

1. The First Phase of the Chreation

Let us first turn to the Scriptures and ascertain what they have to tell us about the work of the Spirit of God in the first phase of the Creation or Creative Process; that is, the first phase of God's Cosmic Plan.

By the expression, "first phase of the Creative Process," is meant here the Kingdom of Nature—what is commonly designated the old ("physical" or "natural") Creation. In deference to popular usage, I shall use the terms "physical" or "natural" Creation through this section, for purposes of simplicity and clarity.

According to our thesis, as stated in our first volume, the second phase of the Creative Process embraces the divine operations in the Kingdom of Grace, as included under the terms "regeneration" and "sanctification"; and the third and final phase of the Creative Process embraces the divine operations in the Kingdom of Glory, as included under the general term "immortalization." Immortalization includes the two processes of resurrection and glorification.

The Greek *kosmos*, the English *cosmos*, means "order." *Cosmology*, then, is that branch of human knowledge which deals with the order that is found to prevail in the different areas of the physical world. This word *cosmology* must not be confused with the word *cosmogony*. A *cosmogony* is an account or narrative of the Creation. The Hebrew Cosmogony is given us in Gen. 1:1-2:3. This account is a compact and complete literary and doctrinal *whole*, and must be considered as such.

2. The Biblical Cosmogony

The Biblical book of *Genesis* is as its name indicates, the book of the *Beginnings*. In Gen. 1:1-2:3, we have an over-all panoramic presentation of the creation of the whole Cosmos and its various forms of being. In Gen. 2:4 and following, we have a supplementary account of the Beginnings, with special reference to man, his origin, nature, and original moral state. In this same chapter, we read about the beginning of *liberty* ("of every tree of the garden thou mayest *freely* eat," v. 16), but of liberty under *law* ("but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," v. 17); the beginning of language

(vv. 18-20); and the beginning of marriage and the family, the first social institution (vv. 21-25). In the third chapter, we have the tragic story of the beginning of sin upon earth (vv. 1-6), of conscience (vv. 7-8), and of the universal penalty of sin, physical death (vv. 17-19), all accompanied by the first intimation of future redemption, in the mysterious oracle that the Seed of the Woman should ultimately crush the Serpent's head (v. 15). (Certainly it is interesting to note that Jesus of Nazareth is the only Person who ever came before the world, of whom it is claimed, by revelation of the Spirit, that He was the Seed of a woman exclusively, that is, according to the flesh.)

[Matt. 1:20-21]: But when he [Joseph] thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. [Luke 1:30-35]: And the angel [Gabriel] said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God. [Gal. 4:4, 5]: But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

In the fourth chapter of Genesis, we have the account of the beginning of *religion*—in the institution of sacrifice (vv. 1-15); also that of the beginning of the arts and sciences (vv. 16-24). In the fifth chapter, we have the story of the beginning of the Messianic Line, the Sethites, the line from whom the Messiah would ultimately spring; in the eleventh chapter, the account of the beginnings of different tongues and peoples, and in the twelfth chapter, the account of the beginnings of the Seed of Abraham, the Hebrew people—the people divinely chosen to be the early spiritual elect of the human race, the guardian of the knowledge of the living and true God and of His oracles respecting the promised Messiah. From the twelfth chapter on, the content of the Old Testament is largely the history of the covenant relationship which existed between the

fleshly seed of Abraham, the children of Israel, and the self-existent personal God, the Sovereign of the entire Creation.

The Creation Narrative, as given in Genesis 1:1 through Genesis 2:3, is the Biblical (Hebrew) Cosmogony, complete in itself, forming an organic whole which unfolds in panoramic style the story of the creation of the material universe and its various kinds of living beings. In this Narrative, man is included as an integral part of Nature; he is given the status of lord tenant of the whole natural world. In this Cosmogony, the name of God is Elohim, the plural form, but used—as elsewhere in the Old Testament Scriptures—with the singular verb. This plural form of the divine Name is surely a clear intimation of the triune personality of our God who appears in the Narrative as God, the Word of God, and the Spirit of God; in the full light of the Christian revelation these become Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the Creation Narrative, the Three appear as participating in the Creation, the Father as the *originating* Cause, the Word (who later became flesh and dwelt among us, John 1:1-14) as the *edicting* or *decreeing* Cause (Psa. 148:1-6, "Let them praise the name of Jehovah; for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: He hath made a decree which shall not pass away"), and the Spirit as the *effectuating* or *realizing* Cause.

The account which begins with verse four of the second chapter of Genesis is more or less *supplementary* (or perhaps the better word would be *complementary*), with special reference to man, *generically*, as the head of the human family and as lord tenant of the whole physical or natural creation, and narrowing down *specifically* to man, as the head of the covenant people through whom God preserved the knowledge of Himself as the living and true God, and through whom, as stated above, He gave to the world His oracles respecting the promised Messiah-Redeemer. And whereas the name *Elohim* is used in the Cosmogony to designate the Deity under the aspect of His Almightyness, the name *Yahweh* (re-rendered *Jehovah*) is now introduced to designate Him under the aspect of His benevolence, that is, with respect to His dealings with mankind. In a word, as *Elohim* is the name of our Sovereign Creator God, so *Yahweh* designates Him as the Covenant God of His people. In this supplementary account the two divine Names are joined together, beginning with verse 7, to indicate Him in His over-all relations with His Creation.

Let it be emphasized here *that there is one, and only one, Hebrew Cosmogony*, and it is given us in Genesis 1:1-2:3. The critical assumption that the second chapter of Genesis contains a second account of the Creation coming down to us from a source different from the one given in the first chapter is an arbitrary and unjustifiable claim. We know of no ancient cosmogony that did not include the creation of the sun and moon and stars. It is significant to note that all this is mentioned here in chapter one, but not mentioned at all in chapter two. For the immediate present, therefore, we shall be concerned only with the Hebrew Cosmogony itself. We shall concern ourselves later with the second chapter but only for the additional light which it throws, in Genesis 2:7, on the origin and nature of man.

First of all, we shall examine the interpretations of—or speaking more precisely, the approaches to—the Biblical Cosmogony, which have prevailed in various circles up to the present time. These may be listed as follows:

1. The *mythological* interpretation, according to which the account simply embodies the poetic speculations of an ancient people, accommodated to the cosmogonic views generally current among the early cultures of the Tigris-Euphrates (Mesopotamian) area. But we must reject this view of the Hebrew Cosmogony, for the simple reason that the usual characteristics of an ancient myth are completely absent from it. There is in it, for example, (1) no personification of natural forces, (2) no glorification or deification of a tribal ancestor, (3) not even a hint of magic or of totemism; (4) not a trace of fierce carnal struggle between deities contending for supremacy, (5) not even a trace of the primitive notion of the kinship of man and animals, but in fact just the opposite—the revelation of the glory and dignity of man as lord tenant of the universe and head of the natural creation, and finally (6) not even a semblance of crude anthropomorphism. All these common features of primitive myths are entirely absent from the *Genesis* account of the Creation. Nor does it present itself to us—in any of its details—as designed to be an allegory of anything. Nor, again, does it partake of any legendary, or quasi-legendary, character: there is nothing of the humanly heroic in it, nothing that smacks of the glorification of the doings of men. On the contrary, the works of God alone are presented—the works of God, of the Word of God, and of the Spirit of God. And the

truths which are revealed are exclusively of a religious character, and of the purest form of religion at that. Besides all this, although it has come down to us in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Genesis Cosmogony unlike the heathen narratives of Creation, is destitute of local coloring or national peculiarity, being no more Jewish than it is Assyrian, Babylonian, Chaldean, Indian, Persian or Egyptian. As one author has said:

The Bible narrative, by its simplicity, by its chaste, positive, historical character, is in perfect contrast with the fanciful, allegorical, intricate cosmogonies of all heathen religions, whether born in the highly civilized communities of Egypt, the Orient, Greece, or Rome, or among the savage tribes which still occupy a large portion of our planet. By its sublime grandeur, by its symmetrical plan, by the profoundly philosophical disposition of its parts, and, perhaps, quite as much by its wonderful caution in the statement of facts, which leaves room for all scientific discoveries, it betrays the supreme guidance which directed the pen of the writer and kept it throughout within the limits of truth.¹

The prevailing mythologically-suggested origin is that the Hebrew Cosmogony was derived largely from Babylonian myths, or probably from a general Semitic traditional deposit long anterior to the Babylonian. The advocates of this view profess to find echoes of the Babylonian Cosmogony especially in the allusion in Gen. 1:7 to the division of "the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament"; and of the Babylonian Cosmogony, known from its two opening words as *Enuma elish* ("When on High"), and especially (1) in the reference to a "watery chaos" at the beginning, (2) in the description of the order of events in the Creation, first the firmament, then the dry land, the luminaries, and man, in the order named, and (3) in the conclusion picturing the Creative Power (Elohim as in contradistinction to "gods") at rest.

