

# **Theistic Evolution and Other Accommodating Approaches – A Critique of Non-Literal Approaches to Gen. 1–11**

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## **Introduction**

Ever since Eve, in Gen. 3 questioned God's instructions, the revelation of Genesis has been under attack. In modern times these attacks have taken a variety of forms. Popular today is an attempt to accommodate the Genesis narratives with current scientific theories. My background is in both the sciences and biblical studies but I am convinced this is a huge mistake. Science changes with new data but sound exegesis of Scripture endures.<sup>1</sup>

This paper will attempt to outline and refute the more recent accommodating approaches to Genesis within the church. The discussion will focus on theistic evolution (hereafter TE) and all accommodating approaches (hereafter AAs) to interpreting Genesis 1-11. AAs include all interpretive approaches that accommodate the straight forward understanding of the biblical text to any current scientific theories that appear to contradict Gen. 1-11. Following this introduction, there will be three major parts: first, I will provide a description of these non-literal or accommodating views, second an overview of examples of these major AAs, and third a detailed critique of these approaches. The emphasis will be to demonstrate that a grammatical-historical-contextual (hereafter GHC) interpretation of Gen. 1-11 refutes all these approaches. GHC is the basic hermeneutic of conservative evangelicalism. It is the only approach that treats the biblical text adequately and therefore is the best approach for interpreting Gen. 1-11. The paper will attempt to show that all other approaches are faulty and result in a compromised biblical text.

## **Seriousness of the Issue**

This issue is important because the majority of the church today, whether deliberately or unknowingly, accepts some form of TE and/or its associated AAs. Most genuine Christians believe that the Bible teaches that God is the ultimate Creator. But they also think that science has proven that evolution and other supposed scientific findings are true. So the logical conclusion is to somehow combine the two ideas, such that God used some elements of evolution to create all things. Even most unbelievers accept this premise. There is a small minority of people who are die-hard, purely naturalistic evolutionists. That minority has set the cultural agenda and has successfully intimidated most theologians and the church at-large on this issue. There is also a small minority of conservative theologians, scientists, and Christians who reject all forms of Darwinian evolution and hold to a literal, or GHC interpretation of Gen. 1-11. This minority defends the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture in all areas addressed

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<sup>1</sup> Certainly the exegesis of a text can be refined and clarified with new insights in lexicography, archaeology, etc but not radically reinterpreted as proposed by accommodating approaches.

by the Scriptures, including history and science. This minority takes a literal (GHC) approach in interpreting Gen. 1-11. This is the view that I hold and will defend in this paper. Such an approach will result in an accurate understanding of both Scripture and all reality.

We can demonstrate that one's view of origins will shape one's worldview.<sup>2</sup> We can also show that one's worldview at least influences, if not determines, one's lifestyle and choices. Historically, the outcome of all non-literal approaches has contributed to the apostasy of many seminaries, Christian schools, denominations, organizations, and individuals. Today our culture continues to be shaped by an evolutionary worldview. Since that worldview is antagonistic to a biblical worldview, it is important that we be able to navigate our way through the creation vs. evolution debate. TE or AAs do not do that. Instead they confuse our thinking. Only a biblical worldview that embraces the core principle that God miraculously created all things ex nihilo, over a relatively short time span, can give an accurate explanation of reality. Any other worldview compromises Scripture and truth and distorts science and reality.

I will begin by describing what I mean by AAs and then I will give examples. All these approaches have some common characteristics.

## **Description of Accommodating Approaches**

### **Scope**

This paper will discuss theistic evolution as well as all other accommodating approaches to Gen. 1-11. It will treat virtually all views that take a non-literal approach. I will attempt to show that TE and most of the associated individual views can only be supported by utilizing a non-literal approach. Such approaches include creation using evolutionary processes, creation over long ages of time or the old earth/universe view, and a local Genesis flood. If a grammatical-historical-contextual approach is utilized, no evidence for evolution, an old universe, or a local flood can be found in the biblical text. Instead, the exegetical result is a miraculous creation by God, a relatively young universe, and a universal or global Flood. Virtually all these accommodating views can be lumped together because they all have the characteristics described below to a greater or lesser extent. They all stand in contrast to the GHC interpretive approach.

I think this broad approach is possible because if any form of evolution is accepted in order to accommodate the biblical text, then all the other related issues follow. Nearly all the accommodating views are based on evolution theory. All deep time<sup>3</sup> views accept the evolutionary time frame. All the accommodating flood views accept the historical geologic interpretation of the geologic column which is based on evolution. Only a GHC approach can reject all forms of evolution with these corollaries and does justice to the biblical text in every detail.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to Nancy Pearcey's excellent work on the influence of world views on culture, especially in Part One of her book *Total Truth – Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway Books, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> The phrase "deep time" is currently being used to refer to the billions of years for the origin of the universe.

In writing this critique of AAs, I do not question the sincerity, spirituality, or commitment of those who hold them. This is a debate in many cases within the evangelical church. Many evangelicals hold to these views and still maintain a high view of Scripture. The fundamental question is then: What is the most accurate and best interpretation of Gen. 1-11? My intention in this paper is to defend the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture and to avoid any distortion of God's revelation.

Another issue to note is the different approaches taken between the relationship of science and theology. These approaches range from a "conflict" view to a "continuity of theology versus science" view.<sup>4</sup> The "conflict with science" view sees no relationship between science and theology because it holds that both theology and science cannot be true. Therefore one or the other must distort reality. This view elevates science to the degree that Christianity is considered to be false. This view can easily be rejected, but this is beyond the scope of this paper. In my opinion, the best view maintains continuity between true science and an accurate interpretation of biblical truth. If the same God is both the Creator of all things and also the revealer of an inspired, inerrant record in Scripture, then there should be continuity between true science and an accurate interpretation of Scripture. This is the approach of this paper. When there is a conflict between the two, either our understanding of the creation (science) or our understanding of Scripture (exegesis) is in error. It is best to begin by making every effort to do accurate exegesis and then attempt to understand science from this biblical framework or worldview.

Unfortunately, all the AAs give priority and greater authority to the conclusions of scientific theories rather than the GHC interpretation of Scripture. We can demonstrate however that there are sound scientific theories that support a GHC interpretation of Scripture, and particularly Gen. 1-11. An ever-increasing body of work has been produced in recent years by scientists and theologians/exegetes in the young earth/universe movement that supports this continuity between science and Scripture.

## **Basic Characteristics**

All the AAs to the creation/evolution debate display the following characteristics. Since this is so, I have grouped these views under the broad category of non-literal approaches. TE and all other accommodating forms of creationism and flood views display the characteristics described below to a greater or lesser extent. The only alternative to these is a miraculous creation, the young earth/universe, and global flood view of science and Scripture. Only this approach is consistently based on the GHC interpretation of Gen. 1-11.

