

**A NEW BIBLICALLY-BASED PARADIGM**  
**REGARDING**  
**THE AGE OF THE UNIVERSE**

**By**

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## Introduction

There is little that will generate more heated debate and occasional hostility among Christians than a discussion of the age of the universe and the earth. Two camps—Old Earth Creationism (OEC) and Young Earth Creationism (YEC)—are firmly entrenched at polar opposites of the dispute.<sup>1</sup> The old earth view typically holds that the universe was created by God between 14 and 20 billion years ago (and the earth about 4.5 billion years ago). The young earth view claims that the whole universe was created by God in six literal days no more than 10,000 years ago. The popular view within society seems to be that science has “proven” an old universe, although many would probably deny it was created by God. Because of this, the non-Christian community doubtless snickers with amusement and delight that a “literal Bible interpretation” is scientifically untenable, satisfied that Christianity is anti-intellectual in an age of scientific enlightenment. Obviously, this issue has ramifications in skeptics’ minds regarding the believability of Christianity, but also for Christians who seek a robust faith that integrates multiple disciplines into a coherent, theistic worldview.

At the center of this in-house debate is the relative role of science and theology in our pursuit and understanding of truth. Both sides generally acknowledge that science and theology can be thought of as two windows on the one universal reality. As each discipline peers through their respective windows, they learn things about how the world really is. This is because the Christian believes that God has revealed Himself “in two books—the book of Scripture, which is the Bible, and the book of nature, which is creation. Both books testify to the God who is their common author. Not only do these books agree, but each helps us make sense of the other.”<sup>2</sup> Science is man’s fallible interpretation of nature and theology is man’s fallible interpretation of Scripture. Although we can learn much about our world from each, we must acknowledge that our interpretations can be in error, and this is why science and theology can sometimes conflict. However, when science and theology are both correct about some particular issue, then they will necessarily support each other because they both are looking at the same reality. Both sides sincerely desire to harmonize science and theology. To this end, OEC and YEC advocates have valiantly provided both biblical and scientific arguments to support their views. However, their harmonization efforts have resulted in radically different conclusions, leaving most lay-people wondering what to believe.

This paper will demonstrate that the currently popular views do not do justice to the biblical text and are therefore in error. A new view is offered that is simpler, more robust, and more faithful to the

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this paper, the term “old earth” includes an old universe. Likewise, the term “young earth” includes a young universe.

<sup>2</sup> William Dembski, *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science & Theology* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 192.

biblical text.<sup>3</sup> The key points of this view are 1) The Bible is silent about the age of the universe (including the earth), so we can let science debate this point without fear of an unbiblical result and 2) The age of the earth's biosphere (our habitat and all biological life) is less than 7,500 years old, being created in six literal days. This model is hereafter referred to as the Young Biosphere (YB) view.

Due to space limitations, the focus of this paper will be almost entirely on the interpretation of the relevant biblical creation passages. Unfortunately, space considerations also prevent the presentation of the scientific case for a young fossil record. However, the arguments provided herein should be adequate to make an intriguing and compelling case that will motivate readers to do further investigation.

### **A Paradigm Shift is Required**

The aim of this paper is to present biblical evidence that challenges the current reigning paradigms for understanding the age of the universe. A paradigm is a standard conceptual framework, consisting of a set of presuppositions and values within which thinkers perceive, observe, and evaluate data. There are two competing creationist paradigms today for the age of the universe (OEC and YEC), but neither can explain all the biblical and scientific evidence in a completely satisfactory way. The YB view represents a *paradigm shift* from the current popular thinking on this issue. A paradigm shift occurs when insurmountable problems (e.g. significant contrary data) arise in a given paradigm and an alternate one is embraced. The view proposed in this paper is a completely different paradigm from OEC and YEC. If it is adopted, it would immediately solve many of the current difficulties of the two existing paradigms and would likely launch future scientific investigation in more fruitful directions.

I would encourage supporters of either of these two existing paradigms to set aside any emotional attachments they may have and endeavor to fairly evaluate the biblical perspectives described herein. Recognize that the pursuit of knowledge involves two goals: 1) to believe as many truths as possible and 2) to avoid believing as many falsehoods as possible. We have a responsibility to live our lives in such a way that we maximize our acquisition of knowledge. It is a serious mistake to believe something that is false; but it is no less serious a mistake to fail to believe something that is true.<sup>4</sup> Seek the truth wherever it may lead, even if preconceived notions must be discarded.

I would also urge those readers who have, until now, remained undecided on this issue to heed the advice of Doug Geivett and Gary Habermas. Although they were speaking about miracles, they made a remarkably relevant point to our discussion when they wrote, "It is tempting to withhold belief when

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<sup>3</sup> I do not know the origin of this view, but I personally learned of it from Gorman Gray's book entitled "*The Age of the Universe: What are the Biblical Limits?*" and also through some e-mail correspondence with him. Gorman Gray is a retired engineer with a degree from Multnomah Bible College in Portland, Oregon. It is possible that this theory has existed for some time; however it does not seem to be widely known. To my knowledge, Mr. Gray is the first to systematize this view and I am indebted to him entirely for the thesis of this paper.