However, the fact cannot be emphasized too strongly that the ethico-theological abyss (as one might well call it) between the two Cosmogonies cannot be bridged by any so-called mythological correspondences. The simple fact of the matter is that whereas the Babylonian account is definitely mythological and polytheistic, the Hebrew Cosmogony is non-mythological and strictly monotheistic. As Finegan states it, referring expressly to the Genesis account, "the dignity and

1. Arnold Guyot, *Creation, or the Biblical Cosmogony in the Light of Modern Science*, pp. 2-3.

exaltation of the words of the Bible are unparalleled."¹ From every point of view, the Genesis Cosmogony is strictly in a class by itself.

The Babylonian Cosmogony takes off with two mythical personifications, the male Apsu (the primordial sweetwater ocean), and the female Tiamat (the primordial salt-water ocean). (Some authorities suggest possible etymological kinship between *Tiamat* and *tehom*, the Hebrew word for the "deep" in the Genesis account.) These two, the male and female principles—as the account goes—became the progenitors of the gods. In time, however, the doings of these offspring became so annoying that Apsu announced his intention of destroying them. But the god Ea, becoming aware of what was about to happen, managed to muster up sufficient strength to overcome and slay Apsu. (In Greek mythology, Kronos emasculated his father, Uranos; and Zeus, in his day, dethroned Kronos, cast him into Tartarus, the abode of great sinners, and seized power for himself.) "Mother" Tiamat, in the Babylonian myth, bent on revenge, created an army of gruesome monsters whose bodies were filled with poison instead of blood, and appointed one of her own offspring, Kingu, the general of her forces. It was then that Marduk, the city-god of Babylon (Ashur in Assyria), made himself the leader of the gods in their war against Tiamat. A terrible battle ensued in which Marduk emerged as the complete victor. The description of this battle is gory and gruesome. When Tiamat and Marduk finally faced each other in mortal combat, as Tiamat approached Marduk and opened her mouth to devour him, the latter drove a raging wind into her belly and distended it. Marduk then shot an arrow into her inward parts; this arrow tore her belly and pierced her heart. Marduk then, having destroyed the "life" of Tiamat, cast down her carcass, and standing upon it, proclaimed himself (much in the manner that a referee proclaims the victor in a prize fight in our time), "the winnah," after which, he created the world out of her corpse. The gods then condemned Kingu for having instigated Tiamat's revolt, and slew him, and then fashioned mankind out of the blood that flowed from his arteries. Marduk was finally advanced from his first position as the city-god of Babylon to the headship of the entire pantheon. *Surely it is approximating profanity even to assume that in these crude pagan mythologies we find the source material of a Cos-*

1. *Light From the Ancient Past*, 54.

mogony so pure in its revelation of God, so majestic in its portrayal of His creative activity, so elevated in its literary beauty and simplicity, as is the Genesis account of the Creation.

I quote here the testimony of eminent Jewish scholarship of our time in regard to this problem. While not in agreement with certain statements, I feel that the following excerpt is worthy of presentation, in view of the clear-cut terms in which the Babylonian and Hebrew Cosmogonies are contrasted therein, as follows: Both Genesis and the Babylonian myth, we are told

express in their own symbols a fundamental notion of the world, the victory of cosmos over chaos, and creation seen as the reducing to order of a primeval disorder. But Babylonian cosmogony . . . is not really a "creation story" as in Genesis, but a story of the growth of the cosmos through procreation of gods and struggles between their generations, while the gods themselves personify nature and its elements. But in the Bible God is an independent and self-existent source, or the creator of nature and cosmos. It has been pointed out that in the Bible were scattered references (in Job 9:13, Psa. 89:10 and Isaiah 51:9) to a primeval conflict between Yahweh and mythological rebellious figures bearing the names of Rahab, Leviathan, the dragon and the serpent. But the dogma in Gen. 1 shears off this mythological content. Any such tale would be a figment to be scrupulously avoided by the writers of the account of Creation. While Hebrew lore must have originally used myth or anthropomorphic concepts, it eventually de-mythed its concepts of a very ancient polytheistic version of the primeval world.¹

We cannot, of course, accept the notion that Old Testament intimations of Satanic power are mythological, because in the full light of the New Testament revelation Satan (the Devil) is presented as a very real enemy of God, man, and all good (John 8:44; Matt. 4:1-11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 6:10-12; 1 Pet. 5:8; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 20:10). And certainly what is revealed in Scripture about Satan and his operations is confirmed by every issue of every newspaper published in our day. Experience testifies that this life on earth is essentially a probationary period in which the forces of good and the forces of evil are engaged in mortal combat for the souls of men.

The transcendence of the God of the Genesis Cosmogony, by way of contrast to the deities of the ancient mythological systems, is stated eloquently by Ralph H. Elliott, as follows:

Is there nothing distinctive which Genesis on its own presents? Very definitely and uniquely there is. Creation originated in the will of God (1:3f.). God's speech—"Let there be light," etc.,—is always prior to, and makes possible, the existence of something. Thus, everything

1. Gaalyahu Cornfeld, *Adam to Daniel*, 12.

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"owes its existence to God's creative word"; hence, it is all good. The step-by-step design suggests that God works with a pattern and purpose. There is nothing here of the irrational or whimsical. All is according to the willed design of God. Hence, God is a personal being. He transcends the universe and is independent of the universe. There is not the slightest room for pantheism here . . . God *before* all, God *back*, of all, God *above* all are appropriate statements.¹

We must reject the mythological theory of the Genesis account of the Creation on the following grounds: (1) the transcendent purity of the concept of God and His operations, as revealed in the Hebrew Cosmogony, removes it far from any connection with these alleged pagan sources; (2) the fact that the account is attached to the history of the early life of man on the earth gives it historical support that all pagan mythologies lacked; (3) there is not the slightest trace of myth in the Genesis narrative, and those who allege to the contrary are obviously confused regarding the factors which make a narrative really mythical. To realize that there is no mythology in the Mosaic account all that one has to do is to compare it with the actual creation myths of the primitive and pagan peoples. Mythology was polytheistic. Its characters were *personifications* of natural forces (as distinguished from the pure incorporeal *personality* of the God of the Bible, Exo. 3:14), anthropomorphic creatures with sex distinctions and guilty of all the crimes in the category. *Kaufmann* writes:

The [pagan] gods themselves are subject to evil forces and impulses, and, having sinned, they too must suffer for their guilt. Thus, the guilty Kingu is slain for his part in Tiamat's attack upon the Babylonian gods. Gilgamesh rebukes Ishtar for her wantonness and cruelty. The Hindu creator Prajapati lies with his daughter, and is punished by the terrible Rudra. Indra, having committed murder, is depressed, and so purifies himself. Cronus castrates his father, and Zeus brings him, in turn, down to Hades. Zeus, Aphrodite, and most of the gods of the Greek pantheon are steeped in promiscuity. The Teutonic Odin is a drunkard, a deceiver, an adulterer, a murderer; it is the same in one mythology after another.¹

This eminent present-day Jewish authority summarizes the theories and practices characteristic of the ancient pagan mythologies which made them so greatly inferior to the Hebrew Cosmogony and its God (Elohim), as follows: 1. The funda-

1. Elliott, *The Message of Genesis*, 27, 28.

1. Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, tr. by Moshe Greenberg, 38, 39.

mental idea that "there exists a realm of being prior to the gods, and above them, upon whom the gods depend and whose decrees they must obey." This realm is conceived to be "the womb in which the seeds of all being are contained." This means, of course, that these pagan deities were limited in their powers. (In the Homeric epics, for example, Zeus, although the head of the Greek pantheon and designated "the father of gods and men," is pictured, nevertheless, as having been subject to the determinations of an over-ruling Destiny, Fate, etc.) 2. The pagan gods "emerge out of the primordial substance, having been generated by its fertility" (as depicted in the ancient theogonies.) (A *theogony* is an account of the generation of the gods, goddesses, demigods, etc. Cf. the *Theogony* of Hesiod, a seventh century B.C. Greek poet.) 3. These gods were "personal embodiments" of the various "seminal forces of the primordial realm" (in simpler terms, personifications of the forces of nature). 4. These gods were all sexually differentiated and subject to all sexual drives (motivations), drives even more powerful than those of the human libido. These early mythologies are fairly saturated with tales of the gross immoralities of the gods: Plato criticizes them severely for this very reason. 5. Finally, "just as the fundamental idea of paganism found poetic expression in myth, so it found practical expression in magic."

