



**CLUES TO CREATION**  
**IN GENESIS**

**P. J. WISEMAN**

with a Foreword by

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## FOREWORD

### by DONALD J. WISEMAN

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In response to a growing number of requests the two studies written by my late father, **P. J. Wiseman**,<sup>1</sup> are presented here in a single volume. The first originally appeared as New Discoveries in Babylonia about **Genesis** in 1936; the second, Creation Revealed in Six Days in 1946.

This digitised edition is only “**Creation Revealed in Six Days**” in 1946.

Despite their publication in 'war economy' format and in a limited edition, new printings were immediately called for. These were followed by translations into German (Die Entstehung der **Genesis**, Wuppertal, 1958) and into Dutch (Ontdekkingen over **Genesis**, Groningen, 1960).

References to his writings are made in a number of books

(e.g. **R. K. Harrison**, Introduction to **the Old Testament** (1970) which summarises the first book on pp. 545-53). These have increased the demand for reprints.

My father's interest as a **Bible student** was quickened 'by his residence in the Middle East, especially during 1923-5 and 1931-3 when in Iraq.

He read extensively and took the opportunity of visiting the principal excavations; these included the British Museum and University Museum of Pennsylvania expedition to Ur under **Sir Leonard Woolley** and that of the University of Oxford Ashmolean Museum at Kish under **Professor S. H. Langdon**. He had many discussions with these and other scholars there (especially the late **Professor Cyril Gadd**).

While he himself did not read the cuneiform scripts and had a limited knowledge of classical **Hebrew** he carefully checked his theories with competent scholars. His enthusiasm was in no small measure the encouragement to me to enter these specialised fields of archaeology and ancient Semitic languages, and we often discussed his ideas together in their formative stages.

**P. J. Wiseman's** primary idea is a simple one. Taking his clue from the recurrent '**catch lines**' or **Colophons** in **Genesis** of the form 'these are the family histories (generations) of he examines them as clues to the literary structure of **Genesis** and as indicative of its origin and transmission. He takes the **Genesis** narratives as they stand and relates them to well attested ancient literary methods. It is of interest that no critical review of his books has contradicted his main thesis.

It is no part of his intention to discuss the general problems presented by **Genesis** or archaeology and he concentrates his comments about **Genesis** on the literary problem of its origin. His view, which he always emphasised was a hypothesis, provides a satisfying alternative to the theory usually associated with **J. Wellhausen** and known as his

### **'Documentary Hypothesis.'**

The centenary of this theory will be remembered shortly since, much modified, it is basically that on which so much modern critical **Old Testament** study continues to rest for want of an alternative. My father always thought that such a subjective theory as that of the **Wellhausen** school would hardly have been conceived, or copied, had the many literary tests (among the tens of thousands of cuneiform tablets which have since been discovered) been known at that time.

Since these books were first written there have been many more **Colophons** discovered among the cuneiform texts which have been found in Babylonia. They have been published by **H. Hunger**, *Babylonische und assyrische Kolophone* (1968) and by **E. Leichty**. '**The Colophon**' in *Studies presented to A. L. Oppenheim* (1964), pp. 147-54.

These substantiate the references to this scribal device which is the '**key**' to the elucidation of the documents which composed **Genesis** put forward here.

Similarly, new additions to our knowledge of the Babylonian versions of the creation story make no major change in the inferences derived from the **Enuma elish** epic quoted in the following chapters. It is, however, significant that the new text of an earlier old Babylonian account of the creation of mankind, his downfall and the Flood, occur together on a single tablet dated c. 1700 BC (**W. G. Lambert** and **A. R. Millard** Atrahasis:

The Babylonian story of the Flood, 3969). It is evident that the **Genesis** narratives were not derived from the very different and polytheistic Babylonian records.

Recent discoveries of Semitic literature from Syria and Mesopotamia, among them many dated texts c. 2300 BC, notably the finds in 1975-6 from **Tell Mardih** (Ebia) and, from a millennium later, **the Akkadian** texts from **Ras Shamra**, show the continuity in the tradition both of scribal education and literary practices. In many instances tablets show them to have continued virtually unchanged for a further two millennia.

Unlike the **Wellhausen** theories, based on subjective assessment of the Hebrew text alone, these extra biblical documents give us fixed and dated points along this stream of tradition.

I have, therefore, felt it a duty in the light both of the importance of and interest in **P. J. Wiseman's** thesis to prepare these chapters for republication so that readers may judge their relevance for themselves from the grounds advanced. A certain number of necessary changes have been made, especially to omit those sections, in Part I or Part II, which were duplicated when they were in separate volumes.

Since it was no part of the original purpose to provide a survey of archaeology in relation to the book of **Genesis**, no attempt has been made (or is necessary to the main argument) to bring archaeological detail up to date. A number of minor changes and corrections have been made for the sake of clarity. In the main, however, it has been thought desirable to adhere as closely as possible to the author's views as originally expressed.

For this reason the **1611 Authorised Version of the English Bible** has been left as the basis of all quotations from Scripture, To the present writer the particular value of this theory in relation to **Genesis** is the implication of the early use of writing, with the possibility that **Genesis** 1 to 11 could be a transcript from the oldest series of written records.

In Part II there will be found suggestions of special interest to readers who are specialists in the natural sciences. Reasons are given for the author's firm view that the original text of the Bible never said that the world was created 'in six days'. In fact, **Genesis** uses the Hebrew word bara' 'create' very sparingly. It occurs in the first chapter of **Genesis** only three times. This is at the three major stages in the acts of God in Creation:

- (1) The creation of the inorganic earth (v.1);
- (2) the creation of organic life (v. 21); (3) the creation of man (v.27).

Reasons are also given for the author's view that the Bible states that what God was doing in these 'days' was not creating, but revealing and explaining to man what he had already done. The recurrent phrase 'and God said...!' supports this. Moreover, it is shown how on this view the **Sabbath** rest is in keeping with other Scriptures. As our Lord said; 'The **Sabbath** was made for man.' God 'broke off' or 'desisted' from his work of revelation on the **seventh day** for the sake of man, and initiated it as a perpetual rest day for mankind.

Many members of various professions have expressed their gratitude for the part the two original volumes played at crucial periods in their developing intellectual and spiritual lives. They take the view that, of all the various ways in which **Genesis** and science have been interpreted and related, this approach appears to be the most rational, the most true to the text of Scripture and the most free from difficulties. For those who accept the text of **Genesis**, it leaves no conflict with the substantiated findings (as distinct from the hypotheses) of modern science.

In sending these pages to press, it is my prayer that my father's book will continue to be of help to many. Also, may it encourage others to study the finds of archaeology and relate them not merely to **Genesis** but to the Bible as a whole.

My family wishes to thank Dr Douglas Johnson for his assistance and encouragement in preparing this book for press.

**July 1976**

**Donald J. Wiseman**

# **PART TWO**

## **CREATION REVEALED**

### **IN SIX DAYS**

**Part One is found on my web site  
[www.biblemaths.com](http://www.biblemaths.com) to download.**

**“New Discoveries in Babylonia”**



## INTRODUCTION

A new endeavour is made in the following pages to trace the biblical **Creation** narrative back to its source and to ascertain why it is divided by

**six 'evenings and mornings'.**

The reader may doubt whether it is possible after centuries of discussion to write anything new about this first page of **the Bible**.

I take, however, the same view as **Butler** did when he wrote,

**'Nor is it at all incredible that a book, which has been so long in the possession of mankind, should contain many truths as yet undiscovered' (Analogy 11.3).**

There are, I believe, several undiscovered truths regarding this first narrative of **Creation** which hitherto have remained unnoticed in modern times. One of these is so important, yet so simple and obvious, that our failure to recognise it is all the more surprising, seeing that this oversight has created considerable difficulties, has resulted in continued misinterpretation, and caused the narrative to be rejected by many.

This misunderstanding is certainly not due to any want of clarity in the narrative itself but to our failure to recognise the extremely ancient character of the document. Consequently its interpretation has become distorted by speculations concerning the time occupied by **God** in the processes of **Creation**.

### The Chief Difficulties

The most outstanding literary problem on the first page of **the Bible** is the precise meaning of the **'six days'** separated as they are from each other by an **'evening and morning'**.

Also there is the problem of the **'rest' on the seventh day**.  
These **'days'** have perplexed almost everyone who has read the narrative of **Creation**.

Were they days of **twenty four hours** each? Or can they be interpreted as being long periods of time? Why are these days separated from each other by an **'evening and a morning'**?

In whatever way these questions are answered it is obvious that the record implies that **God** did something for **six days** and ceased doing it **on the seventh day**. What did **God** do on those **six days**? and why did he cease on **the seventh**? Whilst the modern critical scholar and scientist reject the account as **'impossible'**, the answer usually given by those who regard **the Bible** as trustworthy is that during those **six days God** created or **Re-created** the world, and (because he had finished it at the end of the **sixth day**) he rested on the seventh.

Whatever meaning is given to the word **'day'**, whether literal or symbolic, we must ask is such an answer in accordance with the facts? I do not think so, and this book will endeavour to explain why it cannot be the true interpretation. It disagrees not only with **the Bible** but with all we now know about **the literary methods** of scribes in ancient times.

A brief summary will make clear what the following pages set out to explain. It is that:

- (1) The **six 'days'** divided from each other by an **evening and morning**, do not refer to the time occupied by **God** in his acts and the duration of The processes of **Creation**.
- (2) The **six days** refer to the time occupied in **revealing** to man the account of **Creation**.
- (3) **God** rested (lit. ceased) **on the seventh day** not for his own sake but for man's sake, and because this revelation about **Creation** was finished **on the sixth day**, not because on that day (or period) the **Creation** of the world was finished.
- (4) The narrative of **Creation** was probably written on **six tablets**. Later, it also appears to have become the custom in **Babylonia** to write the story of **Creation** on **six tablets**.
- (5) There is good and sufficient evidence to show that the first page of **the Bible** is the **oldest document** which has come down to us.

The evidence on which these statements are based will be stated as fully as is possible without the introduction of too much detail. Until the evidence has been read, is it too much to ask that judgment on these, statements be suspended?

It can be said with assurance that none of the explanations hitherto given either of these days, or of the phrase '**evenings and mornings**', have really proved satisfactory.

That proposed in the allowing pages are simple because the statements made in the narrative are accepted in their natural ancient sense and setting. It is an attempt to restore '**a commonplace truth to its first uncomfortable lustre**'.

## The Importance of The Enquiry

We need a faith that enquires. There should be no need for an apology for a fresh investigation into the meaning of the narrative. It's importance can scarcely be over emphasised. Estimated simply as a piece of descriptive writing, the first chapter of **Genesis** constantly challenges attention, for it is unquestionably unique in the world's literature concerning the origin of things. That it is regarded both in the **Old and New Testaments** as the foundation of faith in **God** as **Creator** few will deny.

Although the writer of these pages has no doubt that the greater and more convincing revelation of **God** to **man** was made through **Jesus Christ** our **Saviour** and **Lord**, he has noticed that philosophers as well as thoughtful students in our universities are apt to go back, not only to **Christ**, but to the first page of **the Bible** in order to secure a sure foundation for their thinking and faith.

Thinking men cannot regard it as a matter of secondary importance whether **God** was or was not in a real and definite sense **the Creator** of the **Universe** and **Man**. Neither can they think it an enquiry of little consequence whether this narrative of **Creation** is a revelation from **God** or merely a myth, or nothing more than a series of guesses made by some man at an unknown date. My purpose here is not that of a reconciler of **Scripture** with science, important as that may be in its place; nor is it an attempt to bring the narrative of **Creation** into harmony with modern thought. **God's** thought and modern thought are not at all the same thing. It often happens that they are not in harmony.

***'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'*** (Isa. 55:8-9).

Modern thought about the origin of things is still in its usual state or flux, and there is nothing that can become out of date so quickly as an up to date scientific explanation of the first chapter of **Genesis**.

This narrative has often been **'harmonized'** with **modern scientific theories**, only to find that **scientists** have necessarily **changed their position**, leaving the **'explanation'** quite out of date.

**H. G. Wells**, for instance, complained that

**'we do not rewrite and retell Genesis in the light and language of modern knowledge.'**

Later (p. 231) **his version of the origin of life** will be stated, but had the **Genesis** account been subjected to constant amendment in accordance with modern thought, the various editions of it would make an interesting history of the changes in human thought on this subject, but it certainly would not impress us with the sum of human wisdom about origins.

My thesis is that there is **no disagreement** between **accurate scientific findings** and an **accurate interpretation of Genesis** based on the available evidence. When rightly interpreted both can look after themselves.

**The Bible** account of **Creation** will see the disappearance of many scientific and philosophic theories, and yet remain in harmony with the great **facts** discovered by scientists.

## **The Central Aim**

Mine is the more modest, though not less important task of attempting to find out how the account of **Creation** came into existence, not how the universe came to be. It aims to take careful note about what the first chapter of **Genesis** actually says and to test the validity of current interpretations concerning its meaning. The investigation began some time ago with as open a mind as was possible; certainly the conclusions reached are different from those expected.

Until, as explained in **Part I** of this work, the results of modern archaeological research became known it was not possible to understand fully the literary methods in use in early days. During the years that I was living in **Babylonia**, I spent much time in examining on the one hand the text of **Genesis**, and on the other the ancient methods of writing prevailing there **5,000 years ago**.

We are often told that the only scientific way to study **the Bible** narratives is to read them in their ancient literary setting as pieces of contemporary literature. In one respect at least this advice is essential, because much of the criticism of this **Creation** narrative betrays a lack of knowledge of the literary methods of ancient times.

Probably no passage in the whole range of literature, ancient or modern, sacred or secular, has been subjected to such detailed, continuous and critical examination as this first page of **the Bible**.

But this criticism originated before scholars were aware of early literary methods. Every advance in archaeological discovery has enabled us better to understand these ancient writings. There has been a vast growth in our knowledge of the remote past, particularly about the old ways of writing. The present reinterpretation is made in the light of the methods customary in early times.

It should not therefore surprise us that there should be a new understanding of the meaning of the narratives. As knowledge has advanced it has been possible to see how this ancient document agrees with the ascertained facts of science and disagrees with some scientific theories.

Some have imagined that the growth of scientific knowledge has already dealt a **death blow** to the **Scripture** narrative of **Creation**. Indeed, not a few have written as if all that now remained to be done some have already done it is to hold a post mortem examination as to which writer was mostly responsible for its destruction. Just when a verdict is about to be pronounced, further evidence, often that of archaeology, is produced in favor of the **Scripture** narrative, and it is then found to be more **vitaly alive** and **accurate** than had been assumed,

## **Basic Attitudes**

In stating the results of our inquiry it is obviously impracticable within the limits of this book to do more than put forward certain reasoned convictions as a basis. These are that:

- (1) There is a **God**,
- (2) He is **the Creator** of **the heavens and the earth**.
- (3) He could, if he desired reveal to man all that is necessary for **Creation**.

In other words we begin where the narrative of **Creation** begins,

***'In the beginning God created ...'***

and, like **the Bible**, we accept the statement that **God** was **the Creator**.

**The Bible** point of view is that he not only could, but did reveal himself to man is also accepted. But no assumptions are made as to his methods of **creation**, or speculations indulged in as to the length of time occupied by him in his acts or processes. It is submitted that the **Genesis** narrative details neither the methods he used, nor the time taken. All we are told is that **God** commanded and **'it was so'**. The only exception is that concerning the **creation** of man where details are given, and these, though few, are important.

**Sir Ambrose Fleming** has said (Transactions the Victoria Institute, 1927),

**“The majority of persons take their opinion on difficult subjects ready made from those they deem special authorities, and hence, when once a certain view of a subject has been broadcast and widely accepted as the right and fashionable one, it is very difficult to secure an unbiased reconsideration of it.”**

This first page of **the Bible** has **suffered badly** from **traditional misinterpretations** and misconceptions which should never have occurred, and some of these popular errors have made shipwreck of faith in **God as Creator**, and in **the Bible** as his revelation to man. While sufficient reasons are seen for adhering to the narrative, there are good reasons for **rejecting** some of the current interpretations of it.

As **Dr Andrew Murray** has written,

**“We cannot, of course, escape the necessity of theorising, if we are to define to ourselves and to others the message which Holy Scripture conveys to us.**

**But the abiding wonder of the gift of God to us in the Bible is the way it remains permanently ahead of all its interpreters. We are terribly prone to make idols of our theories, and to identify them with the Truth that we are trying to interpret.**

**But as each generation of students goes back to the original deposit and tests the theories it has inherited in the light of it.**

**The Bible seems to have an inexhaustible power to help us clear out of the way difficulties that are not inherent in the Truth itself, but have been introduced into our statement of it by a lack of proportion in our treatment of the evidence, either by ignoring what we can now see to be the vital elements in it, or by overstressing the implications of earthly metaphors, which can only correspond very partially to the spiritual reality.”**

## THE LITERARY FORM OF GENESIS CHAPTER 1

The account of **Creation** on the first page of **the Bible** is written in a literary form quite unlike any other narrative in it. Even to the most casual reader it is obvious that there is something very exceptional in its structure. Not only is it divided into **six sections** by the use of the words

**'and there was evening and there was morning'**

but the sections are serially numbered from **one to six**. The whole record is fitted into a unique framework composed of words and phrases which are repeated **six** or more times. This framework is constructed in the following manner:

### DAY FIRST

#### Verses

3 *God said let... and there was.*

4 *God saw ... that it was good.  
God divided...*

5 *God called... there was evening and there was morning day first,*

### DAY SECOND

6 *God said let...*

7 *God made,..  
God divided... and it was so.*

8 *God called...*

*God saw that it was good (Septuagint Version).<sup>1</sup>  
And there was evening and there was morning day second.*

### DAY THIRD

9 *God said let... and it was so.*

10 *God called...  
God saw that it was good.*

- 11 *God said let... and it was so,*  
12 *God saw that it was good.*  
13 *And there was evening and there was morning day third,*

## DAY FOURTH

- 14 *God said let... and it was so.*  
16 *God made...*  
17 *God set...*  
18 *God saw that it was good...*  
19 *And there was evening and there was morning day fourth.*

## DAY FIFTH

- 20 *God said let... and it was so* (Septuagint Version).  
21 *God created...*  
*God saw that it was good.*  
22 *God blessed...*  
23 *And there was evening and there was morning day fifth.*

## DAY SIXTH

- 24 *God said let... and it was so.*  
25 *God made...*  
*God saw that it was good.*  
26 *God said let...*  
27 *God created...*  
*God created... created...*  
28 *God blessed...*  
*God said...*  
29 *God said... and it was so.*  
31 *God saw that it was very good.*

And there was **evening** and there was **morning** day the **sixth**.

Apart from the repetition of these phrases, the words used are remarkably few and simple.



This is all the more surprising seeing that it is an outline of the origin of **the heavens** and **the earth**; of vegetable, marine and animal life, and also of the instruction given by

The principal words used in addition to the framework are those translated,

**light, darkness, night, firmament, waters, heavens, dry, earth, seas, grass, herb, seed, winged creature, cattle, creeping things, man, image, male, female, replenish, dominion, meat.**

It will be noticed that **'God said' ten times (four times on the sixth day)**.

In this number there is a similarity to **the Ten Words**  
(as the **Ten Commandments** are called by **the Hebrews**).

If this record of **Creation** is carefully examined it will be seen that the **six days** fall into two clearly parallel parts, the events recorded in **the last three days** being parallel with **the first three**, Those best acquainted with ancient **Hebrew literary methods** will recognise a feature frequent in **the Old Testament** of a balanced symmetry due to a repetition of thought expressed in almost synonymous words. The parallelism is as follows:

## Parallelism

On **the first day** it was revealed how **light** came into existence, **on the fourth day**, about **the sources and purposes of the light**, the greater light for the day and the lesser light for the night.

### On the second day

**God** explains how **the atmosphere** came to be, and how it separated the waters above from those below the expanse. **On the fifth day** how the waters below were populated with **fish and the atmosphere with birds**.

### On the third day

**God** tells how he gathered the waters together so as to **form areas of dry land** and then , how the various forms of vegetation came to be.

**On the sixth day** it is said how **the dry land** was populated with animal life, how man was created, and explains how the first of the forms of **green vegetation** was for **animal life**, and both green vegetation and trees were assigned to **man for food** . ,

## The Framework of The Chapter

The second three days tells how space, water, air and land are populated. Notwithstanding the simplicity of the record it is comprehensive, and later it will be seen how this parallel arrangement agrees with science.

It may be summarised as follows:

<p><b>1 Light</b> Separating the light from the darkness effecting day and night</p>	<p><b>4 Lights</b> (Sun, Moon and Stars) to divide the day from the and night. and for seasons and for days and years.</p>
<p><b>2 Wafer and atmosphere</b> Atmosphere separating the waters below from those above,</p>	<p><b>5 Water and atmosphere</b> Life in the water (fish). Life in the atmosphere (birds).</p>
<p><b>3 Land and green vegetation</b> (a) Land. (b) Green vegetation and trees.</p>	<p><b>6 Land and green vegetation</b> (a) Land. (b) Green vegetation and trees.</p>

The key to the arrangement may be seen in the words,

***“without form and void”*** (v. 2).

In the **first three days** we are told of the formation of **the heaven** and **earth**, and on the **second three days** of the furnishing of the void. Thus the formlessness takes shape or form in **the narration** of the **first three days** and the void becomes, occupied and inhabited in the **second three days narrative**.

We must notice one other feature of the structure of this narrative; while the complete section extends from chapter 1:1 to 2:4, it will be seen that this special framework of the days is confined to verses 3 - 31 of chap 1.

The first two verses being an introduction or superscription, and the last four verses (2:1-4) an appendix (i.e. a **Colophon**). As explained in my other **Book New Discoveries in Babylonia**, when writing on **clay tablets** it was customary to add a **Colophon** giving information regarding the **'Title'** of a tablet or series of tablets, the date written, the name of the writer, and other literary information (pp. 31-33). Does the **Colophon** (or title phrase) at the end of this **Genesis Creation** narrative contain any of this valuable information? Before this question is answered it is necessary to review the other important passage where the **six days** are mentioned.

### 3

## THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

It is significant that the only references elsewhere in **Scripture** to the **six days** of work and one of **'rest'** in connection with the narrative of **Creation** are those attached to the fourth commandment. In no other connection are these **six days** mentioned.

The fourth commandment requires that mankind should work for **six days** and rest on the seventh, because **God** did something for **six days** and ceased doing it on the seventh. It is very necessary therefore that we ascertain what **God** did on the **six days** and why he ceased to do this **on the seventh day**.

The fourth commandment reads:

*“Remember the **sabbath day**, to keep it holy, **six days shall you labour and do all yourwork: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall not do any work, thou, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it” (Exod.20:8-11).***

The impression conveyed by this passage is of **ordinary days**. Certainly **the fourth commandment's six days** work and one **day's** rest for the **Israelites** refer to normal days. Why is it then that no system of interpretation reads both the **six days** and **the seventh day**, that is both the whole of the **Creation** narrative and the whole of the fourth commandment consistently.

I submit that the answer **is plain** if we examine carefully the context and wording of both the **Creation** narrative and the commandment concerning what **God** was actually doing during these **six days**.

A simple but serious misinterpretation has led to an assumption that both **Genesis** and the fourth commandment were intended to teach that **God** created **the heavens** and **the earth** and all plant, marine and animal life, as well as man, in **six 'days'** of some sort.

Because of this false supposition some reject the **'days'** of whatever length (and also the whole narrative). Others deny either the literalness of **the six**, or else that of **the seventh day**. Others lengthen either **the sixth** or **the seventh day** to thousands or millions of years. Even the group of expositors who suggest that someone saw **creation** in a vision usually explain the **six days** literally, but interpret the **'rest' on the seventh day** as a long period of unknown duration. At the same time, they all appear to interpret the **six days** of work and one of rest, which the Israelites were to observe, as literal days.

*I suggest that every time the days are mentioned in both the **Genesis** and **Exodus** verses they are intended to be taken literally as, ordinary days.*

Because of the incorrect assumption that what **God** did on the **six days** was to *create* all life and man, **five main** variant interpretations have been adopted in an attempt to harmonise the **Genesis** narrative and the fourth commandment with scientific ideas concerning the origin of **the heavens** and **the earth**.

These may be, summarised as follows:

- (1) The geological **'day'** theory
- (2) The **six days Re-creation** theory.
- (3) The **vision** theory.
- (4) The **antedate** (or artificial week) theory.
- (5) The myth or **legend** theory.

We are all liable to **identify** our own particular interpretation of the meaning of a **Bible** statement with **the Bible** statement itself. Consequently, when our own special theory as to its interpretation is doubted, we are sometimes apt to assume that the doubter is challenging not merely our interpretation but also **the accuracy** of **the Bible** narrative.

For reasons which I hope to explain later, I believe that the days in both the narrative of **Creation** and **the fourth commandment are literal**.

But ever since I have considered these passages in the light of what is said about them in the rest of **the Bible**, and of what is known of **literary methods** prevailing in ancient times, none of the theories mentioned above have appeared to me to be satisfactory.

Each of these theories will now be subjected to the following tests:

Does it agree with

- (1) All the statements in the **Genesis** narrative?
- (2) All the statements in **the fourth commandment**?
- (3) All **the facts** (not theories) of science?

## The Geological Age Theory

This popular theory is that each **'day'** is a long geological age. The geologist **Sir William Dawson** was one of the leading exponents of this interpretation.

If the **'days'** are interpreted as geological periods of **unknown length**, then the explanation does what those who adopt it desire to do: it enables **Genesis** to be reconciled with science in regard to the slow and gradual formation of **the heavens** and **the earth**, and of the appearance of life on it. As to the time occupied by these geological days, **Sir William Dawson** in his Meeting Place of Geology and History says:

**“Man is of recent introduction on the earth. For millions of years the slow process of world-making has been going on with reference to the physical structure and to the lower grades of living creatures.”**

But is this explanation in general agreement with science? **Sir William** thinks that he can relate the last three geological ages with the last three **'days'** of **Genesis**. Even if it is conceded that this explanation makes **Genesis** agree with science, does it agree with **the Bible**? Can we interpret either the **Genesis** narrative or the fourth commandment consistently so as to give the word **'day'** the significance of an untold number of millions of years?

We may well believe that the geological formation of **the earth** occupied a very long period of time, but is not difficult to interpret **the seventh day** as lasting for an equivalently long period of millions of years? And if all the days are to be interpreted as millions of years then the application to the fourth commandment is difficult to imagine.