<sup>4</sup> Jack Keebler, loosely quoting J.P. Moreland from a lecture, Biola University, M.A. Christian Apologetics class online postings, accessed 22 September 2006.

there are well-informed and intelligent people on both sides of the question. But we should withhold belief only when that is the most reasonable attitude to adopt. Remaining undecided may be most convenient, but that does not make it most reasonable. There is a better response. When one encounters a question about which intelligent people disagree, one should not withdraw from the challenge of personal decision. Rather, one should consider what makes the most sense on the basis of one's own effort to collect, understand and weigh the evidence."<sup>5</sup>

So how should we compare the YB view to the OEC and YEC views? When competing theories exist to explain some reality, they can be compared against one another using certain principles to test which theory is the correct one:<sup>6</sup>

1. The theory must explain something about the relevant reality.
2. The theory must be logical, i.e., none of its assertions can contradict any logical principle.
3. The theory must be self-consistent, i.e., none of its assertions can contradict any other assertion it makes.
4. The theory should be more plausible, i.e., it should be implied by a greater number and variety of accepted truths.
5. The theory should be less ad-hoc, i.e., it should include fewer speculations about things not known.
6. The theory should have greater explanatory power, i.e., it should more sensibly explain the relevant set of data.
7. The theory should have greater explanatory scope, i.e., it should explain a greater variety of relevant data.

The theory that fulfills principles 1-3 and is superior to its rival theories in fulfilling conditions 4-7 is the one that deserves our allegiance.

The OEC and YEC theories have both suffered from weaknesses in the areas of plausibility, ad-hoc-ness, explanatory power, and explanatory scope regarding the biblical and scientific evidence. That's why a new paradigm—a paradigm shift—is necessary. The YB theory fills the explanatory gaps of the OEC and YEC theories at the same time that it provides a simple and straightforward explanation of Genesis 1 that even a child can understand. The YB theory, therefore, should be earnestly considered to become the reigning paradigm on the biblical understanding of the creation of the universe and the earth.

### **Survey of the Popular Views**

In order to understand how exactly YB represents a paradigm shift, it would be beneficial to briefly review the current popular theories within the OEC and YEC paradigms, highlighting their main distinctives as well as their major flaws. Three theories within OEC will be examined first, followed by two theories in YEC. It should be emphasized that all five of these theories are *creationist*, meaning they believe that God created the universe and all that is in it. Naturalist theories are not considered here, not only because they are unbiblical, but also because they fail the last six tests listed above.

Common to the first two OEC theories is the concept of day-age creationism, which postulates

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<sup>5</sup> Doug Geivett and Gary Habermas, *In Defense of Miracles: A Comprehensive Case for God's Action in History* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 278.

<sup>6</sup> Steve Hinrichs, "Rational Reasoning for Reality," August 2001, Internet; accessed 17 September 2006, <http://members.aol.com/SHinrichs9/reason.htm>, 9/17/06.

that the six days of creation were not ordinary days, but rather much longer periods of time (millions, if not billions, of years). There are three major problems with this model. First, it requires a non-literal interpretation of the Hebrew word for day (*yom*) in Genesis, which is not the straightforward reading of the text, especially since each of the six days are described as having an evening and morning (more on this later). An alternate view sometimes taken to overcome this objection is that each creation day is a literal 24-hour day, but that they each punctuate long periods of time (ages) in between.<sup>7</sup> However, this does not seem to be a straightforward reading of the text as it in no way implies such an interpretation. Second, it places the creation of the sun, moon, and stars (which it assigns to day 4) millions of years after the creation of plants and trees (day 3), as well as after the creation of the earth (which it assigns to day 1)—all of which seems non-sensical.<sup>8</sup> Third, it dates the fossil record in millions of years when there is very good evidence that limit it to a few thousand years.

The first OEC theory is theistic evolution, which accepts many tenets of Darwinian macroevolution, including the wide diversity of life today originating from one or few common life forms. The main difference between this theory and full-blown Darwinism is the belief that God initiated the forces of evolution to produce living things, rather than it being a naturalistic process. In addition to the three day-age challenges described above, problems with this theory include the need to interpret Genesis allegorically and the well-established problems with macroevolution, such as the lack of adequate biological mechanisms to account for it, the lack of transitional fossils, and the lack of an explanation for irreducible complexity.

The second OEC theory is progressive creationism, which is the most common form of old earth creationism. It maintains that God created “kinds” of organisms sequentially (as seen in the fossil record) that have changed or evolved, but the newer kinds are specially created and are not genetically related to the older kinds. This theory is distinct from theistic evolution in that God is seen as continuously guiding the process and involving himself through special creative acts. As mentioned, this theory suffers from all three day-age problems described above.

The third OEC theory is the literary framework model, which suggests that Genesis 1 is not intended to inform us about the sequence of creation days, nor the duration of creation. Rather, the arrangement of six days is a literary device the author uses to teach us that God made all aspects of the creation. The individual days describe different pictures of God’s creative work that included times of forming and times of filling.<sup>9</sup> Technically, this is neither an OEC nor a YEC theory, but it is most commonly used by OEC advocates who reject theistic evolution and progressive creationism. This theory suffers from the fact that Genesis strongly suggests a chronological sequence of events and the

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<sup>7</sup> Robert C. Newman and Herman J. Eckelmann, Jr., *Genesis One & the Origin of the Earth* (Downers Grove, Ill. InterVarsity Press, 1977), 74.

