening and morning,” implying not a time of activity, but a time of rest. Collins suggests that after each creative day, God “rested” before the commencement of the subsequent day. Of course, God does not actually rest. This is a poetic, anthropomorphic expression. So then, Genesis chapter 1 describes God’s “work week” (сf. Ps 104:22-23).

However, Collins sees Israel’s “work week” and the corresponding command to observe the Sabbath as *analogous* to God’s “work week” (see Ex 20:11; 31:17). He describes them as analogous since there are certain points of correspondence between them, but differences as well. For example, God does not really have to literally rest. Correspondingly, we do not have to take the “days” of Genesis in the same sense of the days leading up to the Sabbath*.*

In response to Collins, we acknowledge that the expression “evening and morning” may carry the connotation of a rest between days. However, the phrase can also serve as a confirmation that 24-hour days are in view. In analogies, it is often hard to determine with certainty which elements literally correspond, and which ones do not. We admit that God’s “rest” is different than ours. Yet, that does not force the conclusion that His “days” differ from ours. Boyd and Eddy aptly comment, “God is not drawing an *analogy* between God and the Israelites; rather, he is expressing a *precedent* set by God for the Israelites.”[[83]](#footnote-83)

We noted earlier the claim that the absence of the phrase “there was evening and there was morning” for day 7 could mean that the seventh day continues on (see Heb 4). Yet, we can respond that Hebrews 4 is not speaking of God’s day of rest from creation extending on, but rather typologically applying the Sabbath rest to our redemption.[[84]](#footnote-84) In addition, Genesis 2:2-3 is written in past tense, not future tense:[[85]](#footnote-85)

By the seventh day God *completed* His work which He had done, and He *rested* on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God *blessed* the seventh day and *sanctified* it, because in it He *rested* from all His work which God had created and made.

Boyd and Eddy observe that in the biblical narrative, God’s supernatural acts typically occur suddenly, not gradually. They also comment that after a long drawn-out, messy evolutionary process, it would be difficult for the Lord to state at the end of it all that it was “very good.”[[86]](#footnote-86)

Concerning the time of human appearance on earth, some commentators theorize that, according to the theory of evolution, before rational humans (*Homo sapiens*) appeared, cave people walked the planet. Yet, God had no dealings with them, but only with fully developed people.[[87]](#footnote-87)

However, this theory creates some serious theological dilemmas. First, it is written that God made Adam from the dust of the ground (Gen 2:7), not from an ape. Additionally, according to Romans 5:12-14, death was introduced into the world through Adam’s sin. This would seem to exclude the development of *Homo sapiens* from countless mutations in ancestors who died previously.

In addition, in Mark 10:6 Jesus taught, “From the beginning of creation, {God} made them male and female,” which shows that the creation of humans dates back to the beginning of God’s creative work, as recorded in Genesis 1-2. Scripture categorically asserts that all humans descended from Adam and Eve. In Acts 17:26, Paul confirmed, “He made from one {man} every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth.” Moreover, Eve was “the mother of all {the} living” (Gen 3:20).[[88]](#footnote-88)

The genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 record the period from Adam to Abraham. All acknowledge that at times biblical genealogies omit names. However, when we compare Genesis’ genealogy with Luke’s, we note only one omission in Genesis (Cainan, the son of Arphaxad – Lk 3.36).[[89]](#footnote-89) It is difficult to assume on the basis of one omission that thousands of years were omitted in the Genesis genealogies. Furthermore, the Genesis genealogies specifically indicate how many years a father lived after the birth of his son, which makes precise dating possible. Even if Shelah was not the son, but the grandson of Arphaxad, the result is the same – Arphaxad died 403 years after his birth.

