

The following three papers are excerpts from papers and books written by Arthur C. Custance (1910-1985). Dr. Custance understood that the events spoken of in Genesis 1 were a recreation account. He knew that although man was only a few thousand years old, and that man was created in the Biblical creation week of six literal 24-hour days, that the earth was older. His scholarly outlook in combining scripture and science has made him one of the best defenders of the recreation account as outlined in the first chapter of Genesis. His book *Without Form and Void* is recognized as an authority on the subject.

The following three articles appear in the following works:

**The Doorway Papers, Volume #7: *Hidden Things of God's Revelation*. Part VI: A Translation of Genesis 1:1 to 2:4.**

***Without Form and Void*. Appendix XX: The Meaning of Exodus 20:11.**

***Without Form and Void*. Appendix XVI: Meaning of Descriptive Terms Found in Genesis 1:2.**

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**Part VI: A Translation of Genesis 1:1 to 2:4**

**Preface**

So many new translations of Scripture are being offered these days that it might be difficult to justify another one (even though this is limited to so few verses), but for the fact that one important point of Hebrew syntax has consistently been overlooked. This is the use of the verb "to be." It is particularly significant in many key verses in the early chapters of Genesis.

One of the great advantages of the Authorized Version is the use of italics for words which have been supplied by the translators which do not appear in the original. For this reason, in the text which follows, italicized words as they appear in the Authorized Version are also italicized, but not specifically to emphasize them. After each verse taken directly from the King James Version, a new translation appears in small capitals with further emphasis where necessary. After each retranslation, some comments will be found for throwing further light upon my alternative.

The Hebrew language is in one sense simple. Thus some of the subtleties of thought and meaning depended upon special devices, including the omission of some words in certain contexts where we would consider their inclusion essential to complete the sense. To the Hebrew writer, the omission had important significance. This applies in a special way to the use of the verb "to be."

A second method of making distinctions in meaning was by the use of special word orders, particularly changing the position of the verb, its object, and its subject in a sentence.

To ignore these literary devices is to miss entirely the original intention of the writer. To respect these carefully in translation is sometimes to discover a quite wonderful new light on many familiar passages, and sometimes to find an entirely new meaning of very great importance, possibly averting a serious misunderstanding of the writer's intention.

Let me give one simple illustration--which will be repeated in due course, but may serve to prepare the way. In Genesis 3:10 in the Authorized Version, Adam is recorded as having said, "And I was afraid because I was naked." In the English text, the verb "was" is printed in italics because it has been supplied by the translators. By contrast, Genesis 3:20 reads, "And Adam called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living." In this instance the word "was" is not written in italics because it did not have to be supplied by the translators: it appears in the original as part of the verb "to be."

The significance of these two uses is as follows. In Hebrew where it is desired simply to use the verb "to be" in any of its tenses, no verb at all appears in the original. However, if the verb "to be" has the more involved meaning of "a change of state or condition or circumstance," then it is written in the original Hebrew. Thus, whenever the word "was" is written in italics in the Authorized Version, it means simply what we mean by the word. For example, Adam was naked:

this is the way he was created, this is the way he observed himself at the time of making this statement. No change had taken place in this basic condition. On the other hand, Eve at the moment of Adam's speaking in verse 20 was not the mother of all living. She might have been in a prophetic sense, but at this moment she was not, for not until chapter 4, verse 1 did she become pregnant. It is therefore necessary to have regard to the fact that in the original Hebrew of verse 20 it does not say, "She was the mother of all living," but rather She "became the mother of all living."

This is an important point to observe, and in a few instances it makes a profound difference in the meaning of the sentence.

For further illustration, turn to Judges 6:12 in any edition of the Authorized Version and read through chapter 7, verse 14. Notice that various forms of the verb "to be" appear in italics as follows:

6:12 "is"  
 6:22 "was"  
 6:13 "be"  
 7:2 "are"  
 6:15 "am"  
 7:12 "were"

All of these are in italics and therefore are properly rendered as shown in the text by these simple forms. There is no change of state in any of these cases. In verse 15 Gideon is the least in his father's house and his family is poor. In verse 22 he perceives that the being who stands before him is an angel, and so forth. But in verse 27 the text reads, "And so it was, because he feared his father's household and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night." In this passage, the "was" is in the original Hebrew and it should more properly be rendered, "and so it became that..." or more familiarly, "and so it came to pass that..."

The point here is that recognition by the scholars responsible for the Authorized Version of the need to pay attention to this distinctive use in Hebrew was accorded by their use of italics. As will become apparent now, this device makes it possible for the English reader with no knowledge of Hebrew to read the translation with much better understanding than is possible, for example, with the Revised Standard Version, which has not adopted this principle.

There is one caution here that is rather important. Sometimes the word "was" (or is, etc.) belongs to the verb that follows. Only a student acquainted with Hebrew will be able to resolve this difficulty by reference to the original where there is any doubt. But there are numerous cases where an ordinary understanding of English is sufficient guide. This is true in Genesis 3:20, for example, as already quoted--"because she became the mother of all living"--since the verb "was" is the only verb in the sentence.

The other point of importance, especially in certain key verses, is the fact that Hebrew does not have all the tense forms found in English. It does not have a specific form for expressing the future, nor is there a specific form to express the pluperfect. The future is expressed by using

either the present tense or the past tense in a special way: the pluperfect is expressed by changing the order of the words. It is the second of these that concerns us particularly at this time. The normal order for a Hebrew sentence is verb, subject, object. When the subject is placed first, one of two meanings is intended: either the writer wishes to draw attention to the fact that he is talking about a new subject, or he wishes it to be understood that the verb is in the pluperfect tense.

It is with the observance of these linguistic devices in mind that the translation that follows has been undertaken. Yet, while it is most desirable to hold as closely as possible to the original Hebrew at all times, it did not seem to us necessary to render slavishly the same word in the original by the same exact phrase in English every time it occurred, provided that there was no real departure from the manifest intent of the original. This will be found to be true in our rendering of the Hebrew which underlies the English phrases "the firmament of Heaven," "the moving creature that hath life," and "after his kind," for example. The really important thing is to grasp what the original text signifies and then find as many fresh ways of conveying the same meaning as is consistent with freedom of expression.

One further observation. This is not intended to be an attempt to reconcile Scripture with geology. It is an attempt rather to get at the Author's intent. This is not possible merely by word equivalents, faithfully giving the same meaning each time the same word occurs. For this reason, there can scarcely ever be any such thing as an absolutely literal rendering if the text is to have any flow of language to it. Interpretation becomes necessary, and interpretation always suffers from the bias of the interpreter. My own bias will be obvious enough, yet I think we have not betrayed the Hebrew text.

Finally, as we have it in existing manuscripts, the early chapters of Genesis are not written as poetry. The Psalms are written as poetry, and so are many other portions of Scripture. Poetry is most obviously indicated by the manner in which the text is arranged in lines, though there are more subtle means of signifying poetry, such as parallelism in couplets. But Genesis is not presented in this way. It would seem presumptuous, therefore, for anyone with this piece of information available to allegorize the text freely on the grounds that it is, after all, a poem of creation and not a sober history.

This is a "commentary" for study purposes and is not intended in any sense as an aid to devotional reading.

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**"The beginning of Thy Word is True...."--Psalm 119:160**

## **A Translation**

ORIGINALLY, God brought into being and set in perfect order the heavens and the earth.

But the earth had become a ruin and a desolation, and a pall of darkness hung over this scene of disaster. And the Spirit of God moved mightily upon the face of the waters. And God said, "Let it become light." And it became light; and God saw the light that it was good: and God divided

the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning together constituted one day.

And God said, "Let there come to be a space between the waters, and let it divide between the waters above and the waters below." And God appointed the space and divided the waters which were under the space from the waters which were above the space: and so it came to pass. And God called the space Heaven. And the evening and the morning became a second day.

And God said, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place and let the dry land appear." And this came to pass. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called the Sea: and God saw that it was good. And God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit--akin to itself--whose seed is in itself, upon the earth": and this came to pass. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed, akin to itself, and the tree yielding fruit whose seed was within also akin to itself. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning became a third day.

And God said, "Let the lights in the heavens above be to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years: and let them become in the heavens above as lights to give light upon the earth": and this came to pass. Moreover, God appointed the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night, along with the stars. So God set them in the heavens above to give light upon the earth and to rule over the day and over the night, and to make a distinction between light and darkness. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning became a fourth day.

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly living creatures, and let fowl fly above the earth across the face of the open sky." And the very large sea animals did God also create, and the wealth of living creatures which the waters brought forth, like begetting like, and all the different kinds of fowl that fly, like begetting like. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the sea, and let the fowl multiply on the earth." And the evening and the morning became a fifth day.

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures breeding true to themselves, cattle and creeping things and the wild creatures of the earth, also breeding true to themselves." And this came to pass. And God appointed the wild things of the earth, breeding true to themselves, and the cattle similarly, and likewise everything that creepeth upon the earth. And God saw that it was good. And God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our Likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him: male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth: to you it shall be for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food." And it became so. And God saw everything that

He had done, and behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning became a sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished with all things necessary to them. On the seventh day God completed the work which he had been engaged in, so He rested on the seventh day from setting everything in order. And God blessed the seventh day and set it apart: because that on this day He had rested from the work involved in creating and appointing everything.