<sup>8</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 299.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 301.

forming/filling symmetry breaks down in day 3, which contains some of both.

Common to the YEC theories is the idea that God created the entire universe in six 24-hour days no more than 10,000 years ago. One major problem with this view is the existence of substantial scientific evidence that the universe is much older than that. For example, we observe starlight from distant galaxies that requires billions of years to arrive at earth. Another problem with YEC theories is a flawed interpretation of Genesis 1:1-2, which will be addressed later.

The first YEC theory is mature creationism, which claims the universe and its contents were created with the appearance of age, thus the scientific evidence for old age can be explained away. Just as Adam and Eve were obviously created mature, so too was the universe and the earth. A major problem with this view is that it makes God a deceiver. For example, this theory requires that stars were created with light beams in place so that they appear to us to be very old. This would imply that God was trying to fool us, yet we also believe that God created an ordered, rational world where we can discover scientific truth and illusion such as this would not characterize a God of truth.<sup>10</sup>

The second YEC theory is flood geology, which posits that tremendous worldwide natural forces unleashed during the Great Flood of Noah's time significantly altered the face of the earth, creating the fossil record that we observe today.<sup>11</sup> This view actually has a great deal of merit except for its unnecessary insistence that the universe itself is young.

### **Biblical Translation and Interpretation Issues**

This is not the place for a treatise on hermeneutics; however, a brief reminder of some key points would aid us in our quest to better understand the creation passages of Scripture. In particular, the principles cited below are derived from The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics, specifically articles I, II, VI, XII, XV, XX, XXI, XXIII, and XXIV.<sup>12</sup>

Of first importance is the belief in the inerrancy and authority of Scripture. The entirety of the Bible is a revelation given by God and is therefore infallible, so that it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses. It is free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit. These beliefs are true of the biblical autographs and copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original. The authority of Scripture to teach transcendent truth and bind the conscience of man follows from its divine inspiration and inerrancy.

An important principle of biblical interpretation is the belief in the perspicuity of Scripture, which means that the Bible can be plainly understood because its ideas and events are clearly and precisely

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<sup>10</sup> Gorman Gray, *The Age of the Universe: What are the Biblical Limits?* (Washougal, Wash.: Morning Star Publications, 2005), 116.

<sup>11</sup> Grudem, 306.

<sup>12</sup> "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics", Dallas Theological Seminary Archives, copyright 1978, Internet; accessed 24 September 2006, [http://www.churchcouncil.org/ccpdfdocs/02\\_Biblical%20Hermeneutics\\_A&D.pdf#search=%22The%20Chicago%20Statement%20on%20Biblical%20Hermeneutics%22](http://www.churchcouncil.org/ccpdfdocs/02_Biblical%20Hermeneutics_A&D.pdf#search=%22The%20Chicago%20Statement%20on%20Biblical%20Hermeneutics%22).

presented. Some passages and doctrines are certainly less clear than others, but we trust that most of Scripture is easy to grasp in its straightforward reading. “The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple” (Psalm 119:130).<sup>13</sup> It is my contention that this is true of the creation passages; however the existing paradigms have over-complicated them. The Bible was written for the common people and interpretations of it which can be understood *only* by theologians and astrophysicists are probably wrong.<sup>14</sup> This is simply Occam’s razor applied to the Bible—the simplest of competing theories is to be preferred to the more complex.

A corollary to this principle is that we should prefer literal, grammatical-historical interpretations over figurative or poetic ones. We should use the literal sense of words and phrases unless there is some good reason not to, such as if a literal meaning is impossible or absurd. A literal six-day creation of the earth’s biosphere is neither impossible nor absurd, so such an interpretation should be favored if it also meets other sound interpretive principles. OEC day-age interpretations strain the biblical text more than many people can accept.

As mentioned in the Introduction, in cases where the Bible speaks on a scientific subject, the biblical interpretation should be in harmony with verifiable science. Because Scripture is inerrant, we can trust that the biblical writers expressed nothing that would contradict established science, yet we also recognize that they wrote from their own ordinary observation.<sup>15</sup> The emphasis here is on science that can be demonstrated to be true and which has substantial corroborating evidence. It does not glorify God to insist on factual errors such as a flat earth or a geocentric solar system.<sup>16</sup> Likewise, the evidence for an old universe seems to be fairly extensive and we need to adequately address this point in our biblical worldview.

Finally, we need to acknowledge that translations of the Bible result in less-than-perfect representations of the original.<sup>17</sup> Most English translations of Biblical passages are quite good, but occasionally translated passages must be corrected or at least explained to the reader. Every language has multiple meanings for certain words, so we must carefully ascertain the proper intended meaning from the context. Because ancient Hebrew has only about 20,000 words, compared to about a half million in English, its interpretation is especially sensitive to context.<sup>18</sup> The original language should be consulted as necessary to settle translation disputes.

Both the OEC and YEC theories make significant interpretive errors of the Bible to substantiate their views. They each have made several assumptions that should be abandoned because, upon closer

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<sup>13</sup> All Bible references are from *The Holy Bible*, New International Version (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1984).

<sup>14</sup> Gray, 22.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

examination, they are found to be without basis. These faulty assumptions will be exposed as we apply our interpretive principles to Genesis 1 and other creation passages. Note, in the exposition that follows, only the main points of interest in the Genesis 1 text will be quoted. The full text of Genesis 1 is contained in Appendix A for the reader's reference.