In fairness to the advocates of this theory, it must be emphasised that it was **not invented** in recent times simply in order **to harmonise** the **Scripture** with Science.

The interpretation is at least **1,600 years**, old. **Before Christian** thought was pressed by science to allocate a very long time to the geological formation of **the earth**, men felt, that there was something wrong with an interpretation of **Genesis** which involved the **creation** of all things within a period of **144 hours**.

**Professor Dickie** in *The Organism of Christian Truth*, says,

**'The theory was widely held that the six days of creation meant six extended periods of time. It commended itself among others to Augustine ... but neither Augustine nor modern harmonisers of Genesis and Science get the theory, whether true or false, from Scripture. There is nothing in the Bible even to suggest it. On the contrary it has always been read into the Bible from without, on scientific or quasi scientific grounds.'**

Is this theory able to give a satisfactory explanation of **the seventh day** on which **God** ceased from his work? If the **six 'days'** are intended to be read as **six** long geological periods extending to millions of years, how long a period are we to assign to **the seventh day** which **God** sanctified or set apart by ceasing from his work?

No one doubts that the **six days'** work and **the seventh day's** rest which **the Israelites** were enjoined to observe were just ordinary days. Why then should we assume that **the seventh day** is used for a period amounting to thousands of years? And in what sense is the present age which has continued since **Creation** hallowed or sanctified?

can we say that **God** has **rested** or **ceased** from **creation** ever since?

On the use of this word **'day'** **the great Hebraist, C. D. Ginsburg**, wrote,

**'There is nothing in the first chapter of Genesis to justify the spiritualisation of the expression "day."**

On the contrary, the definition given in verse 5 of the word in question imperatively demands that **"yom"** (the **Hebrew** for **"day"**) should be understood in the same sense as we understand the word **"day"** in common parlance, i.e. **as a natural day**.

'The institution of the **sabbath on the seventh day**, which if understood as **an indefinite period** would have **no meaning for man**, and the constant usage of this expression in **Scripture** to denote **an ordinary day**, with the few exceptions of poetical or oratorical diction and the literal meaning which all commentators and **Bible readers** have assigned to it till within the last century, are additional proofs that the primitive record purports to intimate by the expression **"yom"** a **natural day**.

The arguments generally produced by those who ascribe to the word **"day"** here an unlimited duration of time are **untenable**. They say (1) that the word **"day"** is not to be taken here in its literal meaning is evident from chapter 2:4,

**"for the portion of time spoken of in the first chapter of Genesis as six days is spoken of in the 2nd chapter as one day"** (Hugh Miller).

But the word used in the hexaemeron is the simple noun, whereas in chapter 2:4 it is a compound of **"the day of"** with the preposition **"in"**, which, according to the genius of the **Hebrew** language, makes it an adverb, and must be translated, **"when"**, **"at the time"**, **"after"**.

They say (2) that the **Psalm** of **Moses**, 90:4, is decisive for the spiritual meaning. But the reference to that **Psalm** is inapposite; for the matter here in question is not how **God** regards **the days** of **creation**, but how man ought to regard them.'

But the **greatest defect** of this theory is that it does not satisfactorily account for the **six 'evenings and mornings'**. It either ignores, or fails to make any **reasonable interpretation** of them. Was each of them an indefinitely long night in which there was no light?

Was the geological **'night'** as long or almost as long as the geological **'day'**? The words **'evening and morning'** seem very unnatural to describe such a geological night. Was there in any sense an evening and morning to that kind of day, and in what sense has there been a hallowing of the **Sabbath** day which is alleged to have lasted from **Creation** till now?

A variation of the geological age interpretation should be mentioned it is that put forward by **Mr Hugh Capron** in his Conflict of Truth. He says that on each of the **six ordinary days** **God** issued **a commandment**, or pronounced the laws upon which the production of phenomena depends, that just as a man might say **'I will build a house'** or **'I will make a garden'** the resolution takes but a moment; but its accomplishment may take a long time.

While **Mr Capron** has rightly emphasised the reiterated statement that **Genesis** purports to be an account of what **God said !**

He also fails to deal with the **'evenings and mornings'**.

While an **'evening and morning'** is a most natural phrase to separate one day from the next, **Mr Capron's** interpretation does not convince that an **'evening and morning'** is an appropriate method of dividing periods which may have occupied millions of years.

## The Six Days Re-creation Theory

The second theory that of **six days creation** puts forward the idea that there has been two quite distinct **creations** and that these were separated by an unknown period lasting possibly millions of years. It interprets the first chapter of **Genesis** thus; the first sentence

*'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'*

is presumed to be a completed account of (or at least all we are told about) the first or original **creation of the heaven and the earth**. The theory assumes that plant, animal and human life were, included in that **creation** notwithstanding that no mention is made of the **creation** of life until later in the chapter.

The second verse is said to leave room for, or to assume that a, catastrophe came upon **the earth** affecting **the Sun** and **moon**, resulting in **the earth** becoming **'darkness and waters'**, chaos and ruin, involving the destruction of all plant, animal and human life.

The remaining verses (3-31) are said to refer to the **six literal days** in which **God Re-created the earth**. **The light** is made to **appear again**, the waters which had covered **the earth** are made to recede so that dry land appeared and all plant, animal and human| life are recreated - all in **six ordinary days of twenty four hours each**. This theory then assumes that chapter 2:1-4 refers only to **the second** or **Re-creation** period. .

Again, it is obvious that this interpretation has been adopted because of the impossibility of compressing the geological formation of **the earth** into a period of **six ordinary days**.<sup>1</sup> This difficulty is obviated by stating what is doubtless true, that the period occupied by the events of verse 2 may be a vast number of millions, of years.

But it is equally obvious that the theory creates more difficulties than it attempts to solve.<sup>2</sup> While it provides the long periods required by geology, and also adheres to the **Scripture** narrative as to the literalness of the **six days**, it gives no satisfactory reason for the **'evenings and the mornings'**.



Notwithstanding **G. H. Pember's** insistence that those who adopt the geological ages theory fail to explain these '**evenings and mornings**', it is very significant that he himself fails to do so. Are we to suppose that **God Re-created the earth** and all life upon it in **six** ordinary days, and then only during the daylight hours of those **six days**?

It is submitted that **Scripture** gives us no information whatever about these alleged two quite distinct and complete **creations** separated from each other by millions of years. And science for its part has no knowledge of the **alleged universal destruction** of all marine, animal and human life in one catastrophe.

Nor is it aware of an infinitely long period of perhaps millions of years when, after all forms of life had existed on **the earth**, there was left no kind of life whatever on it. **Isaiah** 45:18 is sometimes quoted as **evidence** that the second verse in **Genesis** refers to a **catastrophic ruin** which had overwhelmed **the earth** and all life on it. Does the statement

***'He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited'***

imply such a thing? Is not this verse in entire agreement with **Genesis** 1.2, that the formlessness and emptiness does not express **God's** final purpose for the world? It must be borne in mind that the second verse in **Genesis** refers to a time when **the Spirit of God** is said to be already working on **the earth.**'

Those who adopt this **Re-creation** theory say that subsequent to the second verse (except presumably the reference to **the Sun** and **the Moon** in verses 14-18) the whole passage relates to **the earth**. It is said that it is **the earth** only, not the heavens, which were **Re-created** in the **six days**. Seeing that they assume the fourth commandment refers to the **six days** as being the time occupied by **God** in **creation**, they appear to have overlooked the fact that according to this assumption the fourth commandment says that **God** did something relating not only to **the earth**, but also **the heavens** during the **six days**.

## **The Vision Theory**

Another explanation - **the vision theory** - has been advanced to explain the '**days**'. It is said that the narrator had visions of each stage of the **Creation** on each of the **six days**. This explanation at least has the merit that it does not involve the **creation** or **Re-creation** of all things in **144 hours** (6 days x 24 hours) or use the word '**day**' to indicate a long geological period.

But can it be sustained? I think not in its present form, because one significant fact about this first narrative is that all the marks of a vision are absent. We do not read *'I beheld', 'I saw'*, as we do for visions later recorded in **the Bible**. On the contrary, we read that *'God saw'*.

The difference between a normal narrative and a vision may be seen when we compare this record with such a passage as **Jeremiah** 4:23-4, which has been, used in order to illustrate verse 2,

**'I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled.'**

It has sometimes been suggested that the **earlier chapters** of **the Bible** resemble its **last chapters**. They do, but there is this important difference. The one is a narrative; the other a vision. A comparison quickly shows the difference in style. In the book of Revelation we read

**"saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away... and I heard a voice out of heaven saying.."**

Phrases such as *'I turned to see', 'after this I looked and lo'*, and the constantly repeated *'I saw'* are. **entirely absent** from the **Genesis** account.

**Dr S. R. Driver (Genesis)** stated, the narrative contains **no indication** of its being the relation of a vision (which in other cases is regularly noted.

E.g. **Amos** 7-9; **Isaiah** 6; **Ezek.** 1, etc.); it purports to describe not appearances (*'And I saw and behold...'*), but facts (*'let the earth... and it was so'*), and to substitute one for the other is, consequently illegitimate.

It is important to note his statement! that it purports to describe not appearances but facts.'

A still less satisfactory way of dealing with the narrative is to say that **'it must be read as poetry'**.

It is sufficient to cite **Dr Ginsburg's** comment on this, **'there is in this chapter none of the peculiarities of Hebrew poetry'**. **It is prose**, not poetry, and purports to be an account of what **'God said'**.

## The Antedate or Artificial Week Theory

The fourth theory is that which found favour with such moderately critical scholars as S. R. Driver and J. Skinner. It is said by this school of thought that the Creation narrative is nothing else than the common stock of oral traditions of the Israelite nation which had been originally borrowed from Babylonian sources and that it was put into writing about the eighth century BC. That this is not the case will be seen in later chapters.

S. R. Driver tells us that, 'Genesis 2:1-3, it will be observed, does not name the sabbath, or lay down any law for its observance by man. All that it says is that God "desisted" on the seventh day from his work, and that he "blessed" and "hallowed" the day.

It is, however, impossible to doubt the introduction of the seventh day as simply part of the writer's representation, and that its sanctity is in reality antedated, instead viz. of the seventh day of the week being sacred, because God desisted on it from his six days' work of creation, the work of creation was distributed among six days, followed by a day of rest, because the week, ended by the sabbath, existed already as an institution. The writer wished to adjust artificially the work of creation to it. In other words, the week, ended by the sabbath, determined the "days" of creation, not the "days" of creation the week.'

S. R. Driver having adopted the theory that the Genesis narrative in its present form is a comparatively late production and that the fourth commandment predated it, some such explanation became necessary. But I suggest that it is a most remarkable fact that the alleged unknown writer of Genesis does not mention the word 'sabbath'. Surely he would have done so if he had been engaged on such an attempt to 'fake' the narrative as described. Not to have done so would be fatal to his purpose. This antedate theory generally rejects the Genesis narrative as real history.

## The Myth or Legend Theory

The last of the theories is not very different. It is that the Genesis narrative is mythological or legendary in character and does not warrant serious attention as a reputable historical document. This theory would have merited greater scrutiny if a satisfactory explanation had been given as to why the account has been written without mythological or legendary elements. E. Kautzsch, who is otherwise critical of these early narratives, says,

**'it avoids all intermixture of a mythological character in particular, all thought of an evolution such as is usually bound up inseparably with the cosmogonies of ancient religions'** (Hastings Bible Dictionary).

The idea popularised by **C. Wolff** two centuries ago, by which he endeavoured to explain all ancient stories as myths, has been generally discarded by scholars, though it sometimes reappears in surprising places. As **L. R. Farnell** says,

**“There has come in recent years, to aid both our sanity and our science, the conviction that the most potent cause of the type of myths just referred to has been the actual reality or historic matter of fact”**

There is also the person who tells us that religious truthfulness and scientific truthfulness are not the same thing. If what is meant by this is that biblical and scientific explanations of events are not at all likely to be made in the same way, we agree. But, if it means that the truth of one may in reality be misleading error, then we disagree.<sup>3</sup>

I submit that all these theories and **'explanations'** fail to determine in a complete and reasonable way what **God** did for **six days** and why he ceased **on the seventh day**.

## **What Then is The Explanation**

Before an answer can be given we must again take note precisely what the fourth commandment says and also what **Genesis** says. In the remaining part of this chapter we will examine the words used in the fourth commandment, leaving the **Genesis** account to the next chapter.

If words mean anything, it is obvious that the revelation from **God** on Mount Sinai was of the greatest possible significance. Nowhere in **the Old Testament** is there anything to equal it in awe and solemnity. If the nineteenth chapter of **Exodus** is carefully read, it will be seen how important the occasion was. Nearly two centuries had passed without any exceptional revelation from heaven. Then we read,

**'And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the Mount and be there: and I will give thee tables (tablets) of stone, and a law, and Commandments which I have written' (Exod. 24:12).**

Those **'Ten words'** thereafter came, to have a special significance. Thus **'saith the Lord'** prefaces the utterances of the prophets. Yet a clear distinction was drawn between these prophetic revelations and the giving of **the law on Sinai**.

It is a difference not so much in degree of the revelation, as in its status and circumstances. The law had been given by **God** speaking 'face to face' with **Moses**; it is said to have been personally communicated to him in a most exceptional manner.

When did **the seventh day's** rest originate? There can be no doubt that it was introduced at a very early date. That this could not have been **on the first day** after the **creation** of the first man will later become evident. For many important incidents are stated to have occurred in the interval between the **creation** of the man and that of the woman. But obviously the rest period had lost much of its proper significance by the time of the **Exodus**, for on **Mount Sinai** **God** called upon the **Israelites** to

*'Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.'*

Specific directions were then given concerning the manner in which it should be kept. Unlike the early **Babylonians** the **Egyptians** apparently did not keep a **seventh day's** rest, so that the **Israelites** who had been slaves in **Egypt** had not been permitted this rest. The fact that **the seventh day** had a recognised significance, prior to the introduction of the **sabbath**, may be clearly seen by reference to **Exodus** 16, where the cessation of the manna is recorded, for this incident happened before the fourth commandment was given.

Moreover, evidence of the institution of an observance of **the seventh day** may also be seen during the Flood (**Gen.** 7:4; 8:10). The division into weeks can also be seen in the history of **Jacob** (**Gen.** 29:27-8). There is however no sufficient reason to suppose that the Patriarchs were required to keep **the seventh day** in precisely the same way as the Israelites were commanded to keep the **sabbath** after the giving of the law.<sup>4</sup>

## The Words of Commandment Four

Precisely what does **the fourth commandment** say about **the seven days**? translates **Exodus** 20:11:

*'For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.'*

First we notice that in the **Hebrew** version we find that the word 'in' does not appear. And the best manuscripts of the **Septuagint Version** omit 'the sea'.

In editions such as **Professor Swete's Cambridge Septuagint** these words form no part of the text. Moreover, the word '**seventh**' is found instead of '**sabbath**'.

The word translated **rested**, like the same word in **Genesis 2:3**, simply means '**ceased**', or '**desisted**'. It does not necessarily mean the rest of relaxation. For this, quite a different **Hebrew** word is used. In **Arabic** the word **sabbat** means '**to cut off**', '**to interrupt**', and in **Assyrian** '**to cease**'. Another word which needs comment is the **Hebrew** word '**malak**' translated '**work**'.

It expressly refers to ordinary work and **S. R. Driver** renders it business; it simply means occupation. **Delitzsch** says of it,

*It is not so much a term denoting a lighter kind of labour as a general comprehensive term applied to the performance of any task whether easy or severe.'*

The idea of **creation** is not in any way inherent in it. Finally **the precise significance of the word 'made'** must be understood, because the meaning of the passage is dependent upon the sense in which it is used in this verse. It is a translation of the **Hebrew** word '**asa**', a very common **Hebrew** word which is used over **2,500** times in **the Old Testament**. On more than **1,500** occasions it is translated '**do**' or '**did**'. The word itself does not in any way explain what the person '**did**' or what was '**done**'. As **R. Young** says,

**'The original word has great latitude of meaning and application.**

**In verse 11 it means to make or yield fruit.**

**In 2 Samuel 19:24, to dress (or trim) a beard.'**

Yet notwithstanding that this word has such **a wide application**, there has been a tendency to elevate its meaning in this fourth commandment to the equivalent of the word '**created**'. **It necessarily means no such thing.**

It simply says that **God** did something and what **God** did on the **six days** can only be discovered by the context in which the word originally appeared. One thing however is quite clear, the fourth commandment does not use the word '**bara**' or **create** or say that **God** created **the heavens** and **the earth** in **six days**. The use of the word '**asa**' in the immediate context of **Exodus 20** is illuminating:

**Verse 9** **Six days** shalt you **do (asa)** all your work.

10 In it you shalt not **do (asa)** any work.

11 For in **Six days** the **Lord made (asa)** the **heavens** and **earth**.

If only the translators of had translated the word **'asa'** in verse 11 in precisely the same way as they had the two preceding verses, the difficulties we have experienced might possibly never have arisen.

Its literal translation would then have read

*'For in six days the Lord **did (asa) the heavens and the earth... and rested on the seventh day.'***

We should then have asked from **Genesis 1** what the Lord did for **the six days**, and why he rested **on the seventh day**. Instead of which it has been incorrectly assumed that during the **six days** he was creating **the earth**.

### **The Meaning of The Hebrew Word 'asa'**

Further instances of the exceptionally wide meaning possessed by the **Hebrew** word **'asa'**, translated **'made'**, may be seen by reference to any good **Hebrew** concordance. In **Brown, Driver, and Briggs** edition of **Gesenius** the following meanings are assigned to it;

**'do', 'make', 'produce', 'yield', 'acquire', 'appoint', 'ordain', & 'prepare'.**

It is therefore obvious that the word must be translated in the light of its context. Here are some translations of this word as they appear elsewhere in .

**Genesis 18:8** the calf he had **dressed (asa)**

20:9 you have **done (asa)** deeds unto me.

20:10 that you has **done (asa)** this thing.

21:23 kindness which I have **done (asa)** unto thee.

27:17 the savoury meat and bread she had **prepared (asa)**

**Exodus 19:4** ye have seen what I **did (asa)** unto the **Egyptians**.

23:22 obey his voice and **do (asa)** all that I speak.

It is obvious that in such an instance as occurs in **Genesis 18:8** the word **'asa'** is not intended to convey the idea that **Abraham** either **created** or **made** the calf he was preparing for a meal.

There certainly would have been no difficulty, for instance, if this word had been rendered in exactly the same way as it was by the translators of (and as the Revisers did **250** years later) in the following passages:

**Genesis** 19:19 which you have **shown (asa)**.

24:14 you have **shown (asa)** kindness.

32:10 the truth which you have **shown** unto your servant,

6:17 then **show** me a sign that you talked with me. ,

If the fourth commandment had been similarly translated it would read,

*'For in six days the Lord **shown (asa) the heavens and the earth and all that in them is and rested on the seventh day.'***

What did the **Israelites** of that day understand by the fourth commandment? Surely this, that because **God did** something for **six literal days** and **ceased** on a **seventh day**, they too were required to work for **six days** and **to cease** on **the seventh**. There is not the slightest indication, or impression that there had been **some miracle of speed** in **creation**.

It does not imply that **the Creator of the heavens and the earth** had **need** of a **day's** rest after **six days** work, or that the commandment referred to **six** long geological ages, or that the day of **God's** cessation was also a correspondingly long geological period of time.

Neither here nor anywhere else is there anything which would lead Israel to infer that all had been accomplished as in a flash, or that **Creation** occupied a limited period of time. Nor would they think it referred to a second **Creation, or to six literal days** of **Re-creation** and then a very long period for **the seventh day**.

They accepted the plain meaning that **God did** something for **six ordinary days** and ceased on a **seventh** literal day.

Read in the sense of its use in other passages in the same documents, the word '**asa**' would not convey to them the meaning of **Creation** in **six days**, but of something done in **six days**. If then **God** was not creating the **heaven** and **the earth** during these **six days** what was he doing ?

The **Genesis** narrative considered in the next two chapters will help us to answer this question.



## A SUGGESTED SOLUTION

On the first page of **the Bible** there is an additional statement about the **six 'days'**. It is that each of them is divided by an 'evening and a morning'. Therefore an interpretation which would make these days other than ordinary **twenty-four-hour** days seems impossible, and must be set aside. To a modern reader, as to those of ancient times, these days (each with their **evenings and mornings**) imply **six days** of ordinary length.

### What did God do on those six days ? And why did he cease on the seventh ?

I submit that the answers usually given to these questions have not been very satisfactory. This is all the more remarkable, seeing that if is possible to give an entirely convincing answer to the second question without any hesitation whatever, because our **Lord** himself answered it. In a weighty Statement, made on an important occasion, he declared that

*'the sabbath was made for man'* (Mark 2; 27).<sup>1</sup>

He was **the Lord** of the **sabbath** (v. 28) and claimed to be the one who from **Creation** exercised authority over **the seventh day** and therefore could authoritatively state both its purpose and origin. In this context he is referring here to the introduction of the **sabbath** at the beginning, for mankind generally, not to **the Sinai laws**.

**It is** clear therefore that **the seventh day** was originally introduced by **God** in order that man could rest for a day and not in order that **God** could rest for a day. **The Creator** did not need a **seventh day's** rest; its introduction, said **our Lord**, was for man's benefit, not **God's**. That this is abundantly clear may be seen from every reference **the fourth commandment** to the purpose of **the seventh day**.

It was to be a **day's** rest after **six days** of work or business, and it extended even to the trained cattle which had, worked for **six days**. Our Lord's attitude to the **Sabbath** is, illuminating. Everything he said about it was to the effect that should there be anything in keeping the **sabbath** day inconsistent with man's true welfare in relation to **the Creator**, then he was prepared in that respect to have it broken. As **J. A. Bengel** says,

**'The origin and end of things must be kept in view; the blessing of the sabbath in Genesis 2:3 has regard to man.'**

Every **Bible** commentator has realised the difficulty created by the assumption that **the seventh day** was instituted by **God** for his own rest. They have all seen that it is necessary to **'explain'** such a remarkable idea which has been thoughtlessly assumed. The usual **'explanation'** is that **God** did not really rest, or cease, **on the seventh day**; but he has rested, or ceased from **creation**, ever since. Is such an idea true either to **Scripture** or science?

Had our Lord's statement been borne in mind, we should be saved from thinking that this **seventh day's** rest was instituted by

**God** as being necessary for himself. Such a conception is clearly contrary to the rest of **Scripture**. In the description of the **Creation** in **Isaiah** 40, we read,

***"Have you not known? have you not heard? that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not neither is weary."***

So the answer to our second question, why did **God cease on the seventh day**, is quite simple and unquestionable: He **ceased** for **man's sake** in order that **man might rest**.

The above answer assists us in answering the former question, What did **God** do on **the six days**? As **the seventh day** was undoubtedly introduced for **man's benefit**, then it is only reasonable to suppose that what was done on the **'six days'** also had to do with man; and if with man, then obviously on the **six days** **God** was **not creating the earth** and all life, because man was **not in the world** when these were being **created**.

## **The evenings and mornings**

Fortunately it is not necessary to rely on **'reasonable suppositions'** and **'assumptions'**, for we are expressly told that each of the **six days** was divided by **'an evening** and **a morning'**.

Why these **six 'evenings and mornings'**? Why were they introduced? For **Gods** sake or for **man**? It seems not to have occurred to **the Bible** commentators to ask this simple question. If they had, there could have been no doubt about the answer. Endless difficulties have been created in thinking that **Almighty God the Creator**, **ceased** his work of **creating** the world as the **evening** drew on, and recommenced it as **morning light** appeared. An instance of the difficulty caused by this false assumption may be seen when that capable writer on this subject, **Sir Robert Anderson**, wrote in his **Bible and Modern Criticism**,

**'The problem may be stated thus. As man is to God so his day of four and twenty hours is to the Divine day of creation, and here I would suggest that the "evening and the morning" represent the interval of cessation from work which succeeds and completes the day.**

The words are,

***"and there was evening and there was morning, one day".***

**The symbolism is maintained throughout. As man's working day is brought to a close by evening, which ushers in a period of repose, lasting till morning calls him back to his daily toil, so the great Artificer is represented as turning aside from His work at the end of each "day" of creation and again resuming the next morning.'**

Because **Sir Robert** assume that during those **six days** **God** was **creating** the universe, he found it **necessary** to explain the **six evenings** and **mornings** as **symbolic nights** on which **God** rested and not man.

That they are rightly regarded as nightly periods of rest may be seen by the comment made **1900 years** ago by **Josephus** (who, in this matter, represents the Jewish opinion of that time) that

**'these evenings and mornings were times of rest'.**

We agree, but for **whom**? If **the seventh day's** rest was introduced for **man's sake**, are we to represent the **six** nightly period of cessation as being introduced to meet **God's** need of rest ? He who did not need a **seventh day's** rest, did he need a **nightly one** Was it necessary for **God** to cease from his work of **creation** when darkness came on, and to wait till morning light dawned before he could resume? The idea needs only to be stated in this blur fashion in order to enable us to see that the cessation of the **six mornings** and **evenings** was to meet man's necessity for rest.

**God himself** had no need of a nightly rest,

***'He faints not, neither weary,'***

So it is evident that, during these **six days** preceding it, **God** must have been doing something which also occupied the attention of man, and that on each of these **six nights** **God** ceased for man's sake.

## What was God doing?

How unworthy of **God** has been the idea that this record of **Creation** was ever intended to teach that, at sunset, **the Almighty God** turned aside from creating the world and resumed it at sunrise! **Evenings** and **mornings** have to do with the inhabitants of this planet earth: **God**, who dwells in light, is not limited by periods of darkness over half **the earth**, but man is.

Is it legitimate to think of the **God of heaven**, when creating, being unable to continue because of the turning of **the earth** upon its axis, or by its movements in relation to the Sun ? These things affect man's time, not **God's**.

As the **creation Psalm** (139:12) says,

***'Darkness hides not from Thee, but the night shines as the day;  
the darkness and light are both alike to Thee,'***

but of man it says (**Ps.** 104:23),

***'Man goes forth unto his work and to his labour until evening.'***

It should have been obvious to us by the very mention of the

***'evening and morning'***

in those **six days**, and of the cessation **on the seventh day**, that **God** was doing something with man during each of the **six days**.

It is clear, therefore, that he was not creating **the heavens** and **the earth**. When he called light out of darkness, when he made **the atmospheric firmament**, when he caused the waters to recede and dry land to appear, man was not there to know anything about it.

