

# A Summary of the Main Evangelical Compromises On Genesis 1

By Phillip Kayser

Dominion Covenant Church is committed to a Six Day Creation position. We recognize that good Christian men and women have adopted many other views, and we recognize that their motivations many times may have been pure – a desire to defend the faith. However, in my opinion, they have compromised the Scripture (whether willfully or ignorantly). Some of the founders of these interpretations agree that the literal sense makes most sense, but that “science” has forced them to reinterpret the passage because it demands an ancient earth interpretation. This places science as an authority over Scripture rather than letting God be true and every man a liar if every man is in contradiction to the Scripture (Rom. 3:4). This outline is of necessity brief and incomplete, but it will help you to answer those who challenge the historic Six Day Creation position.

## 19 False Interpretations of Genesis 1

There are so many views of Genesis 1 that have been developed in the last 200 years that it makes one’s head spin. These views include the Pre-Genesis Gap theory<sup>1</sup>, the Gap Theory<sup>2</sup>, the Multiple Gap theory<sup>3</sup>, the Mid-Week Gap theory<sup>4</sup>, the Day Age theory<sup>5</sup>, the Pictorial Day/Moderate Concordism theory<sup>6</sup>, the Hesitation Theory<sup>7</sup>, the Edenic Creation theory<sup>8</sup>, the Figurative Day theory<sup>9</sup>, the

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as the Recreation-Revelation theory. This places 15 billion years of earth history before Genesis 1:1-2, and that these verses describe a recreation after judgment decimated a previous earth.

<sup>2</sup> Also known as the Ruin-Reconstruction Theory, Catastrophe theory or Interval Theory. Espoused by Dr. Thomas Chalmers and popularized by C.I. Scofield. This theory places an undefined (but long – most fit the 15 billion years of geologic history in here) period of time between verses 1 and 2. The angels were created before verse 1. There was a fall, and a judgment of the solar system or at least our planetary system before day 2. Verses 2 and following are not a re-creation, but a re-formation of the earth, and a clearing of the clouds and/or darkness that kept the sun, moon and stars from appearing on the earth. Only a few things needed to be created in this second period – man’s spirit and soul being one of them.

<sup>3</sup> Also known as the Intermittent Day theory. The six days are literal days in which God brought creative intervention, but vast ages exist between each day. Some say that a creative process described was begun on a given day, but that creative development continued. In any case, unlike the Day Age theory, the days are seen as literal days separated by billions of years.

<sup>4</sup> Also known as the Biblical Reality theory. This divides the creative week into two parts. Days 1-3 occurred billions of years ago. Days 4-6 occurred 10,000 years ago. During the first three literal days, God created the sun, moon, stars, earth and ancient animals (thus the geological record). During, days 4-6 God created man and modern animals.

<sup>5</sup> Also known as Progressive Creationism. Each day represents an age of billions of years. Each age is correlated to secular geology.

<sup>6</sup> The view of Bernard Ramm. This sees “the creation days in Genesis as pictorial representations of the major creative events. These events are coupled with progressive creationism but are not considered as a literal chronology of their occurrence.”

<sup>7</sup> The view of William Stokes and Gordan Gray. Like the gap theory, this posits a long period of time in which the universe was created (v. 1), and then much later, six literal days in which the earth is formed and made habitable. However, unlike the gap theory, this does not see any judgment before verse 2.

<sup>8</sup> Also called the local creation theory. This view says that Genesis 1 is simply talking about God’s creation of the Garden of Eden (or some say, the Middle East), and thus “land” instead of “earth.” John Pye Smith held to this view.

<sup>9</sup> It is not clear to me why this is a different view from the Day Age theory or the Pictorial Day theory. But apparently, the proponents want things to be a bit fuzzier than those two views allow. Dr. Perry Phillips argues that evening and morning are used for the gradual closing of one period and beginning of another. He also argues that in Genesis 1:26-31 it appears that man and woman were created on the same day, yet chapter 2 shows so many things occurring between Adam’s creation and Eve’s creation that they could not possibly have occurred in one literal day. He opts for a nebulous figurative day.

Cosmogonic Day theory<sup>10</sup>, the Relativity Day theory<sup>11</sup>, the Days of Revelation theory<sup>12</sup>, the Days of Divine Fiat theory<sup>13</sup>, the Revelatory Device theory<sup>14</sup>, the Framework Hypothesis<sup>15</sup>, the Two-Register Cosmology theory<sup>16</sup>, the Analogical Day theory<sup>17</sup>, the Day Peak theory<sup>18</sup> and the preparation of Palestine theory<sup>19</sup>. Each of these theories have been used to try to insert billion years into the Biblical record.