### The Creation of the Universe

Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," records the singular, momentous, and glorious act of God creating the entire cosmos *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). Most views within the existing two paradigms assume that this verse is merely a summary of the rest of chapter 1—simply introducing the six day creation to come—and does not describe an actual creative act.<sup>19</sup> However, a vital attribute of a summary statement is that its absence will not adversely affect the remaining text, leaving it understandable and complete.<sup>20</sup> Genesis 1:1 therefore cannot be a summary because, if it was removed, the second verse and following would be left describing something that had not yet been created. In other words, verse 2 requires the presence of verse 1 in order to make sense. If verse 1 was merely a summary, then verse 2 ("Now the earth was formless and empty...") could stand on its own—but it cannot for it refers to the earth as an already existent planet.<sup>21</sup> This is further confirmed by the Hebrew conjunction *waw* present at the beginning of verse 2, which can mean "and", "but", "now", "then" and several other things depending on the context. It occurs at the beginning of Genesis 1:2 and should be translated something like "Now the earth ..." or paraphrased as "Now as far as the earth was concerned ..."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, verse 1 cannot be construed as a summary, but rather as a necessary prerequisite to verse 2. By contrast, an example of a creation summary passage would be Genesis 2:1, which says, "Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array." If this verse was omitted, we'd still understand what God had created.

In Genesis 1:1, the word translated as "created" is *bara*, which means to create, shape, or form, especially something new. The word translated as "heavens" is *shamayim*, which can have several meanings, including the visible universe, the sky, or atmosphere. Since the universe did not exist prior to this creative act of God, the visible universe must be in view for *shamayim* in this context. The word translated as "earth" is *erets*, which can mean land or earth. As with *shamayim*, the intended meaning for *erets* must be the planet earth because the creation of land without first having a planet is meaningless. Therefore, the simplest and most straightforward interpretation of Genesis 1:1 is that it is the account of the creation of the galaxies, stars, planets, moons, and all other objects in the universe. The fact that earth

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>21</sup> Newman, 68.

<sup>22</sup> Russell Grigg, "From the beginning of Creation," Answers in Genesis, Internet; accessed 16 September 2006, <http://www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v19/i2/beginning.asp>.

is separately listed alerts us that this planet is somehow special to God—a fact that becomes clear as one reads further in Genesis. Note, the text simply does not indicate how long this creation took or when it occurred.

Genesis 1:2 describes the state of the planet earth following its creation: “Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” This verse contains three distinct parts, which will be expounded in sequence.

In the first part, the Hebrew phrase *tohu wabohu* is used to describe the earth and its meaning has been debated for centuries.<sup>23</sup> It is often translated as unformed, shapeless, unfilled, and chaotic; but a better contextual interpretation would be barren, empty, desolate, and uninhabited.<sup>24</sup> The earth was not chaotic or formless; it was a fully formed planet, but without a biosphere to sustain life and thus it was uninhabited. This interpretation can be seen to be the correct one by using an interpretive device called the *subtraction method*.<sup>25</sup> The approach is to work backwards from day six to day one, subtracting out each day’s created elements in order to see what is left before day 1. This will help us to correctly interpret *tohu wabohu* within the creation context. Subtracting day 6, we lose Adam and Eve and most animals. Subtracting day 5, we lose all fish and birds. Subtracting day 4, we lose the sun and stars’ ability to serve as signs and seasons. At this point, we still have a fully formed planet with ocean, continents, and an atmosphere. Subtracting day 3, we lose plant life and the visibility of land—the planet is now totally covered with water. Subtracting day 2, we lose only the breathable atmosphere. Earth is a completely formed planet, covered by ocean below and an atmosphere of water above. Light is partially shining through this water atmosphere. When we subtract day 1, we are at the condition described by *tohu wabohu*. To call the earth unformed or even chaotic would obviously be incorrect. The planet clearly exists with “its rocky crust enveloped in water, a featureless ocean which itself is also enveloped in an opaque water cloud, giving total darkness to the surface.”<sup>26</sup> This interpretation of *tohu wabohu* is not that difficult to imagine as all of the other planets and moons in our solar system today can be aptly described as barren, empty, desolate, and uninhabited.<sup>27</sup>

In the second part of verse 2, it says that “darkness was over the surface of the deep.” The Hebrew word translated as “the deep” is *tehom*, which means ocean, so using the word “ocean” would be less obscure. The existing paradigms assume that this darkness pervaded the entire cosmos before the command for light was given in verse 3; however, the text clearly says that the darkness covered only the surface of the ocean.<sup>28</sup> This description of the earth is entirely consistent with Job 38:8-9: “Who shut up

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<sup>23</sup> Gray, 28.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 25-26.

the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness.” Clouds of thick darkness would not be worth mentioning in Genesis and Job *unless* light existed elsewhere and was being obstructed.<sup>29</sup>

In the third part of verse 2, it says that “the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” Sometimes the Hebrew word for hovering, *rachaph*, is translated as “brooding.” This is a beautiful picture of a mother hen waiting patiently for the impending birth of her offspring. So, too, should we think of God as patiently and lovingly waiting before He initiates the birth of man in His own image. The womb imagery invoked in Job 38 also portends an impending birth. The fact that God brooded or waited over the waters suggests the possibility of, but doesn’t require, some amount of time passing between verses 2 and 3.