Such is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God prepared them both. (Genesis 1:1 to 2:4)

## **Setting the Stage: Genesis 1:12, and 3-5**

### **Authorized Version**

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

And the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

### **An interpretative rendering**

Originally God brought into being and set in perfect order the heavens and the earth.

But the earth had become a ruin and a desolation and a pall of darkness hung over this scene of disaster and the spirit of God moved mightily over the face of the waters.

ORIGINALLY: The choice of this word in place of the phrase "In the beginning" was very carefully made. Almost every commentary of an exegetical kind on the Book of Genesis has struggled to find an appropriate phrase whereby to represent what is wrapped up in this original Hebrew compound word (*be-reshith*).

The trouble is that this noun, *reshith*, does not have a complete meaning in itself, but always needs some modifying word which must be supplied in English as the context seems to require. For example, in Job 42:12 it is written, "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." I do not think that by "the latter end" is meant the last few moments of his life, but rather the last few years. By contrast with "his beginning," these latter years were blessed indeed, provided that the word "beginning" (*reshith*) is not taken to mean literally his first birthday, but rather the whole period prior to the catastrophes which overwhelmed him. In other words, the word "beginning" denotes a state rather than a moment in time.

In Proverbs 8:22, wisdom is said to have been the Lord's possession in the beginning. Since the Lord had no beginning in the temporal sense, it must be clear that this is not a reference merely to a point in time. In Ecclesiastes 7:8, patience is advocated for those who wait upon the Lord so

that the "end" is better than the "beginning," i.e., the state of things improved with time. The idea of a moment or point in time is not involved, but rather a later stage as opposed to an earlier one. Israel once enjoyed a measure of prosperity under the Judges prior to the monarchy. In Isaiah 1:26, God makes a promise to a faithful remnant that such a period of prosperity, still without a monarchy, would in time be restored to them. Once more the idea is not that of a point in time, but a period characterized by a condition or state of affairs.

There are a few cases in the Old Testament in which a true beginning is intended, this intention being clearly reinforced by a corresponding quotation in the New Testament. One of these is in Psalm 102:25, a passage quoted in Hebrew 1:10 in such a way as to make it pretty clear - that we are dealing here with the foundations of things. In Psalm 102:25, the Hebrew word *reshith* is not used. This seems good evidence that this *reshith* is not strictly the word for "beginning." For this reason and for grammatical reasons (dealt with in the Doorway Papers Volume VI, Time and Eternity, p. 83), it is necessary to translate it by some such phrase as "In the former state" or--for simplicity and to use but one word--we might render it "Originally." For this word implies "beginning," but it also implies something which the Hebrew writer, I think, intended by his use of the word *reshith*, namely, a condition different from that which he describes subsequently. He is contrasting the first and therefore original condition with a second and changed condition in verse 2.

GOD: As is well known to every Bible student, the original Hebrew word, Elohim, takes a plural form followed by a singular verb. It has been customary for biblical conservatives to interpret this as evidence of a very early revelation of the fact that there is more than one person in the Godhead, yet acting as a single agent. With almost equal unanimity, liberal theologians have declared this to be an unfounded assumption; their explanation is that this is an example of the use of a plural form to designate majesty. As though to reinforce the dignity of their office, absolute monarchs would refer to themselves as "we" rather than "I." It is a little bit, though not quite, analogous to the editorial "we." This pronouncement, once it had been sponsored by one with sufficient authority in theological circles, was unanimously approved and accepted and reiterated by critics thenceforth right up to the present. It is always said in support of this interpretation that oriental monarchs customarily referred to themselves in this manner.

How this has passed undisputed for so long is difficult to understand. Neither in Scripture itself nor in the cuneiform literature of antiquity is found to be the case.

In Joseph's time the pharaoh of Egypt--who could probably be considered a pretty good example of an absolute monarch-- consistently refers to himself in the singular, as in Genesis 41:15. This is rather significant in view of the fact that the Higher Critics (and others) have been fond of saying that Moses was influenced by contemporary usage to put God's title in a plural form after the manner of other Great Ones.

Throughout their subsequent history the Israelites repeatedly suffered at the hands of the absolute monarchs of the Babylonians and the Assyrians. Not one of these, as far as I have been able to verify for myself, ever referred to his own person in the plural. In the Prism of Sennacherib, column 1, line 11, and many times thenceforth, he refers to himself in the singular. Sargon, properly referred to as "the Great"--who interestingly enough had the experience of being set

adrift on his native waterway in a reed basket very much as Moses had been--consistently refers to himself in the first person singular. Shalmaneser III, to whom the Israelites paid tribute, likewise used only singular pronouns. So did Tiglath-Pileser III, to whom the Israelites paid tribute and under whose hand they suffered deportations. The same may be said of the king of Moab, the originator of the now-famous Moabite Stone. One may conclude, therefore, that the plural form Elohim, followed by a singular verb, is not a borrowed idea but a significant aspect of God's self-revelation.

**BROUGHT INTO BEING AND SET IN PERFECT ORDER:** This elaborate phrase is an attempt to convey the rather complex meaning of the Hebrew verb *bara*, here appearing in the third person singular and rendered in the Authorized Version, "created." Although the subject is plural in form, the verb is singular, a circumstance very reasonably taken to mean that the three persons in the one Godhead acted in perfect harmony. There seem to have arisen some rather widespread misconceptions as to the meaning of the word. It is often said that the word is used only of God's activities, and it is only slightly less frequently said to signify "creation out of nothing." Both of these are erroneous. In the first place, the word is used of human activity on a number of occasions in Scripture, as can be readily verified by any English reader who will refer in Young's Analytical Concordance to the Hebrew Index Lexicon, page 7.

Essentially the word appears to mean "to cut" or "carve" (hence even "to cut down," i.e., "to kill"): then, "to put the finishing touches to" or "to polish." And so it came to carry the meaning of creation with a polish, i.e., creation in a finished state--and more than this, with adornment. The Greek word *kosmos*, translated into English as "world" and meaning rather the created order of things than the more common idea of the inhabited earth (which is a quite different Greek word), really implies adornment with particular emphasis upon order. From this arose the idea of adornment, hence the English word cosmetics.

In Hebrews 1:2 we are told that God framed the worlds by Jesus Christ, a statement which implies all that has been said above. One fact needs to be added: the Hebrew word *bara*, when it applies to the activity of God, is used only in what is called the "light" form. Where man's creative activity is concerned, it is used in the "intensive." It is as though creation was easy for God, but difficult for man. This thought is reflected by the juxtaposition of three passages in the Psalms: the first says that creation is the work of His Fingers (8:3); the second, punishment is the work of His Hand (39:10); and the third that salvation is the work of His whole Arm (77:15), thereby signifying that creation was simple, punishment a little more difficult, and salvation the most difficult of all to achieve.

In the second place, the word does not, either by use or in its root meaning, imply creation out of nothing. Cosmologically, it should be pointed out in any case that the universe was not created out of nothing, but rather out of things which "do not appear" (Heb. 11:3), i.e., immaterial forces. Moreover, man himself was not created out of nothing, but out of the dust of the ground.

This may be a good place to mention also that the word *'asah* translated variously in Scripture (but in Genesis 1:1 as "made") should not be assumed, as it often is, to be a synonym. Whereas in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, in six days He re-appointed them. For the word made really means "appointed," as judges are appointed, refuge cities are appointed,



and even some of the evils of city life (cf. Amos 3:6). Such categories of persons or things, already in existence, have sometimes received by God's appointment a new significance. We shall have more to say about this later, for "creating" is not at all the same as "making."

THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH: By these two words we are undoubtedly to understand the universe as a whole and not just the earth with its immediate "heavenly" envelope, since this envelope is subsequently referred to more specifically as the "firmament." It should also be noted that it does not say that the creation of the heavens and the earth were the work of the first day. The first day is actually occupied with a much more restricted aspect of God's handiwork. This verse evidently is a grand opening statement of revelation, standing in a sense by itself--a circumstance borne out by the fact that not a few ancient manuscripts actually indicate a break in the text at this point. Fuller reference to this will be made in discussing verse 2.

BUT: The Hebrew conjunction, *waw* is not quite like the English conjunction "and." In the first place, it does not necessarily imply the continuation of a series of events: for example, it sometimes is used to open a book of the Bible with nothing previously connecting with it (cf. Lev. 1:1; Judg. 1:1; Ezek. 1:1). It is also used disjunctively rather than conjunctively, so that it is quite properly translated "but." We have so translated it above because, like the authors of the Septuagint who used the Greek *de* instead of *kai*, we believe that this verse stands intentionally in contrast with verse 1. Many of the church fathers so interpreted it. Jerome in his Vulgate translation has *terra autem*, ...i.e., "the earth, however ..."; in verse 1 he uses *et* for the simple "and."

HAD BECOME: This translation, which is perfectly proper, is a point of major contention between certain groups of scholars. To explain why this is so is extremely difficult without become involved in some very complicated matters of grammar and syntax in the Hebrew language. But some attempt must be made to inform the reader what the contention is all about.

The King James Version has simply the verb "was." The implication is that the chaos described in verse 2 represents the state of the earth as it was first created. The alternative rendering implies otherwise. The creation was perfect, but some circumstance intervened between verses 1 and 2 to reduce a Cosmos to a Chaos. The earth was not created like this, but it had become so. Which picture is the correct one? Since almost all English versions translate the original Hebrew verb *hayah* in this instance as "was," it would seem that by common consent this is its proper meaning. But is this the case?