### **General Problems With All of the Compromises**

Though this handout will only interact with the three major compromises, every compromise can be resisted if the following things are kept in mind:

#### **They contradict the interpretation of Moses:**

1. Exodus 20:11 is not poetry, yet it describes everything in this universe as having been made in the space of a human week. This is an infallible interpretation of Genesis 1.
2. Genesis 1:31 describes everything in this universe as being “very good” on day six. These theories all insert billions of years of pain, suffering, killing (via the fossil record) into earth history before day six. How could a fossil record of such pain, suffering and death be considered “good” when Scripture speaks of it as a curse (Rom. 8:18-22) and shows the reversal of God’s curse as involving removal of such pain and suffering (Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25)?

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<sup>10</sup> The days are simply seen as religious or theological statements about creation, and that they are modeled after pagan cosmogonies, but refuting those pagan polytheistic errors. Claus Westerman, Karl Barth hold to this, but many have adopted variations on its theme, some sounding more evangelical than others.

<sup>11</sup> Also known as the “Expanding Time theory Gerald Shroeder, Derek Humphreys espouse this view. “The six days are literal 24-hour periods from a cosmic perspective, long ages from the earth’s perspective.”

<sup>12</sup> They claim that these are six literal days on which God gave revelation to Moses. The days only show the timing of the revelation, not of the creative processes being described.

<sup>13</sup> God took six literal, consecutive days to command the universe to come into being, but the commands did not take effect right away, or necessarily in the same order.

<sup>14</sup> The days are like phases in a construction project.

<sup>15</sup> The creation week is seen as a metaphor, not a sequence of time. This metaphor is used as a convenient device to poetically describe creation in topical fashion with the kingdoms being created on days 1-3 and the rulers or the kingdoms being created on days 4-6.

<sup>16</sup> This is actually a subtype of the Framework Hypothesis, but goes way beyond it. Since it is rejected by some Framework people, it should be treated as a separate theory. This was developed by Meredith Kline as a refinement to the Framework Hypothesis and a philosophical adjunct to it. This posits two registers: a lower register (time bounded, natural, earth history) and the upper register (timeless, supernatural, heavenly activity). "Therefore, when we find that God's upper level activity of issuing creative fiats from his heavenly throne is pictured as transpiring in a week of earthly days, we readily recognize that, in keeping with the pervasive contextual pattern, this is a literary figure, an earthly, lower register time metaphor for an upper register, heavenly reality" (p. 7). The implication is that we cannot know anything of timing whatsoever since the upper register is above time.

<sup>17</sup> I'm not sure that I can accurately describe this theory because it is very mushy. Each of the “days” are God’s workdays, but they are not human days, but only analogous in some way to human days. They may (or may not) represent long ages. They may (or may not) have overlap between the days They may (or may not) be chronological. The days are "successive periods of unspecified length. They may overlap in part, or may reflect logical rather than chronological criteria for grouping certain events on certain days."

<sup>18</sup> “This claims that Genesis is a generalised account of major events. Thus while day 5 records the creation of birds - that does not mean that no birds were created before that day, simply that the day was the major period of bird-creation.”

<sup>19</sup> This describes not creation, but the preparation of the land of Canaan for Israelite conquest.

### They contradict the Interpretation of Jesus

3. Jesus said that Adam and Eve were present from the creation of the world. Therefore, the six days were not simply days of refashioning what was already there, but were indeed days of creation: Mark 10:6 “But from the beginning of the creation, God “*made them male and female.*”

### They Contradict the Interpretation of Paul

4. Romans 8:18-22 indicates that the pain and suffering of the world came as a result of Adam’s sin. See also Romans 5:14.
5. Romans 1:20 indicates that the six days must have involved creation, not simply formation since man is said to be witness to God’s attributes since the creation of the world: “For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,” (Rom. 1:20)

### They Contradict the Interpretation of Hebrews

6. Hebrews implies that Christ’s redemption needed to be applied to men from the foundation of the world (not billions of years after it was formed). His argument is that Christ didn’t have to be offered often, otherwise God would have started to have Him offered from the foundation of the world and on: Hebrews 9:26 “He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”