Opponents of this view assert that, for example, when we read “Seth lived one hundred and five years, and became the father of Enosh” (Gen 5:6), this means that when Seth was 105 years old, one of the ancestors of Enosh was born to him.[[90]](#footnote-90) Yet, the text does not support this proposal and it goes against the plain intention of the author to indicate the exact time of Enosh’s birth. Beegle, an opponent of biblical inerrancy, nonetheless admits, “When the writer claims that Adam lived 130 years and then begat Seth, and that he lived 800 years afterward, making his total age 930 years, it is apparent that the writer intended the figures literally.”[[91]](#footnote-91)

We also encounter objections to the longevity of our earliest ancestors (up to 969 years). Yet, we also consider that after the flood human longevity progressively decreased, which corresponds to Yahweh’s announcement: “Nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years” (Gen 6:3). Most likely, the flood brought about some climactic changes that led to accelerating the aging process.

**5. Conclusions**

In summary, it is understandable why sincere believers differ in their views on this topic. We also recognize that scientific claims can affect the results of our exegesis. Therefore, in our conclusions we will not attempt to reconcile the biblical teaching on creation with scientific claims. Such a discussion requires participation from both theology and science.

All things considered, the best exegetical evidence points to a literal reading of Genesis chapter 1. Therefore, we give preference to the theory of Fiat Creationism. Nonetheless, we make the following qualifications. As Collins observed, Genesis 1:1-2 formally is not included in the first day of creation. So then, the time of the initial creation of the heavens and the earth is not indicated. The passage of some period of time is possible after God made the universe and before the events of day 1 transpired.

However, one must inquire why God would create the heavens and the earth and then do nothing for millions or billions of years. Ross suggests that such a period of time was necessary for matter to cool after the Big Bang. Although such a suggestion is attractive, one has to somehow reconcile it with the fact that light did not come into being until day 1. The Big Bang would have produced light before that time.

A variant of progressive creationism also has merit if we postulate that the days of creation are literal 24-hour days, but between them long periods of time passed. Yet again, we are left wondering why God waited so long to commence the subsequent days.

Although we do see some flexibility in establishing the time of the initial creation, Scripture allows little flexibility in fixing the time Adam and Eve appeared on the planet. The Bible dates their appearance at about 4000 B.C.

### E. God as Sustainer

God is not only creator of all, but also sustains all that He created. He maintains creation’s existence and empowers its activities. In Colossians 1:17, after speaking of Christ’s role in creation, Paul writes, ”In Him all things hold together.” Other passages as well confirm this thought:

- In Him we live and move and exist (Acts 17:28).

- (He) upholds all things by the word of His power (Heb 1:3).

- Yahweh, You preserve man and beast (Ps 36:6).

- (You made) the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them (Neh 9:6).

This truth is expresses in a poetic manner as well. Yahweh “gives rain on the earth and sends water on the fields” (Job 5:10), “command(s) the morning” (Job 38:12), “has cleft a channel for the flood… a way for the thunderbolt” (Job 38:25), and “prepares for the raven its nourishment” (Job 38:41). He “leads forth (stars) by number” (Isa 40:26), “stirs up the sea so that its waves roar” (Jer 31: 35), and “causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain, and brings out the wind from His storehouses” (Jer 10:13). God “established the earth, and it stands. They stand this day according to Your ordinances, for all things are Your servants” (Ps 119:90-91).[[92]](#footnote-92)

We make special mention of Psalm 65:9-11:

You visit the earth and cause it to overflow; You greatly enrich it; the stream of God is full of water; You prepare their grain, for thus You prepare the earth. You water its furrows abundantly, You settle its ridges, You soften it with showers, You bless its growth. You have crowned the year with Your bounty, and Your paths drip {with} fatness.

Psalm 104:10-16 provides another striking description of the Lord’s sustaining work:

He sends forth springs in the valleys; they flow between the mountains; they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell; they lift up {their} voices among the branches. He waters the mountains from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of His works. He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the labor of man, so that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine which makes man's heart glad, so that he may make {his} face glisten with oil, and food which sustains man's heart. The trees of Yahweh drink their fill, the cedars of Lebanon which He planted.

The question of how exactly Yahweh sustains His creation is debated. In the Middle Ages, people believed that God used angels to carry out this work. They explained all natural processes as the activity of these heavenly messengers. From the time of the Enlightenment, though, thinkers recognize that God has established natural laws by which the operations of the natural world are ordered.

