

A view of Earth from space, showing the Middle East and surrounding regions. The Earth is illuminated from the right, creating a bright blue glow around the horizon. The landmasses are visible in shades of brown, tan, and green, with white clouds scattered across the surface. The background is a dark, starry space.

Genesis: 1-11

Introduction
Part Four



Review

- X. The Problem of Interpretation of Gen. 1-11: What Ideas in the 19th Century Changed Everything?
 - A. Uniformitarianism in Geology
 - B. Evolution
- XI. Attempts to Harmonize Science and Scripture.
 - A. The Gap Theory
 - B. Day-Age Theories

C. Progressive Creation

1. The Days of Gen. 1 which were not solar days, describe a series of creative bursts that then continued for long ages.
2. They accepted the geological columns.
3. They were theistic evolutionists but believed God created the kinds.
4. It had similarities to the punctuated equilibrium of S. Gould.
5. One early advocate was Louis Agassiz. Later, and more recently: Russell Mixter (Wheaton) and Bernard Ramm. Today, Hugh Ross.
6. They are not popular with either scientists, or Biblical theology.

D. The Literary Framework View

1. Explained:

- a. Currently, it's the most popular view, but may be fading.
- b. *The days* are a literary framework for telling a story. Gen. 1 is an artistic and literary presentation of creation. The author uses the imagery of a work week, a week of days that are analogical: God works 6 days as man also is supposed to work 6 days, then rests on the 7th.
- c. Think of the days as picture frames. Hence, it is a figurative depiction of actual events, each day ending with the formula: *evening and morning*.
- d. All affirm that the Hebrew word for *day* means a solar day, Some believe the word, *day*, is being used as an anthropomorphism.
- e. It's historical, just not chronological. (earth before the sun).
- f. They believe the account is strophic and poetical.

g. They see an interesting relationship between the days. Kline sees two triads: *unformed and unfilled*

Formation

the filling

<i>Kingdoms (Domains)</i>		<i>Kings (Rulers)</i>	
<i>Day 1</i>	<i>Light (1:1-3)</i>	<i>Day 4</i>	<i>Light-bearers (1:14-19)</i>
<i>Day 2</i>	<i>Sea, sky (1:6-8)</i>	<i>Day 5</i>	<i>Fish, birds (1:20-23)</i>
<i>Day 3</i>	<i>Land (1:9-13)</i>	<i>Day 6</i>	<i>Land animals (1:24-31)</i>
<i>Day 7</i>	<i>Sabbath (2:1-3)</i>		

From Currid, p.33


- h. The proponents of this view see God as working in an ordinary providential way. Nothing supernatural. This comes from 2:5.
- i. The main scholar to popularize this view in modern times is, Meredith Kline.
- j. Since the 7th day did not end, and that God is resting eternally, proves that the other 6 days are also figurative days.

2. Critique, Problems

- a. In Hebrew, when the **waw (ו) consecutive** is used with a verb, it always refers to a sequence of events. **It occurs 51 times in Chapter One!**
- b. Genesis One contains no indication of figurative language, metaphors, similes, etc.
- c. Vs 14, seems to rule out a figurative use of *day*: **14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, **and for days and years,**..."**

- d. It is supposed to be Hebrew poetry, but Gen. 1 does not contain any of the features of Hebrew poetry, i.e., parallel ideas.
- e. It would seem from the text, an ordinary reading, that extraordinary providence **is** in operation, i.e., creation ex-nihilo!
- f. An anthropomorphism is always applied to God not something like *a day*.
- g. Since this is a relatively new way of interpreting Genesis One, are we saying that for almost 3000 years it has been misinterpreted?
- h. This view is complex and defies perspicuity.
- i. The parallels in the two triads do not match well. Here is a quote from OT Scholar, E.J.Young:

The question must be raised, "If a nonchronological view of the days be admitted, what is the purpose of mentioning six days?" For, once we reject the chronological sequence which Genesis gives, we are brought to the point where we can really say very little about the content of Genesis one. It is impossible to hold that there are two trios of days, each paralleling the other. Day four . . . speaks of God's placing the light-bearers in the firmament. The firmament, however, had been made on the second day. If the fourth and the first days are two aspects of the same thing, then the second day also (which speaks of the firmament) must precede days one and four. If this procedure be allowed, with its wholesale disregard of grammar, why may we not be consistent and equate all four of these days with the first verse of Genesis? There is no defense against such a procedure, once we abandon the clear language of the text. In all seriousness it must be asked, Can we believe that the first chapter of Genesis intends to teach that day two preceded days one and four? To ask that question is to answer it. **F. J. Young p. 99**

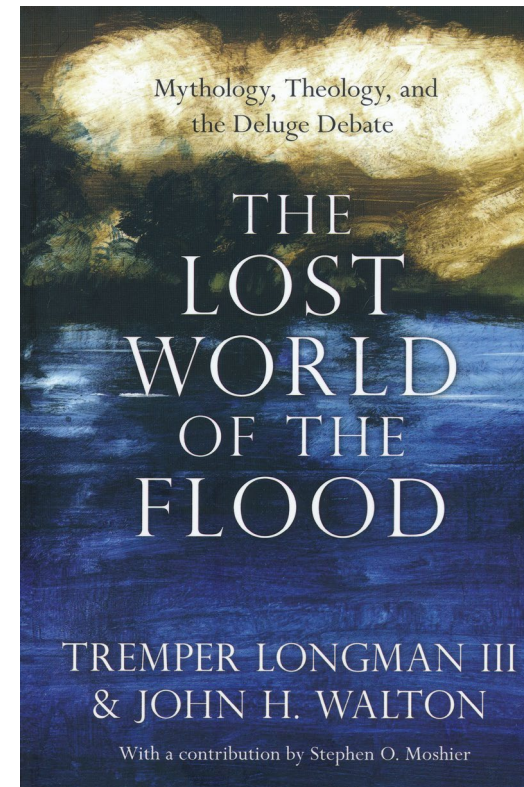
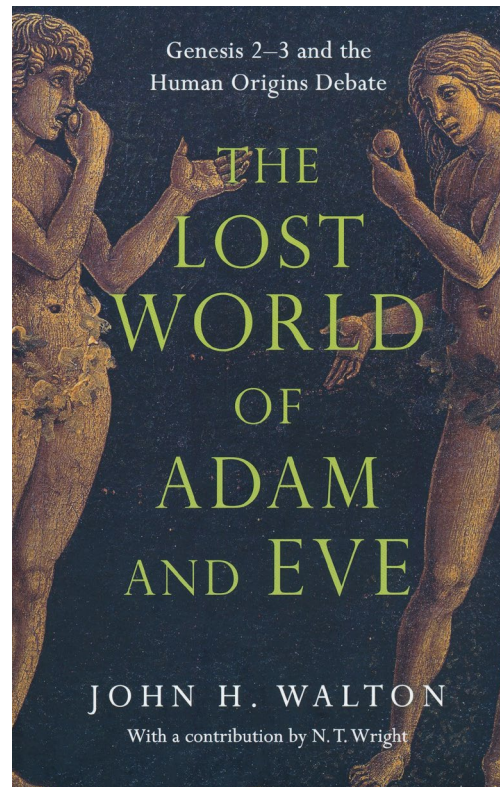
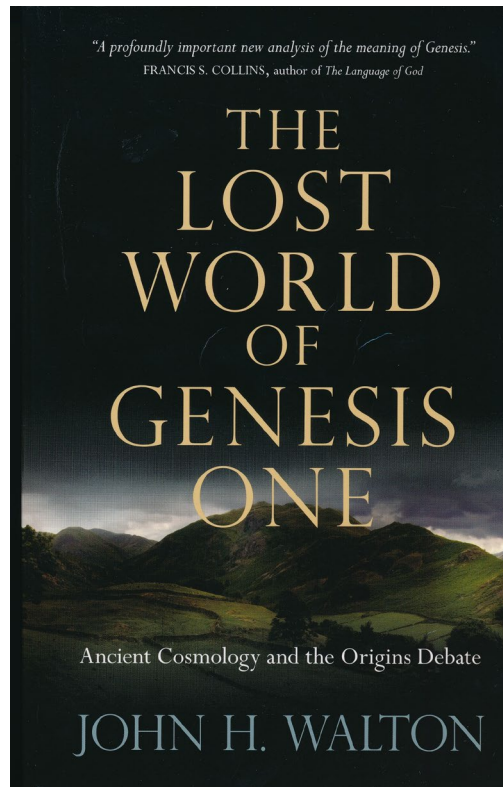