The normal rule in Hebrew, when the simple copulative form of the verb "to be" is required in a sentence, is to leave the verb unexpressed. Thus in the sentence "The man is good," the verb would be omitted and a literal rendering of the Hebrew would be "The man good," rather like an American Indian's "Me good man." If, however, the Hebrew author wishes to express something more than this, such as "The man is becoming good," thereby denoting a change in the situation, then he would introduce the Hebrew verb *hayah* in its appropriate form. The difference is real. The presence or absence of the verb was in the original Hebrew has a significance that must not be ignored.

The translators of the King James Version, recognizing this difference and being fully aware that the English reader has difficulty with a sentence like "the man good," naturally supplied the missing verb and made it read "the man is good." However, to show what they had done, they adopted a policy of setting such supplied words in italics. The reader unacquainted with Hebrew is thus able to detect when the verb has been supplied in the original and when it has not; or to put the matter another way, when the Hebrew author intended to signify that a change had taken, or was taking, or would take place, and when he simply viewed the situation as unchanged or unchanging. If the verb is expressed in the original, thus denoting a change in the situation, the King James Version translators used standard type: if the verb is not expressed in the original, thus denoting no change in the situation, the King James Version has supplied it in italics.

In Genesis 1:2 the first "was" is printed in ordinary type, the second "was" in italics. Similarly in verse 3, the first "was" is in ordinary type, but in verse 4 it is in italics. We are by this to understand that the Hebrew original supplies the appropriate form of the verb in the first instances, but omits the verb in the second. This signifies that a change had occurred with respect to the earth in verse 2 and a change occurred in respect to the coming of light. What was a perfect earth became a ruin; what was dark became light.

This is not the place to enter into a complicated defense of this observation. In point of fact the evidence in its favor is to my mind almost overwhelming, and it has been recognized for centuries by the Jews themselves. Some of the evidence has been set forth by the author in this series (as noted in Volume VI of the Doorway Papers Part III) and in a rather more extended work which, though it requires some dedication to read because of the unfamiliarity of the subject, is by no means beyond the capability of any intelligent layman to understand. It is titled Without Form and Void.

But we have rendered the verb in this instance not merely by the perfect ("became"), but by the pluperfect ("had become"). The normal order for the Hebrew sentence is conjunction, verb, subject object. In certain circumstances, however, the subject may precede the verb. There are two main occasions for this change of order. The first is when the writer wishes to underscore the fact that the subject of the verb which follows is in contrast to the subject of the previous verb. In thought this is found in the New Testament, where we frequently find after man has done one thing, the text continues "but God..." The second occasion is to indicate the pluperfect of the verb. Translators into English do not always follow this rule, but the text is invariably more meaningful when the rule is observed. Thus in Genesis 10:9 it is said that Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord. But in the original this should be, "Nimrod had become a mighty hunter before the Lord." Analogously, in Genesis 3:1 the original has, "Now the serpent had become more subtle..." This rule regarding the inversion of word order to express the pluperfect is not limited to the use of the verb "to be." Deuteronomy 10:16 should be "had journeyed"; Isaiah 1:9 should be "had left"; Jeremiah 12:21 should read "had planted"; Jeremiah 4:25, "had fled." In I Samuel 28:3 the tense is correctly observed, "Israel had lamented...Saul had put away..."

The word order in Genesis 1:2 and the inclusion of the verb "to be" in the original not merely allow for, but positively require, the rendering "had [pluperfect] become." It is quite often stated that the English "become" or "became" is only an appropriate rendering when the object of the verb is accompanied by a *lamedh* in Hebrew. This is simply not true, as any number of examples

will show. For instance, in Genesis 19:26 Lot's wife "became a pillar of salt." The meaning here is absolutely clear, and the *lamedh* is not used. The following examples will perhaps suffice to demonstrate this.

Genesis 3:20: And Eve became the mother of all living.  
 Genesis 4:20: Abel became a keeper...and Cain became a tiller...  
 Genesis 4:21: Jubal became the father of musicians.  
 Judges 11:39: It became a custom in Israel...  
 Jeremiah 7:11: Is this house...become a den of robbers?  
 II Kings 17:3: And Hosea became his servant.  
 Isaiah 7:24: All the land shall become briars and thorns.  
 Isaiah 17:1: Damascus shall become a ruinous heap.  
 Jeremiah 26:18: And Jerusalem shall become heaps...  
 Jonah 3:3: Now Nineveh had become an exceeding great city.

A RUIN AND A DESOLATION: So much has been written about the Hebrew words *tohu* and *bohu*, and so generally is their meaning agreed upon, that little need be said except to sum up the conclusions of Hebrew scholars by pointing out that the words are used to describe, not an incoherent mass waiting to be brought to order, but rather something that has fallen under judgment.

In Isaiah 45:18 we are told that God did not create the earth "in vain." Here we have the word *tohu* again. But it seems likely that it is used here, not as a noun, but as an adverb. A similar use of the same word *tohu* appears in Isaiah 45:19 in the phrase "seek ye Me in vain," where the usage is clearly adverbial and the meaning is obviously as rendered in the King James Version and not as the Revised Standard Version has it.

Some commentators argue that Isaiah 45:18 proves that Genesis 1:2 cannot mean that God created the earth a ruin (*tohu*) and that it therefore must have become a *tohu* subsequently. I am sure the conclusion regarding the earth's history is correct, but I am not sure it can be proved unequivocally by an appeal to Isaiah 45:18 in view of the use of *tohu* as an adverb in the very next verse (45:19).

It is reasonably certain, however, that the Jewish commentators themselves understood the words *tohu* and *bohu* in Genesis 1:2 to be an emphasized description of chaos resulting from judgment. Their own literature establishes that this view is a very ancient one.

Whatever is the exact meaning of these words, this much seems fairly certain: they signify a condition of judgment. Such a condition is pictured for us in Jeremiah 4:23, but with this very significant difference in the original Hebrew, namely, that as Jeremiah looked at the land it was--at that moment--desolate. The Hebrew original does not employ any form of the verb "to be," since Jeremiah's vision was riveted upon the present moment and not intended to deal with past events leading up to it. The word *tohu* is also found used in connection with the desolation of a city ("a city of desolation" as in Isaiah 24:10). In Isaiah 34:11 both *tohu* and *bohu* are used together in the sentence, "and He shall stretch out upon it a line of confusion [*tohu*] and the

plummet of desolation [*bohu*]." According to Gesenius, the root is probably to be found in the Aramaic "to be confounded," or "desolate."

THE EARTH: It will be noticed that the heavens are not included in this statement, and the idea that this passage refers to a nebular condition of the solar system seems completely without foundation.

A PALL OF DARKNESS: The darkness spoken of here is not exactly the absence of light which is later termed night, for we do not have in the Hebrew original in this instance the word for "night" but a word frequently chosen when the darkness has something unnatural about it--such as that darkness which fell upon the land of Egypt in judgment (Exod. 10:21ff.).

It might be argued that the word for "night" had not yet been introduced and therefore obviously could not have been used in verse 2. But the word heaven and the word earth are both used in the first three verses, and yet they are not defined till later. Evidently it is not to avoid a hitherto undefined term that the word for night was not employed. It was because the darkness was something more than merely the absence of daylight.

Quite frequently, this word is given a spiritual meaning, as for example, in Psalm 18:28 or Isaiah 9:2. It is quite true that the word is later identified with night time (Gen. 1:5); but thereafter the night time "darkness" is not referred to by the Hebrew word *hoshech*, but rather by the word *layilah* which strictly means "nighttime" as opposed to "daytime." The original word *hoshech* continues to mean something quite different. For this reason, we have tried to convey the idea of something other than merely nighttime by introducing the word pall, which I think very nearly recovers the original meaning.

HUNG OVER: We have supplied these words. Nothing exists in the Hebrew corresponding to them. In the Authorized Version the word was is correctly printed in italics since there is no form of the verb "to be" representing it in the Hebrew text. The meaning is, in fact, simply that this pall of darkness existed, but it seemed appropriate, since this was a scene of desolation, to use the term "hung over" rather than merely "existed" or "was."

THIS SCENE OF DISASTER: The Hebrew word *tehom* translated as "the deep" in the Authorized Version is difficult to render exactly: it does not mean "the deep" as synonymous with "the sea," but like many of the terms in this second verse, it is associated implicitly or explicitly elsewhere in Scripture with the idea of judgment. Thus although it is rendered sometimes as "waters" (cf. Deut. 8:7), in Genesis 7:11 it is translated "the great waters," i.e., of Noah's Flood which, of course, came in judgment. In Psalm 36:6 it is rendered "a great deep" and is clearly associated with the judgment of God. In Job 28:14 (and on a number of other occasions) it is evidently distinguished from the sea, being rendered, in contradistinction, "the depth." In Syriac the cognate word means "a flood," a phenomenon which is normally considered as undesirable.

Thus, although the idea of water is involved and therefore the rendering "the deep" is in one sense quite justified, it does not convey the exact idea intended by the original, unless one associates with this water an element of judgment. The Septuagint substitutes the Greek word

*abussos* (our word "abyss") for some thirty occurrences of the word *tehom* in the Old Testament, a term we meet again in Revelation (9:11; 11:7; 17:8; and 20:1,3) in circumstances which clearly indicate an undesirable condition. Associated with the Abyss is Satan, the Great Serpent or Dragon. This association is a very ancient one.