However, due to the discovery of natural laws, some went to the extreme of teaching that God, having established the world, has abandoned it to self-regulation and no longer intervenes in the world. This is the teaching of Deism. However, Deistic faith is not consistent with the biblical teaching of God as sustainer. See volume 1 of this series for more discussion on Deism.

We acknowledge that the world indeed is governed by natural laws, which God installed in nature. Yet, these processes operate by the power that God continually supplies. We call this “God’s concurrence.” God actively supplies creation with the power and energy for the operation of all natural processes.[[93]](#footnote-93)

We may compare God’s concurrence with the operation of an electric drill. When one presses and holds the button in place, the drill works. When one releases the button, the drill stops. Another example would be when a driver presses the gas pedal. When the driver releases the pedal, the car stops. Similarly, God provides power for nature to function, without which both the activity of nature and its very existence would cease.[[94]](#footnote-94)

Helseth expresses well the concept of God’s concurrence, “The created order is utterly dependent on the providential activity of the Creator for its moment-to-moment existence, because it does not have the power of existence in itself. It has, in other words, ‘no independent existence,’ for from one moment to the next it exists ‘only in and through and unto God.’”[[95]](#footnote-95)

One might wonder, though, whether God empowers sinful activity as well. If all action depends on His concurrent activity, then we must answer in the affirmative. At the same time, we assert that the power to act does not include the impulse to act. God grants people the power to act, but also the freedom of self-determination in their actions. Therefore, God is not to blame for human sin.[[96]](#footnote-96)

Finally, Yahweh’s concurrence in creation does not contradict Genesis 2:3, which states that God “rested from all His work.” His concurrence is not an act of creating, but of sustaining the world.[[97]](#footnote-97)

### F. Is Creation in Movement toward God?

**1. Description of the View**

In Eastern patristic theology, we encounter the idea that all of creation is in movement toward God and, in the end, will unite with Him. Filaret of Moscow comments,

His glory is a heavenly force, reflected in humanity and clothed in the grandeur of the visible world. It issues from Him, is received by participants, returns to Him, and, one might say, the blessed life and well-being of the creature consists in this revolving movement of God’s glory.”[[98]](#footnote-98)

Here, we see that the Lord endowed creation with some sort of divine power, which is identified as God’s glory, and which accomplishes this “revolving movement” of the creature back to Him. We also read, “In the created world, called forth from nothing,… infinite and eternal energies are present.”[[99]](#footnote-99) So then, all of creation is “interpenetrated” with God’s energies, which lead it back to the source of that energy – to God. Lossky writes,

- This will created all things by its energies, in order that all created things might enter into union with God through those same energies.[[100]](#footnote-100)

- The creature ‘participates’ in creative energies.[[101]](#footnote-101)

- (Creation) is streaming toward something… it is in eternal motion. Everything in the created world is in motion, things both mental and sensible.[[102]](#footnote-102)

- All creation is called to complete union with God.[[103]](#footnote-103)

Maximus the Confessor held a similar view. In his opinion, there exist three stages in creation’s development: *genesis*, i.e., “the beginning of created world’s existence,” *kinetics*, or “movement toward God,” and *stasis*, which is “rest in God.” Furthermore, he taught, “This movement culminates in an eternal rest in God.”[[104]](#footnote-104)

God’s “energies,” which supposedly interpenetrate all creation, issue from the Divine Logos: “All things consist together in the Logos, the second Person of the Most Holy Trinity.”[[105]](#footnote-105) The Logos and the creaturely world are interconnected in the following way.

According to Platonic philosophy, for every entity in the created world exists a corresponding “form” in the so-called “ideal world.” In the Neoplatonic worldview, the “ideal world” corresponds to the “Nous,” or “Mind,” one of the mediators between the “One” and the material world. In Eastern patristic thought, the Platonic “ideal world” is located in the Logos. Maximus the Confessor taught that creation is “the realization of all the divine ideals.”[[106]](#footnote-106) In Maximus’ thought, the Logos is “the divine principle of the world Reason”[[107]](#footnote-107) and penetrates all things.[[108]](#footnote-108) The Logos “has contained from eternity the life-giving foundations of all kinds of existence.”[[109]](#footnote-109)

Correspondingly, the “divine ideals,” which include all created things, are the expression of the Logos or “logoi”: “Every created thing has a point of contact in the Godhead. This is their ideal, their reason for being, their ‘logos,’ which is at the same time the goal to which they stream.”[[110]](#footnote-110) The world is held together by these “logoi.” They are the Lord’s thoughts and intentions.