### **1. God as ultimate creator**

Only those who are theists (including both true believers and many unbelievers) and desire to credit God with some role in creation hold to the AAs. By first accepting at

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<sup>4</sup> A good description of four different views on the relationship between science and theology are described in Willaim A. Dembski, *Intelligent Design - The Bridge Between Science & Theology* (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 187-192. Five different views are briefly discussed in *Three Views on Creation and Evolution*, Edited by J.P. Moreland and John Mark Reynolds (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 9-11.

least some elements of evolution, the outcome is to somehow combine the two opposing positions of God as creator and some elements of evolution. But this is philosophically intolerable, as demonstrated below.

## **2. Darwinian evolution and naturalism accepted**

AAs accept some elements of naturalistic evolutionary theory. Some views accept more than others but all accept some evolution. All the non-literal views, like local flood views, accept varying forms of evolution. But this is scientifically insufficient.

## **3. Non-literal hermeneutic on Gen. 1-11 utilized**

There is no way that TE or any of the associated AAs can take a grammatical-historical-contextual approach to Gen. 1-11. There is no support for these when a GHC approach is taken. To take a non-literal approach is hermeneutically inadequate.

## **4. Guiding hermeneutic principle of modern scientific theory utilized**

The fundamental hermeneutical principle of AAs, which influences their interpretation of Genesis, is scientific theory. Current scientific theories that assume naturalism are imposed on the biblical text. Scientific theory is, in essence, given greater authority to determine truth than Scripture. In some circles, science is even viewed as a 67<sup>th</sup> book of Scripture.<sup>5</sup> But this is not only also hermeneutically inadequate but scientifically insufficient, as demonstrated below.

## **5. Old earth theory accepted**

The predominant theory of science today is the old earth view. Going hand-and-hand with the assumptions of naturalism and evolution is the acceptance of old earth theory. Old earth theory is one aspect of all AAs. But this is also scientifically insufficient and biblically inconsistent.

## **6. Non-universal flood accepted**

If one accepts an evolutionary timescale along with other naturalistic assumptions, then the Genesis flood must also be reinterpreted. Since the AAs cannot accept a universal flood, it substitutes either no real flood or a tranquil theory or some form of a local flood view. But this is both scientifically insufficient and biblically inconsistent.

## **7. Exegetical accuracy of Gen. 1-11 lacking**

Detailed exegesis using a GHC approach does not support TE or any of the AAs. Therefore, from a GHC position, those views neglect, stretch, reinterpret, or accommodate the details of the biblical text. Few supporters of the accommodating views, except for those like Bruce Waltke, as noted below, give detailed, accurate expositions of the biblical text. But this is biblically inconsistent and theologically indefensible.

There are a variety of these AAs that have been taken in the past or are currently being used. Next, I will summarize some of the main accommodating views that display these characteristics, at least in some measure.

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<sup>5</sup> See Hugh Ross's book *Creation and Time: A Biblical and Scientific Perspective on the Creation-Date Controversy* (Colorado Springs, CO.: NavPress, 1994), 56-57.

## Examples of Accommodating Views

### Relating to Darwinian Evolution

#### 1. Theistic Evolution

Theistic evolution is generally defined narrowly and distinct from these other views, including the young earth position. Howard van Till, for example, distinguishes TE adamantly from both old and young earth creationism by the following: “But no matter what the timescale, whether it be thousands or billions of years, the special-creation picture stands in bold contrast to any evolving-creation picture in which God is envisioned as giving being to a creation in an initially unformed state but gifted with all of the capabilities for self-organization and transformation that would be needed to bring about, in time, the full variety of structures and forms that have ever appeared.”<sup>6</sup> Van Till adds “I believe that God has so generously gifted the creation with the capabilities for self-organization and transformation that an unbroken line of evolutionary development from nonliving matter to the full array of existing life-forms is not only possible but has in fact taken place.”<sup>7</sup> What distinguishes van Till’s view is the nature of God’s creative activity. Both old and young earth views hold that God acted miraculously in His creative work while TE does not. TE is generally applied only to the issue of evolution and not some of the other related issues. TE is generally described in the following manner by TE scientists. Colin Humphreys, a materials scientist and theistic evolutionist, says,

It seems that evolution is the general way in which God chooses to work, and it fills me with wonder that the whole of the universe and the whole of life were encapsulated in the very first concentration of matter and energy... I believe that God is in charge and that evolution is the way he chose to carry out his creation. If life emerged from a primeval soup then God was the master Chef.<sup>8</sup>

R. J. Berry, a genetics professor and conservative, accepts evolution as fact and tries to “maintain that God worked complementary with genetic processes, so that the world is both a causal outcome of mutation, selection, and so on, but also a divine creation.”<sup>9</sup> Berry says elsewhere:

there is no doctrinal conflict between Christianity and neo-Darwinism properly understood ... it is possible to be both a convinced Christian and an orthodox evolutionist.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Howard J. van Till, *Three Views on Creation and Evolution*. ed. by J. P. Moreland and John Mark Reynolds, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 167.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>8</sup> Colin Humphreys, “Can Science and Christianity Both Be True?” in *Real Science, Real Faith*, ed. R. J. Berry (Eastbourne: Monarch, 1991), 124-125.

<sup>9</sup> R. J. Berry, “What to Believe about Miracles,” *Nature*, July 24, 1986, 322.

<sup>10</sup> R. J. Berry, “Evolution, Ethics and Christianity,” in *The Collins Encyclopedia of Animal Behavior*, ed. R. J. Berry and A. Hallam (London: Collins, 1986), 141.

Over the years there have been many theologians and commentators who have been theistic evolutionists. Many older theologians who did not have the scientific evidence of today were intimidated by the supposed findings of science. They did not have an answer for evolutionary theory, so tended to cautiously accept it. James Orr (1844-1913), a Scottish Presbyterian theologian, comments “On the general hypothesis of evolution, as applied to the organic world I have nothing to say, except that, within certain limits, it seems to me extremely probable, and supported by a large body of evidence.”<sup>11</sup> A. H. Strong (1836-1921), a conservative American Baptist, writes “Neither evolution nor the higher criticism has any terrors to one who regards them as part of Christ's educating process.”<sup>12</sup> Ramm summarizes B. B. Warfield (1851-1921), a Presbyterian and defender of inerrancy, with many Calvinistic theological works by stating the following:

If evolution be carefully guarded theologically it could pass a tenable theory of the ‘divine procedure in creating man.’ Evolution cannot be a substitute for creation but ‘at best can supply only a theory of the method of divine providence.’<sup>13</sup>

Most theologians, including conservatives, did not have an answer to evolutionary theory until relatively recent time.<sup>14</sup>

TE is the least of all the AAs with biblical support and the most accommodating to scientific theory. Therefore, the approach is the most objectionable to a GHC approach.

## **2. Progressive Creationism**

This view accepts the evolution of the natural realm with God occasionally interjecting acts of creation at critical points throughout geologic ages. It accepts the evolutionary geological ages and the mechanism for Darwinian evolution. The gaps in the geological record indicate times where God injected creative acts.