It was common in Babylonian times to personify the forces of nature. This may have been because they held these forces to be personal, but it may also have been for teaching purposes because the account was thereby rendered much more vivid and animated, easier to understand and recall. In the Babylonian account of the constitution of order out of chaos, the God of Order battles with an enormous foe, the Goddess of Chaos. Armed with his weapons, the orderly Marduk advances against his enemy, seizes the Goddess of Chaos in a huge net and transfixes her with his scimitar. The carcass of this monster he splits into two halves, one of which becomes Heaven and the other the Abyss of water upon which the earth was supposed to rest. Thus the Goddess is subdued and order is restored; and her name was Tiamat--probably related originally to the Hebrew word *tehom*, translated "the deep" in the Authorized Version. Although this tradition is mythological, it lends support to the idea that the Deep was not merely the unrestrained waters of the ocean (later to have their bounds set for them), but something more terrible.

Wallis Budge has pointed out that in one Babylonian tablet Tiamat is called "the Great Serpent," a fact which strengthens the contention that the Hebrew word *tehom* implies something far worse than merely water on the rampage. It is apparently related in some way to the activities of Satan, a place or a condition which even the demons themselves (although they are part of Satan's kingdom) would like to avoid (Luke 8:31).

We have rendered this a "scene of disaster" because such is what it really appears to have been.

## **Verses 2-5**

### **Authorized Version:**

And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

The God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

### **An interpretative rendering:**

And the spirit of God moved mightily upon the face of the waters. And God said, "let it become light": and it became light. And God saw the light that it was good.

And God called the light day and the darkness he called night. And the evening and the morning together constituted one day.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD: The Hebrew word for "spirit" is also the word for "breath" and for "wind." It is therefore possible that the phrase "the spirit of God" could be equally well read as "the wind of God." Such an alternative does not make very good sense, but it happens that Hebrew writers, when they wish to convey the idea of something very powerful or very large or very tall, employ a similar sentence construction. Thus, in Psalm 36:6, David, in order to magnify the righteousness of God, speaks of it as being like the great mountains. In the original Hebrew the phrase "great mountains" is written out as "the mountains of God." Similarly, in Psalm 80:10 the "goodly cedars" are in the original spoken of as "the cedars of God." It is therefore quite possible in Genesis 1:2, where we are told that the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, that a legitimate alternative rendering would be "a mighty wind moved upon the face of the waters."

But there is one difference between Genesis 1:2 and the two passages from the Psalms. The word God in the Psalms is a translation of the Hebrew El, not the more familiar Elohim. El may possibly mean "mighty." In Genesis 1:2 the Hebrew has Elohim, not El. However, the difference may not have any significance, because other writers in the Old Testament who have used this mode of conveying the idea of magnitude have employed the longer form Elohim for El. Thus the city of Nineveh (in Jonah 3:3) is described as an "exceedingly great city," which in the original is written out as a "great city of God" (i.e., Elohim). It is a little analogous to an expression which I have heard farmers use when speaking of a severe storm as being a "God-awful storm."

There is some justification therefore for rendering this sentence "And a mighty wind swept over the surface of the waters" as the New English Bible has done, or "a tempestuous wind raging over the surface of the waters" as Smith and Goodspeed have translated it.

But it seems more consonant with the spiritual nature of revelation to follow the basic pattern of the King James Version, the Revised Standard Version, and the New American Standard Bible, all of which render this "the spirit of God."

MOVED MIGHTILY: The Hebrew word which is translated moved in the King James Version is *rachaph*. We have only three occurrences of this word in the Old Testament. These are Genesis 1:3, Deuteronomy 32:11, and Jeremiah 23:9. In Jeremiah the word is applied to the shaky bones of a drunken man! Deuteronomy 32:11 is a reference to the eagle fluttering over her nest. It is this reference that is usually taken by commentators as the best clue to the basic meaning of the word. That the Holy Spirit should appear in the form of a dove (John 1:32) seems to confirm the appropriateness of such a word, as the Spirit of God hovered over the destroyed world about to be restored. The idea of concern is indicated in the Hebrew original by the use of a special form of the verb which is the "Intensive" or Piel Form. If the ordinary form of a verb means, let us say, "to kill," the intensive form of that same verb would mean "to slaughter" or "to massacre." English uses a different verb entirely: Hebrew would use the same root word but change its form. The original Hebrew verb *rachaph* used in Genesis 1:3 is in the intensive form, hence the desirability of adding "mightily."

The Septuagint rendered this by the Greek *epipherein*, which in the New Testament means "to bring to bear upon" or simply "to bear upon." This word appears in Acts 25:18 and in Jude 9, where in both instances it is associated with the bringing of an accusation against someone. In Philippians 1:16 Paul uses it when he is speaking of circumstances which added to his afflictions. These three occurrences would not seem to support the previous observations to the effect that the word has a certain intensity of meaning, but in another sense they do in that both accusations and afflictions involve an element of violence. At any rate in classical Greek this aspect of the word is very much more evident from a study of its usage. For example, it is used in the sense of "laying heavy hands upon," of "attacking" or "assailing," of "imposing upon," of "gratifying passions," of "bringing something upon oneself," of "rushing upon," of "being eager to do," and of "great waves dashing against a ship."

If one attempts to compress into a single word all these ideas of active concern, of hovering over with eager intent, of effecting changes by deliberate intervention, or any other equally determined activity, one has to surrender much of the content of the original verb. A single word in English simply does not suffice. In short we need to coin a phrase which as simply as possible conveys all these ideas--even though the translation may then seem to have gone far beyond the original text. The word moved nicely combines both activity and an undertone of an emotional involvement. The word mightily reinforces the sense of power and energy, of successful operation and effectiveness, and reflects also something of the alternative meaning of the phrase which we have rendered "the Spirit of God."

LET IT BECOME LIGHT: AND IT BECAME LIGHT: In the original Hebrew, the verb "to be" is expressed in both instances, and therefore the words "be" and "was" are in the King James Version correctly printed in standard type and not in italics. It is clear that the Creator intended it to be understood that He was commanding a change, a fact which is surely in Paul's mind when he penned II Corinthians 4:6. Both instances have reference to a recreation beginning with darkness that becomes light. On the other hand, God saw that the light was good, not that it became good. Moreover only the light is mentioned as good; not the darkness.

THE EVENING AND THE MORNING CONSTITUTED ONE DAY: Again, the verb "to be" is expressed in the original, signifying that circumstances have changed somewhat. The term "one day" has significance as a concept only for ourselves, and not for the animal or vegetable world. In the vast untold ages which had preceded the scene of devastation in verse 2, the sequence of days really did not have the same significance. But now that man is about to be introduced upon the scene as a creature with a unique time sense, it is appropriate that God should begin to number the intervals by which man will consciously regulate his life.

But the concept of days, i.e., periods of light alternating with periods of darkness, was by no means a new thing upon the earth; therefore, as the Revised Standard Version has correctly shown, the divine Author does not refer to this as the first day. He is in fact saying, not that days began at this point in time, but rather that henceforth an evening and a morning constituted a day, and all man's days are hereafter numbered. The restrictive meaning of the phrase "evening and morning" is borne out by its use in Daniel 8:14 and in the New Testament by Paul's words in II Corinthians 11:25.

It is quite possible, however, that even more than this is intended. The original Hebrew phrase of Genesis 1:5--"one day"-- is also found in Zechariah 14:6, 7, where the meaning of uniqueness rather than merely unity is involved. Perhaps this occasion in Genesis 1:5 was not one day simply, but a unique day also--the birthday of a re-creation.

The days which follow are properly referred to as second, third, and so forth: but not this day. Moreover, as will be noted by reference to the King James Version, it is said that the evening and the morning "were" the first day: italics are not used, because the verb "to be" is represented in the original. It therefore really has the significance of "becoming" a unique day. In this instance it would seem that the original intends us to understand that this was an occasion upon which God deliberately constituted this particular evening and morning time period as a "day" and thereby fixed the real meaning of the six days which follow as periods of twenty-four hours. Evidently when he wrote his Vulgate version, Jerome understood the original in this way, for he renders it *factum est dies unis*, i.e., "was made one day"--or, as we have rendered it, "constituted one day."

DAY: About the meaning of this word (*yom*) in the context of chapter 1, very much has been written and very little new can be said. A few observations may be in order.

1. For several reasons there is little justification for interpreting the world as an age.

a. Hebrew has a perfectly good word (*'olam*), for what we mean by a geological age which would surely have been used if this were the intention. *'Olam* would have been the logical choice, since it means a long period of time with very ill-defined boundaries. It is virtually impossible to think of any way in which God could have made it more obvious that He did not mean ages than by the deliberate avoidance of the word. The text could not have made it any clearer than it is that ordinary days are intended.

b. Those for whom this record was intended could not possibly have understood the meaning of a geological age--the record would not have been meaningful, but rather mystifying. One cannot use a term--the meaning of which is familiar to a people in the context of their daily experience--to reveal to them something which is entirely outside this daily experience unless at the same time the new meaning of the term is made clear: and *'olam* simply meant the indefinite past or the indefinite future. The concept of a geological age was wholly foreign to the people to whom the creation account was committed for preservation. By contrast, these earliest readers were assured that the term day signified exactly what common experience would lead them to believe it did.