Therefore, through contemplation on the created order, a person can come to know the Logos.[[111]](#footnote-111) Creation, then, serves as an image of this invisible spiritual world: “The perceptible world is immaterial in its qualitative foundations. It is a kind of mysterious ‘compression’ – or even ‘condensation’ – of the spiritual world. Everything in the world is spiritual in its depths.”[[112]](#footnote-112) In other words, “Things are the impression of another world.”[[113]](#footnote-113)

So then, due to the penetration of the divine Logos in creation and the presence of God’s “energies” in the form of “logoi,” God unites all things to Himself. He “includes, embraces, encompasses and intentionally connects by an internal connection all existing things to Himself.”[[114]](#footnote-114) Nonetheless, the qualification is made that the presence and interpenetration of God’s energies do not result in a merging of God and the world in essence.

These “logoi” not only connect those contemplating them to the Logos and unite them to Him, but also enable the “revolving movement” of all creation to God. “Like some creative rays, the ‘logoi’ radiate from the Divine center and again gather in it.”[[115]](#footnote-115)

Finally, people play a key role in this circular return to God. God’s plan consists of concentrating the divine energies of creation in humans and through their deification to deify all creation. Archmandrite Nikon expresses it in this way: “Humans head up within themselves the entire world. Human destiny, therefore, is the destiny of the entire world. The sanctification of people is the sanctification of the whole world.”[[116]](#footnote-116)

We also read, “Humans, abiding in God, must elevate all creation to deification, for which all creation received its existence from God.”[[117]](#footnote-117) Florovsky cites the teaching of Maximus the Confessor in this regard: “Man must unite everything in himself and through himself unite with God.”[[118]](#footnote-118) In addition, “the various features of creation merge around the united human nature.”[[119]](#footnote-119) Nikon claims, “The lives of the holy fathers testifies that humans, attaining to a high level of deification, experience deeply their unity with the surrounding world, which is anticipating the revelation of the glory of the children of God (Rom 8:18-22).”[[120]](#footnote-120) In summary, “Everything will manifest God alone. Nothing will remain outside of God…. Everything will be deified – God will be everything, and in everything.”[[121]](#footnote-121)

**2. Evaluation of the View**

In evaluation of this teaching, we immediately note its variance from biblical revelation. The Bible nowhere speaks of a “circular movement,” returning creation to God, of an interpenetration of God’s energies (logoi), of creation’s union with the Lord, or of its deification. As we shall see, such an idea came not from biblical teaching, but from a Neoplatonic worldview.

Nevertheless, we will examine biblical texts that appear to support this view. In Romans 8:20-21, we read, “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.” At the same time, we must define when that change will occur. According to verse 23, this liberation happens when the bodies of the saints are redeemed, that is, before the beginning of Christ’s millennial reign.

However, according to other passages of Scripture that refer to the condition of creation during the Millennium, this liberation will be only partial. Death will not be totally eliminated until the end of Christ’s earthly reign (see 1 Cor 15:24-26). During the Millennium, nature will enjoy great freedom from corruption and mortals will live long on the earth, but they will eventually die (Isa 65:20).

One must also consider that these texts do not speak of creation returning to God, but rather of God preparing a place for humans to enjoy. This is why the Scripture states that the creation is now in a condition of “futility,” since in its fallen state it cannot fulfill its appointed function to provide humans with only blessing.[[122]](#footnote-122) Consequently, Romans 8:20-21 lends no support to the “movement toward God” doctrine.

We also note Paul’s words in Ephesians 1:9-10: “He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, {that is,} the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.” Scholars differ as to the meaning of the verb ἀνακεφαλαιόω (*anakephalaioo*), i.е., “sum up all things.” Some think it refers to all creation submitting to Jesus Christ, which differs from the Eastern patristic view of uniting God’s energies in the created world in Christ.