Hugh Ross, astronomer and the major proponent of this view today, defines it as “the hypothesis that God has increased the complexity of life on earth by successive creations of new life forms over billions of years while miraculously changing the earth to accommodate the new life.”<sup>15</sup> Gleason Archer, the well known Old Testament scholar, is also a proponent of this view.<sup>16</sup> Even the conservative hermeneutics expert Bernard Ramm is also a progressive creationist and a local flood and old earth advocate. He comments,

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<sup>11</sup> James Orr in Kerr Lectures of 1890-91 cited by Bernard Ramm in *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, 200.

<sup>12</sup> A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, cited by Bernard Ramm in *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, 201.

<sup>13</sup> B. B. Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies* (1911), 238, cited by Bernard Ramm in *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, 201.

<sup>14</sup> The recent young earth creation movement began with Henry Morris and John Whitcomb's major work, *The Genesis Flood - The Genesis Flood - The Biblical Record and its Scientific Implications* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1961).

<sup>15</sup> From audiotape cited in Mark Van Bebber and Paul S. Taylor, *Creation and Time - a report on the Progressive Creationist book by Hugh Ross* (Mesa, AZ.: Eden Productions, 1994), 11.

<sup>16</sup> Hugh Ross & Gleason Archer, “The Day Age View” in *The Genesis Debate: three views on the days of creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian (Mission Viejo, CA.: Crux Press, 2001), 123-163.

The writer is not a theistic evolutionist. He is a progressive creationist for he feels that in progressive creationism there is the best accounting for all the facts -- biological, geological, and Biblical.<sup>17</sup>

The major weakness of this view is that it imposes much of evolution theory, uniformitarian assumptions and the deep time theory upon the biblical text. Since evolution theory has little scientific support it is dangerous to base biblical interpretation on a failed theory.

## Relating to Genre

### 1. Framework Hypothesis

This is an intriguing view that is gaining popularity among even the most conservative scholars. This view takes a partially non-literal approach to interpreting Gen. 1 by interpreting the seven days of Gen. 1:1-2:3 as a figurative framework. The two main features of this view are, first, that some elements of the passage are not to be taken literally, and, second, the events are not necessarily sequential. The events are taken as real events but with non-literal elements. The events are historical but not necessarily sequential. This non-sequential ordering is described as dischronologization or a topical arrangement, which is considered to be common in the biblical narrative elsewhere. The view claims not to take a position concerning the age of the universe. Lee Irons summarizes the view as:

In conclusion, advocates of the framework interpretation argue that the six days are not literal days but frames arranged into two panels. They provide a literary structure in which the creative activity of God is topically narrated according to the theological concerns of the author. The complete seven-day framework is a metaphorical appropriation of lower-register language denoting an upper-register temporal reality. With their evenings and mornings, the six days do not mark the passage of earthly time in the lower register, but of heavenly time in the upper register.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, those who hold this view impose a non-literal approach and re-interpret the text to accommodate current theories of science.

The main and best known proponent of this view is Meredith Kline. Derek Kidner, in his commentary, also seems to hold to this view. He claims that Gen. 1 is a story and not a scientific statement. He sees simplicity as the dominant concern and believes a scientific account would speak of ages, not days.<sup>19</sup> Thus, he views Gen. 1 as not really factual but poetic.

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<sup>17</sup> Bernard Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), 205.

<sup>18</sup> Lee Irons, "The Framework View" in *The Genesis Debate: three views on the days of creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian (Mission Viejo, CA.: Crux Press, 2001), 248.

<sup>19</sup> Derek Kidner, *Genesis – An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 56.

This view attempts to accommodate the text to deep time theory and other current scientific theories by proposing an interesting literary approach. This approach in essence undermines the historicity of the biblical text. This approach also undermines the clarity of Scripture principle. It does this by requiring the reader to have special theological or literary insight in order to understand Gen. 1. Robert McCabe has an excellent critique of the framework view in his chapter in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*.<sup>20</sup> There is abundant support to accept that Moses intended to present a genuine historical narrative of real sequential events.

## 2. Creation Genre

The view of Bruce Waltke, one of the most respected Hebrew scholars but also an old earth creationist, is unique. He considers Gen. 1 as generally historical but adds:

It is not concerned with presenting a strict historical account. ... In sum, the narrator has an agenda very different from the modern historian. He has a theological agenda: to tell us that God created the earth and that it is all very orderly.<sup>21</sup>

Waltke attempts to bypass the scientific problems by identifying Gen. 1 as a special genre, but not myth, science, history, or theology.<sup>22</sup> Instead, he identifies it as the following:

What, then, is the genre of the Genesis creation account? Following Henri Blocher, we can describe the creation account as an artistic, literary representation of creation intended to fortify God's covenant with creation. It represents truths about origins in anthropomorphic language so that the covenant community may have a proper worldview and be wise unto salvation. It represents the world as coming into being through God's proclamation so that the world depends on his will, purpose, and presence.<sup>23</sup>

Waltke is classified as a proponent of the Framework Hypothesis by Robert McCabe in his critique of the framework view.<sup>24</sup>

We can demonstrate that the genre of Gen.1-11 is historical narrative, not poetry nor some special creation genre. Taking all the evidence into account concerning the genre of all Gen. 1-11, supports its nature as historical narrative. Some of this evidence includes the clear references to dating and time notes, the consistent use of the waw-consecutive in Gen. 1 and elsewhere, and the New Testament support of the historicity of these events. Steven Boyd has done extensive statistical analysis of Genesis and

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<sup>20</sup> Robert V. McCabe, "A Critique of the Framework Interpretation of the Creation Week" in *Coming to Grips with Genesis – Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*, ed. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury (Green Forrest, AR.: Master Books, 2008), 211-249.

<sup>21</sup> Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis - A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2001), 76-77.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 78.

<sup>24</sup> Robert V. McCabe in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, 213, ft. nt. 10.



other texts to demonstrate that Gen. 1 is historical narrative and “that it is statistically indefensible to argue that this text is poetry.”<sup>25</sup>

## Relating to the Age of the Universe

### 1. Gap-Theory

One of the most conservative of these views is the restitution or so-called gap theory. It attempts to harmonize deep time science or geological ages by inserting a time gap in the Genesis text. In these gaps, any number of ages can be inserted to accommodate any long ages of time necessary to harmonize with science. Otherwise the text is generally interpreted literally. The six days of creation are a re-creation after a corruption of the original creation due to the fall of Satan. The main gap is inserted between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2. The formless and void condition and darkness described in 1:2 is interpreted as evidence of a corrupted condition resulting from Satan’s fall. This allows for long ages of geologic time before Gen 1:2. Other gaps are inserted in the genealogies of Gen. 5 and 11. This allows for millions of years of human history.

This view was a 19<sup>th</sup> century attempt by conservative theologians to answer the supposed finding of science and conflicts with the biblical text. It was popularized by the Scofield Reference Bible in 1909 where the view was described in the study notes.<sup>26</sup>

This view, however, has Hebrew grammatical problems that make it very improbable. Also, it does not solve the scientific problems it attempts to address but rather ignores them. Plus it puts millions of years of death and suffering before human sin, undermining Romans 5:12. It also inadvertently undermines the flood narratives that give the explanation for the fossil record.