j. Kline seems to admit that behind his innovative interpretation was the motive to make it compatible with contemporary science. His own words: *I have advocated an interpretation of biblical cosmogony according to which Scripture is open to the current scientific view of a very old universe and, in that respect, does not discountenance the theory of evolutionary origin of man.* *Space and Time*, p.47

k. Final note: a quote from John McArthur: *The framework hypothesis is the direct result of making modern scientific theory a hermeneutical guideline by which to interpret Scripture. The basic presupposition behind the framework hypothesis is the notion that science speaks with more authority about origins and the age of the earth than Scripture does. Those who embrace such a view have in effect made science an authority over Scripture. They are permitting scientific hypotheses—mere human opinions that have no divine authority whatsoever—to be the hermeneutical rule by which Scripture is interpreted.* *Battle for the Beginning*, p.22.

E. Genesis One is an Ancient Near Eastern Cosmology

1. This view only came on the scene around 2005, and, made popular with the publication of a trilogy by Prof. John Walton, expert in the history and culture of the ANE.





2. Explanation of the Major Points:

- a. Genesis was not written for us; it was written for the ancient Israelites.
- b. Genesis One is a cosmology not unlike other cosmologies discovered in the ANE. **It is not concerned with the origin of things**, i.e., material creation, but their function, and arrangement. Gen. 1, is not about how God made the world, but how he assigned functions to what was already there.
- c. For Walton, the ancient cultural context is the key to understanding ancient texts.
- d. He believes that in Genesis One God is preparing and organizing the world as a cosmic temple for his abode.

- e. In vs. 14, Walton says the sun had already been shining for a long time but here it is given a new function.
- f. Humans, or humanoids have been existing for some time, but here, they, Adam and Eve, are set aside and assigned a new function as priests in God's cosmic temple. This idea comes directly from ANE creation texts.
- g. Walton takes the *tohu wa bohu* as being *unproductive* not *unformed*.
- h. Human beings are assigned the function of being in God's image.
- i. Physical death and sin occurred long before Adam.

3. Critique

- a. The idea that we should study the culture, worldview, and languages of the ANE is commendable. It can be useful **but not have magisterial authority**. It should enhance not determine meaning.
- b. God was the co-author. Moses, who was raised as an Egyptian, knew the worldview of that time, and when he wrote Genesis did not say: *I know these people have pagan views so I must explain things in a way they understand*. In other words: Moses (and presumably, God) accommodated their message so they could understand it.
- c. Again, as in the Literary Framework theory, this is an entirely new interpretative scheme. We must ask the question: Have Christians been wrong all this time?

- d. Also, we must raise the issue of the perspicuity if Scripture.
- e. That Creation in Genesis One is about function and not material origin is a completely novel interpretation.
- d. John Currid, makes the observation that the genre of ANE texts are mainly mythic narrative in contrast to the biblical historical narrative.
- f. Walton's underlying assumption is that the author(s) of Genesis were dependent on pagan accounts. In fact, the biblical account could not be more in contrast!
- g. The idea of function as opposed to material origin does not seem to arise out of the biblical text. (eisegesis)
- h. Hebrew scholars do not agree that his use of Hebrew words for *make* or *create* support his theory of function.