Now that we’ve established what’s occurred in the first two verses of Genesis, we must examine how they relate to the rest of Genesis 1. The important thing to note is that each “day” of Genesis 1 begins with the expression “And God said...” or “Then God said...”, beginning at verse 3. Therefore, verses 1 and 2 are not part of day one, but precede it.<sup>30</sup> The text thus linguistically supports this interpretation, but some philosophical and scientific reflection also informs us that this is true. Up to and including verse 2, the earth is covered with total darkness; days and evenings cannot occur until “light penetrates the planetary shroud...even though abundant light filled the universe elsewhere”—which does not happen until verse 3.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, Genesis 1:1-2 *must* precede the first day chronologically. Furthermore, the Bible does not mention how long the cosmological creation took, nor how much time elapsed before God began his secondary creation of the earth’s biosphere.

### **The Creation of the Biosphere**

At some undefined time following the creation of the universe, God moved specially upon planet earth to make it habitable and to populate it with biological life. This was accomplished in six literal 24-hours days. God first conditioned the planet for life and then populated it with plants, animals, and the pinnacle of His creation—humanity. It seems obvious and quite natural to assume that the perspective taken during the six day creation of the biosphere is that of an observer standing on the planet earth. Note, this could not have been the reference point for verse 1 since the earth has not yet been created. Once the earth was created, however, and considering that the Bible was written for mankind, this seems like the only sensible reference point for the remainder of the creation account.<sup>32</sup>

There has been considerable debate between OEC and YEC advocates about how to interpret the Hebrew word *yom*, which is translated as “day” throughout Genesis 1. As discussed in the survey section

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 59.

earlier, OEC supporters interpret this as an indefinite, long period of time. Most people agree however—even many OEC proponents—that the most natural and straightforward interpretation of *yom* is a literal 24-hour day. We can gain insight about this from how *yom* is used outside of Genesis 1: (a) *Yom* used with an ordinal number (410 times) always indicates an ordinary day; (b) The words “evening” and “morning” together (38 times) always indicate an ordinary day; (c) *Yom* used with “evening” or “morning” (23 times each) always indicates an ordinary day; (d) *Yom* used with “night” (52 times) always indicates an ordinary day.<sup>33</sup> These precedents, along with the fact that such an interpretation makes good logical sense in context (explanation to come) and can still easily harmonize with verifiable science, seem to demand a literal interpretation. Now, we will examine each day in turn.

On day 1 beginning at verse 3, God said, “‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light ‘day,’ and the darkness he called ‘night.’” The existing paradigms assume that the darkness of Genesis 1:2 pervaded the entire universe before God commanded light on this day. However, the text does not say that; it clearly limits the darkness to the surface of the earth’s ocean.<sup>34</sup> Just as importantly, as we’ve discussed previously, light was *not* created on this first day. The stars, including the sun, had been shining their light throughout the universe since the time that God created them in verse 1; however it is not until this day that God allowed that light to penetrate the darkness that had covered the earth.<sup>35</sup> It does not matter if the earth had rotated millions or billions of times before this day because no observer on the planet surface (had there been one at this time) would have been able to detect the passage of a day until light was allowed to reach his eyes.<sup>36</sup> There simply could have been no understanding of night and day until this event occurred.

On day 2 beginning at verse 6, God said “‘let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water...God called the expanse ‘sky.’” The Hebrew word translated as “expanse” is *raqiya*. OEC theorists typically interpret this to be an expanse or firmament that extends to the outer limits of the universe, but the more sensible interpretation is that this refers to the atmosphere—the air—that surrounds the earth. In verse 8, where God labels the expanse, the Hebrew word used is *shamayim*. This word is the same one used in verse 1 translated there as “heavens,” but it has a range of meaning beyond the visible universe. It also can mean sky or atmosphere and this is the meaning that fits best in the overall context of the six day creation. This becomes clear when we read later in verse 20 (day 5) the fact that birds fly “across the expanse of the sky.” This confirms our interpretation here because, obviously, birds cannot fly

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<sup>33</sup> Ken Ham, “Answers with Ken Ham,” Answers in Genesis, Internet; accessed 24 September 2006, [http://www.answersingenesis.org/cec/study\\_guides/answersSG2.pdf](http://www.answersingenesis.org/cec/study_guides/answersSG2.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> Gray, 25-26.

<sup>35</sup> The darkness that covered the earth then would also not be unlike the opaque atmosphere of the planet Venus today.

<sup>36</sup> Gray, 62.

outside the earth's atmosphere. Finally, if this expanse does not refer to the sky, then there is no record of God's creation of the air, which would be an inconceivable oversight.<sup>37</sup>

On day 3 beginning at verse 9, God said "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear...God called the dry ground 'land,' and the gathered waters he called 'seas.'" Recall that before this day, the surface of the earth was completely covered by ocean. God now makes some of the submerged land visible to the sky so that it becomes dry. It wouldn't make sense to think that God somehow "created" land at this point, because the earth had been a fully formed, rocky planet since verse 1. The account doesn't say how God accomplished this; perhaps he deepened the ocean basin in some areas to allow land to appear or caused mountains to rise up (although some think the latter is exclusively post-Flood). The word translated as "sky" is *shamayim* and "sky" is the best interpretation in this context. The Hebrew word *erets* is used in verse 10 and is properly translated as "land." This is further confirmed by the presence of the Hebrew word *yabbashah* in verse 9, which means "dry land" or "dry ground." On this day, God also said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." This represents the first biological life that ever appeared on planet earth.

