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# HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES AND CREATION THEORIES

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## INTRODUCTION

Since Charles Darwin had his Origin of the Species published in 1859, following by a century Astruc's 1753 book on the sources of Genesis, the two forces of evolution and higher criticism have placed the Genesis creation account under great scrutiny and attack. During this attack it has been alarming to see the principles of interpretation used by liberals and some so-called conservatives in an attempt to arrive at interpretations which are compatible to the views of skeptics. At the same time, there have been so many schemes of understanding the structure of the Genesis 1:1-2:3 portion, that all true lovers of God's Word may well give pause to consider the hermeneutical principles governing all Scripture and particularly this section of it.

In order to facilitate this consideration, this paper offers: (1) a set of rules for properly interpreting the creation narrative, and (2) summaries of the leading theories on the creation of Genesis 1:1-2:3.

This is written with belief that the Psalmist was correct when he declared, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89); that Christ was right in saying, ". . . the scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35); and that Paul spoke the truth to Timothy as he penned, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . ." (2 Tim. 3:16). Some day when our goal of glory is reached, when we no longer "see through a glass darkly" (I Cor. 13:12), and when the true scientific facts of cosmology will be known and unhampered by false opinions of unbelievers (I Tim. 6:20-21), then all shall see that the Mosaic creation narrative is indeed inspired of God and entirely accurate! Until that great day, let us pray that God's truth might be better apprehended by all who love His word.

## SECTION I

### HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES AND THE CREATION ACCOUNT

The following thirteen principles combine those which have become the heritage of true Protestantism through Augustine and the Reformers together with some original and newly worded ones. The originality, however, is severely limited as even the so-called newer

principles are built squarely upon the thoughts of others. If all interpreters would uniformly adopt these suggestions there still would not be perfect agreement in Christendom, but a large step would have been taken towards both agreement and discovering the truth. As it has been sometimes said, "Interpretation is both a science and an art;"--usage of these rules would make the science more reliable and would restrict the art to the limits of the canvas. It must also be noted that the closer students come to understanding God's revelation perfectly, the more beautiful that revelation becomes. Human theories as far as they differ from God's truth, that much mar the beauty of the picture. These principles are designed to enable the interpreter to better unveil the wonder and glorious majesty of the creation.

### The Thirteen Principles

#### 1. Inspired

The creation account, Gen. 1:1-2:3, being part of Holy Scripture, is to be taken as inspired of God, and therefore, thoroughly trustworthy and accurate in its original autographs (2 Tim. 3:16).

As with all of God's word, it is inerrant in fact, judgment, and doctrine. Thus, whenever the Bible treads in the realms of history and science in this narration of first things, it is infallible and without error in these areas. Its cosmological, geological and anthropological teachings are just as accurate as its religious teachings. See the twelfth principle for further support of this point.

It is the unanimous declaration of the Old Testament Torah, Prophets, and Writings, as well as of Christ, Paul, and all of the New Testament writers that Scripture is entirely God's message and free from all error. Among the myriad of Biblical passages to support this are: 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; John 10:34, 35; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; and Heb. 1:1, 2. Therefore, Gen. 1:1-2:3, a keystone of the Bible, must above all be treated as inspired revelation given to us through Moses from a God who cannot lie (Num. 23:19).

#### 2. Guidance of the Holy Spirit

The guidance of the Holy Spirit is a sine qua non to true interpretation.

This guidance is commonly referred to as "illumination." This truth is taught by such Scriptures as 1 Cor. 2:14-16; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; and Dan. 2:27-30.

#### 3. Grammatico-Historical Method

The Grammatico-Historical Method must be used.

Dr. Homer Kent, Sr. in the Grace Theological Seminary Postgraduate Seminar of Feb. 6, 1964, defined this method as follows:

The grammatico-historical method of interpretation is that method which

seeks to find by the use of the laws of grammar, the study of the context and connection of a given passage of Scripture, the intrinsic meaning of the words used, and the author's historical standpoint, etc.--that is, the intended meaning of Scripture.

#### 4. Literal

"Any term should be regarded as literal until there is a good reason for a different understanding."<sup>1</sup>

This is the literal principle which flows naturally out of the grammatico-historical method. While it recognizes the use of figurative language, it forbids the turning of historical narrative, be it in prose or poetry, into allegory when the writer did not originally so intend it.

#### 5. Scripture Interprets Scripture

"Scripture is its own best interpreter!"