- i. NT texts support the idea of material origin: Jn. 1-3; Heb. 11:1-3.
- j. Walton's view that Adam was not representative of the human race, completely upsets Reformed doctrine of redemption. (imputation of sin). In his view, we did not all descend from Adam.
- k. Genesis One is a mythical account of creation, not unlike other ANE creation accounts. The people, however, believed these myths; this is the way it happened.
- l. Walton admits that his motive for his complex view of Genesis accommodates what he sees as settled science.

XII. The Problem of Evolution



A. Is the Theory of Evolution no Longer a Theory?

1. The Theory of Evolution is currently under attack as never before. Not only is the evidence not compelling it's non-existent! No, fossil evidence, junk genes are now shown to have important function, the DNA of humans and chimps is not 98% identical. New research has reduced this to under 70%!
2. There are, however, compelling reasons to reject it, and if the teaching of the Bible were our only consideration, would there be sufficient reasons for rejecting evolution? We think so.

3. Why is this an important issue? Because today, many theologians who call themselves evangelicals, seem to see no conflict in believing in both evolution and the Bible. (By evolution we mean **macro evolution** as described by Darwin and his followers.) The following are 10 major reasons for rejecting evolution:

- a. Evolution, by definition, leaves no place for purpose. Randomness and chance are integral to evolution. What we see today is the result of blind processes. The Bible teaches that life is purposeful, and that history has meaning. God is the Intelligent Designer of the universe.

- b. Evolutionary theory does not see a *qualitative* difference between man and the animals. Evolution believes the difference between man and animals is only *quantitative*, i.e. man has more brain cells, etc. The Bible teaches that man is significant because only man is created in God's image.

- c. Evolution sees man's problem as having too many holdovers from his animal past (violence and aggressiveness). The evolutionist says man does not need redemption just more time. The Bible teaches that man fell from an innocent state and that he is now in need of redemption.
- d. The theory of evolution is in direct conflict with the character of God. Evolution is wasteful and inefficient. It thrives on struggle, pain, and death. This is in contradiction to the nature of God as revealed in Scripture.
- e. Evolution is in direct contradiction to Biblical morality. The Sermon on the Mount teaches that *the meek shall inherit the earth* and that we are to *love our enemies*. Evolution speaks of the *survival of the fittest*. Evolution teaches that the unfit should be destroyed. The Bible teaches quite the opposite. Evolutionary ethics teach struggle and survival. Christian ethics teach self-sacrifice and love.

- f. The theory of evolution says living things evolved over billions of years. The bible says that God created everything in 6 days. Exodus 20:11.
- g. Evolutionists say evolution is still taking place. The Bible says on the 7th day God rested.
- h. Evolution is basically materialistic, i.e. there is no spiritual dimension, spiritual causes, or life after death. The Bible not only asserts a spiritual dimension, it teaches that it is the key to understanding the material world.
- i. With the theory of evolution there can be no true meaning to life other than what is arbitrarily assigned to it. The Bible reveals to us the mind of the Creator, therefore, we can know the meaning of the facts.

j. Evolution teaches that the universe is a closed and self-existing (autonomous) system. The Bible teaches that God sustains the universe and that it is open to re-ordering by God if He so chooses. Evolution believes only in natural law (since it is materialistic). The Bible teaches that there is also supernatural realm. Miracles are possible.