On day 4 beginning at verse 14, God said "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." God also "made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars...God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness." It would be incorrect to understand any of this passage as indicating that the stars have just been created. First of all, it would seem quite unscientific to believe that the sun was created around an already existing planet.<sup>38</sup> Secondly, "God made" can sometimes be misleading in this context. The Hebrew word *asah* is the word translated "made" in this passage. This word has a large range of meaning since it is very much like our English word "do." In this context, it is better to translate this word as "God brought forth" or "did" or "worked" or "arranged."<sup>39</sup> We can contrast this with the Hebrew word *bara*, which is used in Genesis 1:1 (creation of the heavens and the earth), Genesis 1:21 (creation of the first conscious animal), and Genesis 1:27 (creation of the first human being). All of these have in common that God created something brand new. However, on day 4, God is not creating something brand new; rather he is further "working on" what He has already created.

God's intention on this day seemed to be to make it so the heavenly lights—our sun, moon, and the stars—would serve as clear markers to man of days, years, and seasons. He did this not by creating

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 66.

these lights, but by bringing them forth or making them appear to a hypothetical earth-bound observer. On day 1, God removed the total darkness covering the planet-wide ocean, making it translucent and allowing only some light to penetrate to the surface. This would be much like an overcast day that we might observe today. We can see some light, but we can't make out the sun, moon, or stars. On day 4, God made the stellar light completely transparent. God performs the division of day from night on both days 1 and 4 apparently because the first division was incomplete and partial.<sup>40</sup> The reasons for two divisions are simply not stated in the text.

Any biblical age-of-the-universe theory must reconcile "let there be light" on day 1 and "God made lights" on day 4. OEC advocates who believe the stellar heavens were created on day 4 must posit that vegetative life (created on day 3) survived for millions or billions of years without sunlight or must contrive some sort of "temporary" light on day 1, followed by the "permanent" light of day 4—an ad hoc, convoluted, and unnecessary notion. The YB view is much simpler and makes the most sense—the stellar heavens were created in verse 1, their light was allowed to partially penetrate the earth's atmosphere on day 1 and then completely on day 4.

On day 5 beginning at verse 20, God said "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." God "created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind." Here, God created all the fish and birds.

On day 6 beginning at verse 24, God said "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." God also said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image and gave them a mandate to populate the earth and rule over it. With the creation of man, God completed the habitation of the earth and its population with biological life.

On day 7 beginning in Genesis 2:2, God rested from all he had done in the previous six days, thus providing man a model of six days of work followed by a day of rest.

The age of the earth's biosphere can be estimated from the ages and relationships of the Patriarchs listed in Genesis beginning with Adam and ending with Jacob's son Joseph. This results in a probable age between 6,000 and 7,300 years old, depending on whether the Hebrew Masoretic text or the Greek Septuagint text is used.<sup>41</sup> The chronology from Adam's birth until Joseph's death requires about 2,400 years according to the more conservative biblical genealogies. Most scholars place Joseph's death

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>41</sup> Walt Brown, *In the Beginning: Compelling Evidence for Creation and the Flood*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition (Phoenix: Center for Scientific Creation, 2001), 273.

between 1606 B.C. and 1690 B.C., which would place the creation week around 4000 to 4100 B.C.<sup>42</sup> Adding this to the time that has elapsed since Christ was born yields just over 6,000 years. Although there are some minor issues with this dating methodology due to a few differences in the two biblical texts and some rounding of ages; it is reasonably sound. The implication of this age for human and animal life is that no fossils can be older than 6,000 or 7,000 years. According to Scripture, the universe may possibly be old, but biology—including fossils—cannot be.<sup>43</sup> The fossil record can be explained by the worldwide flood from Noah’s time (about 4,500 years ago) when that cataclysmic event cause widespread rapid death of all animal life.

### **Objections to this View**

The resistance to the YB view from proponents of the two existing paradigms is expected to be great. Paradigm shifts do not occur easily. In some cases, entire lifetimes have been invested in a particular view and it is difficult to abandon it in favor of a new one. Consequently, several biblical objections to the YB view can be anticipated, which will now be elaborated and answered.

First, some will say that Exodus 20:11, “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them” leaves no doubt that the entire universe was created within six days.<sup>44</sup> However, as usual, we must let the context define the meaning. When we do so, we conclude that this verse is not referring to the cosmos, but rather to the six day creation of the biosphere. First, all the reasons described earlier for the young biosphere apply here. If there are good reasons to believe in a literal six day creation of the earth’s biosphere from Genesis 1, then it is not difficult to understand this passage as simply referring to that. Second, the phrase “heavens and the earth, the sea” is better thought of as “air, land, and sea,” rather than the “universe, the planet, and the sea.” If the stellar heavens and the planet earth were in view, then it would be redundant to include “sea” as that is part of the earth and there is no apparent reason to specifically cite it.<sup>45</sup> Just as *shamayim* means “sky” or “air” in Genesis 1:8, it must mean the same in Exodus 20:11. When the verse says “all that is in them,” the reference is to the vegetation, animals, and human beings on the earth. Finally, the word translated as “made” in Exodus 20:11 is *asah* (work, do, make) and not *bara* (create), giving further credence to the biosphere interpretation of this passage.