It is imperative to interpret the Ephesian’s passage in light of its parallel verse in Colossians 1:20: “…through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, {I say,} whether things on earth or things in heaven.” Here, “unification” of all things is expressed in terms of reconciliation. There is no hint of a unification of God’s energies in creation and their reunion with Him, but establishing peace between God and creation, i.e. the removal of all enmity. Lincoln comments, “Both passages (i.e., Eph 1:10 and Col 1:20) appear to presuppose that the cosmos had been plunged into disintegration on account of sin and that it is God’s purpose to restore its original harmony in Christ.[[123]](#footnote-123)

In addition, the Bible predicts the total destruction of the old creation order and the making of all things new – a new heaven and a new earth (see Mk 13:31; Ps 101:26-27; Isa 34:4; 51:6; Rev 20:11; 2 Pet 3:12-13).[[124]](#footnote-124) Let us cite the last two reference in full:

- Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them (Rev 20:11).

- … looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells (2 Pet 3:12-13).

Therefore, the Bible does not give a picture of the return of the present creation to the Lord, but of its total destruction. So then, we must assign the conditions described in Ephesians 1:10 to the future new heavens and new earth.

Although few points of correspondence exist between the biblical view of creation and Eastern patristic theology, nevertheless a striking similarity exists between the latter and the philosophy of the third-century Greek philosopher Plotinus, founder of the philosophy “Neoplatonism.”[[125]](#footnote-125) According to his teaching, there exists an ultimate reality called the “One,” from which various “emanations” issue forth. The emanations are the Nous (or, “Mind”), in which the Platonic ideals reside, and, after it, the World Soul.

The World Soul has two parts: a higher and lower part. The higher part interfaces with the Nous, while the lower part interacts with the material world. The Platonic ideals, which are located in the Nous, find expression in the world through the World Soul, where they are known as “logoi.” The logoi provide a point of contact between the Nous and the material world. The ultimate destiny of the material world is return to the One and unification with It.

Pseudo-Dionysius, who widely disseminated Neoplatonistic thinking among Christians in the sixth century, blatantly expresses his understanding of God’s creation in Neoplatonistic terms: “And there is no single thing which does not participate in some way in the one, which uniformly pre-held in the uniqueness throughout all, all and whole, all, even the things opposed.”[[126]](#footnote-126)

Therefore, due to the spurious origin of this theory and its lack of biblical support, the Eastern patristic view of creation is unacceptable for Evangelical Christianity.