### 2. Day-age theory

This view accommodates the age of the earth with deep time theories. It defines the term day in Gen. 1 as referring to geologic ages or long periods corresponding to major geologic periods. It inserts billions of years into the 6 days of creation in Gen. 1. The correspondence between the geological ages of historical geology and the days of Gen. 1 are only superficial. There are actually more contradictions in the details.<sup>27</sup>

This theory has support dating back to at least Josephus and many Jewish rabbis. Church fathers, including Irenaeus, Origin, and Augustine, held this view. It was popularized more recently in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is commonly held among theistic evolutionists. The progressive creation view is a recent form of the view.

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<sup>25</sup> Steven W. Boyd, “The Genre of Genesis 1:1-2:3: What Means This Text” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis – Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*, ed. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury (Green Forrest, AR.: Master Books, 2008), 176. Boyd presents his statistical data in more detail in *RATE II – Radioisotopes and the age of the earth: Results of a Young-Earth Creationist Research Initiative*, ed Larry Vardiman, Andrew A. Snelling, and Eugene F. Chaffin (El Cajon, CA.: Institute for Creation Research and Chino Valley AZ.: Creation Research Society, 2005), 631-734.

<sup>26</sup> John J. Davis discusses the view in *Paradise to Prison – Studies in Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1975), 43-46. Henry Morris also has a good discussion in *The Biblical Basis for Modern Science* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1984), 121-125.

<sup>27</sup> Henry Morris lists many of these contradictions in *The Biblical Basis for Modern Science*, 119.

The major support for this view includes the fact that the Hebrew word for “day” can be used in a variety of different ways, allowing for a meaning of long ages. 2Peter 3:8 is also cited in support of this view.

This view undermines the traditional view that accepts the text as historical narrative. There are also major conflicts with these “day-ages” and the theoretical evolutionary history.

### **3. The Days of Revelation**

This view interprets the days in Gen. 1 as God revealing in six days what took longer to create. This revelation came through visions that do not represent actual historical events. These are days of revelation, not days describing accomplishments. This allows any number of ages to be accommodated into history since the narrative has no relationship to time.<sup>28</sup>

This is clearly a non-literal approach. It undermines the historicity of the text. It is a view with very little support, either biblical or scientific.

## **Relating to the Genesis Flood**

### **1. Tranquil Flood**

A very unlikely and not widely held view is the tranquil flood view. It maintains that the Genesis flood was so mild that it did not leave any trace of its occurrence in the geologic record. The view solves no geological issue and does not explain anything. It never gained much support.

### **2. Local Flood**

There are two versions of this view. The first maintains that the Genesis flood was local to Mesopotamia in all aspects. It allows for the possibility of some people and animals not destroyed, including peoples in the Americas, Far East, or Africa. This is the view of Bernard Ramm, who wrote:

... the entire record must be interpreted phenomenally. If the flood is local though spoken of in universal terms, so the destruction of man is local though spoken of in universal terms. The record neither affirms nor denies that man existed beyond the Mesopotamian valley. Noah certainly was not a preacher of righteousness to the peoples of Africa, of India, of China or of America--places where there is evidence for the existence of man many 1000s of yrs before the flood (10,000 to 15,000 yrs in America).<sup>29</sup>

The second view holds that the flood was local to Mesopotamia geographically but universal in that all humans and animals were destroyed. Unfortunately, many conservative theologians have and continue to support this view, such as W. H. Griffith Thomas, G. C. Morgan, and, more recently, Derik Kidner.

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<sup>28</sup> This view is described in John Davis, *Paradise to Prison*, 54.

<sup>29</sup> Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, 163.

The main premise for both of these views is the contention that there is no geological evidence for a universal flood. The biblical text is then accommodated with this scientific theory.

A detailed exegesis using the GHC approach refutes this view. There is also abundant scientific evidence that there was an actual global flood as described by the details of Gen 6-9.

With this brief review of accommodating views, I will now attempt to briefly refute them and defend the GHC approach to interpretation. This will result in a six-day creation with no evolution, the young earth/universe view, and a global flood.

### **Refutation of Accommodating Approaches**

The main consideration in this section is to determine whether all of the above-mentioned accommodations can be refuted with the available evidence, both biblical and scientific. This paper will attempt to do this, at least in summary or outline form, by discussing the following five important categories: the philosophical intolerance, the hermeneutical inadequacy, the scientific insufficiency, the biblical inconsistency, and the theological indefensibility of all accommodating approaches. Each of these categories could be greatly expanded with far more discussion of an abundance of available data.

#### **The Philosophical Intolerance**

Many things could be said concerning the philosophical intolerance of combining creation with evolution. The ideas of special creation and naturalistic evolution are so diametrically opposed that they cannot both be true. The two concepts are totally antithetical. Darwinian evolution proposed self-organization by chance while creation science proposes intelligent design. Chance and design are opposite and antithetical concepts. I would add that any form of naturalistic evolution imposed on the biblical text serves only to distort it. When the text is allowed to speak for itself, no evidence of any form of evolution, along with its deep time-frame can be found. To support any form of evolution is to stretch Scripture beyond what any literal interpretation permits.

There are at least three major reasons that creation and evolution are antagonistic to one another. First, in spite of a clear attempt to compromise on the part of Christian theologians, I know of no committed evolutionists who accept any form of TE or any of the accommodating views. They all acknowledge that the two concepts are direct opposites and incompatible. Ernst Mayr, a biologist and well known evolutionist, says "...it is impossible to believe simultaneously in two opposing theories explaining the same set of phenomena."<sup>30</sup> Douglas Futuyma, another biologist, makes clear the incompatibility:

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from preexisting species by

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<sup>30</sup> Cited in David H. Lane, "Theological Problems with Theistic Evolution," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 151, April-June 1994, Number 602, Ernst Mayr, in "Introduction," in Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species* (reprint of 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1964), vii, xii.

some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence, for no natural process could possibly form inanimate molecules into an elephant or a redwood tree in one step.<sup>31</sup>

The Nobel Prize recipient, George Wald, says:

The reasonable view was to believe in spontaneous generation [life from non-life]; the only alternative [is] to believe in a single, primary act of supernatural creation. There is no 3rd position. ... Most modern biologists, having reviewed with satisfaction the downfall of the spontaneous generation hypothesis [disproved by creationist Louis Pasteur in 1864], yet unwilling to accept the alternative belief in special creation, are left with nothing.<sup>32</sup>

Evolution has given humanistic naturalism its basis for accepting an explanation of origins without involving God. Richard Dawkins eloquently summarizes the importance of evolution to naturalists in saying: "Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist."<sup>33</sup> Henry Morris, a young earth creationist, emphasizes the same point: "Not all evolutionists are humanists or atheists, by any means, but all humanists and atheists are evolutionists!"<sup>34</sup>

Second, it can be demonstrated that evolution has been the secular alternative explanation for origins from ancient time. Morris traces in great detail the roots, historical development, and great influence of evolution on most cultures of the world in his book with the descriptive title, *The Long War Against God*.<sup>35</sup> This history did not begin with Darwin, but is ancient. It is a history of antagonism to the biblical teaching on creation. According to Morris, the results have not only impacted science, but also all aspects of culture in a detrimental way.