## Answers to Key Arguments for the Gap Theory.

Gap Argument	Response
The verb in verse 1 can be translated as “became.”	Possible, but extremely unlikely given the fact that the ordinary idiom for “became” is a different Hebrew word. Virtually every translation has “was.”
Only perfection could come from God’s hand, and “without form and void” is a state of imperfection.	1) Contradicts their own theory which says that <i>God</i> judged the earth to make it void (and thus something “imperfect” comes from His hand on their own definition). 2) How is gradual progress imperfect? How does the first stage of a project imply imperfection? Is a baby imperfect?
Isaiah 45:18 uses the same Hebrew word for “void” when it says that “He did not create it a waste place [or “void,” “empty,” “chaos.”]” Something else must therefore have made it waste or empty – Satan. Furthermore, Jeremiah 4:19-26 describes the destruction of Jerusalem using the same Hebrew words and translates it “waste and void.” Isaiah 24:1 uses similar language for judgment. Thus, “without form and void” is language referring to judgment.	That phrase in Isaiah 45:18 should not be taken out of context. It was speaking of God’s <i>purpose</i> for creation– that it was not meant to be an empty earth, but “He formed it to be inhabited.” God formed it, or created it over six days, and by the time creation was finished, it was inhabited. Jeremiah 4 and Isaiah 24 use the terms to describe a “decreation.” Any approximation of of the first day of creation (or the second through fifth days for that matter) would be descriptive of calamity for man since it would imply that

	men would be wiped out. But this would not make the earlier days bad. By analogy, we would never say that the helplessness of a newborn baby was a tragedy, but if a healthy man sustained an injury that made him retarded to the level of a three year old, all would recognize this reversion to be calamitous. A good thing (day one of creation, a baby) could be used to describe a calamitous thing (depopulation, retardation).
In verse 4 God calls the light “good” but does not call the darkness “good.” This is significant since everything else in the creation account is called good. Therefore, the darkness was evil.	Until verse 31, there are many things that are not yet called “good.” For example, the firmament, the waters and the heaven of verses 6-8. However, in verse 31 God calls everything He made good, which includes darkness. In Isaiah 45:7 God says, “I form the light and create darkness.”
Adam and Eve were told to “replenish the earth” Gen. 1:28) so it must have been plenished before.	There is no “re” in the Hebrew. Every other translation simply says “fill,” which is what “replenish” meant in Elizabethan English.
If the fall of Satan didn’t occur before verse 2, then when did it occur? Angels must have been created and must have fallen before verse 2 in the pre-six day summary of verse 1.	Ezekiel 28:12-7 says that Satan was still sinless when “Eden” was first formed. Gappers claim this was heaven, but the text calls it “Eden, the <i>garden</i> of God” (v. 13), and speaks of the precious stones, diamonds and gold there (v. 13; cf with Gen. 2:11-12). It speaks also of a mountain, “ground,” and “the earth.” When one compares Colossians 1:15-16 (which speaks of Christ’s preeminence over all creation, including angels) with Exodus 20:11, it becomes clear that angels must have been created within the six day period in Genesis 1.

### Other Problems with the Gap Theory

**Though I have always had far more respect for this view than for any of the others, there are many problems with it. Let me outline just a few.**

1. The language of verse 1 is included in Exodus 20:11 where God says, “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth...” See also Exodus 31:17. On the framework view, the heavens and earth (Gen. 1:1) came into existence long before the six days. They reinterpret the word “made” (but see #3 below).
2. Exodus 20:11 also says, “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, *and all that is in them...*” The plural “them” refers to the three previous items: heavens, earth and sea. The gap theory teaches that the sun and moon, the earth, the stars,

the fossil records, etc represent things created before the six days, and that God merely made the sun, moon and stars to appear through the haze or darkness. But this "all that is in them" is so comprehensive, that it must include everything under the earth and beyond the earth.

3. The distinction between "create" and "formed" that is essential to the Gap theory (ie. God created in verse 1 but He only formed out of pre-existing matter on the six days) produces some strained exegesis. Thus, "Let there be light," in verse 3 must be interpreted as "Let light pierce through the atmospheric debris following the cataclysm and again reach the earth's surface." Similarly, the simple statement of verse 16, "And God made two great lights . . . the stars also," must be understood as saying "God removed all the clouds still remaining from the cataclysm so that now the sun, moon and stars could be seen again on earth." Similar strained renderings are needed for other passages.
4. The Gap theory necessitates death for billions of years before Lucifer rebelled for they credit all the fossil deposits to millions and billions of years of natural geological formations. Furthermore, the fossil records clearly point to violent death, universal suffering and struggle. But Scripture is clear that death and suffering are on account of sin (Rom. 5) and more specifically that the fall of Satan only affected himself and his angels since death entered the world through the sin of Adam (Rom. 5:12). Furthermore, the world that God looked at on day six was declared to be very good (Gen. 1:31). How could God declare the record of sin (in the fossils from the "pre-Adamic world") be very good?
5. At the end of the creation week "God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." (Gen. 1:31). God made Lucifer. Lucifer was part of everything that was "very good" and therefore Lucifer had not fallen until after Genesis 1:31.