In a word, these gods and goddesses of pagan myth were limited in power, sexually generated and differentiated, wholly anthropomorphic, grossly unspiritual and immoral. This was equally true of the deities of the Babylonian Cosmogony as of all the ancient theogonies and cosmogonies. *They were mere personifications, in striking contrast to the God of the Bible who is pure personality (Exo. 3:14). There are no genuinely mythical, allegorical, or even metaphorical connotations either explicit or implicit in the Hebrew Cosmogony and its portrayal of the living and true God: He is personal, spiritual (i.e., non-corporeal), ethical, compassionate, purposeful, and sovereign, in short, theistic and monotheistic. Moreover, the Biblical God is sharply differentiated from the Greek philosophical pantheistic To Theion ("the Divine"); whereas the latter is That Which Is, the God of the Bible is He Who Is.*

A final word from the pen of Dr. Kaufmann is sufficient here as a conclusion: in reference to the "conventional view of the origins of Israelite monotheism," namely, that it is to be regarded "as an organic outgrowth of the milieu of the ancient

Orient," he writes: "This view is here rejected *in toto*. We shall see that Israelite religion was an original creation of the people of Israel. It was absolutely different from anything the pagan world ever knew; its monotheistic world view had no antecedents in paganism . . . It was the fundamental idea of a national culture, and informed every aspect of that culture from its very beginning."¹

I feel obliged to dissent, however, from one statement in the foregoing excerpt, namely, the statement that "the Israelite religion was an original creation of the people of Israel." I must affirm that *this religion was not a human creation, but a Divine revelation to the people whom God elected to preserve theistic monotheism for all future ages*. It is inconceivable to me that such an exalted Deity as the One whom we meet in Exodus 3:14 (Yahweh, I AM, He Who Is) could ever have been a formulation ("intuition," "insight") of the unaided ("un-inspired") human mind, whether the mind (genius) of a single individual (e.g., Moses) or of an ethnic group, and especially of an ethnic group known historically to have been surrounded on all sides by neighbors all of whom were devoted to such gross immoralities as those which characterized the pagan Cult of the Dead and the pagan Cult of Fertility. To me, this "great and incommunicable Name" of our God is evidence *per se* of the Divine origin (inspiration) of the Old Testament Scriptures.

The following paragraph points up exceptionally well the acknowledged non-mythological character of the Hebrew Cosmogony:

Genesis is the Only Book of Antiquity Which is Ever Considered When Discussing the Scientific Accuracy of Ancient Literature on the Creation of the World. When Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859, Huxley immediately called it 'Anti-Genesis.' Why did he think that it was the *book of Genesis* which Darwin's theory of natural selection confuted? Why did he not say anti-Hesiod, or anti-Timaeus, or anti-Metamorphosis in reference to Ovid's account of the creation? In the very fact that Huxley spoke of Darwin's work as anti-Genesis he confessed that the book of all ancient literature that contained an account of the creation of the world worthy of being discussed in our modern scientific age as of any scientific value at all was the book of Genesis. A vast number of books, and hundreds of articles, during the past one hundred years have been written, maintaining or denying the scientific accuracy of the first chapter of the book of Genesis, but where are you going to find any books and articles even discussing the *scientific accuracy* of other ancient accounts of the creation of the world? Whenever you hear anyone speaking disrespectfully of the book of Genesis, in its relation to modern science, remember that this

1. See Kaufmann, *op cit.*, *Intro.*, 2, also pp. 21ff.

first book of our Bible is the only piece of literature of all the ancient nations which anyone even thinks worthy of discussing, even if condemning in the same breath, with the phrase "modern science." It is of great significance that for two thousand years men have felt it necessary to consider this ancient Hebrew record when discussing the subject of creation. The Babylonian, the Greek, and the Roman accounts of the same beginning of our universe are, for the most part, counted mythological, and utterly incapable of being reconciled with the conclusions of modern science.¹

2. The *reconstruction* theory. This is also variously designated the "restitution" or "renovation" theory. It is the theory that we find described in the Genesis Cosmogony what is called the *Adamic renovation* of our cosmos following a pre-Adamic cataclysmic reduction of this cosmos to a chaos. This view goes along with the *cyclical* view of cosmic history (cf. Isa. 65:17, 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-2), a view which, incidentally, was held by the Stoics in ancient Greece and Rome.

This view is clearly stated by W. E. Powers as follows:

[The opening verse of Genesis says] "In the beginning God created (*bara*) the heaven and the earth." This does not mean that He made the world as it is today only six thousand years ago, but that way back, no one knows how long ago, God created all the universe with its myriads of solar systems, including our own earth, and it came from His hand a perfect masterpiece. To imagine the earth coming from God's hand in a chaotic condition, void and waste, would be altogether out of order. He created it . . . in perfect beauty, and was compelled to throw it into chaos through some catastrophe, as a judgment upon its first inhabitants. There is ample Scriptural evidence for the above statement. Let us turn to Isaiah 24:1, 45:18, also to Jeremiah 4:23-26. These passages clearly indicate that the earth has undergone in the far distant past a terrible catastrophe which turned it from perfection into disorder and a void because of sin and rebellion. Therefore, between the first and second verses of Genesis, there is ample space of time for all the geological ages that our earth's strata reveal. [This author then suggests that Satan may have been the governor of our earth in its pre-Adamic state of beauty and perfection (cf. Isa. 14:12-15, Ezek. 28:11-15, Dan. 10, Luke 10:18, Matt. 4:10, etc.). He continues]: What the beings on the earth at that time were is somewhat hard to know, but it is perfectly clear that in that awful far-off event they perished, and then in the first chapters of Genesis we find a reconstruction of our planet and a re-peopling of it . . . Beginning at verse 3, we do not have six days of creation, but more correctly we should say, six days of reconstruction. In this connection, we find God bringing our chaotic earth back to order and preparing it for a new system under the hand of man.¹

In opposition to this argument, I point out (1) that the texts quoted from Isaiah and Jeremiah obviously had reference

1. Wilbur M. Smith, *Therefore Stand*, 328, 329.

1. *Studies in the Book of Genesis*, 8-11.

to judgments about to descend on the lands of contemporary peoples including even those of Jerusalem and Judah (also the perennial problem as to whether the Hebrew *erets* should be translated "earth" or "land" is here involved); (2) that to hold that references in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 to Satan's primordial status as an archangel who chose to rebel against the Divine government, for which rebellion he was cast out of Heaven (Luke 10:18), justify the conclusion that he became the ruler of a hypothetical pre-Adamic earth is too far-fetched for serious consideration; or to identify any of the personages who appear in Daniel's vision, as recorded in Daniel 10, with Satan, is equally far-fetched; (3) that the notion that God would ever have created a chaos in the sense of a universal disorder is totally irrelevant, for the simple reason, as we shall see later, that the counterparts in ancient languages of our English word "chaos," did not mean *disorder*, but rather, as their primary meaning, *infinite space*, with such secondary meanings as *unformed matter*, *primal energy*, the *abyss*, *darkness*, etc.