Third, the issue of creation vs. evolution is a conflict of two worldviews. It is not simply a debate about scientific theory or origins but two very opposing worldviews. Percy's book reveals the comprehensiveness of the humanistic evolutionary worldview.<sup>36</sup> She states:

Darwinism functions as the scientific support for an overarching naturalistic worldview, which is being promoted aggressively far beyond the bounds of science. Some even say we are entering an age of 'universal Darwinism,' when it will no longer be just a scientific theory but a comprehensive worldview.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Douglas Futuyma, *Science on Trial: the Case for Evolution* (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 197.

<sup>32</sup> George Wald, "The Origin of Life," *Physics and Chemistry of Life* 3 (1955), 5.

<sup>33</sup> Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker* (New York: Norton, 1986), 6.

<sup>34</sup> Henry Morris, *The Long War Against God – The History and Impact of the Creation/Evolution Conflict* (Green Forest, AR.: Master Books, 2005), 117.

<sup>35</sup> Henry Morris, *The Long War Against God*.

<sup>36</sup> Nancy Percy, *Total Truth*.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 207-208, 228.

Pearcy shows the widespread cultural impacts of the evolutionary worldview, not only in the sciences but also in economics, law, literature, medicine, business, families, psychology, moral theory, theology, epistemology, and other areas of society.<sup>38</sup> That influence has been greatly detrimental to cultures and antagonistic to a biblical worldview. That influence has impacted theologians, pastors, and the average Christian.

Therefore, Christians gain nothing by compromising Scripture in order to accept any form of evolution. The scientific weakness of Darwinian evolution can be demonstrated (see comments below). Therefore, TE is akin to harmonizing a truth with a lie. The result undermines an accurate understanding of God's word. This makes all accommodating views philosophically intolerable with Scripture.

### **The Hermeneutical Inadequacy**

There are two major hermeneutical problems related to this issue of science and Scripture. First, there is the issue of the proper approach to interpreting the biblical text. Second, there is the issue of properly interpreting the physical data of science. The issue is not science versus religion. The issue is the interpretive approaches of two opposing worldviews.

Concerning the biblical text, most conservative evangelicals accept the protestant hermeneutic, more specifically titled the Grammatical-Historical-Contextual (GHC) method of interpretation. It is often referred to as the grammatical-historical or literal method. At the heart of this approach and main objective is the attempt to discern the original author's intended meaning, both human and divine. Similarly, the meaning must also be one that the original audience would have understood. Berkeley Michelson, in his hermeneutics textbook, summarizes this goal of the approach with, "... to find out the meaning of a statement for the author and for the first hearers or readers, and thereupon to transmit that meaning to modern readers."<sup>39</sup> The GHC approach is described not only in Michelson but in several standard hermeneutics texts.<sup>40</sup>

Unfortunately many theologians and scientists, though conservative in other areas, are inconsistent in their hermeneutic approach to Gen. 1-11. These theologians and scientists depart from a literal interpretation in varying degrees. Often, their treatment of the biblical text is greatly distorted. David Lane, in his critique of TE, makes this point: "While theistic evolutionists concede that there are differences between this theory and the grammatical-historical theological interpretation of the Bible, they adopt either a harmonization (concordist approach) or a reinterpretation of Scripture (functionalist approach), in the light of modern 'science,' in an attempt to achieve compatibility."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 209-210.

<sup>39</sup> A. Berkeley Mickelsen, *Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 5.

<sup>40</sup> Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Biblical Interpretation – A practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth* (Colorado Springs, CO.: Victor, 1991), Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation – A Textbook of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1970), William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Dallas, TX.: Word Publishing, 1993).

<sup>41</sup> David H. Lane, "Special Creation or Evolution: No Middle Ground," Edited by Roy B. Zuck, *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Dallas, TX.: Dallas Seminary Press) 151, no. 602 (April-June 1994), 21.

For other accommodationalists, denying the historicity of the Genesis accounts allows the stretching of the text. In other cases it is accommodated by identifying the text with a genre other than historical narrative. All the evidence, however, favors the view of historical narrative for the genre of Gen.1-11. This is the view of the writers of the New Testament and of Jesus when referring to Gen. 1-11.

Concerning interpreting the physical data of science, there are at least two opposing approaches. One approach assumes naturalistic scientific theory with evolution as its basis. The second approach interprets the same physical data from a biblical worldview. The results of these two interpretive approaches are radically different.

To my knowledge, all those who accept an accommodating view do so by imposing naturalistic scientific theory and presuppositions upon the biblical text. The motivation seems to be to harmonize Scripture with the latest findings of science. Inadvertently, more authority is given to human-discovered scientific theory than the authority of the inspired biblical text. In most cases, this clearly goes against the meaning intended by the original author. It also could not be a meaning understood by the original readers. Even if such an interpretation were the correct one, it would mean that only interpreters of the last 150 years could have understood the most foundational of all portions of Scripture. Only those who understand Darwinian evolution, the supposed findings of historical geology, the big bang theory, deep time theories, and other recent theories of science would be capable of understanding Gen. 1-11. This is highly unlikely.

This clearly represents eisegesis rather than exegesis. Eisegesis is one of the most damaging forms of biblical interpretation in any portion of Scripture. The result is superficial exegesis, so that the text must be handled in broad strokes and must ignore many details. To the contrary, the safeguards of the GHC method ensure accurate exegesis of the biblical text. In my opinion, it is best to make every effort to accurately interpret the biblical text consistently using the GHC method so we can determine where our current understanding of science may be in error.

It is not often noted that science is a human effort to discover truth about the created order. Actually, science may be the best means humans have to investigate nature, but it is still man-made. Therefore, science reflects all the limitations of humans: science changes over time, it is always incomplete, it is always partial, it is tentative, it has imperfections, and it is done by sinful, depraved people. Older theories are abandoned as new data is discovered. Science is not absolute truth.

On the other hand, those who accept the inerrancy of Scripture are assured that it is absolute truth. It is unchanging, perfect, free from imperfection, complete, unlimited, eternal, and is ultimate reality. Scripture claims that only God has these attributes. Scripture claims that God<sup>42</sup> and his word<sup>43</sup> are absolute truth. This does not mean that we always clearly understand everything in Scripture. But in order to find truth, we must start with Scripture because it provides the framework to do good science or to understand the world around us. If scientific theories are imposed on the interpretation of the biblical text, there is always the danger of distorting it. Our tentative understanding of the physical realm must be harmonized with the absolute truth of Scripture--not the other way around.

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<sup>42</sup> John 3:33, 14:6; Romans 3:4, 7; Hebrews 6:18; Colossians 2:3.

<sup>43</sup> John 17:17, 5:33; Galatians 5:7; 1John 2:21.

It can be shown that science today practices a naturalistic bias in interpreting the physical data, particularly concerning origins. There is a methodological naturalism at work in most science today. The physical data or evidence is interpreted from an evolutionary, naturalistic worldview. We creationists do not take issue with the physical data, but we do take issue with the interpretation of the data. The data can and must be interpreted from a biblical worldview. The results are often very different. It can be demonstrated that when a GHC method and a biblical worldview are used to interpret the physical data, the results show that evolution is a false theory, the universe is relatively young, and the Genesis Flood was historical, global, and universal.