**Day Age Theory**  
**Framework Hypothesis**  
(to be continued)

## Contradictions Between Bible And Uniformitarianism

Uniformitarianism	Bible
<b>Sun &amp; stars before earth</b>	Earth before sun and stars
<b>Land before oceans</b>	Oceans before land
<b>Sun was earth's first light</b>	Light came before sun
<b>Marine organisms first life</b>	Land plants first life
<b>Fish before fruit trees</b>	Fruit trees before fish
<b>Insects before birds</b>	Birds before insects
<b>Sun before land plants</b>	Land vegetation before sun
<b>Reptiles before birds</b>	Birds before reptiles
<b>Woman before man (by genetics)</b>	Man before woman (by creation)
<b>Rain before man</b>	Man before rain
<b>Death precedes man</b>	Man the cause of death

On page 322, Gleason Archer

Objects to the fact that the sun was created on day four:

1. This would pose “a complete lack of orientation as to the orbit of earth until the sun was installed as the central focus for its annual revolution

**Answer:**

- a. The division of night from day is all that occurred on day one.
  - b. There is no mention of seasons or other factors that would divide “years” (such as relative star location in sky, equinox, etc.) until day four. Gleason tries to say that an “observer on earth” would not be able to determine such factors, but verse 14 says nothing about observers (indeed, they are not present on day four). Instead, it says that God *made* the sun, moon and stars and said, “Let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years.”
  - c. All that is needed for day and night is to set the earth spinning on its axis. No “orbit” is necessary around the sun because
    - 1) The sun is not created yet (see verses 14-16), and thus there is no gravitational pull
    - 2) The seasons and year divisions have not been created yet
    - 3) See arguments about “light” without the “lightbearers” below.
  - d. Thus, Archer has misrepresented the literal day view of Genesis 1.
2. “the difficulty of explaining the process of photosynthesis essential for the terrestrial vegetation created on the previous day.”

**Answer:**

- a. Photosynthesis can occur with “artificial light.” The sun is not needed. (However, even if no process of photosynthesis was available through the light that came on day one, we need to keep in mind that it was only 24 hours.)
  - b. Revelation 21:23-25 prophecies about a time when there will be light from God Himself, and no need to have recourse to sun or moon. Whether this is taken literally or not, the concept of light without lightbearers is not foreign to Scripture.
  - c. There are other occasions in Scripture where God Himself was the source of light to a portion of the earth. The light that struck Saul. The glory cloud which divided darkness (on the Egyptians) and light (on the Jews).
3. He objects to the idea that cosmic light was created first on day 1 and then the Sun was created later on day four for two reasons: “(a) there is no reference to ‘*or*’ (‘light’) anywhere else in Scripture that is not connected with the sun or stars, or with moons or planets which reflect sunlight, or to fire resulting from combustion; (b) there is no scientific evidence whatever for photosynthesis resulting from cosmic light alone.” His solution is that the sun was already created, but that cloud cover made it impossible to see in any way that would enable clear time calculation. “At last the cloud cover was parted and clear blue sky became visible to observers on earth.” (p. 323)

**Answer:**

- a. See answers to 2, above.
- b.

All of this was given because “The question of the trustworthiness of Scripture is definitely at stake...” But I want you to notice how, far from fixing a supposed contradiction, this progressive creationist viewpoint multiplies problems:

1. He postulates “observers on earth” long before day four of creation. This shows clearly how his extra-Biblical (scientific”) presuppositions are primary. Nowhere in Scripture is there any indication of “observers on earth” prior to day five (sea creatures, birds, etc) or day six (cattle, man).
2. He is importing a foreign concept into Genesis 1 when he speaks of a cloud cover prior to day four, and the parting of the cloud cover being equivalent to verses 14-16. But the text says clearly, “God made two great lights... He made the stars also.”
3. According to Morris, there are at least 23 discrepancies between the order of God’s work on the “days” and the order that science gives to the epochs. As he says, “To try to harmonize these discrepancies by talking of ‘topical’ rather than chronological arrangements, or overlapping rather than sequential ‘days’ is merely a roundabout way of rejecting the accuracy and historicity of the record. Most liberal intellectuals, of course, do this directly, without bothering to devise any such equivocal exposition.”
4. For God to call everything in creation “very good” when (if progressive creationists are right) there were billions of fossils underfoot giving evidence to millions of years of death and violence runs completely contrary to God’s definition of a good creation elsewhere (Is 65:125).
5. On his interpretation, death came before the creation of Adam and Eve. According to Romans 8:18-23, suffering (v. 18), futility (v. 20 see the dead ends of species, the creation of higher forms, etc that day agers postulate), “bondage of corruption” or “decay” (v. 21) and “groans” (v. 22) all came to creation as a result of Adam’s fall. On death in general see also Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21.
6. For a critique of the “double revelation theory” read John C. Whitcomb and Donald B. DeYoung, *The Moon: Its Creation, Form and Significance* (Winona Lake; BMH Books, 1978), pp. 53-83 and 163-170.