**Evenings** and **mornings** were unknown, and man had then not been created. The activities of the days in the first chapter of **Genesis** cannot therefore refer to the period of time occupied by **God** in the **creation** of the world. Those **six nightly periods** of rest, as well as **the seventh day's** rest, were introduced after man had been created. Consequently the first page of **the Bible** must refer to **six days** during which **God** did something in relation to **Creation** after man was on **the earth**.

Thus far we have reached a partial answer to our first question. We know what **God** did **not do** for the **six days**; he was not creating **the heavens** and **the earth**; the narrative certainly does not teach that. Better, we have some positive information. He was doing something after man had been created and in which man was concerned.

What did **God** do in the presence of man for **six days**? The record gives a very simple answer. **God** was **saying** something about **Creation**. Each of those **six days** commences with '**God said**', and it is a record of what **God** said to man, as stated in verse 28, '**And God said unto them**'. The word is used in the present tense, '**God said**'. It is therefore not only a statement of a command given by **God** in the past; it is more; it is a record of what he then was **saying** to man about **Creation**.

These two things have always been evident; there is the conjoint repetition of '**God created**' and '**God said**'. This double aspect has puzzled many. For instance, **J. Skinner** says,

**'The occurrence of the "so" before the execution of the fiat produces a redundancy which may be concealed, but is not removed by substituting "so" for "and" in "the interpretation."**

This feature has been **called 'the two fold conception of creation'**.

I submit that the textual statement is an account of what "**God said**" about the things **God** made. In other words, it is **his revelation** to man about his **creative acts** which were already completed.

## **The Giving of Names**

Consequently this narrative is a series of statements to man about what **God** had done in **the ages past**. It is a record of the **six days** occupied by **God** in revealing to man the story of **Creation**. We are told what **God** said **on the first day** about the separation of light from darkness, then came **the evening** and **the morning**. **The second day God said** how he had made the atmosphere with its waters below and above it, and **on the third day** how he had caused **the waters** to recede so that **dry land appeared**.

It is **a narrative** of what **God said to man**. There is no suggestion that the **acts** or **processes of God** had occupied those **six days**.

During the **daylight hours** of those **six days God told man** how in **the ages past** he had '**commanded and it stood fast**'. **God explained** in such a clear way that man could understand **how he had created the world** and introduced life upon it, including finally man himself.

Another significant thing should be noticed. At the time **'God said'** to man about **Creation**, he gave **names** to the things he spoke about. **The first day** he called **the light 'day'** and **the darkness** he called **'night'**; **on the second day**, when telling about the firmament, he called it **'heaven'** and then we read how **on the third day**, **'God called the dry land earth and the gathering together of the waters called he seas'**.

Why did **God** give **names** to these things? A name **to identify** a thing is **not necessary** to **God**, but it is necessary for man. The supposition that **God** gave names to things, **before man** had been **created**, has been a great perplexity to all commentators. When we see that **the names** were given for **man's sake** still another difficulty which has embarrassed many commentators **now disappears**.

During the daylight hours of each of the **six** successive days (each divided by an **evening** and a **morning**, when man rested), **God** revealed to him something new about **Creation**, and during the first three days gave to man the names of the things he had revealed. When at the end of the **six days** **God** had finished talking with man he instituted **the seventh day** as a rest day for **man's sake**. In **six days** **God** had revealed **'the heavens** and **the earth** and all that in them is and the **six days** occupied in this work were followed by a day of rest. As **Dillman** says,

**'God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, that is not later on, but just then on the seventh day.'**

It may be said that all this is **very anthropomorphic** of course it is. It is **God giving names** for the instruction of man and recognising man's need of rest. The whole of **the Bible** is frankly **anthropomorphic**. At one time it was used as an argument against this narrative of **Creation** that it looks at everything from man's point of view; that this planet **earth** is regarded as the thing of greatest consequence in **Creation**.

What else should we expect in the circumstances? It was this **planet**, and not **the Sun, Mars, Jupiter** that man was interested in. Modern science has shown that human life as we know it **exists only on this planet**.

**'When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers; the Moon and the stars which you have ordained; what is man that you art mindful of him? And the son of man that you cares for him? For you have made him a little lower than the angels and have crowned him with glory and honour. you made him to have dominion over the works of your hands; you has put all things under his feet'** (Ps, 8:3-6).

In past interpretations this **anthropomorphism** has been applied to **God** apart from man. It has been assumed that before man existed **God** gave objects names. Whereas it was, on the contrary, that **God** was in the process of **explaining his works** of **creation** to man. In the second narrative of **Genesis** we read how **God** talked with man, **instructed him in language**, and taught him to give **names to created things**, and in the choice between **good** and **evil**.

**The Bible** account of **the origin of man** is that of a person who was made in the image and likeness of **God**, his maker, with **a capable mind**. It is in this that he mostly differs from the animal **creation**. It is the conceptual qualities of his mind which enable him to use language, and gives him ideas of space and time. Man became possessed of this knowledge by what **God** said, especially during those **six days**.

## **The Reasons for The Revelation**

It may be asked, why should **God** talk to man about **Creation**? Just because it was the one subject about which man could know nothing with certainty except **God** revealed it to him. Other things he may be able to find out for himself, and his accumulated human experience and acquired knowledge could be handed down.

But if man was to know anything trustworthy about the important subject of the origin of things around him, it was vitally necessary that **God** should tell it to him in such **a simple way** as would enable him to **understand**.

This is just what the **Genesis** narrative does. We are often told that no part of **the Bible** was revealed in order to tell man what he could find out for himself. If that is true, then the first chapter of **Genesis** would need to be revealed by **God**, because it was not possible for a writer either in the eighth or any earlier century to discover by reflection or research the facts of **Creation** as given in this narrative.

The attitude of **the Old Testament** is that man knew about these things, because **God** had **revealed them to him**, and not because some man had the ability **to think it out for himself**.

As **J. Denney** wrote,

**'To begin with creation in Scripture constantly appears as an inspiration to worship. The contemplation of heaven and the earth fills the mind with adoring thoughts of God. We see it in Psalms like the 8th, the 19th, the 29th, the 34th, and the 104th and many more.**

***"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night teaches knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is, not heard. Their line is gone in to all the earth and their words unto the ends of the world."***

**The Psalmist did not mean that he came to know God by studying astronomy.'**

It has been assumed by some that **God** waited until the time of: **Moses**, or even later, before revealing this account of **Creation**. This assumption implies that **God left men in the dark** for a considerable period of time. When **Moses** lived there were in **Egypt** alone nearly **two thousand gods**, as well as **hopeless ideas** concerning **Creation**. A long period of time elapsed between the **creation** of man and **Moses**. Had these ages no revelation of **God** as **Creator** ?

There are many reasons why **God** should not leave man in the early days to grope in the dark concerning the origin and significance of created things around him. Subsequent events teach us that it is just on this very subject - the otherwise unknown - that man speculated and went wrong; **worshipping created things** instead of **the Creator**.

**In New Testament** words

(Rom. 1:21-5), **'Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things, They changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator'.**

Early history is sufficient illustration of the way in which the facts about **God** as **Creator** and of his **creation** were changed into the worship of the Sun and **the moon**, and how a mixture **representations of man, animals** and **birds** became endowed by man with **the attributes** of **god** a **god** made not merely in **the image** of **man**, but of **beasts** and **creeping things**.



So it is not at all difficult to understand why **God** should tell man about himself and about **Creation** in **the earliest days**.

Even **A. Dillman**, who is critical of the **Genesis** account and rejects the possibility of a primitive narrative concerning **Creation** (because he assumes that early man was not sufficiently intelligent to understand anything regarding **Creation**), says,

**'There exists in the spirit of man as soon as he attains to a certain maturity an unavoidable necessity which compels the formation of opinions regarding religious themes on which experience throws no light. One of these themes concerns the beginning of things.'**

Where there is intelligence, the question was bound to arise; **even a child** will ask **who made the stars and other visible things?**

### **A New Attitude Required**

A deistical outlook has developed in the mind of many in the present day. It seems to imagine that **God**, having given the world some sort of start in the immeasurably distant past and having placed within it an infinite potentiality, then left both the world and man in it to evolve without his supervision or care. **Needless to say** this is contrary to **the Bible** view.

**God** has never ceased from his **creation**,

**'My Father still works and I am working'** (John 5:17).

Because the **six days** have been misunderstood as though they were periods occupied by **God** in his creative acts, instead of the time occupied by him revealing what he had created in the past, the first page of **the Bible** has fallen into not a little reproach, and has become a **stumbling block** to many. The misunderstanding may not have mattered gravely until this last century.

Now there is a serious conflict between the interpretations made by **Christians** of **God's** words, and by **scientists of his works**. The writer believes that this should never have occurred. Nor should those interminable **'explanations'** have arisen concerning how there could have been **'days'** and **'evenings and mornings'** before **the Sun** and Moon were functioning in relation to **the earth**. They if the reader agrees with our thesis are seen to have been entirely irrelevant.

The foregoing interpretation has not been presented as a method of escape from the difficulties of the **six days**. It arises both from the implicit statement made by our Lord about **the origin** of **the seventh day** of rest and from the repeated statements made about the **'evenings and mornings'** in the **Genesis** narrative.

It is submitted that this new interpretation explains these statements not by explaining them away, but by accepting them in the most literal manner, and in accordance with the general usage of the ancient words.

A further question naturally defends itself – **when** and **to whom** was the **revelation** regarding **Creation** made ?

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COLOPHON

It has been explained that a **Colophon** is a note added at the end of an account, giving particulars of **the title, date, name of writer or owner**, together with other details relating to **the contents** of A tablet, manuscript, or book. When used on ancient tablets its purpose was similar to that which may be seen in old manuscript. and books.

**The Oxford English Dictionary** defines it as

**'the inscription or device, formerly placed at the end of a book at manuscript, and containing the title, the scribe's or printer's name date and place of printing.'**

Instances of its use may still be seen at the end of some **modern magazines** and **newspapers** where **the names** of the printers, **the place** where printed, and sometimes **the date** of the printing are given. In modern books the **Colophon** had fallen into disuse; the information originally given in a **Colophon**. having been transferred to **the first or title page**.

It is often said that the only reasonable way to read **the Bible** is to read it in the same way as we do an ordinary book. Presumably what is meant by this is that any book **should be read** in **the light of the times** and **circumstances in which it was written**, and there can be no question as to the wisdom of this advice.

But in the case of **the oldest pieces of writing**, this has **scarcely been possible** until the last century when excavation and decipherment of ancient writing has enabled scholars to become acquainted with the literary methods prevailing in **the Tigris** and **Euphrates** districts in early times. Consequently it has only been possible in more recent times to compare the literary construction of this **Genesis** narrative with **other ancient methods of writing**. But it cannot be regarded as other than serious that notwithstanding archaeological discoveries many still read this **Creation** record, not as ancient, but as though it had been written in relatively modern times.

**This date**, however, does not refer to the time when the world was created but, as it states, **to the day** when **the histories** or records were finished.

Those acquainted with the method of **'dating'** tablets in the ancient world will readily recognise this phrase

***'in the day the Lord God did the earth and heavens'***

as indicating the date of the **Genesis Creation** tablets.

Both the **Babylonians**, **Egyptians** and **Assyrians** gave the year a name by identifying it with some important happening in that year. There is a sense in which we, have done something similar, when we date from the greatest of all events, the birth of our Lord. Here are some ancient instances of **'dating'** taken from ancient tablets:

**'Year Sumuel the King built the wall of Sippar.'**

**'Year the canal Tutu-hengal (i.e. the year the canal was dug).'**

Although almost **every commentator** has recognised the phrase

**'in the day ..,'**

as a date, they have **wrongly assumed** that it is the date on which the world was created.

Long ago **A. Dillman** translated the phrase by the words **'at the time of...'**

As **the Hebraist, C. D. Ginsburg**, pointed out, the word **'day'** as used in the first chapter of **Genesis** is the **simple noun**, whereas in **chapter 2; 4** it is a compound of **'day'** with **the preposition 'in'** which according to the genius of the **Hebrew language** makes it **an adverb**, so it must be translated **'when'** or **'at the time'**.

## **The Series**

Next we noticed that it was often necessary to use a series of tablets in order to write a narrative. In **Babylonia** the account of **Creation** was generally written on **six tablets** and these were serially numbered at the end of each tablet. The evidence for this will be given in the next chapter. At the end of each of the **six sections** of the first narrative of **Creation** we see that these **same serial numbers 'one to six'** are given.

The **Hebrew** word used for **'one'** indicates that this is **the first** of a series and the article is employed in connection with **'day sixth'** to indicate **the close of a series**.

## The Finish of The Series

In regard to the fourth piece of information given on the **Colophon**, we know that when more than one tablet was necessary in order to record a narrative, it was a custom to state on the last of the series of tablets that the narrative was finished and sometimes to indicate on the earlier tablets of the same series that the narrative was 'not finished'. A significant instance of this appears on **tablet No. 93016** in the British collection. This tablet is the fourth in the celebrated series of **six Babylonian Creation** tablets, and the **Colophon** reads,

**'am sumati tuppū 4-kdm-ma enuma elis ulqati**

that is, 'tablet 4 of **"when on high"** (that is the title given to the series of tablets) not finished'. Unfortunately the **Colophon** of **the sixth tablet** of the same **Creation** series is badly damaged. The only words which remain legible are **'sixth of "when on high" ...'** Had we access to the original text of this **Colophon** or had this one been in a more decipherable state it would probably have read **'sixth tablet of "when on high" finished'**, Just as final tablets of other series do. An example of this may be seen in,

**S. H. Langdon's Sumerian** and **Babylonian Psalms** where he reproduces a series of liturgical tablets. These are often composed in a set of **six tablets**. The last tablet of one series reads, 'Tablet **six** of... which is finished', indicating that the series was finished or completed at the end of the sixth tablet.

It has been assumed that the reference to **'finished'** is to the acts or processes of **Creation**.<sup>2</sup> What was finished **on the sixth day** was the revelation and recording of the acts of **Creation** long past. And I suggest that the reason why the **Babylonians** and **Assyrians** clung so tenaciously throughout the centuries of their history to this particular number of tablets, **six**, on which they recorded their **Creation** stories, was that it was originally written on **six tablets**.

If we look at the opening words of the **Colophon** attached to the **Genesis** narrative we read **'and were finished the "heavens and the earth"'** (the title given to the series). **The verb finished** occupies **the first position** in the **Hebrew**. So the **Genesis** text uses the word in a manner similar to the literary custom which prevailed in ancient times, thus indicating that the **sixth tablet** concluded the series of tablets on which the account of the **creation** of **'the heavens and the earth'** had been recorded. Compare our older printed books, which ended with **'Finis'**

This mistake has been made notwithstanding the very obvious fact that the narrative itself is constructed in a most antique manner by use of a framework of repeated phrases. However, **almost every scholar** in modern times has recognised that **Genesis 2:1-4** is a **Colophon** or **appendix** to the first narrative of **Creation**. We do not know who wrote the **Colophon** as we now have it; that is whether part was copied from the ancient tablet or whether, when compiling **Genesis, Moses** or some early writer added it.

Until the time of **Alexander the Great** (indeed as long as documents continued to be written in **Babylonia** and **Assyria**) they were generally written on **stone** or **clay tablets**, and the **Colophon**, with its important literary information, was added in a very distinctive manner. There can be no reasonable doubt that any account of **Creation** read by **Abraham** in **Babylonia**, would in the usual way be written on tablets similar to these,<sup>1</sup> The **Colophon** often contains the following information:

- (1) The **'Title'** or designation given to the narrative.
- (2) The date of writing
- (3) The **serial number** of the tablet, when it formed part of a series.
- (4) If **part of a series** of tablets, a statement whether the tablet, did or **did not finish** the series.
- (5) The **name** of the scribe or owner.

When we turn to the **Colophon** to the **Creation** tablets (Gen. 2; 1-4) this is what we find:

- (1) The title - **'the heavens and the earth'**.
- (2) The date **'in the day that the Lord did 'asa' the earth and heavens'**.
- (3) That it was written on. a series of **tablets** (numbered one to six)
- (4) It states that after **the sixth tablet** the writing was **finished**.
- (5) **The only name** appearing on this **Colophon** is the name of **the Lord God**. (In this instance can it possibly be intended to indicate the author or writer?)

## The Literary aids in The Colophon

We will look at these **literary aids** in the order mentioned above.

### The Title

The **'Title'** given to an ancient piece of writing was usually taken from the opening words of **the first tablet**. In this instance **the title** is **'the heavens and the earth'**. Long before the time of **Abraham** the **cuneiform** or **wedge** shaped script was in general use, but earlier still the simpler method of pictographic writing was used. Therefore any document written in **Babylonia** would later need to be translated into **Hebrew**.

When translations are made the position of words in a sentence often undergo a change; this may be seen from the difference between the **Hebrew order of the words**,

*'In the beginning created God the heavens and the earth',*

and the English order as in our **Bible**. That the phrase **'the heavens and the earth'** is a title may be seen from verse 4, which reads,

**'These are the generations (lit. histories of the heavens and the earth.'**

On pages 34-45 is explained the significance of this phrase which occurs at the end of each section of the **Genesis** narratives. **Ample evidence** is also given that the great **Hebrew** scholars agree that the word translated **'generations'** means **'history of...'** **'an account of...'** That this phrase **'heavens and earth'** was actually used as a title in ancient times may be seen by such statements as that by **A. Jeremias** in his **The Old Testament** in the light of the Ancient East, when referring to ancient **Babylonian** tablets. He writes, This

**"tablet of the secrets of the heaven and earth"**

given in the fable, according to **Berosus**, the celestial book of revelation.'

### The Date

The second piece of literary information referred to, is that ancient **Colophons** often include the date when tablets were written. The date in the **Genesis Colophon** is contained in the phrase

*'when they were created in the day that the Lord God did the earth and heavens'.*

This verse has perplexed commentators of every school of thought. All seem to suggest that it implies **a contradiction** of the **six days**, by stating that **Creation** only **occupied one day**.

## Additional Indication

An additional indication that we are dealing with a series of tablets may be seen by the use immediately afterwards of the Hebrew word “**saba**” translated host. We often read of the '**host of heaven**' but never of the host of the '**heaven and earth**' or of the '**host of earth**'; nor is the word ever used of plant or animal life or of the other created things mentioned in the first chapter of **Genesis**.

This is significant. It cannot be therefore, as is so often supposed, a summary of the **creation** of all things, for life and man are not mentioned. The Hebrew word translated '**host**' conveys the idea of an orderly muster or arrangement, or orderly collection of things. **J. First** suggested,

**'joined together for service'** as a meaning;  
but the root meaning appears to be '**to set in order**'.

**Translators** have usually given the word the meaning of '**contain**' or '**contents**', assuming that all the orderly or arranged contents of the **heaven and earth** are referred to. But **S. R. Driver** points out that to use it in this sense of **the heaven and earth** is to give it an exceptional meaning. The meaning of the **Greek** words used in the Septuagint translation is,

**'to order, arrange, set an army in array', 'to marshal'.**

**M. Jastrow** in his **Talmudic Hebrew Dictionary** gives the primary sense as '**to join**', '**to follow**'. The sense of the **Hebrew and Greek** words is therefore to join or '**arrange in order**', it is appropriate to an ordered arrangement or **series of tablets one to six**. The meaning of this verse is

***'And were finished (indicating the finish of a series of tablets)  
"the heavens and the earth"***

(the title given to the **six tablets**) and all their arranged order.

What **God** had '**done**' Hebrew '**asa**' in the **six days**, the context will help us to understand better still.

**The Authorised Version** reads, "**on the seventh day God** ended his work which he had made '**asa**'", or as **S. R. Driver** translates it,

**'His business which he had done'. About this word 'work'.**

**Driver** says,

**'It is the word** used regularly for "**work**" or "**business**"  
**forbidden** on the **sabbath**.



It **does not** in any sense imply **creation**, but to ordinary daily transactions. It is significant that the word translated '**work**' in **Exodus** 20:10 is from precisely the same root as the word '**made**' in **Genesis** 2:4. Thus, what had been **made** or **done** was an orderly collection or arrangement, a **finished series of tablets** numbered **one to six**. That which had been finished was **the concluding tablet** of the series of tablets entitled '**the heavens** and **the earth**'. We would submit that it was not that on some particular **seventh day** or **seventh period** **God** had finished the **Universe**. The **Hebrew** word '**rested**' is the same as that translated '**ceased**' in reference to the discontinuance of **the manna** (**Joshua** 5:12) when the food of **Canaan** became available.

## Reference to The Creation Earlier

At the end of verse three is the phrase '**which God created and made**'; this also seems to have perplexed every commentator. The **Hebrew** construction makes it very difficult to translate into **English**. This

**'lamed of reference'**; the stating of a motive so as to define more exactly.

**S. R. Driver** translates it

**'in doing which God had created, i.e. which he had creatively done'**.

In revealing the narrative of **Creation**, he had instructed man who had been made in his **own image and likeness**. He had made man acquainted with his purposes, given him knowledge and made known his acts and mind concerning the **creation** of **the heavens** and **the earth**. **The Septuagint Version** (the oldest translation of **the Old Testament** from which so many of the **O.T.** quotations are incorporated into the **N.T.**) reads

ὡν η̅ξ̅α̅το̅ ὁ̅ θε̅ος̅ π̅ό̅λ̅η̅σαι̅

I.e., 'which at first **God** made this, the written account (book) of the **genesis** (origin) of **the heavens** and **the earth**.'

I.e., **the Septuagint** reads '**which God made in the beginning**'.

The failure to recognise that we are here dealing with a history or account of **Creation** (as **the Septuagint** plainly puts it) written in accordance with ancient literary usages has made this **Colophon** more than difficult for commentators to explain. For instance, **J. Skinner** wrote that this

**'half verse is in the last degree perplexing'**.

But the perplexity vanishes when we bear in mind the literary methods in use in early times.

There is then no need of this perplexity about the 'descendants' of **the heavens** and **the earth** given its proper significance of 'histories' or 'written account or **the heavens** and **the earth**', the meaning becomes plain. Having examined every important word in this **Colophon** we find its **literal translation** is:

**'And were finished "the heavens and the earth"**

and all their series, and **on the seventh day God** finished His business which He had done, and He desisted **on the seventh day** from all His business| which He had done. And **God** blessed **the seventh day**, and set it apart, for in it He ceased from all His business which **God** created in reference to making these **the histories** of "**the heavens** and **the earth**" in their being created, in the day when **Jehovah God** did "**earth** and **heavens.**"<sup>3</sup>

### **Name of Author**

There remains **the fifth** and last of the pieces of literary information usually given in the **Colophon** - that of **the name of the author** or writer. Here we are met with the fact that the only name mentioned in the **Colophon** is that of **the Lord God**. Yet seeing that what **he did** in the **six days** was clearly **not** the **creation** of the universe, but the account of its **creation**, the phrase

**'in the day that the Lord God made (revealed) the earth and heavens',**

would seem to indicate that **God** was **the author of the record** concerning **Creation**. Perhaps the evidence is insufficient to state that **God** wrote the tablets, but there is **enough internal evidence** that he **revealed** the account in the first chapter of **Genesis**. Was there a similarity of circumstances in the revelation of the '**Ten Words**' and the **Ten Times** repeated '**God said**' In the account of the giving of the commandments we read,

**'And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up into the mount, and be there; and I will give thee tables (tablets) of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written'**

(**Exod.** 24:12). **'And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tablets of testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God'**

(**Exod.** 31:18). **'And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tablets of testimony were in his hands. The tablets were written on both their sides, on the one side and on the other were they written, and the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tablets'**

(**Exodus**. 32:15), The parallel is much the same, note,

**'the work of God... writing... tablets...'**

Did something similar take place when **God** revealed the account of **Creation**? It is worthy of note that there is no subsequent reference to **God** having written **the Ten commandments**. It is therefore quite obvious that **the Jews** were not very interested in **the literary methods** through which the record came, but were **rightly concerned** with the narrative itself. They did not think so much of the method of revelation, as the fact that it had been revealed by **God**.

## References to Early Revelation

There are, of course, indications in both **Old** and **New Testaments** of a revelation made in the beginning. In such **creation** passages as that of **Isaiah** 40 we read,

**'Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? (lit. from the first), have ye not understood from the foundation of the earth?'** (v. 21).

And **Hebrews** 4:4 says,

**'For he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.'**

Bishop **B. F. Westcott's** comment on this verse is,

'The subject is simply **"God"** and not **Scripture**.' In his **Greek Testament**.

**H. Alford** says,

'He (**God**, not **Moses**, nor the writings) hath spoken.'

The words are emphatic: **God** spoke. This implies a **direct revelation**.

**R. F. Weymouth** translates it thus,

**'For as we know, when speaking of the seventh day he used the words.'**

There can be no question that the reference in this verse is to **Genesis** 2:3 and not to the fourth commandment. It implies that **God** himself is the narrator of the account of **Creation** on the first page of **the Bible**, and says it is a record of what **God** said to them. In his **God the Creator**. **Gen.** 1:28

**G. S. Hendry** says, again,

**'The concept of revelation has come to be generally employed with a meaning which is quite spurious. It has ceased to be an act of Divine disclosure and it has become an act of human perception.'**

A review of the evidence given in this **Colophon** of **the Creation narrative** (**Gen. 2:1-4**) takes us back to the older view of a primeval revelation.

The explanation given in this chapter enables us to understand why it is that the narrative is so sublime in its elevated simplicity, **so concise** yet expressive in its language, so pregnant in meaning yet uncontaminated by human speculation.

It stands as **God** intended it should, as the first page of **Scripture**, as **the basis of belief** in **God the Creator** and as the original and primitive **revelation** from **God** to man.

## BABYLONIAN CREATION TABLETS AND OTHER DATA FROM ARCHAEOLOGY

In 1872 **Mr George Smith** was deciphering some tablets in the **British Museum** when he noticed in one, numbered **K36**, a reference to '**creation**'. Thereafter, he concentrated his attention on the search for further tablets which might throw light on the early narratives of **Genesis**. The clay literature at his disposal was immense; it consisted of nearly **20,000 tablets** and fragments of tablets.

Most of them had been discovered by **A. H. Layard**, **H. Rassam** and **W. K. Loftus** in the ruined library of **Ashurbanipal**, at **Nineveh**, nearly twenty years before. Although little more was found referring to '**creation**', several fragments relating to a '**deluge**' were deciphered.