The creation/evolution debate is often framed as one between science and religion. But this is not the case at all. The main issues at stake are hermeneutical, both in relation to interpreting the physical data and also in interpreting the biblical data. The fundamental issue is a conflict between two opposing worldviews: secular humanism, with evolution at its basis, versus a biblical worldview. The evolutionary, naturalistic interpretation of physical data begins with different presuppositions than those of the biblical worldview. The naturalistic interpretation leaves out a significant portion of the actual historical records. If Gen. 1-11 is an accurate historical narrative, then its record must be considered in the debate. Also at stake in relation to accommodating views is the hermeneutical approach, whether the non-literal approach with the naturalistic scientific imposition described above or the literal interpretation of the biblical text. The best approach is one that begins with the biblical record taken literally. Then a scientific approach can be utilized that treats the physical data carefully within a biblical worldview. This approach results in a far better understanding of the real world and specifically supports the young earth and universal flood views. I will attempt to briefly demonstrate this below. The non-literal approach of all AAs is hermeneutically inadequate, both biblically and scientifically.

### **The Scientific Insufficiency**

It is beyond the scope of this paper to deal with the many scientific inadequacies of evolutionary theory. Instead, I will summarize much of the data and discuss it generally. There is an abundance of literature from young earth creationists and the intelligent design movement that documents these scientific failings of evolutionary theory.<sup>44</sup> It can be stated simply that evolutionary theory is a failed concept and should be abandoned scientifically. If it is a failed theory, then it should not be used to influence one's understanding of the biblical revelation on origins. Because of the failure of evolutionary theory, all AAs to Scripture based on evolution are also in error.

Many evolutionists have recognized these shortcomings and are producing their own critiques. For example, Michael Denton, a medical doctor and microbiologist, has

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<sup>44</sup> Many books, papers, DVDs, etc can be found at the web sites of the major young earth creation organizations like The Institute for Creation Research (ICR), [www.icr.org](http://www.icr.org); Creation Ministries International (CMI), [creation.com](http://creation.com); and Answers in Genesis (AiG), [www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org). Also the intelligent design organization, Discovery Institute, has many resources showing the failings of evolution at [www.discovery.org](http://www.discovery.org) or [www.intelligentdesign.org](http://www.intelligentdesign.org).

written a technical critique of Darwinian evolution in *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*.<sup>45</sup> Mr. Denton is not a Christian, but he concludes after 359 pages of scientific evidence that evolution is a cosmogenic myth:

The influence of evolutionary theory on fields far removed from biology is one of the most spectacular examples in history of how a highly speculative idea for which there is no really hard scientific evidence can come to fashion the thinking of a whole society and dominate the outlook of an age. ... Ultimately the Darwinian theory of evolution is no more nor less than the great cosmogenic myth of the twentieth century.<sup>46</sup>

Denton's conclusion is not an isolated view among many scientists today. Many respected scientists have come to a similar conclusion.

My own research, which has spanned the last 25 years, shows the evidence for origins falls into three major categories: evidence supporting evolution according to evolutionists, evidence undermining evolution, and evidence supporting creation science. The evidence supporting evolution is superficial and can be better explained by creation science. Any evidence that undermines evolution theory actually supports creation science. Obviously, the evidence that supports creation science does not support evolution.

First, there is the evidence that the evolutionist supplies in support of his theory. There is very little evidence here that can be demonstrated scientifically or observed today. Most of this evidence is superficial because there is a better creationist explanation for the same data. An example that is easy to visualize is from comparative anatomy. The argument is from homology. Creationists do not dispute that there are similar structures among various species. For example, most mammals have analogous bone and other structures. This is said to be evidence for evolution because it indicates a biological relationship between the species. But there is a better explanation for the same data. Creationists argue that similarity in structure can just as easily show a common designer or creator. It can also be argued that the differences are far more numerous and significant than the superficial similarities. Other lines of evidence in this category are also superficial.<sup>47</sup>

Second, there is evidence that undermines or destroys the theory of evolution. For example the second law of thermodynamics, one of the most widely held and demonstrated laws of nature, presents a principle that is the very opposite of the concept of evolution. There is a tendency in nature for all systems to degrade from a higher state of organization to a lower state. This tendency is observed every where in the universe and in all branches of science. The concept of evolution presents the idea of movement from simple structures to more and more complex structures. Such phenomena are not observed in nature.

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<sup>45</sup> Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (Bethesda, MD.: Adler & Adler, Publishers, 1986).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 385.

<sup>47</sup> Many of the examples I place in this category are refuted in Jonathan Wells' excellent book, *Icons of Evolution – Science or Myth, Why much of what we teach about evolution is wrong* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2000).



Many of the arguments used to support evolution theory have been discarded. They are now non-supportive because we know the facts that undermine evolutionary theory. An example would be the fossil record. In Darwin's day, when the science of paleontology was young, it was hoped that the fossil record would show a gradual development of species through many transitional forms found in the fossil record. Today it is agreed by experts in paleontology that virtually no transitional forms actually exist in the fossil record. Instead, the evidence supports special creation and the biblical worldview and destroys evolutionary theory.

Third, there is ample evidence that supports a supernatural creation, or at least an intelligent designer/creator. There are many examples from various areas of biology. In recent decades, many discoveries have been made about life at the microbiological level. Michael Behe, a microbiologist, demonstrates that within all cells of all organisms, there are numerous irreducibly complex biological machines.<sup>48</sup> This evidence shows very powerfully that life could not arise by natural means. This evidence also shows that mechanisms have been built into organisms to prevent them from crossing genetic boundaries, thereby preventing evolution. This evidence argues for an intelligent designer. One example is the DNA molecule, which contains information for the development and functioning of every cell of every living organism. Evolution theory teaches that organisms developed from the simple to the more complex. Today we know that there are no "simple life forms." All life is irreducibly complex at the most basic level.

Concerning the Genesis flood, a growing body of scientific evidence from the study of flood geology gives support to the biblical account of the flood. Current historical geology attempts to interpret the geological record based on evolution, uniformitarianism, and long geological ages. Beginning with these assumptions, makes historical geology neither historical nor geological but instead is scientism masquerading under a scientific name. The same geological column can be interpreted differently based on the actual characteristics of the strata. Most of the strata being sedimentary in nature are clearly water-deposited from the Cambrian layer to the surface. There is sufficient evidence to interpret these layers as being deposited by one massive global flood. The evolutionist contends that there is no evidence of such a flood when the strata are viewed from the uniformitarian perspective. But in reality, there is so much evidence for a global flood that the naturalist is blinded to that actual evidence.