2. Unlike the word *'olam* which means an age of unspecified length regardless of whether it is accompanied by a numeral or not, the word day has definite restrictions placed upon its meaning by qualifying words. In ordinary non-prophetic language it consistently has the meaning of a twenty-four-hour period whenever it is accompanied by a numeral; this appears to be true in both biblical and extra-biblical Hebrew. In prophetic utterances the situation is different; whether accompanied by a numeral or not, it may then stand for an extended period of time. There is seldom any real difficulty in establishing whether a passage is prophetic or merely historical. In Genesis there is no evidence that the intention of the account is prophetic; it is a simple



straightforward record of past events. Being not only accompanied by a numeral but also qualified by the use of the phrase "evening and morning," its meaning is undoubtedly intended to be understood literally.

3. If in Genesis 1 the days are geological ages, what are we to do with the seventh day during which we must assume that Adam remained unfallen, since God also rested on that day? It is impossible to believe that God would have continued at rest if Adam had fallen during that day. Did Adam then endure in an unfallen state and in perfect fellowship with God within the confines of Eden for thousands and thousands of years, a seventh geological age?

And when, because of his disobedience Adam finally died having lived some 930 years (Gen. 5:5), are we to understand that these were literal years, or were they years composed of days which were really geological ages? At what point in the narrative did geological ages end and normal years replace them in the account of events which happened in the first five chapters of Genesis? By the time we reach the sixth chapter we know that the days are real days and the years real years. Where is the changeover point? It is impossible to find room for its insertion without making nonsense of a narrative which runs unbroken from Adam to Noah in a way that is clearly intended to be plain sober human history.

4. The weight of authority is in favor of literal days. One can scarcely find a single reputable Hebrew scholar who supports the view that the word *yom* in Genesis can properly be understood to mean anything other than a literal day. Personal correspondence with the heads of the Semitic Departments of a number of universities including Columbia, Harvard, McGill, Yale, Toronto, and Manitoba and the head of the Near and Middle East Department of the University of London (England) confirmed in writing that they all believe the word as employed in Genesis 1 can only be taken to mean a period of twenty-four hours. These authorities were asked to express an opinion on purely linguistic grounds without regard to problems this may create in reconciling Genesis with modern geological views.

In the International Critical Commentary edited by Driver, Plummer, and Briggs, of Higher Critical fame, Skinner is the author of volume I on Genesis. He says, "The interpretation of *yom* (i.e., day) as an age, a favorite recourse of harmonists of Science and Revelation, is opposed to the plain sense of the passage, and has no warrant in Hebrew usage--not even in Psalm 90:4. To introduce that idea here destroys the analogy on which the sanctity of the Sabbath rests...."

All in all, it seems that any attempt to effect a reconciliation with geology by interpreting the days as geological periods raises far more problems than it solves. It is, in fact, a rather camouflaged confession of doubt as to whether God is able to work miracles--in this case, a miracle of accelerated creation.

5. It is commonly asserted that the best argument for interpreting these days as ages is to be found in Genesis 2:4, where it is written, "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day when the Lord made the heavens and the earth." Two things may be said in answer to this: (a) the word day here is not accompanied by a numeral, and one need not insist upon it therefore as being a period of twenty-four hours. It has the meaning simply "when the Lord made, etc..." (b) The word "made" (*'asah*,) is never to be confused with

the word "created." In the Old Testament many words through the centuries enlarged their meanings also. One of the best ways to discover the more ancient meaning is to consider those personal names of which the word forms a part. For example, the name Asah-el in II Samuel 2 means "God has appointed." In II Kings 22:12, 14 we have the name Asajah, which means "Jah has appointed." In I Chronicles 4:35 we have Asiel, which means "appointed of God." In I Samuel 12:6 it is said that the Lord advanced Moses and Aaron. It is probable that this means that the Lord "appointed" them, for the Hebrew verb is *'asah*. In I Kings 12:31 Jeroboam appointed priests of the lowest of the people who were not Levites. Here again the verb is *'asah*. In Jeremiah 37:15 Jeremiah is put into a private house which had been constituted (*'asah*) a prison. Again and again the word "made" in the King James Version really has the sense of appointment, something which was not created, but arranged. Thus the cities of refuge were appointed (*'asah*) for the safety of those who desired to escape the hand of the avenger and sought fair trial. Amos 3:6 asks the question, "Is there evil in any city and God hath not appointed it (*'asah*)?" In Exodus 20:11, "In six days the Lord appointed heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day." These are literal days and refer back to Genesis 1. Thus in Genesis 2:4 the meaning is surely, "When the Lord appointed the earth and the heavens." It will be noted in this verse that when speaking of creation, the heavens precede the earth, but because this is a reconstitution primarily of the earth, in the second part of the verse the earth precedes the heavens instead.

It may be objected that the most casual reference to a concordance gives dozens of passages in which the word "made" (*'asah*) means quite obviously "constructed"--as in constructing an altar of an idol or a metal vessel. But while this is clearly the case, there is no question of "creation"--but only of taking some existing material in one form and converting it into something else. This is exactly what is involved in the reconstitution or "remaking" of the earth immediately prior to the introduction of man.

This brings us finally to a consideration of Isaiah 45:18, in which the words "created" (*baral*), "fashioned" or "formed" (*yatsar*) "appointed" or "made" (*'asah*), and "established" (*kun*) are all carefully used with clear distinctions being made between them, and the significant observation that the ruin of Genesis 1:2 (the *tohu*) did not form a part of the original creation.

The verse in the Authorized Version reads as follows:

For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is none else.

It is difficult to avoid the impression that this verse was specifically penned to underscore the translation of Genesis 1:2 as we have rendered it. The Lord says here, speaking of the heavens, simply that He created them. Of the earth He says much more. First, He formed it (*yatsar*), a word which means to fashion in the sense that Jeremiah watched a potter fashioning a vessel. The implication is one of deliberate molding and shaping with an end in view. Then He appointed it (*'asah*), i.e., provided its accouterments or furnishings--trees, plants, rivers, animals, and so forth--again with a conscious purpose in view. Next He established it (*kun*), that is to say, set its processes to run in appropriate cycles. Moreover He did not create it *tohu* ("in vain" in the

Authorized Version). Genesis 1:2 is not a picture of God's handiwork the way He originally created it. He formed it to be inhabited--by man. This was His original intention, and although Satan in some way disrupted the processes of the fulfillment of God's program, he could not do this altogether, for God undertook a work of reordering the earth's surface, as He undertakes the work of reordering a man's ruined life (II Cor. 4:6).

Finally, it will be noted that the forming of the earth precedes the making of it (using the terminology of the King James Version). That is to say, God fashioned it first as a stage and then provided its appointments, its "properties."

An analogous use of the word made meaning "appointed," is found not infrequently in the New Testament, more especially--as is most appropriate indeed--in Hebrews 7:20-22, 28, in which the meaning is absolutely clear.

Since these five verses constitute an epilogue to the whole of the redemption story which occupies the rest of Scripture, it may be well to set forth as a single text this passage as we have proposed it.

Originally, God brought into being and set in perfect order the heavens and the earth.

But the earth had become a ruin and a desolation and a pall of darkness hung over this scene of disaster.

And the Spirit of God moved mightily upon the face of the waters. And God said, "Let it become light." And it became light; and God saw the light that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.

And the evening and morning together constituted a single day.

## **The Creation of Life: Genesis 1:6 - 2:5**

### **Authorized Version:**

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

And God made the firmament and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

And God called the firmament Heaven.

And the evening and the morning were the second day.

### **An interpretative rendering:**

And God said, "Let there come to be a space between the waters and let it divide between the waters above and the waters below,"

And God appointed the space and divided the waters which were under the space from the waters which were above the space: and so it came to pass.

And God called the space heaven.

And the evening and the morning became a second day.

**LET THERE COME TO BE A SPACE:** The word rendered "firmament" is a word which in the original implies "want of substance," and is used in a derived form to mean "not tangible." The root to which it is sometimes traced means "to beat out very thin," so thin in fact as to have little or no substance at all. There is little doubt that here it is the air space which separated the waters on the earth from the waters in cloud form in the sky. It is a peculiarly appropriate choice, therefore, since air strictly speaking does not imply want of substance, but only a very attenuated form of it. In verse 20 it becomes the home of flying things.

Perhaps the omission of any statement to the effect that God saw that it was good in this instance is due to the fact that this space became the abode of Satan and his hosts, the Prince of the Powers of the Air.

### **Verses 9-13**

#### **Authorized Version:**

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into 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 called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning were the third day.

#### **An interpretative rendering:**

And God said, "let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place and let the dry land appear, and this came to pass.

And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters he called the sea: and God saw that it was good.

And God said, "let the earth bring forth grass, herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit--akin to itself--whose seed is in itself, upon the earth," and this came to pass.

And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed, akin to itself, and the tree yielding fruit whose seed was within--also akin to itself.

And God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning became a third day.

**GATHERED INTO ONE PLACE:** there is a possibility that this is precisely the truth of the matter, that it is not merely a manner of speaking; that the waters which had played a part in destroying the previous world actually flowed into a great hole, the Pacific Ocean bed as constituted at that time.