On 3rd December, **1872**, **Mr Smith** read before the Society of Biblical Archaeology his translation of these tablets. **General Sir Henry Rawlinson**, who had been the first to recognise the value of several of the larger fragments, presided.

The place was crowded with archaeologists, theologians and other scholars, including **the Prime Minister**. This distinguished company is described as '**listening breathlessly**' while the able archaeologist detailed the finding and deciphering of these **early Babylonian** writings.

The paper read that day was enthusiastically discussed in **Europe** and **America**. It produced a confident expectation that further archaeological research would reveal the source from which the early chapters of **Genesis** had been derived, or at least show that the **Babylonians** had similar accounts.

Consequently a sum of money was placed at **Mr Smith's** disposal by the **Daily Telegraph** so that he could himself go to **Assyria** in search of the missing parts of the so called '**Genesis narratives**'. Some fragments of **the Deluge account** were soon discovered in the same ruined library at **Nineveh**.

**Mr Smith** thus described the finding of a piece of a '**Creation tablet**'.

**'My next discovery** here was a fragment evidently belonging to the **creation** of the world; this was the upper corner of a tablet, and gave a fragmentary account of **the creation of animals**.

Further on in this trench I discovered two other portions of this legend, one giving **the creation** and the fall of man; the other having part of the war between **the gods** and **evil spirits**.

At that time I did not recognize the importance of these fragments, excepting the one with the account of **the creation of animals**.

As I had immediately afterwards to return to England, I made no further discoveries in this direction.'

### **Summary of The Finds in Babylonia**

Two years later the results of his efforts to recover the **Genesis** stories were summarised in a volume entitled **Chaldean Account of Genesis** ('containing the description of the **Creation**,

**the Fall of Man, the Deluge, the Tower of Babel, the Times of the Patriarchs** and **Nimrod, Babylonian fables** and **legends** of the **gods** from **the cuneiform** inscriptions').

When it was published, some people imagined that these **Babylonian** legends would ultimately prove to be the source from which the **Genesis** narratives had been derived and the long title certainly suggests it.

Others boldly asserted that by the discovery of these **Assyrian tablets** the origin of the early chapters of **Genesis** had already been ascertained. It is now known that the tablets **Smith** found represent not an original source, but one of the **Babylonian** records which **have been corrupted** from the **simplicity of the original source**, which we would suggest is preserved in **Genesis**.

Writing of the **Assyrian creation** record he said that

**'the tablets composing it are in a mutilated condition, and too fragmentary to enable a single tablet to be completed, or to give more than a general view of the whole subject. The story, as far as I can judge from the fragment, agrees generally with the account of Creation in the book of Genesis, but shows traces of having originally included very much more matter.**

**The fragments of the story which I have arranged are as follows:'**

- (1) Part of the first tablet, giving an account of the Chaos and the generation of the **gods**.
- (2) Fragment of subsequent tablets, perhaps the second, on the foundation of the deep.
- (3) Fragment of tablet placed here with great doubt, probably referring to the **creation of land**.
- (4) Part of the **fifth tablet**, giving the **creation of the heavenly bodies**.
- (5) Fragment of **seventh (?) tablet**, gives the **creation of land animals**.
- (6) Fragment of **three tablets** on the **creation** and fall of man.
- (7) **Fragments of tablets** relating to the war between the **gods** and evil spirits' (**Chaldean Account of Genesis**).

I have cited this able **Assyriologist** because of his interest in the discovery of a **Babylonian** equivalent to the **Genesis Creation** narrative, and in order that we may see the origin and growth of the expectation that a parallel account to that in the first chapter of **Genesis** would one day be recovered from the soil of **Mesopotamia**.

Notwithstanding **unremitting search** by **numerous scholars** for over a period of **seventy years**, that expectation has never been realised. On the contrary, as more and more of the missing parts of these so called tablets have come to light, the wider grows the chasm which separates the **Babylonian** and **Genesis** records.

Subsequent discoveries gradually provided many of the missing parts of the **Babylonian** story. In **1888**, **A. H. Sayce** deciphered tablet **No. 93016**, and in **1890P**. **Jensen, of Marburg**, published an up-to-date text in his **Die Kosmologie de Babylonier**.

Five years later **H. Zimmern** gave a still more complete translation in **Gunkel's Schopfung und Chaos**.

**L. W. King** added much material in **1902**. Up to that time only a few lines of **the sixth tablet** had been recovered, but so long as parts were missing, the hope of archaeologists remained that, when found, the tablets would contain matter similar to that in the **Creation** narratives of **Genesis**.

The view prevailing at the time may be seen, for instance, in **H. E. Ryle's** **The Early Narratives of Genesis**, **'The sixth tablet** which has not yet been found must have recorded the formation of **the earth** and the **creation of the vegetable world, of birds and fishes.**'

The search for the missing fragments continued during the earlier part of this century. In **1899**, the **Deutsche Orient Gesellschaft** commenced the immense task of thoroughly excavating the city of **Babylon**, but nothing was discovered there which added materially to our knowledge of the **Babylonian** story of **Creation**.

But the **German** excavators at the old capital of **Assyria, Ashur (Qalat Sherghat)**, were in this respect more successful, for they found some copies of the '**Creation**' series, including the long missing **sixth tablet**. These new **Assyrian** texts were published in **1919** by **E. Ebeling** in **Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts**; but the newly discovered **sixth tablet** did not contain any of the matter which **H. E. Ryle** said of it, That it '**must have recorded**'.

### Comparisons with Genesis

Over **sixty copies** of the tablets and fragments have now been recovered and, except for the astronomical poem (tablet 5), the so called **Babylonian 'Creation'** series is now sufficiently complete to make a full comparison with the **Genesis** narrative. The two accounts are as follows:

Bible	Babylonian Creation Tablets
<b>1 Light</b>	<b>1</b> Birth of <b>the gods</b> , their rebellion and threatened destruction.
<b>2 Atmosphere and water.</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Tiamat</b> prepares for battle, <b>Marduk</b> agrees to fight her
<b>3 Land, Vegetation</b>	<b>3</b> <b>The gods</b> are summoned and wail bitterly at their threatened destruction.
<b>4 Sun and Moon (regulating Lights).</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Marduk</b> promoted to rank of ' <b>god</b> '; he receives his weapons for the fight, these are described at length; defeats <b>Tiamat</b> , splits her in half like a fish and thus makes <b>heaven</b> and <b>earth</b> .
<b>5 Fish and birds.</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Astronomical</b> poem.
<b>6 Land animals.</b>	<b>6</b> <b>Kingu</b> who made <b>Tiamat</b> to rebel is bound and as a punishment his arteries are severed and man created from his blood. <b>The 600 gods</b> are grouped; <b>Marduk</b> builds <b>Babylon</b> where all <b>the gods</b> assemble.

I submit that a comparison **of the two accounts** shows clearly that **the Bible** owes **nothing** whatever to **the Babylonian tablets**.



Perhaps it is not surprising to find as the various fragments were discovered, pieced together, and deciphered, that **the more comprehensive knowledge** about these tablets did not overtake the old false conjectures and expectations as to their probable contents.

Earlier, many archaeologists were inclined to agree with **Smith** that the probable origin of **the Bible** narrative was **the Babylonian legend**; but when these completed tablets came to light it became obvious that the **Genesis** account was **not derived** from the **Babylonian**.

Thus in **The Babylonian Legends** of the **Creation** and the Fight between **Bel** and **the Dragon**, issued by the Trustees of **the British Museum**, we read that

**\*the fundamental conceptions of the Babylonian and Hebrew accounts are essentially different'.**

**Sir Ernest Budge** said,

**'It must be pointed out that there is no evidence at all that the two accounts of the creation which are given in the early chapters of Genesis, are derived from these seven tablets'**

(**Babylonian** Life and History).

It is more than a pity that **many theologians**, instead of **keeping abreast** of modern archaeological research, **continue to repeat** the **now disproved** theory of **Hebrew 'borrowings'** from **Babylonian** sources.

For instance, we find the following paragraph even in the late editions of **S. R. Driver's Genesis**,

**'The more immediate source of the Biblical cosmogony, however, there can be little doubt, has been brought to light recently from Babylonia. Between 1872 and 1876 that skilful collector and decipherer of cuneiform records, the late Mr George Smith, published, partly from tablets found by him in the British Museum, partly from those he had discovered himself in Assyria, a number of inscriptions containing, as he quickly perceived, a Babylonian account of creation.**

Since that date other tablets have come to light; and though the series relating to the **creation** is still incomplete, enough remains not only to exhibit clearly the general scheme of the cosmogony, but also to make it evident that the cosmogony of **the Bible** is dependent upon it. The newer information we now possess emphatically contradicts

**S. R. Driver's** final statement,

**'and I submit that there was no evidence whatever to support it'.**

**A. Jeremias** argues both **Bible** and **Babylonian tablets** had a common origin says (**The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East**),

**'The prevailing assumption of a literary dependence of the Biblical records of creation upon Babylonian texts is very frail.'**

But this **deposed theory**, rejected by; archaeologists, remains a popular impression to this day, as may be seen from the report on Doctrine in the Church of England, where it is stated that

**'it is generally agreed among educated Christians that these (Gen. 1 and 2) are mythological in origin.'**

In order that we may test the widespread assumption that the **Genesis** record is based on **the mythological Babylonian** accounts, I select from nearly **800 lines of polytheistic and mythological matter**, those lines which bear the closest resemblance to **Genesis** chap 1, though to my mind they have no more similarity than **a mud hut has to a palace**<sup>1</sup>

## **TABLET 1**

### **Line**

- 1 When above the heaven had not (yet) been named.
- 2 (And) below **the earth** had not (yet) been called by a name;
- 3 (When) Apsu primeval, their begetter,
- 4 **Mummu** (The 'Form', *Logos*}, (and) **Tiamat**, she who gave birth to them all,
- 5 (Still) mingled their waters together.
- 6 And no pasture land had been formed (and) not even a reed marsh was to be seen;
- 7 When none of the (other) **gods** had been brought into being,
- 8 (When) they had not (yet) been called by (their) names and (their) destinies had not yet been fixed,

- 9 (At that time) were the **gods** created within them,  
 81 Within the **Apsu Marduk** was born, 95 Four were his eyes, four  
 were his ears.  
 132 **Mother Hubur**, who fashions all things,  
 133 Added (thereto) irresistible weapons, bearing monster serpents  
 134 (Sharp) of tooth (and) not sparing the fang  
 135 With poison Instead of blood she filled their bodies.

**Colophon 1** First tablet of 'when above'; written like its original and collated. The tablet of **Nabu-batatsu-lqbi...** by the hand of **Nabu-balatsu-lqbi**

**Colophon 2** (on another copy) First tablet of 'When above', after the tablet... **mushetiq-umi...** A copy from **Babylon**; Written like its original and collated. The tablet of **Nab u-ushetiq-umi** (5th) month Iyyar, 9th day, 27th year of Darius,

## TABLET 4

### Line

- 128 And then he returned to Tiamat, whom he had subdued.  
 129 The Lord trod upon the hind part of Tiamat,  
 130 And with his unsparing club he split (her) skull.  
 131 He cut the arteries of her blood  
 132 And caused the north wind to carry (it) to out-of-the-way places.  
 133 When his fathers saw (this), they were glad and rejoiced  
 134 (And) sent him dues (and) greeting gifts.  
 135 The Lord rested, examining her dead body,  
 136 To divide the abortion (and) to create ingenious things (therewith)  
 137 He split her open like a mussel (?) into two (parts);  
 138 Half of her he set in place and formed the sky (therewith) a roof.  
 139 He fixed the crossbar (and) posted guards;  
 140 He commanded them not to let her waters escape

**Colophon** 146 Fourth tablet of 'when above'. Not finished. Written according to a tablet whose text was crossed out. Written by **Nabu-belshu ...** And

## TABLET 6

### Line

- 1 As Marduk hears the words of the **gods**,
- 2 His heart prompts (him) to create ingenious things.
- 3 He conveys his idea to **Ea**,
- 4 Imparting the plan which he had conceived in his heart:
- 5 'Blood' will I form and cause bone to be;
- 6 Then will I set up Lullu: 'Man' shall be his name.
- 7 Yes, I will create Lullu: Man.
- 8 (Upon) him shall the services of the **gods** be imposed that they may be at rest.
- 9 Moreover, I will ingeniously arrange the ways of the **gods**.
- 10 They shall be honoured alike, but they shall be divided into two (groups).
- 13 Let a brother of theirs be given up;
- 14 Let him be destroyed and men fashioned.
- 15 Let the great **gods** assemble hither,
- 16 Let the guilty one be delivered up, and let them be established.
- 17 Marduk assembled the great **gods**,
- 29 Kingu it was who created the strife
- 30 And caused Tiamat to revolt and prepare for battle.'
- 31 They bound him and held him before **Ea**;
- 32 Punishment they inflicted upon him by cutting (the arteries) of his blood.
- 33 With his blood they created mankind;
- 34 He imposed the service of the **gods** upon them –

**Colophon** 6th tablet of 'when above'. Owner **Nabu-balatsu- iqbi**.

### Genesis Account Unique

I submit that the continued propagation of these legends as the source from which the **Genesis** narrative is derived is entirely unjustifiable.

It is not reasonable to imagine these crude accounts of **gods** and **goddesses** plotting war amongst themselves, smashing skulls, getting drunk and similar activities, as the basis of the first chapters of **the Bible**.

When **Mr George Smith** discovered the first fragment in **the British Museum** he imagined that it referred to the **creation** of animals; now we know the animals referred to were '**monsters**' created to fight **Tiamat**.

The old theory of the supposed similarities between **the Bible** and **Babylonian** tablets was founded on the '**expectation**' that discoveries would provide the missing links; excavation has proved this hope to be false.

Neither is there any evidence for the assertion that the **Genesis** record is merely **the old Sumerian** or **Babylonian** account stripped of all its mythical and legendary elements. It should be obvious that if this '**stripping**' had taken place there would be nothing left with which to construct a narrative of **Creation**.

Until recent years it was thought that the account was written on seven tablets; but the more recent discoveries have clearly shown that this was not the case. In his **Semitic Mythology**, **S. H. Langdon** states,

**'The Babylonian Epic of Creation was written in six books or tablets, with a late appendix added as the seventh book, as a commentary on the fifty sacred Sumerian titles of Marduk. No copies of the Babylonian text exists earlier than the age of Nebuchadnezzar.**

**The epic had immense vogue in Assyria, where the national god Ashur replaced Marduk's name in most of the copies, and it is from the city of Ashur that all the earliest known texts are derived.**

**These are at least three centuries earlier than any surviving southern copy. Since traces of the influence of the epic are found in the Babylonian iconography as early as the sixteenth century, it is assumed that the work was composed in the period of Babylon's great literary writers of the first dynasty.'**

**George Smith** and others had conjectured that the **Assur tablets** had been copied from **Babylonian** sources, the finding of **tablet 45528** proved this, for the **Colophon** read:

**'First tablet of Enuma Elis "when on high" taken from... a copy from Babylon, according to its original it was written.'**

As **S. H. Langdon** says {Epic of **Creation**},

**'The Epic was undoubtedly written in the period of the First Babylonian Dynasty 2225-1926.'**

This date will, however, have to be reduced if **Dr Sidney Smith's** dates in **Alalakh** and Chronology are adopted.

## Six Tablets

The closest resemblance, and certainly the most significant one, is that from the days of Abraham (which is as far back as can at present be traced) the **Babylonians** always recorded the 'creation' series on **six tablets**. Although there is this agreement in the number six, the similarity ends there. Long ago **E. Schrader** wrote in his *Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament*,

**'Neither the cuneiform creation story nor that of Berossus gives any hint that the Babylonians regarded the creation of the Universe as taking place in seven days.'**

**S. H. Langdon** summarised the Epic in these words, 'The arrangement of the poem in **six** books was probably taken from the rules of liturgical compositions. When the **Babylonians** edited the canonical **Sumerian** liturgies for their own use and provided the **Sumerian** text with an interlinear **Semitic version**, the material was almost invariably distributed over **six tablets**.'

It is important that we should notice that nowhere in the **Babylonian** account is there any suggestion of the **creation** of the world in **six days**, or in **six** periods. After seventy years of search into supposed likenesses between **the Bible** and **Babylonian** tablets the only valid similarity is that the **Genesis** narrative is divided into **six days**, numbered one to six, and that the **Babylonian** accounts of **Creation** are almost invariably written on **six tablets**. Why **six**?

## Other Data from Archaeology

Archaeology, the science of ancient things, provides additional information and we are now in a much better position to assess the value of its evidence than when clay tablets were first discovered. We have already noticed that references found in the **Babylonian 'Creation'** tablets were once thought to be the source from which the **Genesis** narrative had been derived.

Now it can be seen clearly that the **Babylonian** stories have little in common with **Genesis**, except that literary methods of writing and transmission in early days were probably similar.

**There is nothing** either in **Babylonian** or **Egyptian** literature comparable with the first page of **the Bible**. We can see that other early accounts, even if stripped of their **crude polytheism**, could not conceivably take the place of the present introduction to **the Bible** (see Appendix III).

This does not necessarily mean that no gleam of light or truth remained in these accounts as transmitted by the **Babylonians**, because some of them seem to give indications of a widespread knowledge of an ancient revelation on this subject of **Creation**.

The **Babylonians** asserted that original knowledge had been received from 'on high', but such similarities as exist are so overlaid with crude polytheistic ideas that it is difficult to discover any reasonable references to **Creation** on their tablets. Besides the **Babylonian** accounts already referred to, other fragments have been preserved which tell us of the ancient beliefs of the **Sumerians** and **Babylonians** regarding the **creation** of the world and man.

**Berossus**, a priest of **Bel** at **Babylon**, who lived at the time of **Alexander the Great**, translated into **Greek** some of the ancient history of the **Babylonians**, including the story of **Creation**. Only fragments of this history remain, and what has survived is known to us only through second hand sources; it is from the works of **Eusebius** and **Josephus** that we learn what he wrote.

Since excavation has made us familiar with the story of **Babylonia**, we know what was previously doubted - that he accurately reproduced the ancient **Babylonian** stories current in his day.

The account of the primitive revelation which he copied from some ancient source reads in the version which has come down to us as follows: 'In the first year (after **creation**) there appeared from the **Erythrean sea** which borders on **Babylonia**, a Being gifted with reason whose name was **Oannes**... his voice and language were human and his picture is still preserved.

**This Being**, they say, abode during the day with mankind, eating nothing, he taught them **the knowledge of writing and numbers** and arts of every kind. He taught them to construct houses, to found temples, how laws should be made and the land cultivated. He explained seeds and harvesting of crops, things necessary to civilised life he taught men.

Since that time nothing has surpassed this instruction. At sunset this being, **Cannes**, went again into the sea. **Oannes** wrote a **book (logos)** concerning **Creation** and citizenship' (see **I. P. Cory**, Ancient Fragments, and **R. W. Rogers**, Cuneiform Parallels to **the Old Testament**).

How much of this reflects the original story and how much later legend? **Oannes** is stated to have been the original instructor of mankind.

An old **Babylonian** account said that 'for **six days** he instructed **Alorus** (according to the story, **Alorus** was the first man who reigned) and when **the Sun** went down he withdrew until next morning.'

The **Babylonians** knew nothing whatever of a **Creation** in **six days**. The reference is quite clearly to an occasion when **six days** instruction was given and according to **Berossus** this instruction represents the original book of revelation. That the **Babylonians** regarded these tablets of destiny as a revelation there can be little question, for we are told that **Enmeduranki**, one of the seven primeval kings, received the secrets of **Anu (Ea)**, the tablet of the **gods**, the tablet of... the mystery of the heaven, and taught them to his son.'<sup>2</sup>

The title given on the **Colophon** of this **Babylonian** tablet is tablet of the secrets of '**the heaven and earth**'; according to **Berossus** it is the celestial book of revelation. The similarity of this title and that in the **Genesis Colophon** will be noted.

## Egyptian Parallels

The place occupied by **Oannes** and **Ea** in **Babylonian** stories is, in **Egyptian** traditions, taken by **Thoth**. This **god**, whom the **Egyptians** represented as having a human body with the head of an Ibis, was regarded as the source of all wisdom. **Sir E. A. Wallis Budge** says that **Thoth**

'was thought to be a form of the mind and intellect and wisdom of God who created **the heavens and the earth**, the picture characters or hieroglyphs as they are called, were held to be holy, or divine, or sacred';

'He was lord of wisdom and possessor of all knowledge, both heavenly and earthly, divine and human'  
(The Literature of the Ancient **Egyptians**).

To him is ascribed the origination of speech, writing and civilisation. In the early days the **Egyptians** invented **gods** by **the hundred**, yet, amongst the most ancient of these, **Thoth** is represented as holding a writing palette and a reed pen.



As far back as it is possible to go in **Egyptian** history, to **the First Dynasty**, we find a perfected system of writing. At first this picture writing was probably not difficult to understand, but when it became **semi alphabetic**, the signs lost much if not all their meaning and became far from easy to decipher. It was called picture writing because every sign is a picture of some creature or thing.

It must be understood however that the **Egyptians** did not express their ideas merely by drawings or pictures, they wrote down words even in the earliest times, words which can be spelt and grammar which can be studied, just as one can **Greek** or **Latin**. The **Egyptians** maintained it was **Thoth** who taught mankind to write, that he was **also** 'lord of the voice', master of speech. In **Genesis** 1:14 we read,

**'And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs.'**

The word '**signs**' is '**othoth**' means '**to mark**' or '**describe with a mark**'.

**Eusebius** in his **Praeparatio Evangelica** says in regard to the ancient **Phoenician** ideas of the origin of the world that,

**'Tauthe'** (**Thoth** of the **Egyptians**)  
**'invented writing and recorded the history of the first Cause'.**

Another ancient document is '**The Asatir**', the **Samaritan Book** of the Secrets of **Moses**. It was first translated from the Samaritan script and became known by **T. H. Gaster's** publication of it in 1927. He says,

**'I claim for the Secrets of Moses that it is the oldest book in existence of this kind of literature.'**

It was compiled, he says,

**'about the middle or end of the third century BC'.**

**The Samaritans** hold the book in high esteem and ascribe it to **Moses**, and say that the old tradition,

**'has been preserved unaltered down to our very days'.**

In chapter 3.9 of this book it states that **Adam** possessed three books and that,

**'In seven years he (Noah) learned the three books of creation: the Book of Signs, the Book of Astronomy and the Book of the Wars which is the Book of the generations of Adam'.**

**T. H. Gaster** says that **the Samaritans**,

**'declared the calculation of the Calendar to be a Divine revelation made to Adam. Genesis 1:14, where the luminaries are set into the heavens to be for "signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years", as been taken by the Samaritans to prove that from the very beginning ... this knowledge had been imparted to Adam.'**

Much is written about **the Book of Signs** which was given to **Adam** (ii.7), and **Enoch** is said to have

**'learned from the Book of Signs'**

which was given to Adam. In ii.12 it is said that

**'Adam started reading the Book of Signs before his sons.'**

**Noah** obtained possession of it (iii.9) and in iv.15 it is said that **Noah** gave it to **Arpachshad**, from **Arpachshad** the knowledge was handed down to **Abraham, to Joseph, to Moses.**

**This Book of Asatir** shows that there were glimmerings of truth which had become overlaid by tradition. It contains absurd corruptions and in this respect is a manifest contrast to the first page of **the Bible**. If the **Book of Signs** was as **the Samaritans teach**, that referred to in **Genesis 1:14**, then it is possible that

**'the Book of the Wars which is the Book of the generations of Adam'**

is our **Genesis 2:5 to 5:1**, which in our **English** translation is called **'the book of the generations of Adam'**.

It is significant that not a little of this section has to do with warfare, first against the tempter in **Eden**, next with the expulsion from **Paradise**, then the murder of **Abel** by **Cain**, resulting in the sentence against

**Cain** a **'fugitive and vagabond shalt you be in the earth'** (4:12), and **Cain's** lament that **'it shall come to pass that everyone that finds me shall slay me'**.

It is clear that as early as the third century BC **the Samaritans** held that the contents of the first chapter of **Genesis** had been communicated to **Adam**. With the common **Hebrew** and **Samaritan** tradition about these ancient records as having been handed down to **Noah, the oldest Babylonian** accounts generally agree. **Berosus** writing also in the third century BC gives the **Babylonian** account of **the ten rulers** who lived **'before the Flood'** and relates that the seventh (comparable with **Enoch**) was named **Edoranchus**, the equivalent of **Enmeduranki**.

A fragmentary text which was found has been published by **H. Zimmern** (**Beitrdge zur Kenntnis der Babylonischen Religion**), it describes how this person was given the secret of the **gods Anu, Bel and Ea**, the written tablets of the **gods**, 'the mystery of the heaven and earth'. These ancient stories make it impossible to resist the oldest convictions of men that they have come down to us from the earliest times of mankind.

## To whom was it Revealed

The question will be asked to whom was this **Creation** narrative revealed in the **six days**? The **Babylonians** said it was to the first man and this was known to the **Egyptians**. More than **two thousand years** ago **the Jews** had their own beliefs about it, and in more recent years some additional ancient books containing these beliefs have been discovered.

One of these books has been lost to scholars for over **1,200 years**. It is known as **The Book of the Secrets of Enoch**, or as the title of one version renders it,

**'These are the secret books of God which were shown unto Enoch.'**

It is known as the **'Slavonic' Enoch**, and was discovered in **1892**: parts of it were originally written in **Hebrew** and **Greek**. It is old enough to be quoted in **the first century** for it was written before **the Christian era**. Its chief interest to us is the information it gives of the beliefs about the revelation of the account of **Creation** current in **the days of our Lord**.

Amongst much irrational extravagance and senseless fantasy it purports to be a description of **Enoch's translation to the seventh heaven** and says,

**'And the Lord spoke to me Enoch... I will tell thee now, even from the first, what things I created... not even to the angels have I told my secrets, nor have I informed them of their origin, nor have they understood my infinite creation which I tell thee of today...'**

And I separated between the light and the darkness... and it was so... and I said to the light **"let it be day"** and to the darkness **"let it be night"**. And **the evening** and **the morning** were **the first day**... and thus I caused **the waters** below which are under the heaven to be gathered in one place and the waves should be dried up and it was so. Then it was **evening** and again **morning the second day**.'