Since the Bible is an inspired unity, portions which deal with the same subject supplement and illumine one another. No interpretation is really complete until it has considered parallel passages and related references. Just as the many lights above a surgical table prevent shadows, so other portions of God's word enlighten many dark spots not touched by the portion at hand.

Two sub-principles further guide the rule that Scripture interprets Scripture. They are: (a) the clear governs the obscure; and (b) the specific governs the general. An example of this latter assertion would be that the specific account of the creation of the first pair, Adam and Eve in Genesis 2, explains the details of the general declaration of the creation of man in Gen. 1:27. The specific governs the general because it restricts the interpretational latitude of the general truth to the narrower compass of the specific declaration. Thus, without Gen. 2 and related passages, from Gen. 1:27 alone there would be much room for speculation as to how God created mankind, but with the specific account of Gen. 2, Gen. 1:27 is reduced to only the interpretation which Gen. 2 yields. Likewise, Rev. 20:4, 5, with its specific teaching concerning the two resurrections, governs the interpretation of Dan. 12:2 with its general view of the resurrection of all men.

#### 6. Language of Appearance

Interpreters must remember that the Bible describes natural phenomena geocentrically, anthropocentrically, and in the language of appearance.<sup>2</sup>

This principle, however, does not in any way mean that Scripture contains error in fact or judgment, for the biblical description is always accurate and true in every particular.

According to this principle it is observed that the animals made by God on the fifth and

sixth days are described just as a man upon the earth would see them. The waters, sky, and land are seen to teem prolifically with living creatures. The Hebrew words used to describe the various forms of life do not each point to one certain species or class of present day taxonomic classification, but in the language of appearance they each point to a group having a common external resemblance. Edwin Gedney of Gordon College, who adheres to the Age Day Theory of the creation, gives the following suggestions as to the meanings of the Hebrew terms for the animals listed in Gen. 1. He writes, concerning Gen. 1:20-25, as follows:

Moving creatures - Hebrew nephesh chayyah. . . . The idea of movement is derived from the Hebrew sherets [v. 20] which has the significance of swarms or an active mass of moving animals. A more literal translation of the first phrase of verse 20 might be given as follows: "And God said, Let the seas swarm (swarms of) living creatures." . . .

Fowl - Hebrew oph. This has the significance of "That which covereth with wings," a flying creature. The flying creatures with which the Hebrew commonly had to do were the birds, but the word could also signify any other flyer such as reptiles or mammals.

Whales - Literally sea monsters. Hebrew hattanninim. Descriptive of the great reptilian and elasmobranch forms in the sea.

Living creatures - See "Moving creatures" above. Signifies breathing creatures or that which has breath or life [v. 21].

Cattle - Hebrew behemah. Any large quadrupedal animal principally of mammalian type. Sometimes in the plural, specifically used of the hippopotamus.

Creepers - The idea of creepers in verses 24 and 25 is derived from the Hebrew ramas which signifies "to creep, crawl, or glide swiftly." It can be used of a reptile, or any other animal that crawls or moves rapidly with very short steps.

Beasts of the earth - This included in the mind of the Hebrew many mammalian organisms of the nondomestic type. The carnivores, for example, would belong here.<sup>3</sup>

The point is that in Gen. 1 "fowl" would include flying creatures of all classes, Reptilia, Aves, and all others. In like manner, "sea monsters," "whales" in the KJV, must not be limited to the Pisces, fish, but may well comprehend also large air breathing creatures such as dinosaurs which trudge along with their heavy bodies below the water's surface while their heads breathe the coastal air. Perhaps, however, the dinosaurs would best be included among the "cattle" or "beasts." In any event, the Genesis terms cover all major appearance classes, and are certainly intended to take in every created creature which came upon the earth.

## 7. Human Theories

Human inferences and theories on matters and details upon which Scripture is silent are not to be viewed with the same eye of certainty as are the plain teachings of Scripture itself.

John 21:25 points to a truth which is also relevant to the creation account when it says,

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they

should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.

Thus, while Scripture is complete in the sense that it says all that God desired to have written in it and is sufficient to clearly lead all to God and to do His service aright, it yet is not complete in the sense that it records every detail concerning every event in the universe. What it says is true, but it does not say everything. This is especially true in the creation account. To seek for illumination concerning what God has revealed is proper; to seek for additional revelation is presumptuous. Therefore, in this present age it must be realized that all of our curiosities cannot be answered by Scripture's sure authority. Many of these questions can only at best be answered by human opinions, and these, it must be observed, often err.