4. But what about Theistic Evolution? Can it be adapted and made to harmonize somehow with biblical theology? Theologian, Wayne Grudem says, no. Here are his reasons why theistic evolution cannot be harmonized with a biblical worldview:

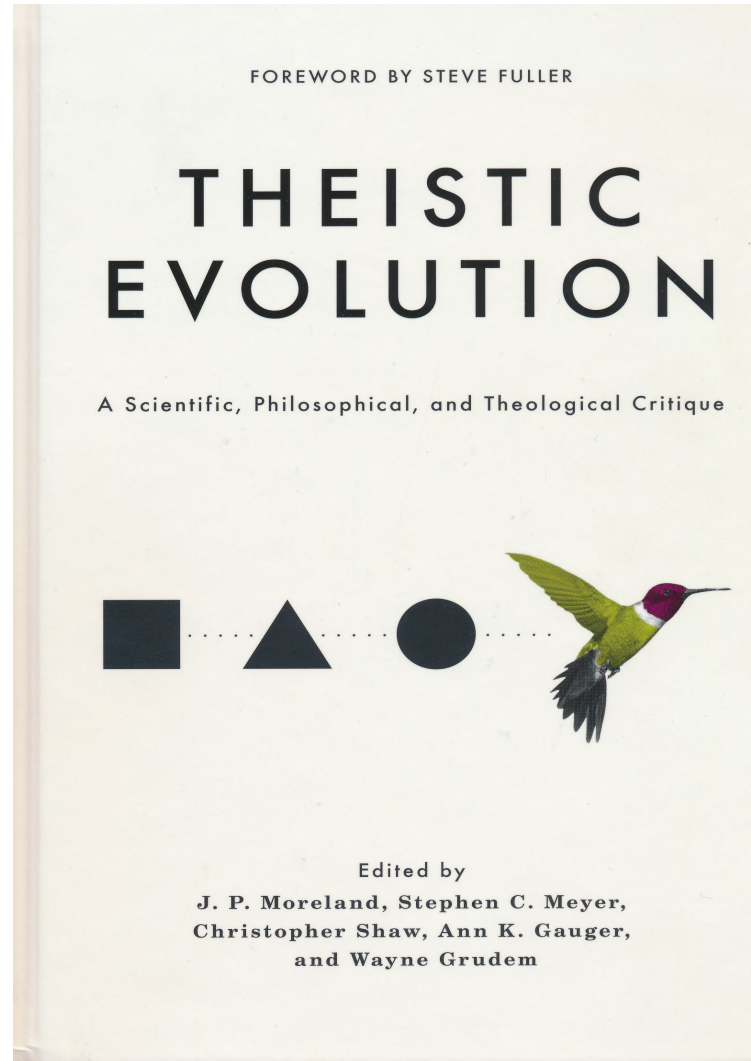
a. Adam and Eve were not the first human beings (and perhaps never existed).

- b. Adam and Eve were born from human parents.
- c. God did not act directly or specially to create Adam out of the dust of the ground.
- d. God did not directly create Eve from a rib taken from Adam's side.
- e. Adam and Eve were never sinless human beings.
- f. Adam and Eve did not commit the first human sins, for humans were doing morally evil things long before Adam and Eve.
- g. Human death did not begin as a result of Adam's sin, for human beings existed long before Adam and Eve and they were always subject to death.

- h. Not all humans have descended from Adam and Eve, for there were thousands of other human beings on Earth at the time that God chose two of them as Adam and Eve.
- l. God did not directly act in the natural world to create different “kinds” of fish, birds, and land animals.
- j. God did not “rest” from his work of creation or stop any special creative activity after plants, animals, and human beings appeared on earth.
- K. God never created an originally “very good” natural world in the sense of a world that was a safe environment, free of thorns and thistles and similar harmful things.

I. After Adam and Eve sinned, God did not place any curse on the world that changed the workings of the natural world and made it more hostile to mankind.

972 Pages!



p. 72-73

From the standpoint of theology, the debate is primarily about the proper interpretation of the first three chapters of the Bible, and particularly whether these chapters should be understood as truthful historical narrative, reporting events that actually happened. This is a question of much significance, because those chapters provide the historical foundation for the rest of the Bible and for the entirety of the Christian faith. p,61.

Without the foundation laid down in those three chapters, the rest of the Bible would make no sense, and many of those doctrines would be undermined or lost. It is no exaggeration to say that those three chapters are essential to the rest of the Bible. p.62.