This theory—also designated the *chasm* theory or gap theory—is refuted, it seems to me, by Tayler Lewis on the following grounds: (1) That it does not in any way obviate the peculiar difficulties that attend the solar-day theory, such as "a morning and evening without a sun, or the language of succession, of growth, and of a seeming nature, without any consistent corresponding reality"; (2) that "it is a building of this world on the ruins of a former, without any natural or moral reasons therefor. The states preceding, as understood by this hypothesis were in no sense preparatory; the catastrophe which makes way for it seems entirely arbitrary, and in no sense resembles the pauses described in Genesis, each one of which is in the upward order, and anticipatory of the work that follows"; (3) that "there is another and greater incongruity in connecting this with a former and very different state of things, or mode of proceeding, with which, after all, it has no real connection either in the realm of nature or of divine providence"; (4) that the theory "is evidently brought in as a possible escape from the difficulties of geology, and would never have been seriously maintained had it not been for them"; (5) that it "has to make the heavens of the first verse a different heavens from that of the eighth, without any exegetical warrant"; therefore, "is a *rationalizing* interpretation, carrying with it a conception of our modern astronomy, and almost wholly unknown to the

Scriptures, which everywhere speak of the heavens and the earth therein mentioned as one system"; (6) that "it violates the principles of a rational and grammatical exegesis, in making a separation between the first and second verses, of which there is no trace or reason in the language itself." (As a matter of fact, does not the conjunction with which the second verse begins nullify any hypothesis of severance?) (Perhaps it should be noted here that T. Lewis stoutly champions the view that the "heavens" (or "heaven") of verses 1 and 8 are the same, not the astronomical heavens of the planetary systems, galaxies, universes, etc., but the "heaven of the earth-world," that is, the star-studded sky, which together with earth, makes up the whole as presented in Scripture. (Cf. Psa. 104, 1 Sam. 2:8; Isa. 65:17, 66:22; Psa. 102:25; 2 Pet. 3:5-7, 3:13; Rev. 21:1.) This would be in harmony, of course, with the obvious fact that the entire Genesis Cosmogony is presented from the terrestrial (tellurian) viewpoint, that is, the point of view of a dweller on our earth.)¹

Commodore P. J. Wiseman designates this view "the six days re-creation theory." He writes:

This theory "puts forward the idea that there have been two quite distinct creations and that these were separated by an unknown period lasting possibly millions of years. It interprets the first chapter of Genesis thus; the first sentence, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" is presumed to be completed account, or at least all we are told about the first or original creation of the heaven and earth. This theory assumes that plant, animal and human life were included in that creation, notwithstanding that no mention is made of the creation of *life* until later in the chapter. The second verse is said to leave room for, or to assume that a catastrophe came upon the earth affecting the sun and moon, resulting in the earth becoming "darkness and waters," chaos and ruin, involving the destruction of all plant, animal and human life. The remaining verses (3-31) are said to refer to the six literal days in which God *re-created* the earth; the light is made to appear again, the waters which had covered the earth are made to recede so that the dry land appeared and all plant, animal and human life are re-created—all in six ordinary days of twenty-four hours each. This theory then assumes the chapter 2:1-4 refers only to the second or re-creation period.¹

1. John Peter Lange, *Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical Commentary: Genesis*. Translated from the German, with Comments, by Tayler Lewis and A. Gosman, 166-168.

1. Wiseman, *Creation Revealed in Six Days*, 23, 24. First edition, 1948. Now out of print. By the same author, we have *New Discoveries in Babylonian about Genesis*, first edition, 1936, now also out of print. These are most interesting books. Published by Marshall, Morgan and Scott, London.

Wiseman rejects this view (put forward, we are told, especially by G. H. Pember, in his *Earth's Earliest Ages*). He goes on to say:

It is obvious that this interpretation has been adopted because of the impossibility of compressing the geologic formation of the earth into a period of six ordinary days. This theory is obviated by stating what is doubtless true, that the period occupied by the events of verse 2 may be a vast number of millions of years. But it is equally obvious that the theory creates more difficulties than it attempts to solve. While it provides for the long periods required by geology, and also adheres to the Scripture narrative as to the literalness of the six days, it gives no satisfactory reason for the "evenings and the mornings." Notwithstanding Pember's insistence that those who adopt the geologic-ages theory fail to explain these "evenings and mornings," it is very significant that he himself fails to do so. Are we to suppose that God re-created the earth and all life upon it in six ordinary days, and then only during the *daylight* hours of those six days? It is submitted that Scripture gives us no information whatever about these alleged two quite distinct and complete creations separated from each other by millions of years. And science for its part has no knowledge of the alleged universal destruction of all marine, animal and human life in one catastrophe; nor is it aware of an infinitely long period of perhaps millions of years when, after all forms of life had existed on the earth, there was left no kind of life whatever on it. Isaiah 45:18 is sometimes quoted as evidence that the second verse in Genesis refers to a catastrophic ruin which had overwhelmed the earth and all life on it. Does the statement "He created it not in vain [ASV, not a waste], He formed it to be inhabited" imply any such thing? Is not this verse in entire agreement with Genesis 1:2, that the formlessness and emptiness does not express God's final purpose for the world? It must be borne in mind that the second verse of Genesis refers to a time when the Spirit of God was working on the earth. Those who adopt this re-creation theory say that subsequently to the second verse (except presumably to the sun and the moon in verses 14-18) the whole passage relates to the earth. It is said that it is the earth only, not the heavens, which were re-created in the six days. Seeing that they assume the Fourth Commandment refers to the six days as being the time occupied by God in creation, they appear to have overlooked the fact that according to this assumption the Fourth Commandment says that God did something relating not only to the earth, but *also to the heavens* during the six days.¹

Incidentally, the view has been advocated in certain quarters that the earth was taken over by Satan and his rebel host after their expulsion from heaven (cf. Luke 10:18, Matt. 4:10, Ezek. 28:14-17, Isa. 14:12-15, 2 Pet. 2:4, Jude 6), and that God saw fit to cast them down to hell by a catastrophic judgment that destroyed the original creation. Cf. Job 1:6-7, "Now it came to pass on the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah, that Satan also came among them. And

1. Wiseman, *op. cit.*, 25-27.

Jehovah said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered Jehovah, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." But the New Testament makes it very clear that Satan is operating in this allegedly re-created earth today just as he did in the original. Why, then, was a catastrophic expulsion resorted to, in the case of the original earth, if Satan was not to be defeated by it—once for all—in his nefarious schemes to thwart God's Eternal Purpose? (Cf. Isa. 46:8-11). But is it not just as true that today he is the Adversary of souls, the Accuser of the saints (as, for example, he was when he appeared in the presence of God to accuse old Job)? (Cf. 1 Pet. 5:8, Rev. 12:10, Eph. 6:12). Satan's ultimate doom has been decreed by the Sovereign of the Cosmos from the beginning; his complete defeat and ultimate segregation in hell, the penitentiary of the moral universe, is positively affirmed throughout the Scriptures (Matt. 25:41, Rev. 20:7-14, 2 Thess. 1:7-10, 1 Cor. 15:20-28). Was not his bold and blatant presumption to be able to deliver to his ultimate Conqueror power over all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them another manifestation of sheer braggadocio fostered by diabolical malice (Matt. 3:8-9).

In the view of the present writer, these two men (T. Lewis and Com. Wiseman) have most effectively disposed of the content of the *reconstruction* or *re-creation* theory, as quoted above. It is so obviously *per se* an attempt on the part of both scientists and theologians artificially to compress the alleged geologic periods postulated by the earth sciences into strict harmony with *the time element* according to which they interpret the progression described in the Creation Narrative. As a matter of fact, it is this writer's conviction that *the Bible need have no fear of the truth*; hence, that there never was, nor is there now, any reason for an interpretation of Scripture to be humanly adjusted to conform to scientific hypotheses by any violence to the sacred text. The Bible "stands on its own two feet," to speak in popular parlance; it asks no gratuities of the scientists. Moreover, a theory of diabolical rule over the earth between two creations, does not attain even the status of a myth; rather, it is sheer fantasy, without support from pre-history, history, science or revelation.

3. The *prophetic-vision* theory. According to this theory, the "days" of the Genesis Cosmogony were actually seven successive ordinary days in the life of the prophet Moses (Deut.

18:15-19, Acts 3:22, 7:37), on which he was vouchsafed what might be called panoramic visions of the progressive stages of the Creation. According to this view, the "days" mentioned might be named *visional* or *revelational* days. Objections to this view are the following: (1) Visions are specifically designated such wherever they are related in Scripture (e.g., Gen. 12:7, 15:12-17, 28:10-17; Num. 24:4; Job 7:14; Isa. 1:1, 6:1-13; Ezek., chs. 1, 10, 11, 37, 40; Dan., chs. 4, 7; Zech. 1:18-21, 2:1-5; Acts 2:17, 10:3, 10:9-17; 2 Cor. 12:1; Rev. 1:9-20, etc.); however, there is not the slightest hint in the Genesis Cosmogony that mere visions are being described therein; the whole account is presented in declarations that have all character of forthright history. (2) What about the affirmation presented in Gen. 1:1? This evidently is not included in the first *visional* day. Hence the question arises as to whether it was included in the first vision granted Moses or was communicated in some non-*visional* manner. As Archer states it: "If Genesis 1 was only a vision (representing, of course, the events of primeval history), then almost any other apparently historical account in Scripture could be interpreted as a vision—especially if it relates to transactions not naturally observable to a human investigator or historian."¹ As a matter of fact, this general view has never been entertained by any great number of Biblical commentators.