Concerning the age of the universe, there is ample physical evidence to support a young universe. There is also abundant and significant evidence that appears to support the old earth view. The evidence is considered to be so overwhelming and convincing that most scientists, theologians, and Christians see no way to harmonize Scripture without allowing deep time in the Genesis record. But there are credible answers and adequate evidence to support the young earth view. Dr. Russell Humphreys, a world class physicist, has done much research in this area. He contends that 90% of the physical evidence actually supports a relatively young earth and

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<sup>48</sup> Michael J. Behe, *Darwin's Black Box – The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York, N.Y.: The Free Press, 1996), 4.

universe in the biblical time frame of under 10,000 years.<sup>49</sup> Most of the attention is focused on the 10% of the evidence that seems to support a universe of billions of years. Most of that 10 percent of evidence includes three major areas.

First, the evidence from the geological record is considered to be very strong. But if the geological record can be interpreted as the result of the Genesis flood down to the Cambrian layer, then it eliminates the billions of years of historical geology.

Second, the most difficult area for young earth creationists is starlight coming to earth from billions of light years away. This has been a real challenge for young earth creationists to explain. In his book *Starlight & Time*, Humphreys has proposed a theory based on Einstein's general theory of relativity.<sup>50</sup> In simple terms, the theory involves God's creative work on the second day of creation, when God separated the waters and stretched the expanse between the waters. Humphreys proposes that matter in the distant reaches of the universe would have experienced faster time than the one day of time recorded on earth. Gen. 1 records time as measured from earth's point of view.

Radiometric dating is the third area that seems to support a universe billions of years old. Creationists have produced some very promising answers to this interpretation of the data. A major research project sponsored by the Institute of Creation Research and the Creation Research Society was completed in 2005. This project, entitled "Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth (RATE)," provides experimental studies indicating that the assumptions of all radiometric dating may be faulty, thus returning erroneous dating results.<sup>51</sup> The study produced evidence based on radiometric dating that the universe may be, in fact, relatively young. Therefore, reasonable evidence exists to explain the supposed 10 percent of physical evidence that supports the old earth view.

It is my hope that this brief survey shows that there is sufficient scientific evidence to support a supernatural creation within the relatively short biblical time frame and a universal flood. TE and other accommodating views actually produce more scientific problems than they solve. There is insufficient scientific evidence supporting evolution, an old earth/universe view, or a local flood. I contend that the physical, scientific evidence supports the details of Gen. 1-11 when Genesis is interpreted literally.

## **The Biblical Inconsistency**

In contrast to a detailed exegesis of the text, most AAs explain away the clear straight forward interpretation of the text by selectively taking portions of the text that support their view and either ignoring or explaining away the other details. Their exegesis tends to be not only selective but superficial. An example is the work of Hugh Ross in his book devoted to an explanation of Gen. 1-11 in *The Genesis Question*.<sup>52</sup> Ross does more than most, in that he at least attempts to discuss most of the passages

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<sup>49</sup> Humphreys writes and speaks on young earth creationism internationally and presents much of his evidence for a young earth in the lecture format.

<sup>50</sup> D. Russell Humphreys, *Starlight & Time – Solving the puzzle of distant starlight in a young universe* (Green Forrest, AR.: Master Books, 2006).

<sup>51</sup> The results of the RATE project were documented in a technical text titled *Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth*, edited by Larry Vardiman, Andrew A. Snelling and Eugene F. Chaffin.

<sup>52</sup> Hugh Ross, *The Genesis Question – Scientific Advances an the Accuracy of Genesis* (Colorado Springs, CO.: NavPress, 2001)

and issues in Gen. 1-11. He works through Gen. 1-11, explaining the text by superimposing current scientific theories on the interpretation. He assumes evolution theory, uniformitarianism, and deep time theory. He often states that certain physical conditions existed millions or billions of years ago as if actual observations were recorded or actual measurements had been made. Such statements are provided with little or vague support. His discussion is highly speculative at many points. This gives the allusion of a scientific and exegetical treatment but in reality results in a distorted interpretation by the imposition of evolutionary assumptions. He does not do exegesis in the book but instead he reinterprets the text with this imposition of current scientific assumptions. A couple of quotations will illustrate the point. In Ross's explanation of Gen. 1:1 he injects current scientific theory more than the clear supernatural nature of the original creation:

With this simple yet profound declaration, the biblical account of God's interaction with the human race begins. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of pages of commentary have been devoted to this one statement alone. Its explosive impact bursts upon the reader like the creative blast we modern physicists have come to call the 'big bang.' ... New scientific support for a hot big-bang creation event,<sup>53</sup> for the validity of the space-time theorem of general relativity, and for ten-dimensional string theory verifies the Bible's claim for a beginning.<sup>54</sup>

Later in his book Ross explains away the global nature of the flood with the local flood theory in Mesopotamia. Concerning his explanation of one of the most powerful textual evidences for a global flood, the waters covering the highest mountains, Ross strains the interpretation of the text. He actually implies that the text is deceptive in that it presents only Noah's limited perception, instead of the actual conditions:

Genesis 7:19 describes Noah's inability to see anything but water, horizon to horizon, from his viewpoint on the ark's upper deck. If the ark were floating anywhere near the middle of the vast Mesopotamian plain on water as deep as two or three hundred feet, no hills or mountains would be visible from it.

Noah would see nothing but water. The high mountain ranges surrounding the Mesopotamian valley would lie beyond Noah's line of sight.<sup>55</sup>

When Ross does interpret specific terms or details in the text, he will often take a legitimate meaning of a term in other contexts but not a likely meaning in the specific Genesis text he is treating. The meaning he uses is the one that supports his accommodating view. These examples are typical of his treatment of the Genesis narratives through out his book. Ross's treatment of the text is also typical of the treatment of the text by most proponents of most AAs.

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<sup>53</sup> John Hartnett refutes the big bang theory in *Dismantling the Big Band – God's Universe Rediscovered* (Green Forest, AR.: Master Books, 2005). Russell Humphreys also indirectly refutes the theory in *Starlight and Time*.

<sup>54</sup> Hugh Ross, *The Genesis Question*, 17, 19.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 149-150.

My detailed exegesis of Gen. 1-11 using the GHC method of interpretation lends no support for the accommodating views described in this paper. Instead, Moses, the original author of Genesis, intended to document a historical record of God's supernatural creation in six literal days followed by a divine day of rest. To present my exegesis is beyond the scope of this paper. The following six major conclusions relating to these issues have resulted from my exegesis of Gen. 1:1-2:3. A similar presentation, briefly outlined in a seventh conclusion below, could be provided for the flood narratives and the Genesis time frame as well. This would show that the original author intended to document a global and universal flood and a relatively young universe.

## 1. The Direct Work of God

The entire focus of Gen. 1:1-2:3 is the direct creative work of God. God sovereignly created *ex nihilo*, then shaped, formed, and filled his creation with highly structured creatures. There is virtually no evidence of any naturalistic action or ordinary providence as proposed by many AAs.<sup>56</sup> The creative activity is clearly miraculous in nature. This concept of creation is supported by all the following details in the text.