One version states,

**'On it God showed to Enoch all His wisdom and power: during all the seven days how He created the powers of the heaven and earth and all moving things and at last man.'** Again chapter 33,

'And now **Enoch** what things I have told thee and what you have understood and what **heavenly things** you have seen upon **the earth** and what you have (one version has "I have") written in the books of My wisdom all these things I devised so as to create them ... do you take the books which you thyself hath written ... and go with them upon **the earth** and tell your sons what things I have said to thee ... Give them the works written out by thee and they shall read them and know Me to be **the Creator** of all and shall understand that there is no other **God beside Me.**'

On this **R. H. Charles** comments,

**'This was the ancient belief of the Jews, from being the scribe of God's works as he is universally in the Ethiopic and Slavonic Enoch.'**

It was the popular belief that **Enoch** who prophesied of a second coming referred the first coming to the time when **God** came to Adam. It is stated thus,

**'Listen, my sons. In those days when the Lord came upon the earth for the sake of Adam and visited all his creation which He Himself had made, the Lord called all the cattle ...'** Again (chapter 64),

***'For you art before the face of the Lord for ever, since God hath chosen thee above all men upon the earth, and has appointed thee as the scribe of His creation of visible and invisible things.'***

It is clear therefore that in **Old Testament** times the current belief was of a revelation to first man and to **Enoch** and of **'heavenly tablets'**. Constant reference is made to **God** teaching man to write. This is further illustrated in another book called 1st **Enoch** or **the Ethiopic Enoch** which was written in **the second century** before **Christ**.

It tells of **Enoch** the scribe and much about the **'heavenly tablets'** which had been written and passed down to succeeding generations by **Enoch**. It will be seen that the testimony which archaeology has to give is of considerable importance.

Unexpectedly, our investigation has brought us back to a revelation in the earliest times of man. Both the **Hebrew**, **the Samaritan**, the **Greek** writings current in **Palestine** during the two centuries before **Christ**, and the old **Babylonian** traditions, **assert a transmission of writings** about **Creation** down from the beginning of time to **Enoch** and **Noah**.

## 7

### FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE ANTIQUITY OF GENESIS

There has been general agreement among **biblical scholars** that the first narrative of **Genesis** is very ancient, but divergent views have been held as to the date it was first put into writing.

The view current from the Middle Ages to the early part of the nineteenth century was that the account of **Creation** was based on a primitive revelation made known to **the Patriarchs** and first put into writing by **Moses**, though some held that the narrative was first revealed to **Moses**.

The main reason for this view was that before the days of excavation few could conceive **that writing was sufficiently known in the time of the Genesis Patriarchs** to enable them to possess a written account. Indeed, commentators in the early part of the last century found it difficult to assert - for there was then very little evidence to support it that writing was practised even as early as the time of **Moses**.

The **'liberal critical'** view is that the first chapter of **Genesis** was put into writing by an unknown writer, or school of writers, about **the eighth century BC** (see pp. 75-8). But many of them, however, freely concede that this alleged unknown writer took an earlier account, or an oral tradition which had been handed down among the **Hebrews** from the remote past, and put it into the form in which it appears at the beginning of **the Bible**.

A more extreme critical view (which in chapter 6 we have seen to be unreasonable) is that after the Exile some unknown writer took the crude **Babylonian accounts** and purified them of their absurdities and so constructed this account.

### CLUES CONCERNING DATE

Does the narrative itself give any clue as to the time when it was written? In addition to the ancient literary method referred to in

In chapter 5, there are, I think, some pieces of evidence which should assist us in ascertaining its chronological place in **the Old Testament**.

## No Anachronisms

Perhaps the most significant fact about it is that it contains no reference whatever to any event subsequent to the **creation** of man and woman, and of what **God** then said to them (see pp. 58-60). The significance of the omission of all later events may best be judged by comparing this record with every other account extant (not merely those existing in **the eighth century BC** but those current centuries later), it then becomes impressive.

It has been said that,

**'every religion has tried to give some explanation of the universe in which we live. All are either fantastic or puerile or else disgusting.'**

For instance, the **Babylonian** version, which is known to go back to a period before the days of **Abraham**, contains references to events of a relatively late date, such as the building of **Babylon**, and the erection of various city temples.

## Universality

Another thing of considerable significance is that all the references in this first chapter are universal in their application and unlimited in their scope. We find no mention of any particular tribe or nation or country, or of any merely local ideas or customs. Everything relates to **the earth** as a whole and to mankind without reference to race. Compared with the second narrative, the difference in this respect is very illuminating. In the second there are historical notes.

We are told that the cradle of the human race was near the rivers **Hiddekel, Euphrates, Pison** and **Gihon**.

References are made to later developments, to **Ethiopia**, to **Assyria**, to **gold**, and **bdellium**. These notes regarding countries, rivers and minerals have been included in the second narrative in order to explain the geographical situation and circumstances. They are absent from the first narrative.

Every other account of **Creation** extant contains some references to a limited historical or purely national outlook. All those who handled this account throughout these earlier ages must have regarded it as so sacred that they refrained from altering its primitive character by adding anything to it.

## Simplicity

Another instance of its unique antiquity may be seen in the childlike simplicity with which reference is made to **the Sun** and **the moon**. These are referred to simply as the '**greater and lesser lights**'. It is well known that astronomy is one of the most ancient, if not the oldest of all the branches of knowledge. It originated in **Babylonia** - the land from whence **the Father** of the **Hebrew** race came.

Long before the days of **Abraham**, **Babylonian** writers had given names to both **the Sun** and **moon**; moreover we cannot disregard the persistent tradition that **Abraham** was well versed in the astronomy of his day. When he lived at **Ur** certainly that city was renowned for its worship of **the Moon god** named **Sin**, while **the Sun god** named **Shamash** was one of the oldest and best known of all the **gods** in the **Babylonian** pantheon.

We have many seals and tablets written long before **Abraham** was born, on which the **Babylonian** names **Shamash** and **Sin** occur. Yet this account must have been written before these ancient names had been given to **the Sun** and **the moon**, which means it must have been written before the days of **Noah**.

## Brevity

**The brevity** of **the narrative** is a further indication of **its ancient character**. If this account is compared with the **Babylonian** series of **six tablets** of '**Creation**', it will be seen that **the Bible** uses only one fortieth the number of words. Writing in the earliest days was necessarily brief and later became more extended.

## Two Untenable Criticisms

The idea that an alleged **eighth century writer** eliminated not only all mythical and legendary matter, but also any reference subsequent to the **creation** of first man, is not tenable in the light of certain other characteristics of the narrative. For instance, there is the statement,

*"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."*

This, has often been explained as the 'plural of majesty', but, as **Professor J. Skinner** says,

*'The difficulty of the first person plural has always been felt.'*

Surely it is impossible to imagine an **Hebrew** writer of the eighth or any century originating such a sentence.

Neither is it reasonable to suppose that any **Hebrew** into whose hands this document fell would leave it there if he knew that he had the right either to edit or suppress it.

The narrative must have been ancient and held to be so sacred that notwithstanding their belief in one **God** this statement was regarded as unalterable. The main characteristic of **the Old Testament** writers, living as they did in a country surrounded by nations whose ideas were polytheistic, was **their intense monotheistic faith**, summarised in the statement,

**'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.'**

An argument precisely the opposite to that which asserts deletions and corrections of an ancient text, is that put forward by

**S. R. Driver** and **J. Skinner** and others, in an endeavour to explain the narrative as an attempt by an alleged eighth century writer to incorporate into this ancient account of **Creation** a reference to the **sabbath** day. They say that he did this by artificially dividing the narrative into **six days** of work and one of rest, so as to enable him to make a dramatic reference to rest on the **sabbath** day.

Thus we find one school of writers asserting that everything which is subsequent to **Creation** has been expunged from the original account, while the other says that this unknown writer deliberately introduced into it something which they think is of a later date. When we turn from these speculations about the **sabbath** to the narrative itself we see that the **sabbath** is never referred to. It is simply called **the seventh day**.

On any rational and even **'critical'** grounds this would be regarded as clear evidence that the narrative had been written before the word **sabbath** had been introduced, or at least before it had become a common name in the vocabulary of the people to describe **the seventh day's** rest.

It is surely more reasonable to say that the document is ancient than that the alleged eighth century writer set himself the task of intertwining the idea of **six days** work and a **sabbath** rest into the narrative of **Creation**, yet avoiding even mentioning the word **sabbath**. The omission of the all important word is clear evidence against this theory, and good evidence of **the antiquity** of **Genesis**.



## Oral Transmission ?

In previous chapters we have noticed that for **six days God** told man about **Creation**, and that from the earliest times in **Babylonia** the story of **Creation** was written on **six tablets**. The assumption at present prevailing is that early ideas about **Creation** were **transmitted orally** and there can be no doubt that this did often happen, though one thing that archaeology has shown us is that **the ancients committed even trivial things to writing** at a very early period and that their traditions often refer to a primeval revelation to first man. Was this **Genesis** record transmitted to subsequent generations by **word of mouth?**

**A Dillman**, arguing against any possibility of accuracy in an oral transmission, writes,

**'The creation of the world was certainly never a matter of human experience. Where, then, can anyone get knowledge of it, to tell us? This question must be faced. On its answer depends our whole conception of the passage.**

**First of all, it is evident that the account is not a free poetic invention of the author. In his whole work he represents himself always as a historian, not as a poet. What he narrates, he held also to have happened, or found it reported as having happened' (Genesis).**

**'Important external events, highly influential in the history of man, are forgotten; how then should an occurrence, so purely in the mental sphere as the one here under consideration, be preserved and transmitted by human memory? Besides there would be poor guarantee for the truth of this narrative if, like that of all other history, it had to be founded upon the credibility of a chain of external tradition.'**

But if as he says,

**'in the main the authority gives what has been handed down by tradition, still the question arises, when has this tradition its origin? To this formerly it was simply answered that it rested ultimately on a special Divine revelation... but that hypothesis of a Divine revelation about the process of creation does not merely fail to furnish what it should, because on account of the length of the chain of traditional guarantee for the undistorted tradition could not possibly exist, but is in itself untenable.'**

He then explains why a primitive revelation is considered by him to be impossible because

**'it is dependent upon the formation of language'** and

**'full development of the thinking faculty.'**

**Before these powers existed there could be no void of revelation dealing with such a question',** and adds **rather weakly**

**'that we should not look for light on this'.**

**A. Dillman** is of course right in implying that a revelation is useless unless the man to whom it is made can **understand speech**, and meaningless unless he has a **mind capable of comprehending** such a revelation. Probably he is also right when he doubts the possibility of the human memory retaining in a pure state a revelation which is transmitted orally over a long period.

It must however be remembered that **Dillman's** assumptions are clearly contrary to **the Bible** statements as to first man, for the **Genesis** narratives explicitly state that he was made in **the image and likeness of God**, endowed with **a brain and given the faculty of speech**, and made capable of assigning **names to animals**,

## **Speculation**

It has been said that early man speculated about the origin of things and that this first chapter of **Genesis** is the result of these speculations. Is it possible to imagine that some writer thought things out as best he could, writing this narrative as the result of his reflections?

To suggest this as a solution would imply that the speculations of this alleged **eighth century writer** are nothing less than miraculous in their insight.

If the chapter is no more than the ideas of a human mind, how comes it that, in the words of **Professor G. W. Wade**, the account is so accurate that he writes, in **'Old Testament History'**,

**'of the inherent improbability of an ancient writing anticipating accurately the conclusions of modern science'**

It is not practicable to suppose that this chapter is merely a miracle of literary insight, seeing how absurd were all the other prevailing ideas of a **Creation**. It is far more reasonable **to believe that it is a revelation** than that some **unknown writer made so perfect a guess at it**.

Apart from the **Genesis** record, does **the Bible** throw any light on how man originally became possessed of his wisdom? Some information on this will be found in Appendix II.

**The fact that this account of Creation** (1).

- (1) does not contain any reference whatever to any event subsequent to the **creation** of first man and woman and what **God said** to them, and
- (2) all its references are universal in their application and scope, no mention being made of any particular tribe or country or customs and
- (3) that the current names for the **Sun** and **Moon** do not appear but that they are simply called the greater and lesser lights, and
- (4) it contains the plural '**us**' which no late writer would ever have dared to use, and (5) the use of the word '**seventh**' instead of '**sabbath**' all show that this first page of **the Bible** is very ancient indeed.

## CREATION GRADUAL OR INSTANTANEOUS?

Does **the Bible** anywhere suggest a **measurement or limit of time** for the acts or processes of **Creation**? Is **Creation** in its comprehensiveness as recorded in the first chapter of **Genesis** stated to have; been accomplished suddenly, as instantaneously say as a flash of lightning, at a given moment of time, or does the **Genesis** narrative imply that **God** worked gradually, by **successive acts or processes** extending over an unspecified period of time?

In other words, does **Genesis** state whether **the Creator** of **the heavens** and **the earth** worked by a **sudden** or **by a gradual method**? I submit that the only references to time in connection with **creation** are those relating to the **six days** of revelation of the narrative, and that there is no reference whatever to the time occupied by **God** in creating **the Universe** and all things on it.

The significance of the **six divisions** of the narrative has already been discussed, and we have seen that neither in **Old** nor in **the New Testament** times were men interested in the speculations as to how long **the heavens** and **the earth** and life had existed. Nor did they concern themselves with the precise methods or processes by which **God** caused things to be.

For them it was sufficient that the first narrative of **the Bible** meant that **God** was, in the most real sense, **the Creator** of **all things** in **heaven** and **earth**.

On one point **all commentators** have been in general agreement, that obviously the narrative tells of successive acts, and it is quite clear that all acts of **Creation** were not accomplished all at once. In this sense they were gradual and it is significant that there is no appeal in **the Bible** to any speed of action on the part of **God**. In all the references to **Creation** the impression produced is of a considerable period of time.

An instance may be seen in **Psalm** 90,

*' you Lord has been our dwelling place in all generations.  
Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you  
had formed **the earth** and the world, even from  
everlasting to everlasting you art God ...  
For a **thousand years** in your sight are but as yesterday  
when it is past, and as a watch in the night.'*

In **Psalm 145: 13** we read,

**'Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and your dominion  
endures throughout all generations',** or  
**'of old have you laid the foundation of **the earth**  
and **the heavens** are the work of your hands'** (**Psalm** 102:25).

Here the impression left on the mind is not that of brevity of time; there is order and succession on a vast scale.

There is no suggestion of crowding into a few hours the great works of **Creation**, and not the slightest implication anywhere that material things were of comparatively recent **creation**. The references are to eternities in the past.

## **Milton: A Sudden Creation**

Even subsequent to biblical times there was very little speculation concerning the age of the universe, or of the time taken for the formation of **the earth's** crust, or of the length of time man had been on **the earth**.

Until inquiry by scientific methods had been developed, men were not very much concerned with a quest for knowledge in these directions.

But long before science had awakened questions on these problems, men like **Origen** in the third, and **Augustine** in the fourth century, held that the days of **Genesis** were not normal twenty four hour days, but that **Creation** had extended over long periods of time.

On the other hand writers like **Milton** had adopted the

**'instantaneous or sudden'**

view which he represents in **Paradise Lost** in this way:

**The sixth** and of **Creation last**, arose with  
evening harps and morning prayer; when **God said**,

**Let the earth** bring forth soul living in her kind, **Cattle and creeping**  
things, and beast of **the earth**, Each in their kind.

**The earth** obeyed, straight Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth  
Innumerable living creatures perfect forms Limbed and full grown.

**Out of the ground uprose**, As from his lair, the wild beast,  
where he was In forest wild, in thicket, thickets or den.

Among the trees in pairs **they rose**, they walked.

The cattle in the fields and meadows green.

those rare and solitary, these in flocks Pasturing  
at once and in broad herds, **sprung up**.

The grassy clods now **opened**: half appeared the tawny lion, pawing  
to get free His hinder parts then **springs up**, as broke from bonds.

The horse shakes his brinded mane; the tiger; as the mole rising,

the crumbled earth above them made the hillocks;  
the swift stag from underground bore his branching head;

from his mould **Behemoth**, the biggest born of earth, up heaved.

If this does not mean **instantaneous creation**, then **it implies** something  
**very nearly approaching it**, for the poet is **endeavouring to represent**  
**the completion of animal creation before nightfall on the sixth day**.

It is surely significant that there is **nothing whatever** in **Scripture**  
comparable with **Milton's** description of **Creation**

**'limbed and full grown, out of the ground uprose'**; or of the

**'tawny lion pawing to get free his hinder parts'**; or of

**'the tiger, as the mole rising the crumbled earth above them threw'**.

A contemporary of **Milton**, **Dr John Lightfoot**, a great scholar and  
Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University, wrote that man was created,

**'at nine o'clock in the morning'**.

## Nineteenth Century Reaction

This **Miltonic** idea of '**speed**' in **Creation became current** and it was against the poet's conception that the nineteenth century reacted so extravagantly. As frequently happens in such a burst of impetuosity, the pendulum was violently swung out of control in the opposite direction.

Even scientists vied with each other in **adding hundreds of millions of years** to the time they required for the origin and development of **the earth** and of life on it, including human life.

This was taken to such extremes that the process known as '**throwing away the baby with the bath water**' took place, men jettisoned not only their fallible human interpretations of what they imagined the first chapter of **Genesis** to mean, a **six days creation**; they went further, some abandoned all real belief in **God**, substituting '**evolution**' as a merely mechanical process in place of a **Creator**, as though this could be an alternative creative agency.

All that was needed, it was said, is a sufficient number of millions of years, and an explanation can be given of the development of **the heavens** and the formation of **the earth**, the variety and distribution of plant and animal life including man, all without reference to **God**.

The mental refuge in this attempt to eliminate **God** as **Creator** was an unstinted **number of millions of years**. Given a figure of **sufficient magnitude**, it was assumed that almost anything could have happened in such a period of time without requiring a **First** or **Continuing Cause**.

Of course the real scientists were careful to explain that the vast number of **millions of years** of which they wrote were **merely speculations**, and their ideas only theories. When however their time periods and theories were disseminated in popular form, they were often believed by the general public to be scientifically ascertained facts.

But it has been seen that scientific research, instead of strengthening, has often weakened these theories, and some scientists have made it plain that they retain their antipathy to **Genesis**, on scientific grounds, but just because they cannot reconcile their unbelief in the existence of **God**, or their idea of what the **six days** mean with their scientific findings.

An instance of this may be seen in **Professor D, M S. Watson's** statement to a British Association meeting in 1929, that

**'the theory of evolution is a theory universally accepted not  
Because, it can be proved to be true, but because the only  
alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible.'**

## **Greater Scientific Understanding**

Although the reaction against the idea of an instantaneous **Creation**, which had grown up during **the medieval ages**, reached **its climax** in the **nineteenth century**, its gradually diminishing acceptance was in part due to a more scientific understanding of **the heavens** and **the earth**.

When **Galileo** explained that **the earth** moved round **the Sun** and not **the Sun** round **the earth**, the opposition was due not to any time factor, but to false astronomical assumptions not derivable from **the Bible**. When **Newton** published his ideas about gravitation and the movements of the heavenly bodies, the criticism was not on grounds of **Scripture**, for the believer in a **Creator** could then with even greater meaning use the words of the Psalmist and say that

**'The heavens declare the glory of God and  
the firmament shows his handiwork'**

and **Newton**, devout believer as he was, also took this point of view. However, some interpreted his discovery in such a way as to say that

**'the heavens now declare the glory of the laws of mechanics,  
and the firmament shows that they are held together by gravitation.'**

It was this **substitution of scientific laws**, as though they could take the place of a **Creator**, which prompted **Laplace** to say that he could explain the movements of **the heavens** without reference to **God**.

When **Herschel** made **the nebular hypothesis** popular as an explanation of the formation of **the earth**, it seemed to some that it implied an **accidental origin** and therefore that it was contrary to **Scripture**. **That theory** supposed that **the Sun** while in a gaseous state threw off a section which had protruded from **its rim**, and that this detached portion, while still travelling at a distance from **the Sun**, condensed over an enormously long period of time, gradually forming into **the planet earth**.

Modern astronomers, however, have declared that **this theory is scientifically untenable**, but at that time it served its purpose in some minds as an account of the origin of **the earth** without mentioning **God**.



Meanwhile those engaged in **the study of geology** wrote of the enormous length of time necessary for the formation of the various layers in the crust of **the earth**. When **C. Lyell** produced his **Antiquity of Man**, it was the time element which was regarded as a direct challenge to the **Genesis** narrative. Soon after **Darwin** published his **Origin of Species**, insisting on **millions of years** for the process of selection and variation, it was this time note again, in addition to its merely mechanistic explanation, which was seized upon as a direct contradiction to the **six days** of **Genesis**.

## The Time Factor

Those who maintained that the days in the **Genesis** record were literal **twenty-four-hour** periods found their interpretation increasingly difficult to defend, for the current of scientific opinion was flowing strongly against them, but strangely enough it never seems to have occurred to them that they should test and verify their assumption that **God** had confided all his creative actions to a period of less than a week.

An instance may be seen in the way **Philip Henry Gosse**, an eminent **zoologist** and Fellow of **the Royal Society**, and a convinced believer in the integrity of the **Genesis** narrative, tried to stem the rising tide of criticism by a book he wrote in **1858** called **Omphalos** in which he maintained that **Creation** was accomplished in **144** (6 x 24) **hours**.

His son, **Sir Edmund Gosse**, describes its contents as follows:

**'It was, very briefly, that there has been no gradual modification of the surface of the earth, or slow development of organic forms, but that when the catastrophic act of creation took place the world presented, instantly, the structural appearance of a planet on which life had long existed.'**

The popular press of the time said that this book assumed

**'that God hid the fossils in the rocks tempting geologists to infidelity'**,

and his friend, the celebrated **Charles Kingsley**, wrote to **Gosse** that he could not

**'give up the painful and slow conclusion of five and twenty years study of geology and believe that God had written on the rocks one enormous and superfluous lie'**

It will be seen therefore that the divergence of thought between **the Bible** and science is almost entirely concerned with the problem of the time occupied by **the Creator** in his **Creation**.

It is true that some scientists have produced a far greater divergence by attempting to account for all things without any **Creator** at all. But it is this time factor, and not any question as to the order in which things appeared, which has created the main conflict, for the order is remarkably accurate.

The disagreement is between the doubtful interpretation which alleges '**speed**' on the part of **God** in his **creation** and the findings of science which assert that these things occurred over immensely long periods of time. We have already noted that many **Christian thinkers** agreed that the **creation** of the universe did occupy an immense period of time, but their solution of the days of **Genesis** was not convincing.

## The Key from Archaeology

It is significant that just at the time when science was producing its evidence of a slow succession of events - the very year that **Charles Darwin** published his **Descent of Man** - **Mr George Smith** issued his **Chaldean Genesis** in which he explained as much as was at that time known of the literary methods of writing used in the then recently discovered fragments of tablets recording the **Babylonian** story of the **Creation**. Had the literary information which archaeology has brought to light been applied to the problem of the '**days**', few scholars would have continued to interpret the first chapter of **Genesis** other than as **six days** narration or revelation and not as a **six days Creation**.

It would take us too far from our purpose to discuss the philosophic ideas of time in relation to **God**. **The 90<sup>th</sup> Psalm** already quoted makes it plain that man's ideas of time have no place in regard to **God's** creative work.

## No Suggested Time Element

In the light of **the evidence** already given that the '**days**' refer to the period of revelation and not of acts of **creation**, and if we bear in mind that '**a miracle is not necessarily something quick**', the difficulties are resolved. No one can doubt that **God** could create instantaneously, that is not the point at issue; the question is, did he so act? Some of the older theologians assumed that he did. If, however, we discover from the record that this assumption is incorrect, and if accurate scientific research shows that this is not the way he so acted, there cannot be any conflict between his work and his Word.

The clash is between our interpretation of **Genesis** or of **Science**. Does **Genesis** imply that **God** created **instantaneously** or **gradually**? I contend that **the Bible** narrative gives clear evidence against the former view.

In the first place the record certainly implies that **God** created things successively in time as well as in order; next the statements, **'Let there be... and there was'**, do not in any way imply an instantaneous completion. **Light**, for instance, is swift in its movement but it takes **eight minutes** for **the light** of the Sun travelling at **186,000 miles a second** to reach the earth. When we read, **'Let the waters bring forth abundantly'**, there is not the slightest suggestion of a time limit, **no hint that the teeming abundance was accomplished in a flash**, or in other than **God's** normal way of working. :

Those who held that each of the days commenced with **an ordinary night got into serious difficulties at the very beginning**. When did the darkness of that first night begin seeing that before **light** was created there had been nothing but darkness? Yet if it is **impossible** to say when the **ordinary night began on this first day**, it is not possible to determine the beginning of **the first day**.

When we read,

**'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered unto one place and let the dry land appear and it was so'**, or, **'Let the earth bring forth grass and herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind'**,

there is not the slightest reason for supposing that it all took place in a few hours; there is no suggestion of **a miraculous** drying of **the earth**, so that **grass** and **vegetable life** could be full grown within twenty-four hours of the time when **the earth** had been covered with **waters**.

**Fifteen hundred** years ago **Augustine** wrote in his **De Genesi ad Litterani**,

**'Let us, therefore, consider the beauty of any tree you like, in respect of its trunk, branches, leaves, fruit; this species did not, of course, suddenly spring up of this character and size, but in that order with which we are familiar. For it rose from the root which the first sprout fixed in the earth, and from this all these formed and distinct parts grew. Further the sprout sprung from seed.'**

### **The Creation of Woman**

There is very definite evidence that **speed** was **NOT an element** in the **Creation** for instance of **the man** and **woman**; both were not created on the same day. In **the twenty seventh verse** of the first chapter of **Genesis**, it is said, **'Male and female created he them.'** Had this verse stood alone it might have been assumed that this **creation of the first pair** was something done together and quickly.

But it is very obvious from the second chapter that a great deal happened between the **creation** of the man and the **creation** of **the woman**. After the account of the **creation** of the man and before the **creation** of **woman**, we read that

**'the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed, and out of the ground made the Lord God to grow (no suggestion of haste here, but the very reverse) every tree,'** etc.,

***'And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.'***

It was not until after these events that we read of **God** saying,

***'it is not good that man should be alone, I will make a help meet for him.'***

Still another incident is recorded before **woman** was made for **man**.

***'God brought every beast of the field and every fowl of the air to him to see what he would call them and whatsoever Adam called every living creature that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found any help meet for him.'***

So in regard to the **creation** of **man** and **woman** - about which there is more information than concerning the making of **the heaven** and **earth** - instead of any statement which would imply **a completion in one day**, there is **definite evidence to the contrary**.