Wiseman deals effectively with this theory also, as follows:

Still another explanation—the vision theory—has been adopted to explain the "days." It is said that the narrator had visions of each stage of the creation on each of the six days. This explanation at least has the merit that it does not involve the creation or re-creation of all things in 144 hours or use the word "day" to indicate a long geological period. But can it be sustained? I think not in its present form, because one significant fact about this first narrative is that all the marks of a vision are absent. We do not read, "I beheld," "I saw," etc. On the contrary, we read that "God saw." The difference between a normal narrative and a vision may be seen when we compare this record with such a passage as Jeremiah 4:23-34, which has been used in order to illustrate verse 2. "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled." It is also said that the earlier chapters of the Bible are like the last chapters. They are, but with this important difference; the one is a narrative, the other a vision. A comparison shows the difference of styles. In the Book of Revelation we read: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the

1. Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 175, 176.

first earth were passed away . . . and I heard a voice out of heaven, saying . . ." Such phrases as "I turned to see," "after this I looked and lo"; the constantly repeated, "I saw," are entirely absent from the Genesis account. Dr. S. R. Driver (*Genesis*, p. 23) stated, "The narrative contains no indication of its being the relation of a vision (which in other cases is regularly noted, e.g., Amos, chs. 7-9, Isa., ch. 6, Ezek., ch. 1, etc. 0; it purports to describe, not appearances ("And I saw and behold . . ."), but facts ("Let the earth . . . and it was so"), and to substitute one for the other is consequently illegitimate." I agree entirely with his statement that "it purports to describe not appearances but facts." A still less satisfactory way of dealing with the narrative is to say that it must be read as poetry. It is sufficient to cite Dr. Ginsburg's comment on this, "there is in this chapter none of the peculiarities of Hebrew poetry." It is prose, not poetry, and purports to be an account of what "God said."¹

However, there are yet other objections: (1) Under this view, the six-times-repeated formula, "And there was evening and there was morning, one day," "a second day," "a third day," etc., mark off, in the written account, the successive days in the life of the prophet on which the visions were received; and the written account is assumed to have been indited contemporaneously with the reception of the visions. But it should be pointed out that it does not harmonize with the fact that there is no similar formula to indicate the beginning and end of the seventh day: there is no statement to the effect that "there was evening and there was morning, a seventh day." (This fact would seem to imply that the seventh day of the Creation—the Father's Sabbath—has not yet come to an end, that is, *not even down to our own time*. Wiseman takes note of this fact—this omission of the customary formula with which the work of each successive day seems to be enclosed, so to speak. But, like the other commentators, *he obviously fails to take note of the prolepsis which occurs in Genesis 2:1-3*. It is frankly admitted in the present work that the Father's sabbath (although the word itself does not occur here) may well have begun when He desisted from creating and indeed may be continuing down to our day and possibly in what is now the future to us. Having concluded the first phase of the Creation, it surely could be said that He entered into rest. See *infra*.) (2) This prophetic vision theory seems to be precluded also by the evident fact of the close connection between the cosmogonic account itself and the actual history which follows it in the book of *Genesis*. Dr. A. H. Strong writes:

1. *Op. cit.*, 27, 28.

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We object to the allegorical or mythical interpretation upon the ground that the narrative of creation is inseparably connected with the succeeding history, and is therefore most naturally regarded as itself historical. This connection of the narrative of creation with the subsequent history, moreover, prevents us from believing it to be the description of a vision granted to Moses. It is more probably the record of an original revelation to the first man, handed down to Moses' time, and used by Moses as a proper introduction to his history.¹

But—I ask—why must the narrative be regarded as having been handed down from the first man by tradition, that is, *orally*, for so many long centuries. Could such an account have been transmitted in this manner, over such a long period of time, without having become corrupted? I think not. It is far more reasonable to think that it was given by the Holy Spirit Himself to some holy man of old—and I can find no genuinely valid reason for assuming the man to have been any other than Moses—by whom it was indited and handed down to subsequent generations in its present stereotyped form as a part of the Jewish Torah or Book of the Law, in which it is known to have been embodied from a time long before the birth of Christ. That the account was in some sense a prophetic vision can hardly be doubted, unless of course we propose to deny the agency of the Spirit in communicating it and to reduce it to a document of purely human construction. As is well known, this is precisely what the textual critics for the most part have tried to do, but the combined grandeur and simplicity of the document itself makes such an approach untenable. It is incredible that any man or group of men in the early ages of the world, or in the last days of the Jewish Dispensation, or even in our own day for that matter, could have formulated a document of such transcendent character out of their own imaginative genius alone, that is, unaided by Divine inspiration. The narrative itself bears the imprimatur of the Spirit of God from beginning to end, not only in the truths which it expresses, but in its very omission of details as well. Because of these facts, moreover, it can hardly be treated as a strictly historical document. Before a fact can be established historically, it has to be attested by human eye-witnesses, and certainly no human being witnessed the creation of the world. Therefore the Biblical cosmogony must be accepted as being essentially what it claims to be—a Divine revelation (like that, for example of the Name of the Deity, Exo. 3:14); nothing less can be made of it. We do not hesitate to

1. *Systematic Theology*, One-Volume Edition, 394.

affirm that *time, as we know it, had its beginning with creation, and the human history (and surely anything pre-human could hardly be called history) has its movement within both time and space, as we know time and space. Before time and history had a beginning, as we know these forms of being, there was personality, there was thought and love and communication, there was the triune God, who Himself is timeless.* (This is all presented exquisitely by Francis A. Schaeffer, in his book, *Genesis in Space and Time.*)

Again, if the "days" as given in the first chapter of *Genesis* were days in the life of the prophet who received the visions *panoramically*, this fact does not militate against the view that the Creation itself could have been spread out over an indefinite period of time; on the contrary, it would seem to support that view. On the other hand, the use of the word "day" in the account itself does not necessarily imply a "solar" day or day of twenty-four hours, as we shall see later. Hence, there is no absolute imperative that we regard these "days" as successive twenty-four-hour days in the life of the man to whom the revelation was given.

Finally, in this connection, if the "days" in the first chapter of *Genesis* were days in the life of the prophet who received the visions, this fact would hardly militate against the view that the Creation itself may have been spread out over an indefinite period of time; on the contrary, it would seem to support that view. On the other hand, as we shall see later, the use of the word "day" in the account itself does not necessarily imply a "solar" day or day of twenty-four hours. Hence, there is no imperative that we regard these "days" as successive twenty-four-hour days in the life of the person to whom the revelation was given. Indeed, one fact must be recognized clearly, namely, *that the time element throughout the entire book of Genesis, as in practically all ancient writings, is indeterminate, to say the least. God's realm (eternity) is timelessness. The actualization of His Eternal Purpose is not imprisoned within the walls of man's temporality.* As the Apostle puts it, "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18).

4. *The Antedate or Artificial Week Theory.* Concerning this, P. J. Wiseman writes:

The fourth theory is that which found favor with such scholars as Drs. Driver and Skinner and the moderate school of critics. Let Dr. Driver tell us in his own words what this theory is: "Genesis 2:1-3,

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it will be observed, does not *name* the sabbath, or lay down any law for its observance by man; all that it says is that God "desisted" on the seventh day from His work, and that He "blessed" and "hallowed" the day. It is, however, impossible to doubt the introduction of the seventh day as simply part of the writer's representation, and that its sanctity is in reality antedated: instead, viz., of the seventh day of the week being sacred, *because* God desisted on it from His six days' work of creation, the work of creation was distributed among six days, followed by a day of rest, *because* the week ended by the sabbath, existed already as an institution, and the writer wished to adjust artificially the work of creation to it. In other words, the week, ended by the sabbath, determined the "days" of creation, not the "days" of creation the week.¹ [It is difficult to understand why the various commentators on this—the sabbath—phase of the Creation Narrative overlook completely the pro-leptical character of Genesis 2:1-3. Cf. Deut. 5:12-15. See further *infra*.]

Wiseman continues as follows:

Dr. Driver having adopted the theory that the Genesis narrative in its present form is a comparatively late production and that the fourth Commandment pre-dated it, some such explanation became necessary. But I suggest that it is a most remarkable fact that the alleged unknown writer of Genesis does not mention the word "sabbath." [As we shall see later, the reason for this is stated clearly in Deut. 5:15.] Surely he would have done so if he had been engaged in such an attempt to "fake" the narrative as described by Dr. Driver. Not to have done so would be fatal to his purpose. This antedate theory generally rejects the Genesis narrative as real history. It is said by this school of "critics" that the creation narrative is nothing else than the common stock of oral traditions of the Israelite nation which had been originally borrowed from Babylonian sources and that it was put into writing about the eighth century B.C.¹ [Wiseman then goes on to reject this critical theory, for good and sufficient reasons, as set forth herein in the section *supra*, on the mythological theory of the Narrative, and in Appendix IV *infra*, on "The 'Myth' and the 'Mythos.'"]