This paper is not intended in any sense to be a scientific reconstruction of geological events. But it may be noted that according to the Continental Drift Hypothesis as first propounded by Alfred Wegener, all the current oceans at one time formed a single body of water "in one place." The continents meanwhile formed a single land mass. Only later, as this land mass fragmented into continents, were the separate oceans created as a consequence. There are some highly qualified experts who, like George Gamow, have held that the crust of the earth out of which the present continents were formed once constituted an unbroken shell over the whole of the earth's surface. The water which now fills the oceans at that time lay like a shallow sea everywhere except in those places where the rumples in the shell penetrated this shallow sea so as to form islands. These islands would presumably break the surface randomly all over the globe.

Once this shell fragmented into separate continents, deeper bodies of water would form as the water collected where the fractures opened up. The general water level over the land would fall as a consequence, and in due time these drained areas would constitute a new kind of "dry land" which would thus be exposed permanently and appear as a new feature of the earth's surface. The former world, of which the ruin is dramatically described in Genesis 1:2, was a world literally "standing out of the water and in the water" (II Peter 3:5). The present world does not look as though it has any longer the tremendous up and down movement of its surface to which we clearly owe the miles of water-laid stratified fossil-bearing rocks observed over the whole of its surface. We seem to live now in a different world from that which existed prior to Genesis 1:2.

**THE WATERS CALLED HE THE SEA:** This is rendered in the singular though the Hebrew is in the plural, but there is nothing inappropriate about this, since it is always found as a plural form even when referring to a small body of water such as the Sea of Galilee.

**AKIN TO ITSELF:** The word kind is derived from the word kin, which gives rise to the term "akin to." The choice of this English word in the King James Version was a happy one, since it

seems to capture the obvious meaning of the original Hebrew word *min*. Whether *min* is equivalent to our terms "species" and "genera" and even "family" is a moot point, because we have not yet settled the precise meaning of these three classifications even for ourselves. It is clear, however, that God intended these created kinds to be hedged about in order to preserve the purity of each line.

It should also be pointed out that the catastrophe of Genesis 1:2 need not necessarily have destroyed the living cells required to repopulate the earth with green things. Consequently it does not say that God created them afresh, but rather that He commanded the earth to produce them out of itself. This may be reflected in the peculiar redundancy of the words in verse 11, "let the earth bring forth...whose seed is in itself, upon the earth." Perhaps the seed was in itself already upon the earth, i.e., it had never been entirely destroyed. Both the separation of land from sea and the provision of plant forms are said to have been good in God's sight. As shown by the King James text, these things did not become good; they were good from the moment of their appointment.

## **Verses 14-19**

### **Authorized Version:**

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, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

### **An interpretative rendering:**

And God said, "let the lights in the heavens above be to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons and for days and years and let them become in the heavens above as lights to give light upon the earth," and this came to pass.

Moreover, God appointed the two great lights; the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night, along with the stars.

So God set them in the heavens above to give light upon the earth and to rule over the day and over the night, and to make a distinction between light and darkness

And God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning became a fourth day.

**LET LIGHTS IN THE HEAVENS ABOVE BE TO DIVIDE:** In the original Hebrew, the verb *hayah* is introduced, and it is appropriate therefore to consider why. Its introduction here seems to require that we understand this passage to mean something more than merely the placing of the sun and the moon and the stars in the sky. The use of the term "heavens" in Genesis 1:1 seems to indicate that the sun and moon and stars were created in the beginning and therefore were already in existence. Verse 14 clearly assumes their existence but now declares what the purpose of that existence is to be. Their purpose is to divide day from night, and to be for signs and for the regulation of the seasons.

All living things require or respond to regulations of this kind; plant forms are obviously governed by the seasons, and there is considerable evidence that many living organisms like insects, birds, and even higher animal forms live by cycles regulated by the heavens. This regulation encompasses migratory movements as well.

Verse 16 tells us that God appointed (*asah*) the two greater lights (i.e., the sun and the moon) to regulate the hours of daylight and darkness. There is no mention of them being created at this time, for light as opposed to darkness was already distinguishable, as verses 3 and 5 indicate. It seems quite possible that the aftermath of the devastation which had left its pall of darkness had not until this fourth day been cleared sufficiently for the sun and moon and stars to be actually visible. The appointment of these lights as signs comes only after they can be observed. The succession of evenings and mornings indicates that they did already exist, but perhaps a heavy mist or cloud blanket had up till now obscured them. This blanket or "swaddling band" may possibly be in view in Job 38:9. Perhaps indeed it was only when dry land appeared that convection currents brought fresh winds to break up the overcast sky into cloud formations, allowing the sun and moon and stars to become visible. Hence the reference to dry land appears before any specific reference to the sun and moon and stars as visible objects, though they had been in existence since the beginning of creation.

## **Verses 20 - 23**

### **Authorized Version:**

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his 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 let fowl multiply in the earth.

And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

**An interpretative rendering:**

And God said, let the waters bring forth abundantly living creatures, and let fowl fly above the earth across the face of the open skies, and very large sea animals did God also create, and the wealth of living creatures which the waters brought forth, like begetting like, and all the different kinds of fowl that fly, like begetting like.

And God saw that it was good.

And God blessed them and said, "be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the sea, and let the fowl multiply on the earth."

And the evening and the morning became a fifth day.

**BRING FORTH ABUNDANTLY:** The Hebrew uses a reduplication of a word which means "to swarm," the text literally saying, 'Let the waters swarm a swarm,' i.e., "bring forth abundantly" as the Authorized Version most sensibly rendered it. The sea is prodigal indeed, and this statement, preserved by a people who had no great love for the sea and therefore presumably not too profound a knowledge of it, can hardly be explained in any other way than as the result of inspiration.

**LIVING CREATURES:** This is a rather loose rendering of the Hebrew original which reads literally "a living soul" (soul of life). The word "soul" (*nephesh*) is therefore found in Scripture applied to animals before it is applied to man. This is by no means an exceptional instance, as may be seen by a reference to the Doorway Paper, "The Nature of the Soul" (Volume V, Part VI). Since we have by custom reserved the word soul for people, an unscriptural practice, it seemed more appropriate to render the phrase as we have. The same remark applies to verses 21 and 24.

**ACROSS THE FACE OF THE OPEN SKY:** There is a certain poetry in this descriptive phrase which fairly closely reproduces the original Hebrew.

**THE VERY LARGE SEA ANIMALS ALSO:** We have so rendered this because the text obviously singles out these exceptional creatures by emphasizing their specific creation. It is said somewhat less specifically of the smaller marine animals that the waters were merely to bring them forth in abundance. It seems that God wished us to observe a distinction between these two classes of marine life, almost as though to tell us that there are certain larger creatures (whales,



porpoises, etc.) which are not natural to the sea in the sense that fishes are. The waters did not "bring them forth": they were for some reason introduced differently.

**WEALTH OF LIVING CREATURES:** Literally, every living swarming creature. An alternative might of course have been to assume that the reference here was really to creatures which actually swarm, but it does not seem that this restrictive meaning is intended.

**LIKE BEGETTING LIKE:** This is merely an alternative to the phrase previously translated "akin to itself" and is used only to avoid too much repetition.

**ALL THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF FOWL THAT FLY:** Literally, "every fowl that flies, according to its kind."

**AND GOD BLESSED THEM, SAYING:** This seems an innocent enough statement, but what it really means is that the kingdom of God extends into the animal world, for He gave them instruction in a direct form. He did not say, "Let them be fruitful and multiply," but rather, "Be fruitful and multiply." This thought is explored more fully in another paper, "The Realm of Nature as Part of the Kingdom of God" (Volume III, Part II). It will be noted that this command is almost, but not quite identical, with that given subsequently to Adam.

## **Verses 24 - 25**

### **Authorized Version:**

And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind:

And God saw that it was good.

### **An interpretative rendering:**

And God said, "let the earth bring forth living creatures breeding true to themselves, cattle and creeping things, and the wild creatures of the earth, also breeding true to themselves."

And this came to pass.

And God appointed the wild things of the earth, breeding true to themselves, and the cattle similarly, and likewise everything that creepeth upon the earth.

And God saw that it was good.

**BREEDING TRUE TO THEMSELVES:** This again is an attempt to find an alternative rendering in the interest of variety, for the phrase originally rendered "akin to itself." However this is rendered, the meaning is quite clear: God did not create a potential chaos of inter-fertile organisms.

**WILD CREATURES:** Scripture seems normally to distinguish between beasts and cattle as representing those creatures not yet domesticated as against those which are. It would appear therefore that there were some animals provided for man already "domesticated." It is, in fact, almost certain that one of man's most faithful companions, the dog, has been with him virtually from the beginning. Probably the same is true of sheep and perhaps other such immediately "useful" animals.

**SIMILARLY...LIKEWISE...** Here again we have in the original the same emphasis laid upon the orderliness of God's planned natural economy. All creatures are to breed true to their appointed pattern.

## **The Creation of Man: Genesis 1:6-31**

### **Authorized Version:**

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of the tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

And God saw everything that he had made and, behold, it was very good.

And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

In view of the fact that the Authorized Version has rendered the Hebrew of these verses with great faithfulness for the most part, it did not seem appropriate simply to present in different type

a rendering of our own which in the nature of the case would be virtually the same. However, there are one or two places where a change in the wording could perhaps contribute to a better understanding of the original, and these are therefore offered in due course. What follows is essentially commentary rather than translation.

**LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE AFTER OUR LIKENESS:** Three very important truths are implied in this statement, and they relate to a great mystery: the nature of the Trinity three Persons in one Godhead. First of all, we have plurality indicated by the words, "Let us make man." It has been argued by some commentators that this is merely an example of what is termed "the plural of majesty."

Queen Victoria was once told an off-color joke. Her icy comment was "We are not amused." With devastating effect she used the plural when referring to herself. However, this practice, which has been common enough in Europe, is nowhere found in the Bible. It was not used, if we are to judge by the record of Scripture, by a single one of the monarchs of antiquity, including the pharaohs of Egypt or the emperors of Babylonia, Persia, Greece, or Rome. Nor is it found to my knowledge in any cuneiform documents. I do not think this is a valid explanation.

It is clearly a revelation of the nature of the Godhead, and it is reinforced on a number of occasions subsequently: explicitly, as in Genesis 3:22; 11:7; and Isaiah 6:8; and implicitly in such passages as Isaiah 5:4-7; 61:1-2; and in many other places.

As an alternative explanation it has been proposed that God was addressing the angelic hosts of heaven. But this would require us to believe that He was inviting them to join Him in His creation of man, a circumstance which is highly improbable.

The second important fact revealed by this declaration of intent is that the Persons in the Godhead are equal. To propose that man should be formed in the image of a plurality of Persons without at the same time specifying which member of that plurality should be the model, is to make it very clear that all the members are equal.

A third great truth is subsequently brought out when, after Adam had sinned, the Lord said, "Behold the man has become as one of us" (Gen. 3:22), by which statement we may learn that the Persons of the Godhead are separate and individual.

**IMAGE...LIKENESS:** Many Bible scholars have taken the view that these words are in reality synonymous. However, it will be noticed in verse 27 that whereas man was indeed created in God's image, nothing is said about the likeness. In fact, the wording of verse 27, in which the phrase "image of God" appears twice, seems almost deliberately directed toward establishing the fact that the likeness was not at this time completed. In verse 26 God did not say, "Let Us create man in Our image after Our likeness," but rather "Let Us make man...." Once again the word make is used where the image and likeness are both in view at once, but the word create is used in verse 27 where only the image is in view. It seems that in verse 26 the verb make has its more basic meaning of appointing.

A study of the use of the two words, "image" and "likeness," throughout the rest of Scripture, both in the Old and the New Testaments, confirms that there is a vital distinction between the two. The image establishes ownership in this special sense that a son belongs to the Father. This sonship is always created or, when necessary, re-created (Col. 3:10); the association between image and sonship is affirmed in Romans 8:29; in Matthew 22:20 it was the image on the coin which established to whom it belonged. While Adam was created in the image of God and thereby was constituted a son of God (Luke 1:38), Adam's children, by contrast, were in Adam's image and therefore sons of Adam by procreation (Gen. 5:3), and not sons of God. It will be noted in Genesis 5:3, however, that Adam's son was also in his own likeness as well as in his image.

In Scripture likeness is not a matter of relationship but of similarity in character. While we are already sons ("even now," so the Greek of I John 3:2), the completion of the full plan of God whereby man was also to achieve likeness is finally guaranteed, as this verse points out. John says, "Beloved, we are even now the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." This is not a hope limited to the New Testament, for in Psalm 17:15 David said, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

What makes us sons of God is not that we were created, for cattle were created too: we are sons because we were created in His image. Having lost this image and accordingly the sonship that it signifies, a re-creation is necessary and is possible for all who have a saving faith. Thereby we may, as John 1:12 is careful to point out, "become the sons of God" once more.

**LET THEM HAVE DOMINION:** The use of the plural pronoun *them*, means that God had in mind a race. This race was to have dominion over the earth, and it should be noted in verse 28 that its multiplication, its increase of population, was not to be an end in itself but to make such dominion possible. Unrestrained childbearing cannot be justified by an appeal to one part of this passage unless the second part is being equally served.

**REPLENISH THE EARTH:** In Hebrew the meaning of this verb is merely "to fill" (*malah*). It is desirable to point this out only because a few, holding the idea that the earth had once before been inhabitable until it was destroyed, have tried to strengthen this view by an appeal to the basic meaning of the English word "to replenish," i.e., "to fill again." It has also been pointed out that the same command was given to Noah after the destruction of his old world. However, here again the Hebrew original does not in itself convey this meaning of refilling. *Malah* means simply "to fill."

**EVERY HERB BEARING SEED:** Judging by the tooth patterns of animals from the world that had perished which we now know only as fossils, that world was composed of both herbivorous and carnivorous animals. It seems clear that the reconstituted world into which Adam was introduced was a herbivorous one only. After Adam's fall, in due course, our world reverted and became omnivorous.

There is some evidence of this change in man himself. It may account for the fact that he suffers rather frequently from appendicitis, that organ once serving to aid him in the digestion of tough

vegetable fiber which formed part of his diet. It is apparently homologous with a similar organ (the caecum) in certain animals which have remained entirely herbivorous. Man's diet is now such that the organ no longer serves the purpose for which it was created, and partial disuse results in a sometimes diseased condition.

A carnivorous world seems now to be clear evidence of a fallen world, though this may not have been the case in the world which had been desolated prior to Genesis 1:2. In Isaiah 65:25 we are told that our world will revert to its intended herbivorous character when the Lord sets up His kingdom.

## **Epilogue: Genesis 2:1-4**

### **Authorized Version:**

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them,

And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.

And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

### **An interpretative rendering:**

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished with all things necessary to them.

On the seventh day God completed the work which he had been engaged in, so he rested on the seventh day from setting everything in order.

And God blessed the seventh day and set it apart because that on this day he had rested from the work involved in creating and appointing everything.

Such is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God prepared them both.

In summary, then, what I believe these verses in Genesis are telling us is that God deliberately planned a world peculiarly suited for man, over which he was to be given dominion. For reasons which are only intimated elsewhere in Scripture, when the earth was just about ready for man's introduction, it came under judgment and was desolated.

The six days of Genesis were, I believe, days of re-creation and reappointment, at what was clearly an enormously accelerated rate. For all we know, only the area comprising the Garden of

Eden need have been completely furnished when man was created and placed in it. The rest of the world outside the Garden may still have been partially disorganized.

The command that man should multiply and fill the earth in order to have dominion over it may be the reason why the earth was by designed left unsubdued. Man's duty was, perhaps, to extend the boundaries of the Garden until the earth became a paradise. This was to be the means whereby he would grow to maturity and turn innocence into virtue. But man failed in the first great test, and with his failure the whole world of nature suffered by default. In this sense what disruption still remains is due to the fall of man and his consequent failure to be lord of the earth. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Last Adam, will yet complete the purposes of God in this respect.

**Arthur Custance. Without Form and Void. Doorway Publications. Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Appendix XX.**

**The Meaning of Exodus 20:11.**

It is very frequently argued that the wording of Exod. 20.11, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day....", excludes the possibility of a gap between Gen. 1.1 and 1.2 because the whole process of creation was completed within these six days. Those who argue thus assume that the days are literal days - and in this, I think they are quite correct. But it is of tremendous importance in studying the Word of God to observe the precision with which words are used, especially where some important doctrine or institution is involved. What we are told here is that God in six days "made" ( **הָפַע** , 'asah) the heavens and the earth. It does not say that He created ( **בָּרָא** bara) them in six days.

I have seen it argued that these verbs are interchangeable because they are used sometimes in successive verses with what appears to be identical meaning. For example, in Gen. 1.26 it is written, "And God said, Let us *make* man in our image after our likeness....", and in verse 27, "So God *created* man in His image, in the image of God created He him". Superficially, the two verbs do appear to be equated here. But as Origen and other early commentators noted, by carefully observing what is said and what is *NOT* said in these two verses, there is an important lesson to be learned, and the lesson hinges upon the difference in meaning between these two governing verbs, 'asah and bara.

It is often found that light is shed upon the fundamental meaning of a word by noting the way in which it is first used in Scripture. The verb 'asah appears significantly in this respect in Gen. 1.16: "And God made two great lights...." It seems unlikely that the sun and the moon were not created until the fourth day since green things would hardly be brought into being before the sun was created. The reference in Gen. 1.16 seems more likely to refer not to a creation but rather to the *appointment* of the sun and moon as rulers of the Day and Night: they were appointed as markers of time ("signs" – verse 14), precisely as Psa. 104.19 indicates; "He appointed the moon for seasons", If we allow that the basic meaning of the Hebrew verb 'asah is not creation but rather the giving of a new role to something already in existence, then we have plenty of illustrations throughout Scripture of the use of this verb in this sense.

In the New Testament we are told that Jesus was *made* a High Priest after the order of Melchizedec (Heb. 6.20). This illustrates the sense in which "made" means "appointed". In I Ki. 12.51 we have a quite exact parallel where we are told that Jeroboam appointed ('asah) priests of the lowest of the people. In Amos 3.6 the question is asked, "Is there evil in any city and God hath not appointed ('asah) it?"