#### 8. Human Reasoning, as a Source of Revelation Is Rejected

A Christian must look to the Bible only as a source of infallible revelation; he must not look to human reasoning or human science for inerrant truth.

Sound exegesis must determine one's findings, rather than a desire to make scriptural teachings conform to the current consensus of secular scientific cosmological theory. It is a false theory of Double Revelation to look to men who hold anti-supernatural and uniformitarian presuppositions for inerrant guidance in interpreting Genesis.

This may be reasoned in the following manner:

(1) Since the theories and conclusions of secular science in the areas of prehistoric anthropology, paleontology, geology, and cosmology are experimentally and testimonially (except for the testimony of Scripture) unverifiable; and (2) since they are based on anti-supernatural presuppositions (which we know to be false for God does exist, has created, and has and does providentially by second causes and miraculous intervention govern His world) and uniformitarian presuppositions (which we know to be false for God has intervened in the world of nature at the creation, Gen. 1, 2; at the Fall, Gen. 3:14-19; at the Flood, Gen. 6-9; Num. 16, etc.); (3) therefore these secular theories and conclusions are unreliable interpretational guides (2 Pet. 3:3-6; 1 Tim. 6:20; Matt. 22:29).

#### 9. Biblical Words

Biblical words are to be interpreted according to the hermeneutical rules governing their definitions, equivalents, and connotations.

These rules are, --

(1) Biblical words are to be defined according to the Grammatico-Historical method. According to this method usus loquendi and context, not etymology, determine a word's meaning.

(2) Biblical words are to be understood as not being necessarily identical with words of

similar area in present scientific terminology. (E.g., the Hebrew word "kind," min - מין - of Gen. 1 is not identical to "species" of present day taxonomy.)

(3) Biblical words may not be presumed to have the same connotation in any given location as they have in another. This must be decided by evidence. (E.g., because tohu and bohu, "without form and void," are used in Jer. 4:23 in a judgment context, it may not be presumed without proof that these words always carry a judgment connotation, and hence in Gen. 1:2 signify per se the results of a divine judgment.)

#### 10. Time Gaps

Conclusions relating to time gaps must accord with the rules of evidence, logic, and the teachings of Scripture.

Rules which govern time gap interpretations are as follows:

(1) Time gaps are an a priori possibility. (As there are time gaps in prophetic revelations of the future, e.g., Dan. 12:2, cf. Rev. 20:4, 5; Dan. 9:25-27 between the 69th and 70th weeks; etc., so there might be a time gap (or gaps) in the Genesis 1 prophetic revelation of the past!)

(2) Time gaps, therefore, must not be dogmatically denied or affirmed in any given place without exegetical proof that in that place a gap is either impossible or a necessity.

(3) Time gaps which are "probable" or "improbable" cannot be dogmatically affirmed or denied.

(4) Time gaps, where evidence is not conclusive, must await further light to be either established or eliminated.

#### 11. Pagan Cosmogonies

Pagan cosmogonies cannot be used as interpretational guides.

While additional enlightenment upon the interpretation of the creation account may be had through extra-biblical studies, pagan cosmogonies such as the gross Babylonian Enuma Elish, being uninspired, cannot be used as hermeneutical guides. Thus it cannot be maintained that the Genesis account probably teaches something because Enuma Elish teaches it--many modernists to the contrary notwithstanding (e.g., Ralph Elliott<sup>4</sup>).

#### 12. Historical Not Mythological

The narrative must be interpreted as a real historical occurrence.

The Genesis 1:1-2:3 account, in harmony with Principle 5 which declares that "Scripture Interprets Scripture," must be taken as relating history. Christ took the supernatural

events of Genesis to be historical, and not as myth or allegory (Matt. 19:4; 24:37-39; Luke 17:32); and He of all men should know the truth of the matter since He was there when it happened (John 1:1-3). The writers of Scripture everywhere take the creation story historically (Heb. 11:3; John 1:1-3; Psa. 8:3; 19:1; Exod. 20:11; Acts 17:24; 2 Pet. 3:5; etc.).

### 13. Abrupt Decisions Are To Be Avoided

Abrupt decisions concerning debatable matters should be avoided.