It is therefore quite obvious from this one instance that the acts and processes narrated on the days had not been completed on ordinary days, so that the **twenty-four-hour** day **Creation** or **Re-creation** is contrary to **Scripture**.

How **God** made man we are not told, apart from the fact that he was an exceptional **creation** made in **the image** and **likeness** of his maker. Body and soul were so made that the completed product was in **God's image**, a person to whom **God** could talk, and who could talk to **God**.

It is surely significant that nowhere in **the Bible** is any event dated from the beginning of **creation** of the earth. Yet some have assumed that **'suddenness'** is an essential element of it. **Sir William Dawson, the geologist**, referring to **Psalms** 104, which is the poetic version of the first chapter of **Genesis**, says {Expositor, 3rd Series, Vol. 3, p. 289),

**'The work marches on in slow and solemn grandeur without any reference to the days. Again there is not anywhere in the Bible a hint that the work of creation was remarkable as being done in a short time. Some of us have no doubt been taught in childhood that God's power was wonderfully shown in His creating the world in a short space of six days, but there is nothing of this in the Old or the New Testament.'**

Precisely how long ago God created the heavens and the earth we do not know. Astronomers and geologists have made suggestions as to times and methods. Except in the case of man the narrative of Genesis does not tell us any detail of the process, or state what period of time was involved. Genesis tells us something that scientists cannot. Science can know little or nothing about origins. In the very nature of the case they are quite unable to say what happened

*'in the beginning'.*

Genesis however does tell us that God was the originator and controller.

## A COMMENTARY AND SUGGESTED TRANSLATION

### Verse 1                    'In the beginning'

In the beginning, at **the commencement of time**. It does not say when this was, but does imply that there was **a beginning**. **No date** is given, it expresses the earliest time imaginable, and is equivalent, to

### 'at the beginning of time'.

It is not to be understood in a merely relative sense as **'first of all'** or **'first in order'** to a second or subsequent thing, for **'heaven and earth'** include all. It is not here used adverbially in the sense of **'first of all God'**, or **'in the first place God'**. It is the beginning of all material things in the indefinite past. Compare **John 1:1** where the words translated **'in the beginning'** in the **Septuagint Version** of **Genesis** and the **Greek** of the Gospel are the same, but there is an addition in the Gospel, **the Word 'was in the beginning with God'**.

### 'God'

There is no attempt to explain the existence of **God**, this is not considered necessary, his reality is simply stated Some scholars translate the

**Hebrew** word **Elohim** by **'The Eternal'**. **Elohim** is always in **the plural**, but accompanied by **the verb in the singular**.

**God** is **before all time** and all material; **the heavens** and **the earth** had a beginning but no beginning is of course suggested in regard to **God**.

**The emphasis** is on **the word 'God'**. Note the continued repetition of the **divine title** in this narrative, it occurs **thirty five times**. This first sentence implies that **God** is other than his Universe and beyond it, it is the foundation of **the biblical philosophy** of **Creation**.

### 'Created'

**Hebrew 'bara'- created**, In its primary form it is used **only** of **an act of God, never of a human production**, or to describe the work of man.

In this exclusive use, it is probably unique in any language of the world.

The root of this word is commonly considered to mean **'to cut'**, or **'to hew'**, or **'to fashion by cutting'**, and its use in this sense may be seen in **Joshua 17:1, 18**.

The word **'bara'** does **NOT** invariably mean **creation** from nothing, this idea is not necessarily inherent in it, but may be implied. There is no other **single word** in **Hebrew** which could express **creation** out of nothing.

No word is stronger in expressing absolute **creation**. Perhaps in its biblical use it implies effortless (but not necessarily instantaneous) production. **The word is sparingly used** even in this chapter. It occurs again in verse 21 in connection with living organisms, and in verse 27 in regard to the **creation of man**.

The statement that **God** created shows that the universe is not an emanation from **God** as **Pantheists** have taught. It implies that matter is not eternal and that **the heaven** and **earth** are not the result of an accident, or series of accidents, or **'a fortuitous concourse of atoms'**. It obviously means that **the heavens** and **the earth** have **NOT** existed throughout all eternity past. In **Hebrews** 11:3, we read that the

***"By faith we understand that the existing ages exist, by the word of God, and not made from what we see"***

**'bara'** is one of three words used in this chapter to describe **God's** work, the others are **'yasar'** - **'formed'** and **'asa'** - **'made'**.

**[Creation** is not **'exNilo'** (out of nothing) but out of the **'Breath of God'** Psalm 33.6.

**This is not Pantheistic**

The only thing that **truly exists in reality** is **God Himself**. How this is done is a **Mystery** and was a **Miracle**. PB Editor]

## **'The Heaven and The Earth'**

In the **Hebrew** the word **'heaven'** is in the **plural form**. This phrase is often used to **describe created things** apart from **the earth**, as there is **no single Hebrew** word which expresses **the totality of all created things**. Even in **the New Testament** the phrase is retained, **'a new heaven** and a **new earth'**. Its meaning may be seen from **Genesis** 15.5

**'Look toward heaven, and count the stars, if you be able to number them.'**

**The heavens** and **the earth** later became **the acknowledged phrase for the "Universe"**.

The majority of scholars regard the first verse as **an independent sentence**, summarising the whole creative process narrated in this chapter. It has been stated thus:

**'The verse gives a summary of the description which follows stating the broad general fact of the universe, the details of the process then form the subject of the rest of the chapter.'**

**Rashi, E. Schrader**, and others, however, regard the word **'created'** as a noun and not as a verb, and read it as follows:

***'in the beginning of God's creating the heavens and the earth, the earth was without form and void and then ...'***

**verse 2 'and'**

The simple **Hebrew conjunction**; it cannot mean **'in contrast to'**; it could mean, **'but the earth was waste'**.

**'the earth'**

The **Hebrew** word translated **earth** is emphasised by its position: in the sentence. It is the common word for **land** or **earth** as contrasted with the **sea** or **heavens**. The sequel shows, reference is to this **earth**, in its state before **God** brought about the condition successively in verses 3-31.

**'was'**

Some have wished to translate this **'became'** or **'had become'**; but such a rendering is not permissible here. **'Was'** is correctly given in both the **AV** and **RV** and is so translated by the overwhelming majority of **Hebrew** scholars. We should not assume that a thought, such as a catastrophe, has been dropped out or intentionally not mentioned, and that the subsequent words can, not be properly understood, unless we introduce it.

**'without form and void'**

**Tohu-wa-bohu**: **tohu** expresses **formlessness, nothingness**, something **unsubstantial**; **bohu** means **void, empty, tenantless, unfinished**. The words are almost **synonymous**, and in **Hebrew** this repetition is one of the methods used to express intensity of meaning. The like sounding **Hebrew** words can be rendered in English by **'formless and void'**. Absence of form and order is conveyed by their use, rather than shapelessness and disorder. The word **tohu** is used in **the Old Testament** of a desert and expresses emptiness. As **J. P. Lange** remarks,

**'The first word denotes rather the lack of form, the second the lack of content in the earliest condition of the earth; uncompleted as regards order, and bareness as regards life.'**



The chapter gives an account of **God's creative work** relating to this **earth**, and also of **the heavens** as they affect **the earth**. The opening words of this verse refer therefore to the earth in a state of emptiness and the **AV** and **RV translation** expresses the sense as nearly as possible.

**G. J. Spurrell** translates the words as '**bareness and emptiness**'. The **Authorised** and the **Revised Version** use the latter word in **Isaiah** 34:11.

There is no reason (except as a theory in attempting to reconcile the narrative with science) for introducing the idea that something or someone wrecked the earth as created by **God**. **Isaiah** 45:18 expressly refers to **the earth** which **God** had made and established, i.e. the completed **earth** referred to in the chapter as a whole. The prophet says of this completed earth, '**he created it not in vain (tohu), he formed it to be inhabited.**'

**As T. Whitelaw** wrote in his Commentary on **Genesis**,

'He **created** it not **tohu**, he formed it to be **inhabited**, i.e., **the Creator** did not intend the **earth** to be a desolate region, but an **inhabited planet**. There can scarcely be a doubt, then, that the expression portrays the condition in which the newly created earth was, not innumerable ages, but very shortly, after it was summoned into existence. **It was formless and lifeless; a huge shapeless, objectless, tenantless, mass of matter, the gaseous and solid elements commingled, in which neither organised structure, nor animated form, nor even distinctly traced outline of any kind appeared.**' **F, Delitzsch** (New Commentary) says,

*'being only a means to an end, only the substratum  
and not properly such a creative work itself;  
God made it the foundation of his creative agency.'*

**'and darkness'**

The absence of **light**.

**'was upon'**

It is the same **Hebrew** word as is used in **Deuteronomy** 32:11, of **a bird 'hovering over'**. On this formless and bare earth **the Spirit of God** moved in controlling motion.

**'and The Spirit of God'**

The idea of a manifestation of **an invisible power**. It is the usual word for **the Spirit of God**. Just as **God** is mentioned in the first verse without any attempt at explanation, so here **the Spirit of God** who throughout **Scripture** is represented as the source of life is not defined. It would be idle to suggest '**wind**' as the creative agent affecting the change in the state of the **earth**.

There is no indication whatever how long **the earth** was in the state described in this verse, during which **the Creative Spirit of God** was active.

### 'the face of the waters'

The **Hebrew** word is "tehom"; it means, not merely **the sea** or the deep, but the undefined, unformed watery mass,

### What God said **First day. Verses 3 - 5**

#### 'And God said'

These words are placed at the beginning of each **day's** narrative. On this first day there follows the narrative of what **God said**.

**God speaks** and this **implies** that he speaks to **some person**. To whom? We do **not know** to whom **God spoke** these words on the **six successive days**, but in chapter 7 we have seen that the narrative bears unmistakable evidence of having been a revelation given and written down at the very earliest period.

#### 'Let There be Light: and There was Light'

These words constitute the creative fiat. **Creation** by fiat is referred to throughout **Scripture**. It implies the effortless realisation of; his thought and purpose.

#### *'In the beginning was the Word ... all things were made by him'*

(John 1:1-3). In **Hebrew** only two very short words are used,

**'yehi'** or **'let light be', or 'let light exist'**.

The words used are as simple as it is possible for them to be; there is no reference to any scientific hypothesis regarding the nature or source of light and **no astronomical explanation**. **Light** is the indispensable condition to the life of things which are stated in the succeeding verses to have been successively created. In regard to the alleged contradiction of this verse with verses 14-18 see chapter 2 and the comment **on the fourth day's** narration.

*'The exigencies of the text, as well as the ascertained facts of physical science, require the **first day's** work to be the original production of **light throughout the universe and in particular throughout the planetary system**' (Whitelaw, Genesis).*

#### 'And God Saw The Light'

This phrase **'and God saw'** occurs **each day**.

#### 'That It was Good'

These words are also repeated regarding each day. The **Hebrew** word includes the idea of beauty with goodness.

### **'And God Divided the light from the darkness'**

Better **'and God separated'**; we divide one thing and separate two. No mention is made of the origin of darkness because it is simply the absence of light, and here it is not regarded in itself as evil. In fact **God** had a specific use for **darkness**, and assigned to both **light** and **darkness** their own proper sphere, purpose and limits.

### **'And God called'**

**Dr Ryle** says,

**'That God should give names to things is to our minds a strange and almost unintelligible thought',**

and commentators have hitherto been perplexed as to its meaning. When, however, it is realised that **the Names** were being given for **the sake of man**, it is neither strange nor unintelligible, but obviously necessary for an intelligent being. **Genesis** 2:19-20 and 31:47. **God** gave things **Names** in order to reveal, so that these words indicate that **God** is telling the story of **Creation** to man. **A name** is given in order to communicate a thought by language. This narrative is therefore a record, in simple terms, of **God's** explanation of the origin of **the heaven** and **earth**.

Naming is necessary as a notion for **man's sake**, not **God's**.

### **'The Light Day'**

It is the part of the day when light shone on a particular part of **the earth**.

### **'And The Darkness He called Night'**

**'Night'** was the name **God** gave to **the period** which preceded or **succeeded daylight**. Again the only conceivable reason for **God** giving **Names** to such phenomena is for **man's instruction**.

### **'And the Evening and The Morning'**

Or more exactly

**'and evening came and morning came'.**

This phrase has been the subject of considerable debate. It occurs **six times**, dividing the narrative into **six days**.

It has been wrongly assumed that it sets a time limit to the acts of **creation** described, consequently numerous attempts have been made to explain the **'day'** as a sufficiently long period.

As **H. Bullinger** says,

**'The word "day" may refer to a prolonged period, when used without qualifying words. But when qualified by a numeral (cardinal or ordinal) it is denned and limited by it to a day of twenty four hours. It is further limited here by its boundaries "evening and morning" as well as by the seventh day,'** So **F. Delitzsch** and others too

That a normal **'evening and morning'** is intended may be seen by the words used; the word for **'evening'**, like the relative words in the **Akkadian** and **Arabic**, means **'to go in'**, that is the setting of the sun. While the root idea of the **Hebrew** word translated **'morning'** means **'a penetration'** of light of day into **the darkness** of night, a breaking forth, daybreak, the coming of dawn, sunrise, it is never used in the sense of the English forenoon or morning.

As **Delitzsch** says,

**'The Hebrew word means without doubt properly "the breaking", viz 'of light', the first appearance, the early, is everywhere the fundamental notion.'** So that **'evening and morning'** combined means the period between **Sunset** and **Sunrise**.<sup>1</sup>

It was an ancient custom for the **'day'**, that is the **twenty-four-hour** period, to begin at **Sunset**, but, of course, it does not finish at **Sunrise** the next morning, but at **Sunset**. As **J. Skinner** writes,

**'It is impossible to take the words as meaning that the evening and the morning formed the first (second, etc.) day. The sentence must refer to the close of the first day with the first evening and the night that followed';**

so **F. Delitzsch, H. Holzinger, A. Dillman**, etc.

Was **the earth**, as yet, astronomically arranged for a normal **Sunset** and **Sunrise**? The source of **the light** is not stated, for until the relation of **the Sun** and **Moon** to **the earth**, as, described in verses 14-18, had been introduced there could have been no daily **Sunset** or **Sunrise** as required by these words **'evening and morning'**.

There can therefore be no question of an **evening and morning** dividing the acts of **creation**. These **six days** must have been days on which the revelation was given, the narrative of the **creative acts** of **God** long ages before, for the reason .why **God** ceased as each of the **six evenings**, or **Sunsets** came on, was for man's sake.

## 'was the First Day'

More literally, 'day one', or 'one day', as in the RV. The Cardinal is used instead of the Ordinal; this is customary to indicate the first of a series.

## What God said Second Day. Verses 6 - 8

### 'And God said, Let There be a Firmament,' etc.

The Hebrew word 'raqia', and its root meaning is 'to Stretch out', \*to extend'. A more accurate translation would be, 'Let there be an expanse.' It refers to the atmosphere surrounding the earth which bears up the clouds. Compare Psalm 148:4.

*'Praise him, ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens,'* and Proverbs 8:28 where mention is made of the 'clouds above' instead of the 'waters above'. Elsewhere Scripture often refers to clouds as waters. (See 2 Sam. 22:12; Job 36:28; 37:11; 38:37.)

### 'And God made the firmament'

The process is not stated, only the fact,

### 'and divided'

Lit. 'let it be dividing', expressing continuity of action and describing more fully its purpose.

### 'and it was so'

The Hebrew means 'to be fixed' and indicates it was right, honest, true. God's expressed will was truly accomplished.

### 'And God called The Firmament Heaven'

The word heaven is always in the plural and apparently comes from a root which means 'to be high'.

## What God said Third day. Verses 9 - 13

'And God said,

*'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together in one place'*

That is the waters on the earth; how this was effected is not stated, whether by elevation or a subsidence, nor is it stated how long the procedure took. There is a poetical description in Psalm 104:6-8,

*'you cover's it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which you hast founded for them. you hast set a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn again to cover the earth'*

## 'and let the dry land appear'

Lit. **'the dry'**, hitherto covered with water.

## 'And God called the dry land Earth'

Lit. **God called 'the dry'**, earth. Again, **God** gives a name for the information of man. **'and the gathering together of the waters called he seas'** The account is brief, there is no specific mention of rivers, lakes, etc.

There is a **second 'and God said on this third day.'**

## 'Let The Earth bring forth Grass'

Lit. let the earth sprout **'green'**, a comprehensive term for all young **green vegetation**. **God** does **NOT** say **'let there shoot forth on the earth'**, but

**'let the earth cause to shoot forth or sprout'.**

This is the beginning of life on **the earth**.

## 'the Herb Yielding Seed'

Plants, vegetables and grain crops, seed-forming plants.

## 'and The Fruit Tree Yielding Fruit'

Self propagating or producing fruits whose seed is within them.

## 'After His Kind'

The word is **antique**; it can very well mean **'species'**; the word is not used in **the plural**.

## 'Whose Seed is in Itself'

The distinction is in the method of seeding, the vegetation which produces seed and the fruit which contains the seed,

## What God said Fourth day. Verses 14 - 19

### 'And God said, Let there be Lights in The Firmament of Heaven'

**Luminaries**; the word is different to that translated **'light'** in verse 3. That word means **light** itself, **this means 'bearers of light'**, or **'places of light'**, the **'instruments of light'**, though the word is a simple one referring to **light** derived from an instrument. There is an **entire absence of personification** and **deification** which occurs in almost every other ancient account of the **Sun, Moon** and **stars**.

Those best acquainted with the old accounts handed down from **Babylonia** and **Egypt** will recognise how **pure this record is**.

On this day **God** appears to have ceased to give names to the things he had created. No more is it stated 'And **God called**', no name is assigned to the greater and lesser lights, nor are animals named in this narrative. In the second narrative there is an account of how **God** arranged for **first man** to give **the names** to **animals** and **birds**.

There is no necessity, in view of what has been written in chapters 2 and 3, to discuss (as all commentators have felt bound to do) the mention of the Sun and the Moon **on the fourth day**, seeing that this narrative gives the order of revelation. The things revealed on each of the last three days are parallel with the first three, so that the first and the fourth are connected.

### 'To Divide The Day from The Night'

This is the first time the purpose is explained. The '**greater and lesser lights**' are the regulators of the day and night referred to in verse 5.

### 'and Let Them be for Signs'

**Hebrew 'toth'**, means '**marks**', or '**tokens**', and presumably means to mark off the days. **S. R. Driver** says,

**'by their appearance betokening the future state of the weather'**,

but surely in Palestine, and still less in **Babylonia**, where the weather is fixed, can this be the meaning here. In **Babylonia** neither **the Sun** nor **the Moon** indicate a change in the weather on **300 days** in the year. The cloud formation before the rare rain is sufficiently noticeable apart from **the Sun** and **the moon**. Neither can **Spurrell's** interpretation,

**'through eclipses of the Sun and Moon,  
the appearances of comets as showing extraordinary events'**,

be accepted. The account is free from anything like **astrology**

### 'And for Seasons and for Days and Years'

The word translated seasons means '**to appoint**', '**to fix**'. Although some have stated that the record was written in order to introduce the **seven days** ending with the **sabbath**, it should be noted that there is no mention here of **a week**, as **the Sun** and **the Moon** have no direct relation to **a week** of **seven days**.

## 'And Let Them be for Lights in The Firmament of The Heavens to upon Light upon The Earth'

The reference is to the way **the Sun** and **the Moon** affect **the earth**; the account admittedly has **the earth** as its viewpoint; what other point of view would or should it have for man?

### 'And God made two great lights,' etc.

Note the extreme simplicity of the statement; there is no suggestion that these are **the only or even the largest lights**.

### 'And God Set Them'

It conveys the idea of '**placing**' in such a way as to accomplish the purpose of giving **light** to **the earth**.

### 'To Rule,' etc.

To control, and so dominate. Compare **Job** 38:33.

### 'The Stars also':

The original is short, almost abrupt, being two **Hebrew** words only. There is nothing of the ancient superstition about stars and their supposed influence on **persons** and **creatures**.

## What God said **Fifth day**. **Verses 20 - 23**

### 'And God said Let The Waters bring forth Abundantly' etc.

Lit. '*let the waters swarm forth with a swarm of sea creatures*', to teem in abundance. A new form of life different in kind and degree to vegetation. The word '**swarm**' conveys the impression of a great multitude.

### 'the fowl that may fly above the earth,' etc.

Every flying thing; this probably included insects

### 'And God created Great Whales'

**More accurately reptiles**; the idea behind the word is of **a long and big animal**. It includes **big land**, as well as **sea monsters**.

### 'And every living creature that move'

Lit. '**and every soul of life**' or living thing; the principle of life and sensibility, something which moves lightly along or glides, as the swimming movement of fish.



## What God said Sixth day. Verses 24 - 31

**'And God said, Let The Earth bring forth The Living Thing after his Kind; Cattle, and Creeping Thing, and Beast of The Earth after his Kind'**

Lit. **'the earth shall cause to go forth living soul'**.

- (1) Cattle, chiefly four footed domestic animals.
- (2) Creeping animals.
- (3) Untamed animals.

### **'And God said Let us Make Man'**

There is a significant difference between the statements introducing the preceding acts of **creation** and this last and supreme act, the **creation** of man. Previously there had been a fiat such as, '

***'let the waters go forth' 'let the earth bring forth' Here there is no 'let there be man' 'let the earth bring forth man' It is 'Let us make man'***

If words mean anything they surely imply that **God** did a new thing when **he created man; a new order of being** was brought into existence by means which made him distinct from that of animals.

**Let us.** The **first person plural** is used. The Jews attempt various explanations to account for this plural. **Maimonides** and **Ibn Ezra** say that **the angels** are referred to, but **angels** are not mentioned in this record. **Philo** speaks of **'the Father of all things addressing His own powers'**, but such an explanation is far fetched and **generally unacceptable**.

Some have said that here **the plural of majesty** is used, just as some **modern monarchs** use **the plural (we) on official occasions**. This explanation cannot be accepted seeing that it is **NOT** a **usual biblical custom** for **kings** to do this. It is **normal for the singular** to be used, for instance, 'is not this great **Babylon** which **"I"** have built', **"I"** am Pharaoh', This use of **the plural** is in accord with the prologue of **the Fourth Gospel** which indicates the presence of the creative Word. (Appendix II.)

**'All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made.'**

The **"us"** is also used in **Genesis** 3:22, **'And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us'** and in **Genesis** 11:7, **'Go to, let us go down and there confound their language'**, and **Isaiah** 6:8, **'And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for "us" ?'**

It is a **remarkable testimony** to the care with which the text of **Scripture** has been handed down to us that this **plural** occurs. The Jews with their knowledge that

***'the Lord our God is One Lord'***

had difficulty in explaining this **plural**, yet did not attempt to alter the text. **The coming of Christ**, and the opening statement of **the Fourth Gospel** makes the meaning plain.

## **'Man'**

**Hebrew**, **'Adam'**, the name given by **God**. As there is no definite article, the word is here used in a general sense, and denotes mankind.

## **'in Our Image, after Our Likeness'**

**'Image'** and **'likeness'** are almost synonymous words. What in man constituted **the image** and **likeness** of **God**? Before this question can be answered we must ask what **God is like**? We are told that **he is Spirit** (John 4:24), Light (1 John 1:5),

***'He is the King eternal, immortal, invisible'*** (1 Tim. 1:17) ***'No man hath seen God at any time the only begotten Son... hath declared him'*** (John 1:18). Paul says of him ***'dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see'*** (1 Tim. 6:16).

It is in **the Word, the Son of God**, that we have the answer, for he, before being made **'in the likeness of man'**, when he came to this earth at Bethlehem, was in **'the form of God'** (Phil. 2:6). First man saw and talked with the Word who ***'Was in the beginning with God'***, and without him ***'was not anything made that was made'*** (John 1:3). **He was the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation** (Col. 1:15), and man was made in **his image**.

(a) **The image** refers to the **outward form**, and usually expresses the idea of **shape or resemblance as to body** while (b) **'likeness'** is applied to **the immaterial resemblance** or **the things of the mind**, but perhaps the distinction cannot be pressed. [? PB].

***'By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible ... all things were created by him'*** Col1:16

**The Son** being ***'the express image of his person, and upholding all things'*** (Heb. 1:3) created man as an intelligent being with a capacity for communion with **the Eternal God**.

**S. R. Driver** says of this image and likeness that

***'it can be nothing but the gift of self-conscious reason which is possessed by man'***.

## 'Male and Female Created He Them'

The **creation** of **the female** is more fully stated in chapter 2:18-25, and it seems obvious that after the **creation** of **man** several events which occupied **much time** happened before **the woman** was **created**.

## 'And Let Them have Dominion,' etc.

The impression conveyed is that the dominion or rule is consequent upon the **creation** of man in **the image** and **likeness** of **God**. We know that man's outstanding position is not due to his greater physical strength, or size; his superiority was due to the mental qualities with which he was endowed by **God**. The thought is repeated in **Psalm 8:6**,

**'You made him to have dominion over the works of your hands.  
You have put all things under his feet.'**

## "Replenish"

The root word means **'to be full'**, or **'to fill'**; the same **Hebrew** word is translated **'fill'** in verse 22.

## 'and Subdue It'

A strong word; man has been placed in a position of supremacy on **the earth**, and authority has been given to him (see **Psalm 115:16**). **The heaven**, even **the heavens**, are **the Lord's**, but **the earth** hath he given to the children of men.'

## 'I have Given you Every Herb', etc.

The word includes plants, vegetables and green crops.

## 'for Food'

For living things

## 'And Behold, It was Very Good'

There is purpose in the world; matter and material things are not in themselves, as **originally created**, **hostile to God**. His **Creation** is very good. Evil appeared on **the earth** later.

## 'The Sixth Day'

Here, unlike the other five days, **the definite article** is used.

(**The Colophon**, or appendix to this record (2:1-4), has been dealt with in Part II, chapter 5, p. 143.)

## A TRANSLATION OF GENESIS 1:1-2:4

In the beginning **God** created **the heavens** and **the earth**, and **the earth** was **formless** and **empty** and **darkness** was upon **the surface** of the **deep**, and **the Spirit of God** moved upon the surface of the waters.

And **God said**,

let **light** be, and **light** was, and **God** saw **the light** that it was good. And **God** separated **the light** and **the darkness**, and **God** called **the light** '**day**', and **the darkness** called he '**night**', And **evening** came and **morning** came, **day one**.