5. The *ultra-scientific* approach, which would require that the Biblical account of the Creation correspond in every detail with the geological and biological records that have been constructed by human science. This is sometimes specifically designated the *geologic age theory*, that is, the theory that each "day" must be understood as a long geologic age, "an extended period of time," lasting probably for millions of years. Again, the play is on the word "time": it is often overlooked that time, in God's hands, may be telescoped: we must remember that God's Purposes are not imprisoned within the walls of man's temporality.

To the present writer, this *ultra-scientific* approach to a proper understanding of the Genesis Cosmogony is utterly un-

1. *Op. cit.*, 28, 29.

1. *Ibid.*, 28, 29.

tenable, for several reasons. In the first place, there is much in present-day geology that is pure conjecture, or, to say the least, that is based entirely on inference; we cannot admit, therefore, that geology can be used legitimately as a norm for the testing of what is written in Scripture. In the second place, science is constantly changing, rejecting old conclusions and hypotheses, and forming new ones; what is looked upon as valid science today may be cast aside as unscientific by the scholarship of tomorrow. This is a truth attested by the entire history of scientific thought. Hence science as a whole cannot legitimately be used as a norm for the validating or invalidating of what is written in the Scriptures. In the third place, it is utterly foreign to the design of revelation to teach science. The Bible was never intended to be a textbook on geology, biology, psychology, or any other science. The Bible is strictly the history of the unfolding of the Divine Plan of Redemption for man, as that Plan was worked out through the genealogical line which culminated, through Mary, in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the Son of the living God. The Bible is the Book of the Spirit, addressed to the human spirit (person), designed to instruct and guide him in the way of salvation, righteousness and holiness, and to the ultimate attainment of his natural and proper end, Union with God. The Bible is exclusively the book of divinely authorized religion and was never intended to be anything else by its Divine Author, the Spirit of God. Hence in the Biblical cosmogony, we need not expect to find the *scientific*, but only the *religious*, account of the Creation of the world and man. As Guyot has written:

The chief design of the Bible, throughout the sacred volume, is to give us light upon the great truths needed for our spiritual life; all the rest serves only as a means to that end, and is merely incidental. In the first chapter of Genesis, when describing in simple outlines the great phases of existence through which the universe and the earth have passed, the Bible does not intend to reveal to us the processes by which they have been brought about, and which it is the province of astronomy, chemistry, and geology to discover; but, by a few authoritative statements, to put in a strong light the relations of this finite, visible world to the spiritual invisible world above, to God Himself. Its teachings are essentially of a *spiritual, religious character*. Destined for men of all times and of all degrees of culture, its instructions are clothed in simple, popular language, which renders them accessible alike to the unlearned, to the cultivated man, and to the devotee of science. The knowledge we derive from Nature reaches us only by our senses. A faithful study of God's visible works, and sound deductions from the facts carefully ascertained are the foundations on which the science

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of nature rests. But from these finite premises no logical process can derive the great truths of the infinite, supernatural world which are given in the Biblical narrative. Nature's teachings, grand as they are belong to the finite world; they are of a material and intellectual order, and cannot transcend their sphere. If the immensity of the boundless universe, in the midst of which we live, awakens in us the idea of the infinite, it cannot prove it, nor, governed as it is by the necessary operation of invariable laws, can this visible world throw any light upon the mysteries of that invisible domain in which love and freedom reign supreme. *Let us not, therefore, hope, much less ask, from science the knowledge which it can never give; nor seek from the Bible the science which it does not intend to teach.* Let us receive from the Bible, on trust, the fundamental truths to which human science cannot attain, and let the results of scientific inquiry serve as a running commentary to help us rightly to understand the comprehensive statements of the Biblical account which refer to God's work during the grand week of creation. Thus we shall be convinced, if I do not greatly err, that the two books [Nature and Scripture], coming from the same Author, do not oppose, but complete one another, forming together the whole revelation of God to man.¹

It was definitely not the intention of the writer of *Genesis* to give us a scientific description of the Creation; that fact is evident from the content of the *Genesis* Cosmogony itself. It was his intention, however, as also evident from the narrative itself, to reveal the fundamental religious truths respecting the origin of the universe and of man. As Dummelow puts it:

The scientific account of the creation has been written by the finger of God upon the crust of the earth, and men are slowly spelling it out; but the religious account of the creation is written in the first chapter of *Genesis* in letters that all can read.¹

To attempt to find in the Biblical cosmogony an exact scientific account of the Creation is a rank injustice to the narrative itself.

Let us clarify this issue by the affirmation that God has written two Books—The Book of Nature and the Book of Scripture. Now science is the result of man's effort to interpret the Book of Nature and to systematize Nature's laws, just as theology is the result of his effort to interpret, and to systematize the teaching of, the Book of Scripture. Obviously then it is quite possible for the human mind—prone to error as it usually is—to interpret incorrectly either of these two books or indeed both of them; it has been done countless times in the past and is being done today; and because of such misinterpretations, apparent contradictions arise. But the contradictions are between

1. Guyot, *op cit.*, 4-7 (Italics mine.)

1. *One-Volume Bible Commentary*, s.v.

the human interpretations, and not between the Books themselves. The Books themselves are not in disagreement, we contend, because they have the same Divine Author. And it follows naturally that the apparent disagreements, brought about by misinterpretation, will vanish as men achieve, little by little, a more correct understanding of God's two great Books themselves.

Allow me to affirm also, in this connection, that no man is in a position to assert dogmatically that the Bible and science contradict each other unless he has a perfect (complete) knowledge of both. And only a consummate egotist would presume to make such a claim for himself. As one writer puts it:

Before any man is ready to say that the Bible and science are not agreed, he should know two things: first, he should know all about the Bible; and second, he should know all about science. In the meantime, the best thing he can do will be to learn all he can of either one, or both . . . No interpreter should trouble himself to make exegesis keep up with scientific hypotheses. Science has no more right to lord it over religion, than religion has to lord it over science. He who made the universe made the Bible, and when we come to understand them both, we shall be delighted with their beautiful harmony. And it is, therefore, the privilege and duty of every man to push his investigations as far and as fast as he can.¹

To this I would add another affirmation which I am willing to defend anywhere, and at any time, namely, *that there never was a time in the whole history of human thought when there was such widespread agreement between the teaching of the Bible and the conclusions of science, in every branch thereof, as that which prevails at the present time.* The most modern science is in more perfect accord generally with Bible teaching than scientific thought has been in any preceding age of human history. This is true, notwithstanding the fact that the Bible is not, and was never intended to be, a textbook of scientific truth. In the final analysis, much of the alleged conflict between the Bible and Science does not actually exist; it is the by-product, rather, of the human propensity for setting up and shooting at straw men (that is, speculatively creating issues which are not actually relevant).

6. The *ultra-literal view*, that the Genesis account pictures the Creation as having been begun and finished in seven days of twenty-four hours each. Murphy, for example, writes as follows:

1. D. R. Dungan, *Hermeneutics*, 47.

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The days of this creation are natural days of twenty-four hours each. We may not depart from the ordinary meaning of the word without a sufficient warrant either in the text of Scripture or in the law of nature. But we have not yet found any such warrant. Only necessity can force us to such an expedient. Scripture, on the other hand, warrants us in retaining the common meaning by yielding no hint of another, and by introducing "evening, night, morning, day," as its ordinary divisions. Nature favors the same interpretation. All geological changes are of course subsequent to the great event recorded in the first verse, which is the beginning of things. All such changes, except the one recorded in the six days' creation, are with equal certainty antecedent to the state of things described in the second verse. Hence, no lengthened period is required for this last creative interposition.¹

Simpson writes in similar vein:

There can be no question but that by *Day* the author meant just what we mean—the time required for one revolution [rotation?] of the earth on its axis. Had he meant an aeon he would certainly, in view of his fondness for great numbers, have stated the number of millenniums each period embraced. While this might have made his account of creation less irreconcilable with modern science, it would have involved a lessening of God's greatness, one sign of which was his power to do so much in one day.²

(I would have to say that these statements are dogmatic, to say the least, and filled with assumptions for which there is no positive verification. C.C.).