A second objection would come from those who believe that Mark 10:6, which says that Adam and Eve were married “at the beginning of creation” refers to God’s creation of the cosmos in Genesis 1:1. However, God has performed many creative acts. As previously shown, God initially created the cosmos and then, some time later, he created the earth’s biosphere and all life. It is quite credible to

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Gray, 19.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 52.

believe that this verse is simply referring to the creation of mankind—with Adam and Eve being the first human beings—and not the cosmos.

A third objection might be that the YB view makes an irrelevant distinction between *bara* and *asah*, claiming that they are interchangeable. For example, some will claim that Genesis 1:26 quotes God as saying, “Let us make (*asah*) man in our image,” whereas the very next verse says, “So God created (*bara*) man in His own image.” The same event is here described by both *bara* and *asah*, so the verbs are obviously used interchangeably. Furthermore Genesis 2:4 says, “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created (*bara*), in the day that the Lord God made (*asah*) the earth and the heavens.”<sup>46</sup> However, the YB claim is not that *asah* can never be used in the sense “to create,” but rather that it has a much broader range than *only* “create” and the overall context in Genesis 1 *requires* a different sense than that in certain passages. It is not adequate to claim that two words *could* be interchangeable; rather it must be shown that they actually *are* interchangeable in every context, and this has not been done.

A fourth objection might be that it belittles or somehow limits God that He had to wait so long between the creation of the cosmos and the creation of the biosphere. First of all, the YB theory makes no claim about the age of the universe—it may or may not be very old. However, the scientific evidence would seem to indicate an old universe and the objection can be easily met. Since God is outside of time (because time is part of his creation along with matter and energy), He has no concept of “waiting” like humans do. To Him, 15 or 20 billion years is no different than 15 or 20 seconds. To *us*, a billion years is a very long time, but not to God. It would seem that He was content to “wait” in order for the universe to mature, allowing the distant starlight to reach planet earth and radioactive elements in earth rocks to decay. This reinforces God’s credibility as well as our ability to truly perceive reality.<sup>47</sup> Additionally, it is not difficult to believe that the vastness of both space and time serve to show God’s glorious power and wisdom in a greater way than a small universe and a short time-scale might.

A final objection to be considered is the charge that the YB view is simply a resurrection of the discredited Gap Theory. Although the YB view exhibits some surface similarities because it permits a time “gap” early in Genesis and believes in an undefined age for the earth, it is fundamentally different from the Gap Theory. The main thesis of the Gap Theory is that a gap of indeterminate time occurs between the first two verses of Genesis 1. There are many different versions as to what supposedly happened in this “gap” of time. Most versions of the Gap Theory place millions of years of geologic time (including billions of fossil animals) in between these two first verses of Genesis.<sup>48</sup> This is sometimes also called the ruin/reconstruction theory because it is speculated that a whole race of people lived before

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<sup>46</sup> Grigg, Internet.

<sup>47</sup> Gray, 77.

<sup>48</sup> Ken Ham, “What is the Gap Theory?”, ChristianAnswers.net, Internet; accessed 16 September 2004, <http://www.christiananswers.net/q-aig/aig-c003.html>.

Genesis 1:2 that fell into sin following Satan's rebellion from God. This caused God to judge the world, which resulted in a flood indicated by the water of Genesis 1:2. God then reconstructed the earth in the remainder of Genesis 1. This is quite different from the YB theory of course, which places a possible (but not required) gap between verses 2 *and* 3 (where it is linguistically permitted) and avoids the wild speculation of a whole race of people that fell into sin and were judged *before* Adam and Eve were created.

### **Benefits of this View**

The YB view has much to commend it for serious consideration to replace the existing two paradigms as a new way of biblically understanding the age of the universe and the earth. This interpretation of the relevant creation passages in the Bible is simple, straightforward, and faithful to sound principles of hermeneutics. No *ad hoc* explanations are required and one does not have to be a Biblical scholar or an expert scientist to reconcile the biblical and scientific data. One does not need to know the facts of astronomy and geology to conclude the interpretation offered by the YB view, nor do the most advanced scientific discoveries of today contradict this interpretation.<sup>49</sup> This additionally argues for the truthfulness of this view, since it is plainly valid for any age.

This view is more robust because it better explains the biblical and scientific data. The best scientific evidence is that the universe is probably billions of years old, while the evidence for flood geology and a young fossil record is quite strong. The straightforward Bible interpretation of the YB theory solves all major problems by "keeping us out of dangerous territory, namely, a universe required to be young and a fossil record required to be old."<sup>50</sup> The YB view can therefore be tremendously unifying as it essentially allows the best evidence from both existing paradigms.