And **God said**,

let there be **an expanse** in the midst of **the waters** and let it separate **waters** from **the waters**. And **God** made **the expanse**, and separated **the waters** which were under **the expanse**, from **the waters** which were above **the expanse**, and it was so, and **God** called the **expanse** '**heavens**'. And **evening** came and **morning** came, **day second**.

And **God said**,

let the waters under **the heavens** be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear, and it was so, and **God** called the dry land '**earth**', and the gathering together of **the waters** he called '**seas**', and **God** saw that it was good. And **God said**, let **the earth** sprout grass of **green herbage**, seeding seed, and the fruit tree making fruit, after its kind, whose seed is within it upon **the earth**, and it was so.

And **the earth** caused to go forth grass of **green herbage**, seeding seed after its kind and the fruit bearing tree whose seed is within it, after its kind, and **God** saw that it was good. And **evening** came and **morning** came, **day third**

And **God said**,

let **luminaries** be in the expanse of **the heavens**, to separate **the day** from **the night**, and let them be for signs, for set times, for days and years. And let them be for **luminaries** in **the expanse** of **the heavens** to give **light** upon **the earth**, and it was so. And **God** made two great **luminaries**, the great **luminary** for the rule of **the day** and the small **luminary** for the rule of **the night**, and **the stars**. And **God set** them in **the expanse** of **the heavens** to give **light** upon **the earth**, and to rule over **the day** and over **the night**, and to separate **the light** and **the darkness**, and **God** saw that it was **good**. And **evening** came and **morning** came, **day fourth**.

And **God said,**

Let **the waters** swarm with living swarming creatures, and flying creatures that fly about above **the earth** over the face of the **expanse** of **the heavens**. And **God created** great **sea creatures** and every living soul of life that glides, with which **the waters** swarmed after their kind, and every **winged flying creature** after its kind. And **God saw** that it was good. And **God blessed** them saying, be fruitful and multiply and fill **the waters** in the seas and **the flying creature** let it multiply in **the earth**. And **evening** came and **morning** came, **day fifth**.

And **God said,**

let **the earth** bring **forth living creatures, cattle, creeping things, and beast** of **the earth**, after its kind, and it was so. And **God made** the beast of **the earth** after its kind, and the cattle after its kind, and every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, and **God saw** that it was good.

And **God said,** let us **make man** in **our image** according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over **the fish of the sea**, and over **the flying creature** of **the heavens**, and over the cattle, and over **the earth**, and over all **the flying things** that flies over **the earth**. And **God created man** in his **image**, in **the image** of **God he created** him, **male** and **female** he created them.

And **God blessed** them, and **God said** to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill **the earth** and subdue it, and exercise dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the **flying creatures** of **the heavens**, and over every beast which flies upon **the earth**, And **God said,** behold I have given you every herb that sows upon the surface of all **the earth**, and every tree which has in it the fruit of a tree which sows seed, to you it shall be for food. And to every beast of **the earth** and every **flying creature** of **the heavens**, and to every thing which flies over **the earth** in which is the soul of life, every grass of **green herbage** for food, and it was so. And **God saw** all that he had made, and behold it was exceedingly good. And **evening** came and **morning** came, **day the sixth**.

**And were finished**

**the heavens** and **the earth** and all their arranged order (or series), and **on the seventh day God finished** his business which he had done and he desisted **on the seventh day** from all his business which he had done. And **God blessed the seventh day** and set it apart, for in it he ceased from all his business which **God** did creatively in reference to making these **the histories**<sup>2</sup> of **the heavens** and **the earth**, in their being created in the day when the Lord **God** did **the earth** and **the heavens**.



## CONCLUSION

We have endeavoured to marshal all **the known facts** about the first chapter of **the Bible**, and to ascertain why the narrative is divided by the **six evenings** and **mornings**, ending with a **seventh day's** rest.

Having examined all the evidence available to us, it may be useful at this concluding stage to recall some of **the main facts** observed during our investigation. The several converging lines of evidence may perhaps be more clearly seen if these are summarised without detail.

### The Seventh Day's rest for Whom ?

Unquestionably the most important and illuminating disclosure regarding the meaning of **the days** is that made by **our Lord** when he explained that the **sabbath** had, at the beginning, been introduced by **God** for **man's sake**.

Men have always believed this theoretically, it is therefore all the more surprising that **every interpretation**, of which I am aware, has assumed that **the seventh day's** rest was originated by **God** for his **own rest**.

Assured by our **Lord's** pronouncement as to the reason for the introduction of **the seventh day's** rest and seeing that **the fourth commandment** implies that for the **six days** immediately preceding the institution of that **seventh day**

**God** had done work of some kind with man, it became obvious that the **six** nightly periods - **the evenings** and **the mornings** - of **cessation** or rest were also for **man's sake**.

Consequently there was one thing **our Lord** was not doing on those **six days**, he was not creating **the heavens** and **the earth** and all life on it. Of this we can be quite sure. It is not only because man was on **the earth** during those **six days** and it was he who needed the nightly periods of rest as well as **the seventh day's** rest.

But in addition, we have the **clear evidence** of **Scripture** that **woman** was **NOT created** on **the same day** or time as **man**, for many incidents of great importance are recorded as having occurred between these two events. **Scripture** does not teach a **six day Creation** or **Re-creation**.

Nowhere in **the Bible**, not even in **the fourth commandment**, does it say that **God** created **the heaven** and **earth** in **six days**.

## **It is a Record of What 'God said'**

The **Creation** narrative is a statement of what **God said to man** about the things he had already created. This is quite evident from the incident where **the first man** and **woman** are addressed,

*'And God said to them'.*

There is a joint repetition of what **'God created'** and of what **'God said'**.

On each of the **six days God told** man about some aspect of his creative work, much of which had apparently been accomplished in ages past. We have to face a fundamental issue from which there is no escape; this first page of **the Bible** is either **the guesswork** of some man, or it is **a revelation** made by **God to man**.

We cannot honestly shrink from this issue, and every examination of its character has impressed us that we can do no other than accept the evidence that here we have the account of a revelation made by **God** to man, and made very early in the history of man.

**If any reader doubts this**, I suggest that he reads all the accounts of **Creation** or the origin of things known to man (some of which are listed in Appendix III) and compare them with the first page of **the Bible**.

## **God Gave Names to The Things He had Created**

Obviously these **names** were given for **man's sake**, for names could surely have no other purpose. This is important, for it is evidence that what we have in this record is both **God's revelation** of the narrative and his explanation of it to man.

## **Marks of Antiquity**

In chapter 7 we considered the marks of **extreme antiquity** which the narrative bears. Unlike any other account known to man, this first chapter of **Genesis** contains no reference whatever to any subsequent event. We observed that the account was universal in character and not limited in scope to any particular people or country, but **refers to mankind as a whole**.



Next we noticed the child like **simplicity of its statements**, even to the omission in the last three days of revelation of the giving of names. No names are assigned to **the Sun** and **the Moon**. In **Genesis<sup>2</sup>** we are told how **Adam** gave **names** to animals. We saw that the record has the marks of having been originally written down in some form at a very early date.

## **The Colophon States that It was Written**

In chapter 5 we examined the final words of the narrative and observed that they are a **Colophon** (or title appendix) which in accordance with ancient usage gives literary information concerning the writing. We saw that the title given to the narrative was **'the heavens and the earth'** and that which was finished was the writing of the narrative. Similar instances were seen of the use in ancient times of these words

**'the heavens** and **the earth'** and **'finished'**, the former as a **'Title'** and the latter to mark the completion of a series of tablets.

## **Other ancient evidence**

In the **section on archaeology** (chapter 6) we reviewed the available evidence regarding the ancient beliefs and traditions of men and saw that at the time of our Lord the prevailing belief of **the Jews** was that the account of **Creation** had been given in the earliest times by **direct revelation** from **God**, and that it had been written down.

**The Samaritan evidence**, dated **the third century** before **Christ**, is of a written revelation to **Adam** (? PB) which was handed down to **Enoch** and **Noah**. With this **the oldest translation** of **the Old Testament**, **the Septuagint**, agrees in that it clearly states that the account was written. We also saw that the **Babylonians** taught that on one occasion a **Being** instructed first man for the daylight hours of **six successive days**. But it appears quite obvious that **the Bible** account was **not derived** from the **Babylonian**, but that the **Babylonian** tradition was due to the reality of the event.

## Summary of Findings

It is hoped that we have succeeded in lifting the meaning of this first page of **the Bible** out of the confusion of opposing and conventional interpretations into which it has unhappily fallen.

There is a great difference between reading something into **the Bible** - this we have no right to do [ **Eisegesis** ] - and in discovering in **the Bible things** which are undoubtedly there, [ **Exegesis** ] but which have hitherto been **overlooked**.

As **H. M. Gwatkin** has said (The Knowledge of **God**),

**'A theory is easily fitted to any one difficulty;  
the test of it, is its explanation of other difficulties.'**

Current interpretations only meet one difficulty. I submit that the following **seven difficulties** are **eliminated** by the above interpretation.

- (1) **God's** giving **names** - we now see **the reason** for this.
- (2) **'God said'** - the whole account was a revelation to man, just as the two final statements of what **'God said'** are stated to have been.
- (3) The **'evenings and the mornings'** are now seen to be, **quite naturally, for man's nightly rest**.
- (4) **The seventh day** on which **God 'ceased'** was for **man's sake**.
- (5) While all the days, including those in **the fourth commandment** and **the seventh day's** rest, are seen to be natural days, there is no need to give these days exceptional duration.
- (6) and this
  - (a) **disposes** that the day of rest was instituted a **few hours** after **Adam** had been created
  - (b) **disposes** that it was at the end of **a long geological age**, or that this **seventh day** is one of **some thousands of years**.
- (7) And it resolves the old conflicting ideas about the **'light'** of **day one** being present before the **'Sun** and **Moon** on **day four** and all its related problems.

The first chapter of **Genesis**, I therefore suggest, does **not say anything about the period taken** by **God** in **creating the universe**, but it does tell us about the **period taken** in **revealing to man** the account of **Creation**.

This has **wide implications**, for it rids **the record** not only of the perplexities produced by various **misinterpretations**; but what is even more important, it means that we have a **God** given record of **the origin of things** imparted to man in **simple language**. It is a revelation of the things which man by his unaided efforts could not have known.' **Genesis** chapter 1, cleared of its **misinterpretations**, stands out in its **sublime grandeur**, its **remarkable accuracy**, its concise comprehensiveness, quite unique in **the creation** literature of the world.

I am aware that **more** might have been **written** relating to this subject, for instance, on the origin of the idea of **God**, and the problem of the way in which language and writing originated. The scope of this book precludes anything approaching an adequate discussion of these other important subjects. I hope, however, what I have written at least justifies the remark of **Descartes** that,

*'the origin of the idea of God, may well be God Himself.'*

This first page of **the Bible** claims that this is so. It is very important that we interpret it aright, for it is the great fundamental basis of our knowledge of **God as Creator**. **False interpretations** bring it into **disrepute**.

**The approach** of this book we believe leads to **the recovery** of **the original interpretation** current in ancient times. What seems to be a new and **modern interpretation**, we claim, was the one current millenniums ago. When our search began we were not attached to any of the prevailing schools of interpretation.

Our attitude was not unlike **Irenaeus** (Ep. 82:3), who wrote of **the Bible**

**'If in any one of these books I stumble upon something which appears to be opposed to truth, I have no hesitation in saying that either my copy is at fault, or that the translator has not fully grasped what was said, or that I myself have not understood.'**

Is it too much to hope that these pages may become an **Eirenicon** [peace maker] reconciling **the two types of explanation** now prevailing, which contend the one against the other? The one, which explains the days as **six long geological periods** with **geological nights**, contradicts the other which insists that **creation** proper is not referred to in the **six days**, but only a subsequent (yet entire) **Re-creation of the earth** and all life in **six literal days**.

The foregoing **interpretation** recognises that one main feature in what both opposing **interpretations** have been insisting upon is true. The days of **Genesis** are intended to be **literal days**, but not of **Creation**. Also, the time occupied in the events described may well be as long as the **'geological'** interpretation asserts.

## APPENDIX 1

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO CREATION

#### GENERAL

<b>Neh</b> 9:6	You, even you art <b>Lord</b> alone; you hast made <b>heaven</b> , the <b>heaven</b> of <b>heavens</b> , with all their host, <b>the earth</b> , and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and you preserves them all.
<b>Job</b> 38:4,7	Where was you when I laid the foundations of <b>the earth</b> ? declare, if you have understanding...when the morning stars sang together, all the <b>sons</b> of <b>God</b> shouted for joy?
<b>Psa</b> 8:3	When I consider your <b>heavens</b> , the work of your fingers the Moon and <b>the stars</b> , which you has ordained ...
<b>Psa</b> 33:6	By the word of <b>the Lord</b> were <b>the heavens</b> made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.
<b>Psa</b> 33:9	For he spoke, and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast.
<b>Psa</b> 89:11	<b>The heavens</b> are thine, <b>the earth</b> also is thine: as for the world and the fullness thereof, you has founded them,
<b>Psa</b> 90:2	Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed <b>the earth</b> and <b>the world</b> , even from everlasting to everlasting, you art <b>God</b> .
<b>Psa</b> 102:25	Of old hast you laid the foundation of <b>the earth</b> ; and <b>the heavens</b> are the work of your hands
<b>Psa</b> 104:6	You covered it with the deep as with a garment.
<b>Psa</b> 136:5	To him that by wisdom made <b>the heavens</b> ...
<b>Psa</b> 121:2	My help comes from <b>the Lord</b> , which made <b>heaven</b> and <b>earth</b> . (see also <b>Psalm</b> 124:8).
<b>Psa</b> 146:6	Which, made <b>heaven</b> , and <b>earth</b> , the <b>sea</b> and all that therein

<p><b>Pro 8:22-31</b></p>	<p><b>The Lord</b> possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning or ever <b>the earth</b> was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared <b>the heavens</b>, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to <b>the sea</b> his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of <b>the earth</b>; then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his <b>earth</b>; and my delights were with the sons of men.</p>
<p><b>Isa 40.</b></p>	<p>Behold the Lord... (v 10), Who hath measured the <b>waters</b> in the hollow of his hand, and meted out <b>heaven</b> with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? (v. 12). It is he that sits upon the circle of <b>the earth</b>, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretches out <b>the heavens</b> as a curtain, and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in (v. 22). To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that brings out their host by number: he calls them all by their names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one fails (v 25,26)</p>
<p><b>Isa 42:5</b></p>	<p>Thus saith <b>the Lord</b>, he that created <b>the heavens</b>, and stretched them out; he that spread forth <b>the earth</b>, and that which comes out of it; he that gives breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.</p>
<p><b>Isa 44:24</b></p>	<p>I am <b>the Lord</b> that makes all things; that stretches forth <b>the heavens</b> alone, that spreads abroad <b>the earth</b> by myself.</p>
<p><b>Jer 10:12</b></p>	<p>He hath made <b>the earth</b> by his power, he hath established <b>the world</b> by his wisdom, and hath stretched out <b>the heavens</b> by his discretion.</p>
<p><b>Zech 12:1</b></p>	<p><b>The Lord</b> which stretches forth <b>the heavens</b>, and lays the foundation of <b>the earth</b>, and forms the spirit of man in him.</p>

<b>John</b> 1; 1-4	In the beginning was <b>the Word</b> , and <b>the Word</b> was with <b>God</b> , and <b>the Word</b> was <b>God</b> . The same was in the beginning with <b>God</b> . All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
<b>John</b> 1;10	He was in <b>the world</b> and the world was made by him.
<b>John</b> 17.	<b>O Father</b> , glorify you me with yours own self with the glory which I had with thee before <b>the world</b> was (v. 5). you loves me before the foundation of the world (v. 24).
<b>Act</b> 7:49-50	<b>Heaven</b> is my throne, and <b>earth</b> is my footstool... Hath not my hand made all these things?
<b>Act</b> 14:15	The living <b>God</b> , which made <b>heaven</b> and <b>earth</b> , and the <b>sea</b> , and all things that are therein.
<b>Act</b> 17:24-8	<b>God</b> that made <b>the world</b> and all things therein, seeing that he is <b>Lord</b> of <b>heaven</b> and <b>earth</b> , dwells not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he gives all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of <b>one blood</b> all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of <b>the earth</b> , and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring
<b>Rom</b> 1:20	For the invisible things of him from the <b>creation</b> of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and <b>Godhead</b> , so that they are without excuse.
<b>1 Cor</b> 8:6	<b>One Lord Jesus Christ</b> , by whom are all things.
<b>Eph</b> 3:9	Which from the beginning of <b>the world</b> hath been hid in <b>God</b> , who created all things by <b>Jesus Christ</b> .
<b>Col</b> 1:16-17	For by him were all things created, that are in <b>heaven</b> , and that are in <b>earth</b> , visible and invisible ... all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

<b>Heb</b> 1:1	<b>His Son</b> , whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world (v. 2). You, <b>Lord</b> , in the beginning hast laid the foundation of <b>the earth</b> ; and <b>the heavens</b> are the works of yours hands (v. 10).
<b>Heb</b> 11:3	Through faith we understand that the ages were framed by the word of <b>God</b> , so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.
<b>2 Pet</b> 3 :5	By the word of <b>God the heavens</b> were of old.
<b>Rev</b> 3 :14	These things saith ... the beginning of the <b>creation</b> of <b>God</b> .
<b>Rev</b> 4:11	you art worthy, <b>0 Lord</b> , to receive glory and honour and power; for you hast created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created.
<b>Rev</b> 10:6	Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created <b>heaven</b> , and the things that therein are, and <b>the earth</b> , and the things that
<b>Rev</b> 14:7	Worship him that made <b>heaven</b> , and <b>earth</b> , and <b>the sea</b> , and the fountains of <b>waters</b> .
<b>DAY ONE</b>	
<b>Psa</b> 74:16	The day is thine, the night also is thine; you hast prepared the light and the sun.
<b>2 Cor</b> 4:6.	For <b>God</b> , who commanded the light to shine out of darkness
<b>DAY TWO</b>	
<b>Job</b> 36:32	With clouds he covers the light; and commands it not to shine, by the cloud that cometh betwixt.
<b>Psa</b> 19:1	<b>The heavens</b> declare the glory of <b>God</b> , and the firmament shows his handiwork.
<b>Psa</b> 24:1-2	<b>The earth</b> is <b>the Lord's</b> , and the fulness thereof; <b>the world</b> , and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.
<b>Psa</b> 136; 6	To him that stretched <b>the earth</b> above <b>the waters</b> .
<b>Psa</b> 147:8	covers <b>the heaven</b> with clouds, prepares rain for <b>the earth</b> .
<b>Psa</b> 148:4.	Praise him, <b>ye heavens</b> of <b>heavens</b> , and ye <b>waters</b> that be above <b>the heavens</b> .

<b>Psa</b> 148:4.	Praise him, <b>ye heavens</b> of <b>heavens</b> , and ye <b>waters</b> that be above <b>the heavens</b> . Let them praise the name of <b>the Lord</b> for he commanded and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree which shall not pass.
<b>Jer</b> 51:15-16	He hath made <b>the earth</b> by his power, he hath established <b>the world</b> by his wisdom, and hath stretched out <b>the heaven</b> by his understanding. When he utters his voice there is a multitude of <b>waters</b> in <b>the heavens</b> ; and he causes the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he makes lightning's with rain, and brings forth the wind out of his treasures.
<b>DAY THREE</b>	
<b>Gen</b> 2:5 RV	And no plant of the field was yet in <b>the earth</b> , and no herb of the field had yet sprung up, for <b>the Lord God</b> had not caused it to rain upon <b>the earth</b> .
<b>Gen</b> 2:9	And out of the ground. made <b>the Lord God</b> to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.
<b>Job</b> 26:10	He hath compassed <b>the waters</b> with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.
<b>Job</b> 38:8,11	Who shut up <b>the sea</b> with doors ... and said, Hitherto shalt you come, but no further; and here shall your proud waves be stayed?
<b>Psa</b> 33:7-9	He gathers <b>the waters</b> of <b>the sea</b> together as an heap; he lays up the depth in storehouses. Let all <b>the earth</b> fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spoke, and: it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.
<b>Psa</b> 95:5	<b>The sea</b> is his and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.
<b>Psa</b> 104:6-14	<b>The waters</b> stood above the mountains. At your rebuke they fled; at the voice of your thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which you hast founded for them. you hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover <b>the earth... the earth</b> is satisfied with the fruit of your works. He causes the grass to grow for the .cattle, and herb for the service of man.



<b>Psa</b> 148:4	Praise <b>the Lord...</b> ye waters that be above <b>the heavens</b> .
<b>Isa</b> 40:12.	Who hath measured <b>the waters</b> in the hollow of his hand?
<b>Jer</b> 5:22	Fear ye not me? saith <b>the Lord</b> ; will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of <b>the sea</b> by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail, though they roar, yet can they not pass over it,
<b>DAY FOUR</b>	
<b>Deut</b> 4:19	Lest you lift up yours eyes unto <b>the heaven</b> , and when you see <b>the Sun</b> and <b>the Moon</b> and <b>the stars</b> , even all the host of <b>heaven</b> , should be driven to worship them and serve them, which <b>the Lord your God</b> hath divided unto all nations under the whole <b>heaven</b> .
<b>Psa</b> 19:6.	His going forth is from the end of <b>the heaven</b> , and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.
<b>Psa</b> 74:17.	you hast made summer and winter
<b>Psa</b> 104:19-20	He appoints <b>the Moon</b> for seasons; the son knows his going down. you makes darkness, and it is night.
<b>Psa</b> 136:7-9.	To him that made <b>great lights</b> ... <b>the Sun</b> to rule by day, <b>the Moon</b> and stars to rule by night.
<b>Psa</b> 148:1-3	Praise ye <b>the Lord</b> from <b>the heavens</b> ; praise him in the heights ... Praise ye him, <b>Sun</b> and <b>Moon</b> : praise him, all ye stars of light.
<b>Jer</b> 31:35.	Thus saith <b>the Lord</b> , which gives <b>the Sun</b> for a light by day, and the ordinances of <b>the Moon</b> and of <b>the stars</b> for a light by night.
<b>DAY FIVE</b>	
<b>Gen</b> 2:19.	And out of the ground <b>the Lord God</b> formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air.

## DAY SIX

<b>Gen</b> 2:7-8	And <b>the Lord God</b> formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul... the man whom he had formed
<b>Gen</b> 2:18	And <b>the Lord God</b> said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground <b>the Lord God</b> formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them to <b>Adam</b> to see what he would call them: and whatsoever <b>Adam</b> called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And <b>Adam</b> gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field; but for <b>Adam</b> there was not found an help meet for him.
<b>Gen</b> 3:22-3	And <b>the Lord God</b> said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore <b>the Lord God</b> sent him forth from the <b>garden of Eden</b> , to till the ground from whence he was taken.
<b>Gen</b> 5:1-2.	<b>God</b> created man, in the likeness of <b>God</b> made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam. <b>Gen</b> 9:6. In the image of <b>God</b> made he man.
<b>Job</b> 10; 8-9.	Thine hands have made me and fashioned me ... you has made me as the clay; and wilt you bring me into dust again?
<b>Job</b> 33:4.	<b>The Spirit of God</b> hath made me, and the breath of <b>the Almighty</b> hath given me <b>life</b> .
<b>Psa</b> 8:4-9.	What is man. that you art mindful of him? and the son of man that you visits him? For you hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour, you made him to have dominion over the works of your hands; you hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of <b>the sea</b> , and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas. <b>O Lord our Lord</b> , how excellent is your name in all <b>the earth!</b>

<b>Psa</b> 100:3	Know ye that <b>the Lord he is God</b> : it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves.
<b>Psa</b> 104:23-7.	Man goeth forth unto his work, and to his labour, until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom hast you made them all. The earth is full of your riches. So is the great and wide <b>sea</b> , wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts ... These wait all upon thee; that you may give them their meat in due season.
<b>Psa</b> 119:73	Thy hands have made me and fashioned me
<b>Psa</b> 136:25.	O give thanks unto <b>the Lord</b> ... Who gives food to all flesh.
<b>Psa</b> 45:15-17	you open yours hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. <b>The Lord</b> is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works.
<b>Psa</b> 147:9.	He gives to the beast his food. .
<b>Eccl</b> 3:11.	He hath made every thing beautiful in his time; also he hath set the world (eternity) in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that <b>God</b> makes from the beginning to the end.
<b>Eccl</b> 7:29.	Lo, this only have I found, that <b>God</b> made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.
<b>Eccl</b> 12:7.	Then shall the dust return to <b>the earth</b> as it was; and the spirit shall return unto <b>God</b> , who gave it. <b>Isaiah</b> 64:8. But now, <b>O Lord</b> , you art <b>our father</b> , we are the clay, and you our potter; and we all are the work of your hand.
<b>Zech</b> 12:1	<b>The Lord</b> ...forms the spirit of man within him.
<b>Mal</b> 2:14-15	She is your companion, and the wife of your covenant. And did he not make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a <b>godly</b> seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit.
<b>Matt</b> 19:4	. And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female? (see also Mark 10:6).

<b>Acts</b> 17:25-8	He gives to all life and breath, and all things; and hath made of <b>one blood</b> all nations of men for to dwell on the face of <b>the earth...</b> for in him we live, and move, and have our being... for we are also his offspring.
<b>1 Corth</b> 11:7	For a man... is the image and glory of <b>God</b> .
<b>1 Corth</b> 11:9	Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman of the man.
<b>1 Corth</b> 15:45	And so it is written, The first man <b>Adam</b> was made a living soul.
<b>1 Corth</b> 15:47	The first man is of <b>the earth,</b> earthy.
<b>Col</b> 3:10.	The new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.
<b>1 Tim</b> 2:13.	For <b>Adam</b> was first formed then <b>Eve</b>
<b>1 Tim</b> 4:3-4.	Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which <b>God</b> hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of <b>God</b> is good.
<b>Jam</b> 3:9.	Men, which are made after the similitude of <b>God</b> .

## APPENDIX II THE 'WISDOM' AND 'WORD' OF GOD AT CREATION

There are two other passages of outstanding importance to which reference should be made: one is in **the Old Testament** (Prov. 8) and the other is in **the New Testament** (John 1). The former refers to the **'Wisdom'** of **God**, and the latter to the **'Word'** of **God**, in connection with **Creation**. **The Old Testament** passage has been the subject of much comment, and has played a not unimportant part in the history of the doctrine of **the Lord** before **his incarnation** at **Bethlehem**.