On this topic Augustine's wise words are yet to be heeded. He wrote,

. . . if we find anything in Divine Scripture which may be variously explained without injury to faith we should not rush headlong, by positive assertion, either to one opinion or the other; lest, if perchance the opinion we have adopted should afterwards turn out to be false, our faith should fall with; and we should be found contending, not so much for the doctrine of the Sacred Scripture as for our own; endeavouring to make our doctrine to be that of the Scriptures, instead of taking the doctrine of the Scriptures to be ours.<sup>5</sup>

Aquinas commented likewise when speaking on the first chapter of Genesis. He related,

. . . in questions of this sort there are two things to be observed. First, that the truth of Scripture be inviolably maintained. Secondly, since Scripture doth admit of diverse interpretations, that no one cling to any particular exposition with such pertinacity that, if what he supposed to be the teaching of Scripture, should afterwards turn out to be clearly false, he should nevertheless still presume to put it forward, lest thereby the Sacred Scripture should be exposed to the derision of unbelievers, and the way of salvation should be closed to them.<sup>6</sup>

## SECTION II

### CREATION THEORIES

In conjunction with the consideration of the hermeneutical laws which govern the interpretation of the creation account, it is worthwhile to consider the interpretational schemes which have been applied to it by different parties throughout the ages. The following theories are variously explained and are known under sundry titles. They are capable of being combined so that in reality there exist a great number of possible combinations. It is here hoped that thought might be provoked which will point to the truth.

It should also be remembered that the plausibility of various theories largely depends on who explains them. Thus many will say in glory, "But I never heard it explained in quite that way!"

Each of the following are here treated in only outline form as the arguments pro and con for each, with a thorough discussion of the problems involved, could dispose of more than one volume per theory. The chief theories advanced are as follows:

Group One: Theories Which Treat the Genesis Account As  
Literal, Inspired and Accurate in Details

1. Theories Concerning the Grammatical Construction of Gen. 1:1-3

The interpreter may construe Gen. 1:1 in four primary ways:

(1) As an independent clause which is part of the narrative. It then contains the teaching of God's creating ex nihilo the heavens and the earth, i.e., the entire universe with its mass and energy. This is the traditional interpretation. It is supported by the context and by other Scripture. Heb. 11:3 and John 1:1-3, as well as the Bible as a whole, clearly teach creation ex nihilo!

(2) As a dependent clause subordinate to Gen. 1:2. Thus, Gen. 1:1, 2a would be translated, "When God began to create the heaven and the earth, the earth was without form and void."<sup>7</sup> Ibn Ezra held this view.<sup>8</sup>

(3) As a dependent clause subordinate to Gen. 1:3. Here Gen. 1:2 is either taken as a parenthetical element or as coupled to Gen. 1:1 by the waw. Rashi and some others held this.<sup>9</sup> The translation would be, "When God began to create . . . then God said, 'Let there be light.'"<sup>10</sup>

(4) As a headline sentence which is not part of the narrative per se. On the fallaciousness of this interpretation as well as on the two above listed "dependent clause" views, J. Barton Payne writes,

The summary statement in Gen. 2:1, which indicates the completion of heaven and earth, demands that Gen. 1:1 be considered as a part of the narrative on the sequence of creation; for otherwise there would be no verse descriptive of the creation of heaven. Gen. 1:1 may, therefore, not be treated as a mere title prefixed to the chapter. Neither may it be subordinated to verse 2. This latter and more dangerous rendering, that is advocated by liberalism, produces the translation, "When God began to create heaven and earth, then the earth was formless . . ." (RSV note), which suggests the prior, eternal existence of unformed matter.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, the true interpretation, which sees Gen. 1:1 as an independent clause which is part of the narrative of creation, teaches in harmony with other Scriptures that God brought the universe forth out of no pre-existing material. This interpretation must be combined with choices from among the theories that follow in order for a complete interpretational scheme to be formulated.

## 2. Theories Concerning a Time Gap Between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2

### (1) Non-Judgment Gap Theory

This theory sees Gen. 1:1 as descriptive of the original creation of the material universe. Then a vast time gap is seen between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2 (or between 1:2 and 1:3). The first of the six creative days is taken as beginning at 1:3 or at 1:2 rather than at Gen. 1:1. This is thought to harmonize well with the four and one-half billion year age of the universe advocated by many. This theory may be combined with another theory which concerns itself with the length of the creative days. Thus one could hold this theory and also believe in literal 24-hour creation days or in creation days which are millions of years long.