An interesting angle *in re* this whole problem emerges here, viz., that in their advocacy of the ultra-literal interpretation of the Genesis Cosmogony, those who are usually regarded as the most "orthodox" or "fundamentalist" find themselves in the same company with the radical critics who advocate the solar-day theory in support of their view that the Cosmogony as a whole was pointed up to, and was composed primarily to account for, the origin and observance of the Jewish Sabbath, with the consequence that, in their view, the accounts of the Divine "hallowing" of the seventh day as the Sabbath which we find in Gen. 2:1-3 and in Deut. 5:15 are said to be in conflict. (This phase of the problem is treated below and also in the study of the text of Gen. 2:3.)

However, there are many distinguished scholars—men whose Biblical orthodoxy is not open to question, beginning with several of the Church Fathers—who find it impossible to accept the ultra-literal interpretation of the Hebrew Cosmogony, nor

1. J. G. Murphy, *Commentary on Genesis*, 44.

2. *The Interpreter's Bible: Genesis*, 471.

do they consider that any necessity is laid upon them to accept it. They hold that the design of the Mosaic account is to affirm the truth that our world is the handiwork of the living God who has only to order a thing to be done and it is done (for with the God of the Bible, *to think is to create*.) (Note the statement, "And God said," which occurs repeatedly in the first chapter of Genesis.) These men hold that the Spirit's purpose in giving us the account is to emphasize the *religious* truth about the Creation, without regard to possible scientific or unscientific aspects of it. Hence, although we are indeed told expressly that whatever God commanded "was done," we are not told just *how* it was done (cf. Psa. 33:6, 9; Psa. 148:1-6; Heb. 11:3). Whether the Creation extended over seven solar days or seven (shall we say?) *aeonic* days, they contend, is not a matter of too great significance for a very simple reason, namely, *that the same measure of Creative Power (Efficient Causality) would have been prerequisite in either case*. Therefore, the problem, according to those who hold this view, is not one of *power*, but of *method*. (Obviously, Infinity in God has no reference to magnitude of any kind; rather, it designates the inexhaustibility of the Spirit-Power which created and which sustains the whole of the Creation.) Those who take this general *aeonic-day* view cite the following facts to support it:

1. The indefiniteness which characterizes the use of the Hebrew word *yom* ("day") throughout the Genesis Cosmogony itself. E.g., In Gen. 1:5 and 1:16, the word simply designates *daylight* (*light* as distinguished from darkness, and *day* as distinguished from night); in Gen. 1:14, it stands for a period of *twenty-four hours*; in Gen. 2:4, it designates the whole Creation Era. (This same indefiniteness of meaning characterizes the use of *yom* throughout the Old Testament, and of the Greek *hemera* as well as used in the New Testament. Cf. Zech. 14:6-7: Note that here the word indicates a day altogether unique, one of God's days, "known unto Jehovah," but "not day, and not night," as if to distinguish it from one of man's ordinary civil days. Cf. also Deut. 9:1, Psa. 95:8, Isa. 49:8; John 9:4, 8:56; Heb. 8:9, 13:8; 2 Pet. 3:8, etc.).

2. The fact that there is nothing in the Genesis narrative to indicate that God spoke all living species into existence at one and the same instant; on the contrary, according to the account itself, the Creation extended over six successive "days" and, in all probability, a fraction of the seventh (note that God

is said to have "finished" His work *on* the seventh day, Gen. 2:2).

3. The fact that no actual measurement of time is indicated in connection with the first three "days"; chronology had its beginning, it is expressly declared, on the fourth "day."

4. The fact that the "evening" which preceded the "morning" of Day One must have been in the sphere of *timelessness*; as the distinguished commentator, John Peter Lange, puts it: "evening and morning denote the interval of a creative day, the terms indicating respectively the first and second halves of this 'day'; we cannot think of the usual evening and morning here, because the earth, and indeed our entire galaxy, did not become astronomically arranged until late in the entire process."¹

5. Eternity, which is God's realm, is *timelessness*. God Himself is timeless (always He is I AM, Exo. 3:14), and His activity is likewise timeless. (Psa. 90:1, 2 Cor. 6:2, 2 Pet. 3:8); unlike men, and unlike Americans especially, God never gets in a hurry.

6. The fact that the account of the seventh "day" does not terminate with the formula, "there was evening and there was morning, a seventh day," such as occurs in connection with the account of each of the preceding six "days"; this indicates—does it not?—that the Father's Sabbath is still going on? (This could well be what Jesus meant when, in defending Himself against the carping of the Pharisees that He was desecrating the Sabbath by doing works of healing on that day, He said, John 5:17, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work"; that is, the Father had been working works of benevolence throughout all these intervening centuries—His aeonic Sabbath—and now His critics were caviling at Him for doing works of benevolence on their little week-day sabbath! (cf. Mark 2:27). From the arguments as presented above, there are many sincere believers who conclude that the days of the Genesis cosmogony were *aeonic* (epochal, or geological) days, and not days of twenty-four hours each. As Thomas Whitelaw writes: "The duration of the seventh day of necessity determined the length of the other six. Without anticipating the exposition of ch. 2:1-4, it may be said that God's sabbatic rest is understood by the best interpreters of Scripture to have continued from creation's close until the present hour; so that consistency demands the previous six days to be considered as not of short, but of

1. *Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical Commentary: Genesis*, 166, 167.

indefinite, duration."¹ (We shall discuss the sabbath question in more detail later, in dealing with the text of Gen. 2:1-3.)

The following note, by Rotherham, with regard to the formula with which the account of each "day" of the Creation is concluded, *e.g.*, "there was evening and there was morning, a first day," etc., seems to be convincing: "By a well-attested Heb. idiom—'a first day.' Here grammatical exegesis steps in and claims its own. Two ways of explaining this striking 're-frain' are conceivable—the one unnatural and absurd; the other, at once living and luminous. Either this six-times-repeated statement is a mere extraneous patch of information, having no organic connection with the creative acts amongst which it is inlaid—which no thoughtful reader can seriously suppose—or else on each occurrence it grows out of what has gone before. This being conceded, and the words then being grammatically rendered, the reader is on the high road to a correct decipherment of the days, as the God-divided rather than sun-divided. Did the calling forth of 'light' constitute the first morning? If it did, then the previous 'darkness' and the preparatory 'brooding' must surely have constituted the first 'evening.' Then how long was the first day? If no one knows, then no one can say what was the length of the six days. Essential harmony suggests as a crown to the exegesis: That, as is man, the little worker, doing a small work on six short days, so is God, the great worker, doing a large work on his six far-reaching days."¹ (We shall discuss Exo. 20:11 in relation to Gen. 2:1-3 below.) Furthermore, the astronomical bodies obviously were in the process of being fashioned, out of some form of primal energy, throughout the first three days of the Creative Period. It follows that these could hardly have been solar days—the astronomical world was not yet sufficiently developed for solar measurement. It seems obvious, too, that the "light" and "darkness" of verse 5, for example, designate not the *duration*, but the *phenomena*, involved. This ultra-literal interpretation of the Genesis Cosmogony would have us believe that the world is only 144 hours older than man, a view which is contrary both to science and to revelation.

The view that the "days" of the Hebrew Cosmogony were *aeonic* days, that is, days of indefinite length, was held by several of the Church Fathers, even those who adopted the literal rather than the allegorical method of interpretation of Scrip-

1. *The Pulpit Commentary: Genesis*, 12, 13.

1. J. B. Rotherham, *The Emphasized Bible*, 33, note "m."

ture, e.g., Ephrem of Edessa, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine of Hippo, *et al.* (See the book, *Evolution and Theology*, by Ernest C. Messenger, published by Macmillan, New York, 1932.) On the basis of this exegesis, of course, there was ample time to allow for progressive development—by means of *secondary causes*, that is, what we call the “laws of nature” or “natural laws,” which are, in fact, the laws of nature’s God—claimed by modern science. From the instant God spoke out, saying, “Light, Be!” (v.3) to the instant when the Three, in *Divine Consilium*, decided, “Let us make man in our image” (v.26), the stretch of time, as man measures it, was indeed ample for all the eras that may be claimed by geology, paleontology, and other contemporary sciences.

In a word, we must reject the ultra-literal theory of the Hebrew Cosmogony on the ground that this theory puts it—and does so unnecessarily, insofar as religious faith is concerned—in direct conflict with some of the known facts of present-day science. This, we insist, is setting up a conflict for which there is no real justification.