1. Munyon T. The Creation of the Universe and Humankind // Horton S. M. Systematic Theology. – Rev. Ed. – BookMasters. Kindle Edition. – P. 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Noted in Johnson P. E. Reflection 2 // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 273. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Erickson M. J. Christian Theology. – Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1983. – V. 1. – P. 368. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Thiessen H. C. Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology – Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949. – P. 162-163. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Taking into consideration, of course, the participation of all Persons of the Trinity. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. McGrath A. E. Christian Theology: An Introduction. – 4th ed. – Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007. – P. 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Bloesch D. G. God the Almighty. – Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1995. – P. 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Иларион, А. Таинство Веры. – М.: Издательство Братства Святителя Тихона, 1996. – P. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Munyon T. The Creation of the Universe and Humankind // Horton S. M. Systematic Theology. – Rev. Ed. – BookMasters. Kindle Edition. – P. 246; Thiessen, p. 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Meyendorff J. Byzantine Theology. – New York: Fordham University, 1974. – P. 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Thiessen, p. 162-163. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. We can appeal to the Institute for Creation Research’s RATE Project: Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth: http://www.icr.org/rate/. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Collins C. J. Science and Faith: Friends or Foes? – Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003. – Kindle edition, 4545-4549. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Bube R. H. Reflection 1 // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 256-265. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Newman R. C. Progressive Creationism // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Davis J. J. Response to Robert C. Newman // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 82, 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Van Till H. J. The Fully Gifted Creation // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 217, 181. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Ross H. A Matter of Days. – Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004. – P. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Collins, 1408-1409. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Poythress V. Response to Paul Nelson and John Mark Reynolds // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 91; Van Till, p. 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Collins, 1140-1141. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Brown F., Driver S. R., Briggs C. A. Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (electronic ed.). – Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2000. – P. 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. In Genesis 2:19, we read that God formed (יָצַר) birds from the ground as well. We will discuss the interpretation of Genesis chapter 2 later. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Yet, if the “expanse of the heavens” is simply “space,” we can hardly speak of it as being “created” from nothing, since it has no substance. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Brown, Driver, Briggs, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Collins, 1033-1175, 1574. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Mathews K. A. Genesis 1-11:26 // The New American Commentary. – Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996. – P. 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Keil C. F., Delitzsch F. Commentary on the Old Testament. – Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996. – V. 1. – P. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Mathews, p. 193. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Wenham G. J. Genesis 1–15 // Word Biblical Commentary. – Dallas, TX: Word, 1998. – P. 57-58. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Keil and Delitzsch, v. 1, p. 54-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Still, the example in Numbers 1:47-48 is not the same as our text in question. That passage begins with a verb in the Hebrew perfect tense, after which the waw-imperfect is used. In our text, the waw-imperfect, “formed,” stands in a chain of other waw-imperfects, which usually indicates chronological sequence. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Mathews, p. 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Keil and Delitzsch, v. 1, p. 54-55; Wenham, p. 68-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ross, p. 234. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Collins, 1058-1060. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Newman, p. 108-114. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Hugh Ross comments that, although the word “death” is never used in relation to plants and lower animals, it is used in relation to higher animals: Ex 7:18,21; 8:13; 10:17; Ps 105:29;Ecc 10:1; Isa 50:2 (see Ross p. 99-100). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ross, p. 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Boyd G. A., Eddy P. R. Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology. – Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002. – P. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ross, p. 98-144, 220-224. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. See Job 14:12; Ps 102:25-26; Ecc 12:2; Isa 34:4; 51:6; 65:17; 2 Pet 3:5-13; Matt 24:35; Rev 20:11; 21:1-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. See Isa 40:22; 44:24; 45:12; 48:13; 51:13; Job 9:8; Jer 10:12; 51:15; Zech 12:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Suggested by Meredith Kline, noted in Collins, 1703-1705. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Boyd and Eddy, p. 68-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Ibid., p. 69-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Ancient Near Eastern literature structures the days of creation in three groups of two elements each. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Thiessen, p. 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Yet, Boyd and Eddy comment that the Gap Theory can correlate with Day-Epoch Theory, since the six days of creation could represent long periods of time in both theories (see Boyd and Eddy, p. 65). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Munyon, p. 252ff; Thiessen, p. 164, 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Munyon, p. 252ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Boyd and Eddy, p. 63-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. See Num 32:22, 29; Josh 18:1; Neh 5:5; Jer 34:16; Mic 7:19; Zech 9:15. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Boyd and Eddy, p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Munyon, p. 252ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Possibly, in the literature of the Ancient Near East, these legends depict the fall of Satan and his angels. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Brown, Driver, Briggs, p. 1036. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Munyon, p. 252ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Collins, 1689-1693. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Newman, p. 105-116. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. More precisely, 5 million years (see Bradley W. L. Response to Howard J. Van Till // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 220). [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Van Till H. J. The Fully Gifted Creation // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 162-203. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Munyon, p. 264; Thiessen, p. 218 [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Munyon, p. 258: Thiessen, p. 164-165; Boyd and Eddy, p. 58-62; Poythress, Response to Paul Nelson and John Mark Reynolds, p. 92-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. However, on the first day there already existed a source of light and light was already separated from darkness, which makes the measurement of time possible (Gen 1:3-5). [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Ross, p. 36, 77-94, 231-232. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Collins, 1637-1652. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Noted in Collins, 4525-4530. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. For example, “In 1572 Tycho Brahe observed a supernova … and in 1604 Galileo observed another one” (Collins, 4554-4559). [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Moreland J. P. Response to Paul Nelson and John Mark Reynolds // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 86-87. In order to avoid this difficulty, advocates of a young earth either claim that the speed of light has changed over time, or challenge the true distance between earth and the stars (see Newman, p. 108-109). [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Ross, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Munyon, p. 256-257. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Erickson, Christian Theology, v. 1, p. 383-384. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Ross, p. 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Noted in Boyd and Eddy, p. 52-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Collins, 1684-1686. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Boyd and Eddy, p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Thiessen, p. 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Collins, 1481-1507, 1623. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Boyd and Eddy, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Ibid., p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Noted in Poythress, Response to Robert C. Newman // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 149; [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Boyd and Eddy, p. 54-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Carnell E. J. The Case for Orthodox Theology. – Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1959. – С. 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Collins C. J. Science and faith: Friends or foes? – Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003. – Kindle ed., 2486-2489. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. The genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 precisely correspond to the genealogy in 1 Chronicles 1. Harrison shares that in the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch, some names are added and some different dates are suggested. Yet, the differences between those genealogies are not great (Harrison R. K. Introduction to the Old Testament. – Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004. – P. 149-150). [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Wright G. F. Ant. and origin of human race, lect. II (Taken from Strong A. H. Systematic Theology. – Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Publication Society, 1907. – P. 225). [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Beegle D. Scripture, tradition, and infallibility. – Grand Rapid, MI: Eerdmans, 1973. – P. 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Also see Ps 104:13-14; 147:8-9; 104:20; 148:5-6; Prov 21:1 (Poythress V. Response to Howard J. Van Till // Moreland J. P., Reyonds J. M. Three Views on Creation and Evolution. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. – P. 237). [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Mueller J. T. Christian Dogmatics. – St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1934. – P. 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Erickson, Christian Theology, v. 1, p. 392-393. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Helseth P. K. God Causes All Things // Boyd G. A., Craig W. L., Helseth P. K., Highfield R., Jowers D. W. Four Views on Divine Providence. – Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011, Kindle ed., 526-528. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Mueller, p. 191-192. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Helm, P. The Providence of God. – Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1993. – P. 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Taken from Лосский В. Н. Очерк мистического богословия восточной церкви и Догматическое богословие. – Москва: Центр СЭИ, 1991. – P. 59. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Ibid. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Ibid., p. 70. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Ibid., p. 73. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Ibid., p. 75. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Ibid. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Noted in Мейендорф И. Введение в святоотеческое богословие. Минск: Лучи Софии, 2007. – P. 321. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Лосский, p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Noted in Мейендорф, Введение в святоотеческое богословие, p. 321. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Ibid., p. 322. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Florovsky G. Byzantine Fathers of the Sixth to Eight Centuries / Trans. Raymond Miller, et al. – Postfach: Buchervertriesansstalt, 1987 – P. 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Ibid., p. 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Лосский, p. 76. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Noted in Florovsky, p. 220-224. Also see Слово об обожении // Под ред. Архимандрита Никона (Иванова) и Протоиерея Николая Лихоманова. – М.: Сибирская Благозвонница, 2004. – P. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. The teaching of Maximus the Confessor, according to Florovsky, p. 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Слово об обожении, p. 10. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Ibid., p. 12. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. The teaching of Maximus the Confessor, according to Florovsky, p. 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Слово об обожении, p. 68. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Ibid., p. 69. Author’s translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Florovsky, p. 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Слово об обожении, p. 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Ibid., p. 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. The teaching of Maximus the Confessor, according to Florovsky, p. 244-245. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Dunn J. D. G. Romans 1–8 // Word Biblical Commentary. – Dallas, TX: Word, 1998. – P. 471. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Lincoln A. T. Ephesians // Word Biblical Commentary. – Dallas, TX: Word, 1990. – P. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Mueller J. T. Christian Dogmatics. – St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1934. – P. 632. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. More on Neoplatonism and its effect on patristic thought can be found in Appendix А. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Pseudo-Dionysius. *On the Divine Names*, 13.2. The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite / Trans. John Parker. – London: James Parker and Co., 1897. – P. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)