In the Old Testament where the word 'asah forms part of a personal name, it is most appropriately rendered by the English "appointed". Thus we have in II Sam.2.18 the name Ahasel, meaning "God has appointed". In II Ki. 12.14 we have the name Asahiah which means "Jah has appointed". In I Chron. 4.35 we have Asihel, which means "appointed of God".

The word is used of dressing a calf for a meal, ie., preparing it (Gen. 18. 7,8; Jud. 13.15). It is used of trimming a beard (II Sam.19.25). In Deut.21.12 it is used of trimming one's nails! And in Esther 1.5 it is used of preparing a feast for the court.

Strong's exhaustive *Concordance of the Bible* gives a number of meanings to the verb, including the word "appoint", but never the meaning "to create". The word is employed in speaking of the clothes which God made for man (Gen. 3.21), and of clothing which man makes for himself (Exod. 28.2 f.). It always involves working over something which already exists, and usually with a view to changing its form. Sometimes it has more precisely the idea of appointment in the sense that the making is in the future: a multitude of descendants, for example (Gen. 13.16). And it may have the meaning of appointment in a more abstract sense as when a covenant is made between God and Israel (Gen. 9.12). usage it never means the creation of something out of nothing.

In Isa.45.18 we find a whole series of verbs setting forth God's plan for the earth in which He is said to have created it (*bara*), fashioned it (*yatsar*), appointed it (*'asah*), and established it (*kun*). Each word has a specific meaning, and it is not merely re-iteration.

Allowing the word, then, to bear the sense of appointment rather than assuming that it is a synonym for creation, we may observe in Gen. 1.26 that God appointed for man that he should bear His image and His likeness: but that when the plan was put into effect and man is spoken of as having been created, reference is made only to the image - and significantly, no reference is made to the likeness. We may gather from this that while both image and likeness were *appointed* (*'asah*), only the image itself was created (*bara*) by God, the achievement of the likeness being left as some- thing to be wrought out by experience.

Origen noted, rightly, that while God intended that man should bear both His image and His likeness, He created only the image, whereas the likeness was something which was "appointed", some- thing to be achieved, to be wrought out in life by the individual who therefore has a responsible part to play in the achieving of it. A number of passages indicate that the image has to do with relationship, in fact with sonship, and as a consequence of this relationship involves also in a certain sense ownership. As Jesus said of the coin (Lu. 20.24), the image which was stamped upon it signified that it belonged to Caesar. The image, when it is stamped upon man, signifies likewise that he belongs to God, and not only that he belongs to God as something possessed but rather that he belongs to God as a son belongs to his father. Hence it is common to find in the New Testament that when a man by new birth becomes a son of God (Jn. 1.12), he is at something which God creates, and it gives to the individual his unique relationship with his Creator. God is not the father of His creatures merely because He created them, for He created the cattle also but this does not make Him *their* father. But unlike all other creatures, man was created at first, and is re-created, in the "image of God" and thereby achieves his sonship.

But as to the likeness, it is appointed for man but it is not created, it is something to be achieved through experience but it is not imposed. The force of Satan's initial temptation was that man might achieve this likeness (Gen. 3.5: "Ye shall become like God") by the wrong means. David said he would only be satisfied when he awoke with His likeness (Psa.17.15). When John wrote



his first Epistle he said (I Jn.3.1,2): "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath be stowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God... Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him..." Our assurance is that we are, right now, sons, for by an act of God we have had His image stamped upon us: but we do also have the assurance that the appointed likeness will yet be achieved, being brought to perfection when He comes.

Thus by taking care to distinguish between words which superficially seem to be indistinguishable, Scripture sheds a new light

upon the original purposes of God and how they will be fulfilled. The word '*asah*' does not mean "to create", but rather "to make" in the English sense of "appointing".

I do not suggest that the meaning of appointment is the only meaning of '*asah*'. It has other meanings which come close to the common English word "make" in the sense of doing or working at something. But the fact is that the meaning of appointment, in the sense of working upon something which already exists in order to effect a change in it until it becomes something further is commonly involved. So that when we are told in Exod.20.11 that God made heaven and earth in six days, we are not called upon to assume that this has reference to the original creation. We may be quite justified in reading this as a reference to the re-working of something which is already in existence, just as the sun and the moon and the stars may very well have been in existence long before they were appointed to mark the times and the seasons for man who was about to be introduced. Exod.20.11 surely refers to the work of these six: days not as a time of creation *ex nihilo* but as a time in which a ruined cosmos was re-ordered as a fit habitation for man. And when this re-ordering was completed, God rested.

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**Meaning of Descriptive Terms Found in Genesis 1:2.**

Four descriptive terms are used: *tohu*, *bohu*, *ghoshek*, and *tehom*, translated respectively in the AV as "without form", "void", "darkness", and "deep". The following are the occurrences of *tohu* with their AV, RV, Berkeley, and RSV renderings (in that order).

Deut. 32.10:	Psa. 107.40:
waste	wilderness
wilderness	waste
in a .... waste	pathless wastes
in a .... waste	trackless wastes
I Sam. 12.21:	Isa. 24.10:
vain things	confusion
vain	confusion
mere nothings	desolate
vain	chaos
Job 6.18:	Isa. 29.21:
to nothing	a thing of nought
into a waste	thing of nought
wastes	empty
the waste	empty
Job 12.24:	Isa. 34.11:
a wilderness	confusion
wilderness	confusion
in a jungle	chaos
a pathless waste	confusion
Job 26.7:	Isa. 40.17:
empty place	vanity
empty place	confusion (m.)
empty place	worthlessness
the void	as emptiness
Isa. 40.23:	Isa. 45.19:
vanity	not in vain
as in a waste	as in a waste

like nothing	in vain
as nothing	in chaos
Isa. 41.29:	Isa. 49.4:
confusion	for nought
confusion	for nought
waste	for nothing
empty	for nothing
Isa. 44.9:	Isa. 59.4:
vanity	in vanity
confusion (m.)	vanity
in vain	in confusion
nothing	empty pleas
Isa. 45.18:	Jer. 4.23:
not in vain	without form
a waste	waste
in vain	formless
a chaos	waste

In the LXX the words *Tohu* and *Bohu* are rendered ἀόρατος and ἀκατασκευαστος, the first being found also (and only) in Isa.45.3 where it is translated in the AV as "hidden", and in II Macc. 9.5 where it is rendered in the RV as "invisible" (an invisible plague!). The second is found only in Gen. 1.2 in the LXX and is not again used. In no passage where Hebrew employs the word *tohu* does the Septuagint use the word Chaos (Χαος), though the word does appear twice elsewhere in the LXX, ie. , in Mic.1.6 and Zech.14.4, in both of which it is clearly employed to indicate a dramatic dis-ordering - not a Chaos in the classical sense of being merely as yet un-ordered. If the idea of something unformed or incomplete were the author's intent in Gen. 1.2, it seems that the authors of the LXX could still not appropriately have used the Greek word **Χαος**, since to them, evidently, (on the basis of Mic. 1.6 and Zech. 14.4) it did not mean what was meant by the term in Classical Greek. It is hard to know what term they could have used to convey the idea of something yet incomplete - if that is what the original means. At any rate they avoided the word **Χαος** as perhaps being ambiguous.

In the New Testament the opposite term κατασκευαζω is used frequently, always with the sense of "furnishing", "making ready", "adorning". Unfortunately, the New Testament does not use the antonym chosen by the LXX for *bohu* so that one cannot be sure in what sense it was employed in Gen. 1.2, whether as *un*-formed or *de*-formed. That they did not use the term **Χαος** might be taken as

some slight indication that the idea of something un-formed was not considered the meaning of the original. But the evidence is inconclusive in this respect.

By contrast, I do not think that the Hebrew word *tohu* can possibly be viewed as a word *normally* implying something yet incomplete. It is much more frequently, almost overwhelmingly, employed as a term descriptive of something that is, in the view of both men and God, under

judgment or in disfavour, worthless or desolated rather than not yet to be made valuable or not yet put in order.

With reference to the word *bohu*, James Strong in his Dictionary gives the meaning (sub entry #922) as "an indistinguishable ruin", though he states that the root (an unused one) means merely "to be empty". The noun occurs only in Gen. 1.2 and Jer.4.23. BDB favours the sense of *bohu* as something destroyed, not something- being built. Of *tohu* in Gen. 1.2, they also support strongly the concept of "land *reduced* to primeval chaos" (my emphasis).

The word "darkness" is in Scripture frequently associated with something under judgment: but it is not always so. The word can be used merely for the absence of light, as during the night. Either interpretation of the term in Gen. 1.2 would be equally allowable.

Of the term *tehom*, it is difficult to speak without becoming involved also in such words from extra-biblical sources as the Assyrian *Tiamtu*, etc. In the Bible it means "the abyss" or simply, "the deep sea". If one is to argue for a picture of a nebulous first-stage in the process of creation, it is hard to see how a deep sea, an ocean, or at least "waters" (verse 3), could already be in existence. In a number of other passages in Scripture where the word occurs (as for example: Psa.36.7 (Heb.); 71.20; 106.9, there is a suggestion of judgment or distress, but not always. The "deep" is often an *agent* of destruction, as at the time of the Flood, but in itself it seems to signify no more than the mystery of a great body of water whose depths are unfathomable, as it were. Once again, the evidence is inconclusive. But it does not seem unlikely that deep oceans could be thought of as existing when the earth was still part of a nebula as some have viewed Gen. 1.2.