It refers to who, was designated **'Wisdom'**, who was with **God** at **Creation** **'while as yet he had not made the earth... when he prepared the heavens ... when he established the clouds... when he gave to the sea his decree'**; we read,

**'Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I (Wisdom) was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.'**

He is said to be

**'from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was'.**

These verses and **the prologue** to **the Gospel of John** relate to the same person and events there can be little doubt. One occasion our **Lord**, referring to the messengers in **Old Testament times**, said (Luke 11; 49),

**'Therefore also said "the Wisdom of God", I will send them prophets.'**

**The description** suggests the use of **a Personal** and **Universal agent**.

**The Old Testament** writers did not indulge in **metaphysical speculations** about **God** and **the Universe**.

As **W. Fairweather** has written,

**'Wisdom is spoken of in such a way as to make it impossible to believe that only the Divine attribute of wisdom is meant.'**

So that when we read, **'The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth'** (Prov. 3:19), the reference is to **a person**.

So in Psalm 104:24, **\*O Lord how manifold are your works! by wisdom hath you made them all.'**

If there could be any **valid doubt** as to the meaning of the '**Wisdom**' passage, there can be **none whatever** regarding the introduction to John's Gospel. This expressly refers to **the Creation narrative**. The Apostle used the Greek word '**logos**', translated '**Word**', without attempting to explain it; he must therefore have assumed that those who would read his gospel were well acquainted with its meaning.

He is about to write the record of the earthly life of **the Lord** and, realising the importance of what he is to do, says that this life did not begin with his birth at **Bethlehem**; it extends back **to eternity in the past**. So he prefaces the narrative of his life on earth with this **great and sublime statement**, a declaration which above any other in **the Gospels** has been recognised as having no authority except as a **revelation** from **God**.

He states that the One who was **the Word** of **God** at **Creation** is the One who became incarnate at **Bethlehem** and writes

***'all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.'***

As **S. R. Driver** says (**Genesis**), 'The "**Word**" being the mediating principle of **creation**, the means or agency through which His will takes effect (cf. Psalm 33 :6, 9; also 107:20,147:15,18) in which passages the "**Word**" is regarded as a messenger between **God** and His creatures. This usage of the **OT** is a preparation for the personal sense of the term

**"The Word"** which appears in the **New Testament** (John 1:1).'

**Luther** said,

**'God has decreed that he will be unknowable and unapproachable apart from Christ';** and in his **Bampton Lectures J. Medd** writes,

**'The Father has ever worked through the person of the Son. The Son is the one Mediator. The thought of mediation becomes necessary, as soon as from the absolute thought of God we pass to the related thought of creation, and the Bible revelation distinctly attaches mediation to the person of the Eternal Son in respect alike of the works of Creation, of Administration, and Redemption.'**

The necessity of a **mediator** between **God** and **man** is seen from the fact that **the Father** always has been **"the Invisible God"** who dwells in **light** which no man can approach unto.

**'No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son (God), which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him'** (John 1:18).

**He Son**, the "**Word**", is **the image** of "**the invisible God**"; **an image** is a **likeness** or **representation**.

We read of him in **eternity past** as **'being in the form of God'** (Phil. 2:6).

The **'form'** as **J. B. Lightfoot** says, denotes figures, shape, fashion; He ***'took on him the form of a servant'***.

The only other use of this word **'form'** in **the New Testament** is in Mark 16:12 when after his resurrection,

***'He appeared in another form to two of them'***

and talked with them as they walked along the road to Emmaus.

The **'image', the 'form'** which he had at **Creation** seems to be similar to that of his resurrection body. By means of this form he was **the image of the invisible God** and **so visible to man**. Man was made in the likeness of this **'Word'**, and **the Apostle** says this **Word** was **God** (not just **God's** word) and thus the infinite **God** talked to finite man. .

At **Creation** he was the utterance, **the Mediator**.

"In **the New Testament** the **"logos"** signifies a **verbal utterance**, then **discourse, speech, instruction, narrative**, and when applied to **God** either a specific **Divine utterance**, or revelation in general or the **Scriptures** as the communication of **God's** mind and will'

(**G.T. Purves**) He is not only as **Creator**, but **the Light** and **Life** of men.

As **G. T, Purves** says,

**'Hence to men, endowed with intelligence, the life possessed by the "logos", and manifested in creation, was originally the illuminating truth (the light) by which they apprehended God and duty; but when man became immersed in darkness (by sin) the Divine light, though still continuing to shine, was not comprehended'** (Hastings Bible Dict).

At **Creation** the **'Word'** was not only the **'Life'** - **God** breathed into his nostrils the breath of Life - but also the **'Light'**, the True (or more literally 'the original') light which lightens every man coming into the world. It is this enlightenment that made man in the image of **God**. Mind, reason, understanding, came to first man as to all men subsequently from him who was the **'Logos'**, the speech of **God**.

**B. F. Westcott** quotes **Theophylact**,

**'Man as made in the image of God stood in a special relation to the Word. He saith not the light of the Jews only, but of all men, for all of us, insofar as we have received intellect and reason from that Word which created us, are said to be illumined by Him.**

**Without Him was not anything made or, more literally, "not even one thing", neither man's body nor his mind.'**

In this prologue, which is a historical survey of the past, John writes,

*'the light shines in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not',*

or more accurately, the darkness did not overtake or overwhelm the light which had originally shone into man's mind. Periods of darkness soon came; at the **very beginning man sinned** and began to doubt **God**,

*'men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil'.*

First man attempted to hide from **God**, yet notwithstanding his fall his reason remained. Even in the state of affairs which preceded **the Flood**, **the darkness** did not succeed in overwhelming **Light**; in subsequent periods of backsliding and idolatry he,

*'who hath put wisdom in the inward parts and who hath given understanding to the heart'* (Job 38:36),

never permitted **the Light** to be eclipsed or extinguished.

We have already noted that all the corruption of the **Babylonian** or **Egyptian mythologies** did not completely succeed in blotting out the idea of an original revelation from **God**. Nor have the false speculations of more modern days overwhelmed

*'the light which lights every man coming into the world',*

and which illuminates the soul of man in **the image and likeness of God**.

There is always **more light** breaking forth from his word. **The original Revelation of God** to man is the basis of both **the Old** and **the New Testament**. This enlightenment was not something external but something immediate. This **Light** was **the light** of men; we are told that **God** talked with first man - not in **a remote** and **uncertain way**, but directly and positively face to face

*'in the garden in the cool of the day'.*

Some **philosophical theories** assume that **man groped** in

**"the darkness over a period of thousands of millions of years"**,

knowing nothing at first of **God the Creator** of **the heavens** and **the earth**.

On the other hand, the **prologue to this gospel** states that he who later came to be the saviour of men was originally at **Creation** both **the Word** and **the Light** of men. **Genesis** tells of **God** speaking to man and telling him about his purposes for him. In recent years there has been a serious and continuous degradation of the use of the word **'Revelation'**.



As **Dr G. S. Hendry** says (**God the Creator**)

**'the necessity of revelation is formally acknowledged but it is deprived of its essential content because it is taken for granted that its substance is of the same order as the substance of philosophical knowledge, and that the God of revelation is identical with the philosophical idea of God and potentially knowable by the human mind.'**

Attempts are made to bend and mould this word into a semblance quite different from its **Scripture** usage, so we must **define our terms**.

By **revelation** in this instance we mean **a direct speaking to men** by him who is called **the Word**. If it is said that this is impossible then the person who says it is in conflict with the statements in the second chapter of **Genesis**.

**E. Brunner** says,

**'Revelation in the Biblical sense means that in this event of revelation something is said to me which, apart from this event, is and remains inaccessible to me, hidden from me, which accordingly does not reside in some depth of my being and which I can neither control nor judge.'**

**'Nothing can be discovered by man about God apart from the revelation of Himself by God to man, nor can anything be effectively revealed by God to man apart from the activity of human reason in apprehending it'** (Doctrine in the Church of England).

**The Bible** says of first man that he was made in the image and likeness of **God**, a being sufficiently intelligent to whom **God** could speak. **The Bible** consistently represents first man as the specially created crowning climax of **the Creator's** work; it has no place for the speculations which assume a time when there was an ape like man or a man like ape.

As **A. Plummer** has written in the Cambridge **Greek** Testament on **John**,

**'In the Old Testament we find the Word or Wisdom of God personified, generally as an instrument for executing the Divine Will, as if it were distinct from that Will.'**

We have the first traces of it in the **"God said"** of **Genesis** 1 ;3, 6, 9,11,14, etc. **The personification of the Word of God** begins to appear in the Psalms 33:6,107:20, 119:89, 147:15. In Proverbs 8 and 9 the **Wisdom of God** is personified in very striking terms. **The Wisdom** is manifested in the **power** and **mighty works** of **God**; that **God** is love is a revelation yet to come.

In **the Targums** or **Aramaic paraphrases** of **the Old Testament** the development is carried still further. These, though not yet written down, were in common use **among the Jews in our Lord's time**; and they strongly influenced the growing tendency to separate **the Divine Essence** from the immediate contact with the material world.

Where **Scripture** speaks of a direct communication from **God** to man, the **Targums** substituted **the Memra**, or the **"Word of God"**.

Thus in **Genesis** 3:8,9, instead of

*"they heard the voice of the Lord God",*

**the Targums** read,

*'they heard the Word of the Lord God',* and instead of *"God called unto Adam"*, they put, *"the Word of the Lord called unto Adam"*, and so on.'

The usage may be seen in such a passage as Deuteronomy 5:5,

*'I stood between the Word (Memra) of the Lord and you, to announce to you at that time the Word {pithgama} of the Lord.'*

As **Medd** says

**{One Mediator}, The human intellect is part of that image of God wherein man was created. It is the finite counterpart and miniature of the intellect of God.'**

## APPENDIX III

### OTHER ANCIENT ACCOUNTS OF CREATION

#### Babylonian and Assyrian

The oldest accounts of **Creation** (other than **the Bible**) which have come down to us are **the Sumerian**. **The Sumerians** were a dying race when **Abraham** lived at **Ur**, but we know that for a century or two before he was born the scribes had been occupied in reproducing on clay tablets the old **Sumerian** literature.

Many of the ideas that the **Babylonians** and **Assyrians** had about **Creation** came from this source. I have cited in chapter 6 of Part II the relevant parts of the most popular of the **Babylonian Creation** stories, and have referred to the account which came down through **Berosus** relating to a primitive revelation made to first man.

**Eusebius**<sup>1</sup> has preserved another ancient story of **Creation**.

'There was a time when all was darkness and water and these gave birth to fearful creatures with strange appearances, for men with two wings were born and some with four wings and two faces, they had only one body but two heads, a man's and also a woman's.... And other men had goats' legs and horns and the fore parts of men looked like hippocentaurs. Bulls with human heads were born, and dogs with four bodies, with fish tails on their hind quarters, and horses and men with god's heads and other beings had the heads and bodies of horses but with the tails of fish, and others with

#### The Shapes of All Kinds of Beasts'.

'In addition to these, there were fish, creeping things, serpents and many other wonderful beings that had appearances derived from one another. Images of these are set up in the **Temple of Bel**.

The ruler of them all was a woman named **Omorka**, which in **Chaldean** is interpreted "**Thallata**", in **Greek** **Thalassa** (**sea**) but numerically equivalent to **Salene** (**the moon**)'.

After **the Universe** had come to be, **Bel** appeared and divided the woman into two parts, he made half of her **earth** and the other half **heaven**, and did away with the creatures in her.

This, he says, is the material truth set forth allegorically, for when the **universe** was watery and only animals had come to be, this **god** cut off his own head, and the other **gods** mixed **the earth** with the blood which flowed and moulded men, because of this they are intelligent and have a part in the wisdom of the **gods.**'

Another account of the beliefs of the **Babylonians** about **Creation** has come down to us from **Damascius**,<sup>2</sup> a **Neo-Platonist**.

'The **Babylonians** seem to pass over without notice the one origin of all things and make two, **Tauth** and **Apason**, her husband, and named her the mother of the **gods**. Of these only one son was born, **Moymis** which I take to be the word produced from two origins. From these came a further issue, **Lache** and **Lachos**, and from these a third, **Kissare** and **Assorus**. From these three children were born **Anos**, **Illinos**, and **Aos**. To **Aos** and **Dauke**, **Belos** was born who they call **the Creator**'

## Egyptian

Stories of **Creation** were numerous in **Egyptian** literature, but it is very difficult to find any account which was generally accepted. They are often contradictory because almost every town had its own **god** or **gods** and these produced a great variety of stories.

**Maspero** in his **Dawn of Civilisation** writes,

**'It was narrated at Hermopolis, and the legend was ultimately universally accepted, even by the Heliopolitans, that the separation of Nuit and Sibou had taken place at a certain spot on the site of the city where Sibou had ascended the mound on which the feudal temple was afterwards built, in order that he might better sustain the goddess and uphold the sky at the proper height.'**

It was, he says, **the belief** of the **Egyptians** that

**'Their forefathers had appeared upon the banks of the Nile even before the Creator had completed his work, so eager were the gods to behold their birth. No Egyptian disputed the reality of this right of the firstborn, which ennobled the whole race; but if they were asked the name of their divine father, then the harmony was broken, and each advanced the claims of a different personage.**

**Phtah** had modelled man with his own hands; **Khnum** had formed him on a potters table. **Ra**, at his first rising, seeing the earth desert and bare, had flooded it with his rays as with a flood of tears; all living things, vegetable and animal, and man himself, had sprung **pellmell** from his eyes, and were scattered abroad over the surface of the world with **the light**.

Sometimes the facts were presented under a less poetic aspect. The mud of **the Nile**, heated to excess by the burning sun, fermented and brought forth the various races of men and animals by spontaneous generation, having moulded itself into a thousand living forms ... It was not **Ra** alone whose tears were endowed with vitalising power.

**All divinities**, whether beneficent or malevolent, Sit as well as **Osiris** or **Isis**, could give life by weeping, and the work of their eyes, when once it had fallen upon earth, nourished and multiplied as vigorously as that which came from the eyes of **Ra**.

The individual character of **the creator** was not without bearing upon the nature of his creatures; good was the necessary outcome of the good **gods**, evil of the **evil ones**.'

## Phoenician

**The Phoenician** story has been given to us by **Eusebius** in his **Praeparatio Evangelica**, i.10. **Eusebius's** source was **Philo** of **Byblos**, who learned it from **Sanchuniathon**.

'The beginning of all things was dark air and slimy dark chaos, and these were boundless and limitless for limitless ages. The dark air flamed into love for the prime principle and a connection came about, and from the embrace the dark air produced Mot or muddy slime. From this all creation was produced. Then came beings without consciousness, then reasonable beings and they were called **Zophesamin** or beholders of **heaven**, and their shape was that of an egg. And Mot gave light to **the Sun and Moon** and the great heavenly bodies.

'When the air became radiant through the burning of the sea and the earth, there arose winds and clouds and great outpourings of waters. After these had been separated they were torn away by the burning heat of the Sun and met together again creating thunder and lightning. The din of the thunder awoke the living beings and they moved on the earth, male and female.'

## Chinese

The main legends are of a world egg, and there are many of them. In the third century BC **Kith-Yuan**, a **Chinese poet**, says that 'in the beginning above and below had no form only pictures. In the earliest times a **Chinese Emperor** warred against **Kung Kung** and thrust towards the **Pillar of heaven**, destroys it and cuts the cords of earth, then the **Empress Kti-Kna**, who has the body of a serpent, made good the damage done to **heaven** and **earth**.'

## Persian

Ahuramazda created the world of light and Ahriman the world of darkness, **'and the world of darkness threatened the world of light'**.

The oldest Avesta traditions have been lost but the Benduesh says that 'Ahuramazda has settled 12,000 years for the reign of the hostile powers. In the first 3,000 years he created pure spirits, in the second 3,000 years he created **six** Amashaspands who sit on golden thrones.

**Six demons** of fury oppose these **six Amashaspands**. **Amuramazda** then created **heaven**, then water, then earth, plants, animals, and then he destroyed everything but the sun's light, made the seed clean, and there emerged from death animals and man.'

## Indian

Here again there is much uncertainty and the accounts vary. There are over **120** so-called **creation hymns** in the tenth book of **the Rig-Veda**, but it is very difficult to get any clear conception of Indian ideas from these very contradictory stories. One is that a woman gave birth to **heaven** and earth. Another that

**'At first all was dark and indistinguishable, then the eternal One thought "I will create worlds" and at once water came into existence and water contained the germ of all life. This light came and the water gradually became a wonderful egg in which Braham (the creator) created himself. After hundreds of millions of years he split the egg into two parts making heaven out of one and the earth out of the other.'**

## Greek

One of **the earliest attempts** to state the **Greek** view was made by **Hesiod** in his **Theogony**.

**'At first Chaos came to be, but next wide bosomed Earth, the foundation of those who do not know death:, who hold the peaks of snowy Olympus and dark Tartarus in the depths of the Earth and Eros, fairest among the gods, who unnerves the limbs and overcomes the mind and counsel of wisdom of all gods, and all men within them.**

**From Chaos, Erebus came forth and black night, but night gave birth to Aether and Day whom she conceived and bare from union in love with Erebus.**

And Earth gave birth to the starry heaven, equal to herself, to cover her on every side, and to be a sure place of abode for the blessed gods. And she gave birth to long hills, the haunts of the goddess Nymphs who live in the valleys of the hills. She also gave birth to the fruitless deep and his stormy swell.'

It is difficult after reading these stories to account for the very widespread belief that the ideas which were current among other nations in regard to creation do not differ substantially from that in the Bible.

I submit that the difference is not merely one of degree but of kind.

To use Professor A. H. Sayce's words in his Gifford Lectures on The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia,

'Between Judaism and the coarsely polytheistic religion of Babylonia, as between Christianity and the old Egyptian faith - in, spite of its high morality and spiritual insight there lies an impassable gulf. I can find only one explanation, unfashionable and antiquated though it be In the language of a former generation, it marks the dividing line between revelation and unrevealed religion.'

Although occasionally one can catch glimpses of truth in these accounts, obviously they have been so corrupted as to appear grotesque. So great is the difference between them and Scripture that we are compelled to acknowledge the first page of the Bible as a revelation from God. But it is sometimes said that there is another alternative to revelation which can account for the purity of the Bible record; it is the

'religious genius of the Hebrews'.

I submit that this is only begging the question, for was not the

'religious genius of the Hebrews'

due to the Revelation of God to them of his nature and thoughts?

Supposing that any of the so called stories of Creation which have come down to us from any source (apart from the Bible) had been found on its first page, would we have learned anything about Creation?

I submit that a careful reading of these accounts which contain all that men knew about Creation will impress us with the unique character of the biblical record. To my mind this ignorance about Creation outside the Bible is a challenging testimony to the Reality of Revelation.

## Chapter 2

1 The Septuagint Version LXX is a Greek translation of the Old Testament made in Alexandria in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC by 70 Jewish scholars. It is valuable because of its having been translated from earlier texts of the Hebrew Old Testament than were available later in the Christian era. - Ed.

## Chapter 3

1 It may be mentioned that the length of the day in the remote past was, according to the Mathematical Astronomers, little different from that of the present day.

*The Moon causes tides to sweep round the earth in just under twenty-five hours. In the deep oceans little friction is caused by such action; but in shallow seas tidal action causes much fluid friction, which leads to the dissipation of energy as heat. This energy comes mainly from the earth's energy of rotation, so that tidal friction lessens the rate of rotation of the earth and therefore lengthens the day.*

*Of course the effect is very small. The earth has a vast stock of rotational energy; and, even though it has been calculated that the tidal friction leads to a rate of dissipation of energy equal to some two thousand million horse-power, the day is therefore only lengthened by 1/1200 of a second per century'*

(Scientific Theory and Religion, p. 329).

2 This identity even to small details (so far as is possible in so simple and condensed account) of the written and geological record coupled with the fact that the fossil record merges without break into modern times, can mean only one thing, and that is that the written account describes the record of the rocks. The evidence all points against the interpretation that the geological record can be dropped in between the first and second verses of the chapter. This theory was formulated over a hundred years ago to fit in with the ideas of the time, and was not held by either Hugh Miller or Sir J. W. Dawson who were in a better position to assess the value of the evidence than was Dr Chalmers in 1833 (A. Stuart, MSc. FGS, in Transactions of the Victoria Institute, 1937, pp, 105-6).

3 There lurks behind this attitude the 19<sup>th</sup> century distinction between judgments of fact and judgments of value. This may be valid in some contexts but certainly is not here. It is comparable to the New Testament's critics who in their dislike of the miraculous elements in the Gospels will claim that the facts are in doubt, but the value of the statement is still to be received. Historical fact and value are not divisible. - Ed.



4 There are clear indications that long before the time of **Moses** or even **Abraham, the seventh day** had a peculiar meaning in **Babylon**. They observed the 7th, 14th, 9th, 21st and 28th days of the month, but in a very different way from that of the **Hebrews**. Other nations such as the **Egyptians** used it. They certainly would not have borrowed it from the **Israelites** after Sinai.

Its recognition was so widespread that **Josephus** could write in the first century, 'There is not any city of **the Grecians**, nor any of the Barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting **on the seventh day** hath not come' (**Contra Apion**. ii-40). Obviously 'therefore it has a universal and not merely a national significance.

Before it was known that the **Babylonians** kept a **seventh day** there were some who thought that **the seventh day's** rest of **Genesis 2.3** was an isolated instance, and the remaining references to a **seventh day** in the lives of **the Patriarchs** an accident. Now that it is generally known that a **seventh day's** observance existed long before **the Mosaic era**, the testimony of **Genesis** is generally accepted that it was an institution from the beginning. Three-quarters of a century ago **Dean Burgon** clearly showed that a **seventh day's** rest was known to **the Patriarchs**.

## Chapter 4

1 'At **the root** of the **Sabbath** law was the love of **God** for **mankind**, and not for **Israel** only. Cf. **Ephrem**:

"the **Sabbath** appointed, not for **God's sake**, but for **the sake of man**"  
(**Prof. H. B. Swete**, *Commentary on Mark*).

'One of the simplest and most obvious, but yet one of the deepest and most important, of **the apophthegms ( a concise saying)** of **our Lord**. The verb **εγενετο (was made)** means "**was brought into existence.**"

The preposition somewhat barely rendered, "**for means**" "**because of**" or "**on account of**". The idea is that the reason or cause, of the existence of the **Sabbath** is to be found **in man**, not **vice versa**. **Man** needs a **Sabbath**, man universal. The **Sabbath** is a means in order to some end or ends terminating in man' (**J. Morison** in **Commentary on Mark**).

'We find here rather the most emphatic confirmation of the inviolably continuing **σαββανον** in the all expressive **εγενετο**.

Not, "**Moses** gave you **the Sabbath**" but, "**the Sabbath** was from **the first**, when all things came into **being**, when **the world** and **man** were **created**".

As already in the reception of this commandment into **the decalogue**, which contains only what is original and **permanent law for all men**, not what was temporarily designed for **Israel** alone, so again does **Christ**, in the words **οιω τον ανθρωπον**, set forth the universal validity of the **Sabbath** as *originating from the creation*' (R. E. Steir, **The Words of the Lord Jesus**). **Dean Alford** said,

**'Peculiar to Mark and highly important. The sabbath was an ordinance for man; for man's rest, both actually and typically as setting forth the rest which remains for God's people (Heb. 4:9).'**

## Chapter 5

- 1 The thesis of this book and the indications in the text of **Genesis** for the underlying structure of **Genesis** are helpfully discussed by **R. K. Harrison**; Introduction to **the Old Testament** (Tyndale Press 1970 pp 545-53) DJ.W.
- 2 In **Hebrews** 4:3 **γενηθεντων** is the **First Aorist passive** and does not mean finished in the same sense referred to in **Genesis** 2:1.
- 3 No word has been used in this **translation** which has not the support of the best **Hebrew** scholarship.

## Chapter 6

- 1 The translation used is that of **A. Heidel**, **The Babylonian Genesis** University of Chicago Press, 1942).
- 2 **A. Jeremias**, **The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East**.

## Chapter 9

- 1 The **Hebrew** words **erebh** and **boker** do not signify **night and day** but **the early evening** (say between **sunset** and actual **darkness**) and early morning (say between **dawn** and **sunrise**). These do not make up a **"day"** of twenty-four hours.' (**A. H. Finn**, **Creation, Fall and Deluge**).
- 2 **The Septuagint Version** has **'written account'**.

## Chapter 10.

- 1 **'Many scientific men have speculated about the first beginning of life and their speculations are often of great interest, but there is no absolutely definite knowledge and no convincing guess yet of the way in which life began. But nearly all authorities are agreed that it probably began upon mud or sand in warm sunlit shallow brackish water, and that it spread up the beaches to the inter tidal lines and out to the open waters'** (**H. G. Wells**, **A Short History of the World**).

According to this statement **'all authorities'** are agreed about the probability of something about which they have **'no convincing guess'**.

## Appendix III

- 1 The text seen in **Schoene**, *Eusebi Chronicorum*, Liber prior, pp14-18
- 2 Damascii Successoris Dubitationes et Solutiones de Primus principii. Paris, 1889,p.321,322. Suggested further reading by ©. **D J. Wiseman**

### Suggested further reading by **D J Wiseman**

#### 1. ON ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

**A. L. Oppenheim**, *Ancient Mesopotamia* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1964). **H. W. F. Saggs**, *The Greatness that was Babylon* (Sidgwick & Jackwn^ London, 3962).

#### 2. ON ANCIENT WRITING

**I. J. Gelb**, *A Study of Writing* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1963).

**G. R. Driver**, *Semitic Writing* (The British Academy, London, revised edition 1976).

#### 3. ON COLOPHONS

**H. Hunger**, *Babylonische und assyrische Kolophone* (Alter Orient undaltes Testament Band 2, Verlag Butzon, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1968),

**E Leichty**, 'The **Colophon**' in **R. M. Adams** (ed.) *The Workshop of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary: presented to A. Leo Oppenheim* (Oriental Institute, University of Chicago. 1964), p.147-54.

**S. N. Kramer**, *The Sumerians* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London,1970).

#### 4. ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN ACCOUNTS OF CREATION

**J. B. Fritchard** (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testamant* (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1955, revised 1.969). See pp. 3-11 Egyotian **Creation** and myths of Origins

(**J. A. Wilson**), pp. 37-50 Sumerian myths (**S. N. Kramer**), p 60-72 Akkadian **Creation** Epics (E. A. Speiser), pp. 501-3 Akkadian **Creation** Epics (additions **A. K. Grayson**).