Augustine held this Non-Judgment Gap Theory.<sup>12</sup>

### (2) Reconstruction, Restitution, or Gap Theory

This is advocated by the Scofield Reference Bible.<sup>13</sup> Thomas Chalmers seems to have been its first advocate. Through various arguments (the verb in Gen. 1:2, hayah, is taken to mean "became" instead of the KJV's "was;" Jer. 4:23-26, Isa. 24:1, 45:18, and Ezek. 28:12-19 are understood to show that tohu and bohu, "without form and void," are the result of a divine judgment; this provides a place for the fall of Satan which had to occur before Adam's fall; etc.) it teaches that between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2 there was a divine judgment upon a pre-Adamite world. This results in a vast time gap between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2, sees the six creative days as days of reconstruction, and attempts thus to explain the earth's strata and fossils. Scofield, in his Reference Bible, leaves room for either the Literal Day-Literal Succession or the Age Day view to be combined with this hypothesis.<sup>14</sup>

### (3) No Creation Prior to Day One

This theory fits the original creation of the universe including the heavens and the earth within the six days only. It denies that there was an immense time gap between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2 prior to Day One. It does this on the basis of believing that Exod. 20:11 teaches that everything was created during the six creation days. Opponents would say that the verb "made" (אָסַח, --asah) in Exod. 20:11 both includes arrangement of the matter created in Gen. 1:1 and all subsequent creative activities during the six days.

## 3. Theories Concerning the Length of the Six Creative Days

### (1) Literal Day--Literal Succession Theory

This is the traditional view that the six creative days were of a 24-hour duration each, and that they followed one another in unbroken succession.

The geological and paleontological records are explained variously by (a) a Pro-chronic Creation (Philip Henry Gosse, 1857)<sup>15</sup> which maintains that the earth was created with fossils and strata; (b) Flood Geology (Price, Nelson, Klotz, Zimmerman, Rehwinkel,

Morris, and Whitcomb) with the Flood as the major cause of fossil formations; (c) the Gap Theory, with geologic history before the six days.

It should be noted here that the dating of Archbishop Ussher (1581-1656) which placed the beginning of creation in the year 4004 B.C. is not an inherent part of this theory. In fact, the 4004 B.C. date has now generally been abandoned.

Also, some who hold the Literal Day--Literal Succession Theory join with others who hold opposing views, when it comes to the question, "How long ago was the first man created?" Many of these believe that the tables of Gen. 5 and 11 are genealogies which leave chronological gaps by intention (Warfield, Nelson, Allis, MacRae, Buswell, Jr., Buswell III, Whitcomb, etc.).

#### (2) Literal Day with Gaps Theory

This theory holds to literal creative days of 24 hours each, but it sees huge time gaps between each of the first six days. Among those who advocate this view is R. J. Duntzweiler of Faith Theological Seminary.<sup>16</sup> This view preserves a 24-hour day "evening and morning" cycle while offering a time duration needed for a harmony with current scientific opinions.

#### (3) Age Day or Divine Day Theory

This theory, believing in Progressive Creation, takes the creative days to be long periods of time. Hugh Miller, James Dana, and J. W. Dawson are names associated with it. Many feel it to be the sought-for harmony between Genesis and Science. See Edwin Gedney's article, "Geology and the Bible," for an interesting harmony chart and a brief presentation of this view.<sup>17</sup>

The geological and paleontological records are explained by some in additional ways besides by harmonies between the Genesis days and the geologic ages. Cuvier explained them by successive catastrophes of water in addition to the flood of Genesis 6. He proposed a series of floods and catastrophes along with a series of creations.<sup>18</sup> Likewise, Agassiz saw glaciation as the source of the catastrophes.<sup>19</sup>

#### (4) Pictorial Day Theory

Here the six days of Genesis 1 are taken as days during which God revealed the creation scenes to the prophet. They represent days in the life of the prophet who received the vision or the message, rather than time delineations during the original creative period. These days are also called "revelatory days." This view was adopted by J. H. Kurtz over a century ago, by Strong,<sup>20</sup> and is the view of Ramm today.<sup>21</sup> This hypothesis attempts to harmonize Genesis and current scientific consensus by showing that Genesis is silent as to the time duration of creation, --the "days" having reference only to the prophet's visionary periods.

Exodus 20:11, which interprets the days as the creative periods during which God did His work rather than as days in the life of Moses, would certainly seem to challenge this theory! This is especially true in view of the fact that in Exodus 20:11 God Himself is the speaker!