With respect to the *time* employed in the Creation, those at one extreme seem to be obsessed with the notion that the extension of the exercise of Creative Power over a long stretch of time (the view which is designated *materialistic* evolution when attributed to chance, or *theistic* evolution when attributed to the power of God) is derogatory to God. To be sure, materialistic evolution is atheistic, agnostic, and unscriptural, but theistic evolution need not be so, for the simple reason, as stated above, that regardless of the time or the method involved, certainly the same measure of Efficient Causality would be the necessary prerequisite. On the other hand, those at the opposite extreme seem to be obsessed with the notion that any kind of *instantaneous* creation (such as mutations appear to be) or any kind of what is called *progressive creationism* (the insertion of new increments of Power into the Creative Process by direct Divine action; hence the “jump” from the non-living to the living, from the merely living by cellular processes to the consciously living, from the conscious to the self-conscious or personal) is sheer superstition. This likewise is an unjustified assumption, because if God is truly God, He can do whatever He pleases to do, whenever and in whatever way He pleases

to do it, that is consistent with His character and purpose (Isa. 46: 9-11, Acts 17: 24-28).

I should like it to be noted here, also, that the statement often made by scientists that the earth is so many years old (the latest figure is about five billion years), or that homo sapiens must have existed on the earth for so many years (a total hypothetically specified), certainly implies that a Creation occurred; nothing can be "old" except in terms of relation to a beginning. Moreover, evolutionism, even though its advocates seemingly refuse to admit it, is a theory of Creation. Furthermore, that Creation could have occurred at all presupposes the operation of a Power (An Efficient Causality) sufficient to have accomplished it; and that it could have occurred "progressively," even as the Plan of Redemption was actualized "progressively," bringing into existence a Cosmos, a rule of order, presupposes not mere chance, but Intelligence and Purpose. One thing is sure—*man had nothing to do with it*. There is but one of two alternatives possible: either there is a Power in this cosmos and preserving it—a Power that is without beginning or end—or at some time in the past, that is, if time actually existed when it happened, an "*Almighty Nothing*" brought forth the grandeur of the total *Something* which we now experience. This last is utterly inconceivable, from either a logical, a metaphysical, or an experiential point of view. The fundamental question is not, Where did God come from? but rather, *Why* and *how* is there *Something* instead of nothing? One thing is absolutely sure, and that is, that *human power* had nothing to do with this *why* or *how*.

Bertrand Russell, however, would have us believe that there is no need for assuming that a Creation occurred. Why, he asks, may we not conclude that this entity we call the Cosmos has been here infinitely? To this we reply that it *certainly has not been here, as it is now, that is, with the same naturally and eternally existing processes and laws. Such a view would not even accord with evolutionism; indeed it would prove to be tragic for the evolutionists.* On this subject astronomer Fred Hoyle writes conclusively as follows:

On this subject astronomer Fred Hoyle writes conclusively as follows:

Perhaps you may think that the whole question of the creation of the Universe could be avoided in some way. But this is not so. To avoid the issue of creation it would be necessary for all the material of the

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Universe to be infinitely old, and this it cannot be for a very practical reason. For if this were so, there could be no hydrogen left in the Universe. As I think I demonstrated when I talked about the insides of the stars, hydrogen is being steadily converted into helium throughout the Universe and this conversion is a one-way process—that is to say, hydrogen cannot be produced in any appreciable quantity through the breakdown of the other elements. How comes it then that the Universe consists almost entirely of hydrogen? If matter were infinitely old this would be quite impossible. So we see that the Universe being what it is, the creation issue simply cannot be dodged.¹

The following clear statement of fact is pertinent here (from Claude Tresmontant, French Professor of the Philosophy of Science in the Sorbonne, Paris):

The discoveries of modern science have made it easier to prove the existence of God than it used to be. Those who find no place for God in their philosophy must be prepared to affirm that mindless, inanimate matter has been able to organize itself, to become animated, and to endow itself with consciousness and thought . . . If the material universe is to be regarded as the only reality, matter must be credited with all the attributes that theologians specify as belonging to God, including supreme intelligence, creative power, and eternal autonomous existence.

When this scientist was asked if the emergence of life could not be attributed purely to the laws of chance over a very long period of time, he replied:

It may be theoretically possible, but mathematically it is so extremely improbable that only a very few scientists now seriously think that pure chance can be put forward as an explanation of the emergence of even the simplest living organism.²

5. The *panoramic, cinemascopic*, or what Strong designates as the *pictorial-summary*, interpretation. According to this view the *Genesis* account

is a rough sketch of the history of creation, true in all its essential features, but presented in a graphic form suited to the common mind and to earlier as well as later ages. While conveying to primitive man as accurate an idea of God's work as man was able to comprehend, the revelation was yet given in pregnant language, so that it could expand to all the ascertained results of subsequent physical research. This general correspondence of the narrative with the teachings of science, and its power to adapt itself to every advance in human knowl-

1. Hoyle, *The Nature of the Universe*, a Mentor Book, 112-114.

1. Hoyle, *The Nature of the Universe*, a Mentor Book, 112-114.

2. In Shar Salom Publication tract entitled, "So You Are an Agnostic?" by Harry Bucalstein, 236 West 72nd St., New York, N. Y., 10023.

edge, differentiates it from every other cosmogony current among men.¹ [One is reminded here of the words of Augustine, "The length of these days is not to be determined by the length of our week-days. There is a series in both cases, and that is all."²]

According to this view, the narrative is a panoramic description—something of the character of a moving picture—in bold outlines, of the successive developments in the Creation of the cosmos; an account not designed to be scientific, basically, but to reveal the spiritual or religious truths respecting the origin of the physical universe and its creatures, and in particular respecting the high position of man in the total scheme of things. Again I quote from Guyot:

The great spiritual truths emphatically taught by the narrative are: a *personal* God, calling into existence by his *free, almighty will*, manifested by his *word*, executed by his *spirit*, things which had *no being*; a Creator *distinct* from his creation; a universe, *not eternal*, but which had a beginning in time; a creation *successive*—the six days; and *progressive*—beginning with the lowest element, matter, continuing by the plant and animal life, terminating with man, made in God's image; thus marking the great steps through which God, in the course of ages, gradually realized the vast organic plan of the Cosmos we now behold in its completeness and unity, and which he declared to be very good. These are the fundamental spiritual truths which have enlightened men of all ages on the true relations of God to his creation and to man. To understand them fully, to be comforted by them, requires no astronomy or geology. To depart from them is to relapse into the cold, unintelligent fatalism of the old pantheistic religions and modern philosophies, or to fall from the upper regions of light and love infinite into the dark abysses of an unavoidable skepticism.¹

The *Genesis* cosmogony is a description of the Creation in terms of the three great subdivisions in which the Creative Process was progressively effectuated, namely, in the order named, (1) the Era of Matter, (2) the Era of Life, and (3) the Era of Personality. It puts special emphasis on the truth that man was God's last and noblest handiwork, created in His own image; and that, as such, he was placed in a universe especially created for him, as its lord tenant, answerable only to his Creator for his stewardship. This great truth of the glory and dignity of the human individual—from which stem the corollary truths of human equality, fraternity and liberty—is one which is under attack from all sides in our day. It is a truth which our fundamentally Christian culture cannot yield to its enemies without suffering complete destruction and thereby ushering

1. A. H. Strong, *op. cit.*, pp. 393-394.

2. *De Genesi ad Litteram*, 4.27.

1. *Op. cit.*, 20, 21.

in universal chaos; a truth which must be defended by the sword, if necessary, against the doctrine of tyranny in every form—the doctrine that Might alone makes Right. In the words of Kipling's *Recessional*:

*The tumult and the shouting dies;
The captains and the kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!*

3. The Work of the Spirit in the Creation of the Physical Universe

According to Scripture, the old or natural Creation consists of "the heavens and the earth" and "all the host of them."

Gen. 2:1—"And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Psa. 33:6—"By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."

The phrase, "the heavens and the earth," alludes of course to the Cosmos as a whole. The "host of heaven" takes in (1) the sun, moon, and stars, and (2) the angels.

[Deut. 4:19]: lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, thou be drawn away and worship them, etc. [Deut. 17:3]: and hath gone and served other gods, and worshiped them, or the sun, or the moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded, etc. [Gen. 32:1-2]: And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And Jacob said when he saw them, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place, Mahanaim. [I Kings 22:19]: And Micaiah said, Therefore hear thou the word of Jehovah: I saw Jehovah sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. [Psa. 103:21]: Bless Jehovah, all ye his hosts, Ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. [Heb. 1:14]: Are they [angels] not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation? [Dan. 7:10, the prophet's vision of the Ancient of Days]: A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him; and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. [Luke 2:13]: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, etc. [Heb. 12:22]: But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels. [Rev. 5:11]: And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne . . . and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.