This view has the potential to yield more fruit in further scientific investigation of origins because energy need not be expended trying to support untenable biblical interpretations. Theistic scientists no longer have to adhere completely to one or the other of the two faulty paradigms. For example, YEC supporters should no longer feel any pressure to explain away evidence of an old universe (e.g. starlight and radioisotope dating of rocks). Flood geology would be greatly enhanced if they would leave the age of the universe and earth undefined.<sup>51</sup> And OEC believers no longer need to insist on long ages for their biblical interpretation of Genesis days. The YB paradigm would seem to especially allow more openness on both sides in admitting some radioisotope dating flaws while not having to abandon all of it. Additionally, the radioisotopes in today's rocks that appear to measure old ages can be more easily accepted with the understanding that the igneous rocks which intrude into fossil-laden sedimentary layers

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<sup>49</sup> Gray, 82.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

measure the date of the igneous rock and *not* the date of the intrusion.<sup>52</sup> This means that fossils are not necessarily as old as the igneous rocks that are found within the same sedimentary layers.

Ultimately, this interpretation will provide greater confidence to Christians as well as to seekers because it provides more intellectually satisfying answers to origins. Creationism has long been a scientifically plausible explanation of the “Big Bang,” but its perceived weakness has always been the YEC insistence on a young age for the universe. This no longer needs to be the case as we now understand that Scripture does not demand this. The simple understanding that the Bible neither specifies nor implies the age of the universe resolves *the* major problem of creationism.<sup>53</sup>

### Conclusion

The Young Biosphere theory submits that a careful reading of Genesis 1 indicates that verses 1-2 fall outside the 6 days of creation, which all begin with the phrase “And God said...” All the planets, moons, stars, and galaxies were created in verse 1 and the Bible is silent about how long ago that occurred. Consequently, we have no biblical grounds to be dogmatic about the age of the universe or the earth—it could be 20 billion years or several thousand years (it must be at least as old as the biblical genealogies suggest). Because the Bible doesn't specify the age, we can use our God-given abilities to infer it through scientific discovery. Let the best evidence (OEC or YEC) prevail on this specific point. The theory further holds that God later moved upon the previously created earth to prepare it and populate it with plant life, animals, and human beings in six ordinary 24-hour days no more than 7,500 years ago. The OEC theory is wrong on this point; therefore views such as progressive creationism and theistic evolution are false. Flood geology is the likely explanation for the fossil record. The YB interpretation requires only small adjustments in our usual understanding of the biblical creation passages. Perhaps the larger task is jettisoning long-held faulty and misleading assumptions that characterize the existing paradigms. The reader is invited to examine Appendix B, which presents a paraphrase of Genesis 1 that employs the interpretations offered in this paper.

There are several profoundly important concepts taught in Genesis 1. First, we learn that God is the self-existent, transcendent Creator and the universe and everything in it was created by Him out of nothing. Second, we understand that the gods venerated by the pagans in surrounding cultures in the ancient near east were imposters and not worthy of worship.<sup>54</sup> All things normally associated with these so-called deities—the sun, moon, and stars for instance—were creations of the one true God. Third, we discover that God has a very special interest in mankind.<sup>55</sup> We are the culmination of God's actions

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 198.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>54</sup> Albert H. Baylis, *From Creation to the Cross: Understanding the First Half of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 30.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 31.

during the creation week and we are the only creatures made in His image. But is this all we can learn from the first chapter of the Bible? Many people would answer “yes” because they think trying to work through the myriad issues related to the age of the universe and harmonizing it with science are difficult and largely irrelevant. But, as we have seen, it is not so difficult to arrive at a simple and straightforward interpretation of Genesis 1 that also harmonizes with the best science. And in this we discover its relevance; for the one true God who created the universe is the God of *all* truth and the revelation He has given us to know Him—both Scripture *and* nature—marvelously point to this same truth. “For from God and through God and to God are all things. To him be the glory forever!” (Romans 11:36).

## Appendix A

*This appendix presents the NIV translation of Genesis 1.*

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>3</sup>And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup>God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning--the first day.

<sup>6</sup>And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." <sup>7</sup>So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup>God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning--the second day.

<sup>9</sup>And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning--the third day.

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

<sup>20</sup>And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." <sup>21</sup>So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." <sup>23</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning--the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. <sup>25</sup>God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>26</sup>Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup>God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." <sup>29</sup>Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup>And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so. <sup>31</sup>God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day.

## Appendix B

*This appendix presents a paraphrase of Genesis 1 (only slightly **modified** from the NIV) that employs the interpretations offered in this paper. The reader is encouraged to compare this with the original Hebrew and other English translations to determine its faithfulness to the biblical text.*

[God creates the entire universe ex nihilo...]

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>Now the earth was **desolate and uninhabited**, darkness was over the surface of the **ocean**, and the Spirit of God was **brooding** over the waters.

[An undefined time period elapses here, followed by the six day creation week...]

<sup>3</sup>And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup>God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning--the first day.

<sup>6</sup>And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the **ocean below and the water cloud above the ocean.**"

<sup>7</sup>So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so.

<sup>8</sup>God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning--the second day.

<sup>9</sup>And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning--the third day.

<sup>14</sup>And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, <sup>15</sup>and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup>God **brought forth** two great lights--the greater light [**the Sun**] to govern the day and the lesser light [**the Moon**] to govern the night. He also made the stars **appear**. <sup>17</sup>God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup>to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning--the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." <sup>21</sup>So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." <sup>23</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning--the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. <sup>25</sup>God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>26</sup>Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup>God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." <sup>29</sup>Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup>And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so. <sup>31</sup>God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day.

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