Group Two: Theories Which Treat the Genesis Account As Non-Literal, Non-Inspired, or As Inaccurate in Details

(1) Moderate Concordism Theory

Ramm combines this with the previous theory, but actually they are separate ideas which may or may not be placed together. This theory beholds the Genesis narrative as being not strictly chronological, but topical and logical. It correlates the events in the account and the events in reality only in a general "moderate" chronological way. Ramm notes that S. R. Driver was of this persuasion!<sup>22</sup> In other words, this view holds that the creation story tells topically, more than chronologically, what God created and arranged. Ramm holds this view himself.<sup>23</sup> The problem here, however, is that a "moderate concordance" implies a corresponding "moderate discordance!" When once such a dike is opened who can shut it?

(2) Religious Only Theory (Mythological or Allegorical Theory)

This view sees the creation account as a divine medium for putting forth certain religious truths. The narrative itself is not considered to be historically accurate; on the contrary, it is symbolical. Dr. Ralph Elliott's book, The Message of Genesis, recently advocated this ancient belief. Dr. Elliott takes Genesis 1-11 as non-historical and compares the creation account to Christ's parables.<sup>24</sup>

The 105th San Francisco Southern Baptist Convention, June 1962, struggled over this work by Elliott, one of their professors in Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. They finally rejected this work, which accepts the JEDP theory as fact,<sup>25</sup> by a two-to-one ratio vote.<sup>26</sup> Only two to one; how tragic!

This is certainly a view of unbelief! See Principle 12, supra, for a brief refutation of this view.

(3) Theistic Evolution Theory

This belief, which is advanced by many Roman Catholic theologians as well as by Protestant ones, accepts organic evolution as true, but it declares that God was the ultimate cause and guide of the evolutionary process. It is beset with all of the difficulties of the evolutionary hypothesis--paleontological gaps between the phyla, lack of a mechanism, etc.--but it offers a harmony between secular opinion and the Bible. This view would be combined with one or more of the others.

(4) Organic Evolution Theory

This theory, advocated by Darwin in 1859 in his Origin of the Species and champi-

oned by the eloquent Thomas Huxley, traces all present life forms through natural processes to an original ur slime's "fortuitous concourse of events." Its presuppositions are anti-supernaturalism and uniformitarianism. This view either interprets Gen. 1 as non-scientific and mythological or rejects it altogether as a "pious fraud."

Darwin's micro-evolution has, of course, today yielded to the macro-evolution (large jumps) theory. This latter theory, which was invented to avoid a supernatural alternative to the paleontologically disproved micro-evolution, requires great supernaturalistic faith to explain how the posited "jumps" from phyla to phyla took place!

#### (5) Local Creation Theory

John Pye Smith in 1840 wrote his belief that the harmony between Gen. 1 and geology resided in the understanding that the Genesis narrative describes a creation and remodeling of only a portion of near eastern territory with which the ancient Jewish world was familiar.<sup>27</sup> This may be compared to the similar local flood theory, but, however, the two are separate entities and stand or fall individually. Local creation, however, certainly falls!

#### CONCLUSION

Interpreters of this majestic narrative must ever keep before them the primary teaching of this wondrous account. In one of the most sublime passages known to the mind of man, and perhaps the sublimest, God here reveals His eternal existence before the universe, His omniscient and omnipotent creative power, and the stupendous fact that He, and He alone, called the worlds into being ex nihilo. He is seen as both the transcendent and immanent God of theism. He is seen as the holy Creator far above His creation; and yet as the one who cares for His own by providing signs for their seasons and herbs for their food. Here the first of man's three great questions is answered. "Whence is my origin?" is answered; "What is my present purpose?" and "What is my ultimate destiny?" can be partially solved by inference!<sup>28</sup> Here the grounds for God's claim upon every creature are laid. It came to pass graciously, miraculously, orderly, wisely, and perfectly. It was according to purpose and plan, blessed, and all very good. Special creation, not evolution, was its method; and its end was God's glory!

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26. Operation Unbelief (Collingswood: Twentieth Century Reformation Hour, n.d.), pp. 1, 2.
27. Ramm, pp. 190-192.
28. These three questions express the three ultimate inquiries to the mind of man according to Chandra Basu Rao, Instructor in Apologetics, Faith Theological Seminary, October 1958.