First, God is the only and major personage in the narrative. The name for God, *Elohim*, occurs 35 times in the 35 sentences in the text. God is the grammatical subject of most verbs in those sentences. It is his work or action that is the major focus of the entire passage. God creates four times (1:1, 21, 27, 2:3), God speaks seven times (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24), God separates (1:4), God makes four times (1:7, 16, 25, 2:3), God places (1:17), and God blesses twice (1:22, 28). His work continues in chapter 2 in that he completes the work (2:2), he forms (2:7), and he fashions (2:22). The repetition of these creative actions stresses his direct involvement.

Secondly, the creative work of God is described as a direct and active work rather than indirect. There is no evidence for God using other than his own means. The work is given an active, "hands on" description. This concept is supported by several other biblical passages:

Isa. 48:13 "Surely My **hand founded** the earth, And My right **hand spread out** the heavens; When I call to them, they stand together."<sup>57</sup>

Isa. 66:2 "For My **hand made** all these things, Thus all these things came into being," declares the Lord.

Jer. 27:5 "I have **made** the earth, the men and the beasts which are on the face of the earth by My great power and by My outstretched **arm**, and I will give it to the one who is pleasing in My sight."

Ps. 8:3 When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy **fingers**, The moon and the stars, which Thou **hast ordained**...

Ps. 19:1 The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse **is declaring** the work of His **hands**.

TE proposes an indirect and undetectable work of God. R. J. Berry, a geneticist and theistic evolutionist, argues against creationism and for evolutionary mechanisms

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<sup>56</sup> For example this is the view of the Framework Hypothesis. See Lee Irons, "The Framework View" in *The Genesis Debate*, 230.

<sup>57</sup> All Scripture quotations here and following are from the NASB.

that deny God worked supernaturally. He has stated that creationism argues “from a restricted interpretation of the Bible” and, thus, has “the effect of prescribing that God acted in an interventionist fashion.”<sup>58</sup> Berry obviously prefers a non-literal approach. John Stek, another theistic evolutionist, adds “...we must methodologically exclude all notions of immediate divine causality.”<sup>59</sup> This is the very opposite of what the biblical text emphasizes.

Thirdly, God’s creative action is emphasized and described by several Hebrew terms. One of these is *bara*, possibly referring to creation ex nihilo (1:1, 21, 27; 2:4), but this meaning is debated. However, it is certain that *bara* is used exclusively in Scripture with God as the subject with the meanings “to shape”, “fashion”, and “create”.<sup>60</sup> The other terms for creation are used possibly as synonyms of *bara* but have their own nuances. *Asah* is another term used in the narrative, possibly as a synonym in 1:26 and perhaps 2:18. It is a general term used in the sense of “to do” or “to make”,<sup>61</sup> but can be used in a manufacturing context, such as 1:7, 16, 25, and 26. Two other terms occur in chapter 2. A potter’s term, *yatzar*, meaning “to form” or “fashion”,<sup>62</sup> is used for the creation of man in 2:7-8. An artistic and architectural term, *banah*, meaning “to build”,<sup>63</sup> is used for the creation of woman in 2:22. The use of these various terms is not simply for stylistic variation but to stress the creativeness and multifaceted work of God.

## 2. The Immediacy of Fulfillment

Evolutionary theory stipulates progress over billions of year by gradual, tiny increments. Progressive creationists propose that creation is an ongoing step-by-step process, though this is not supported by the biblical narrative. Instead, there is immediacy of fulfillment and completion of the creative work in six days and a cessation of creation on a seventh day of rest.

The concept of immediacy is clearly taught with the phrase “...and it was so” following the divine fiat. God speaks and, with no hesitation, there is creative fulfillment. The phrase does not occur once, but is emphasized by its repeated use seven times in 1:3, 7, 9, 11, 15, 24, and 30. No delays or long periods of time are ever suggested.

Also, the indication of completion is suggested by the divine evaluation of that work. After the fiat, the immediacy of fulfillment is demonstrated by the phrase “... it was good.” This evaluation is not stated once, but emphasized by repeated use in 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, and 25. When the six days of creation were completed, the final evaluation of the completed work is summarized by the statement “... it was very good” in 1:31. Progressive creation proponents do not offer a satisfactory explanation as to how this evaluation is fulfilled in their position.

Therefore, each day of creation ended with the chronological note of that particular day, suggesting completion. No continuity of evolutionary progress is shown.

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<sup>58</sup> R. J. Berry, “What to believe about Miracles,” *Nature*, July 24, 1986, 322.

<sup>59</sup> John H. Stek, “What Says the Scriptures,” in Howard J. van Till, Robert E. Snow, John H. Stek, Davis A. Young, *Portraits of Creation* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1990), 261.

<sup>60</sup> Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 135.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 793-795.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 427-428.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 124-125.

These textual details refute any theory which attempts to accommodate geological ages in the biblical text. There are no indications of any struggle for existence, disease, pollution, physical calamities, imbalance or lack of harmony, disorder, sin, or death.<sup>64</sup>

### 3. The Means of Creation

According to Darwinian evolution, the mechanism for evolutionary progress from simple to complex is mutations acting through natural selection. But the biblical text gives no indications of natural means used or evolution. There are no indications of natural processes, natural selection, or randomness. Instead, everything is created by a sovereign God acting directly by miraculous means. The physical conditions existing during the creation week were vastly different from conditions existing today. All attempts to understand those conditions scientifically must project present conditions back to that time (uniformitarianism), since no human was there to make the observations. We are dependent upon revelation to understand the original creation.

Instead, the creative method described in the text is God speaking his creation into being. God speaks and there is immediate creation. Each individual act of creation is instantaneously accomplished. There is a vital connection between God's word and his creation. Genesis 1 shows that language and communication are vital to creation. Communication and language are encoded with embedded information. One example of this is the DNA molecule, which contains a high degree of information analogous to a language. This language provides all the information for the functioning and building of every cell in every organism. This information argues for an intelligent designer and not random natural processes.

The biblical text emphasizes the method of creation--God spoke things into existence-- by repeating the phrase seven times "and God said ..." in 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, and 24. There are no passages in Scripture that even hint at long ages or natural means. All was created by the word of God. Both Old and New Testaments support God's creation through His Word:

Ps. 33:6 By the **word** of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the **breath** of His mouth all their host.

Ps. 33:9 For He **spoke**, and it was done; He **commanded**, and it stood fast.

Ps. 148:5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He **commanded** and they were created.

2Pet. 3:5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the **word** of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water,

Heb. 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the **word** of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

The idea is also suggested in that the Word was in the beginning and personified in Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14).

Rather than natural means, the text states that God created by His omnipotent power and great wisdom. This is overtly stated elsewhere in Scripture.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record – A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1987), 79.

Ps. 65:6 Who dost establish the mountains by His **strength**, Being girded with **might**;

Ps. 104:24 ¶ O Lord, how many are Thy works! In **wisdom** Thou hast made them all; The earth is full of Thy possessions.

Jer. 10:12 ¶ It is He who made the earth by His **power**, Who established the world by His **wisdom**; And by His **understanding** He has stretched out the heavens.

#### 4. The Definition of Days

Another issue of debate concerns the nature of the days in Genesis 1. Only those who interpret the text literally accept these days as literal solar days. Nearly every accommodating view interprets them as non-literal days, long indefinite ages, or geological ages. Because evolutionary theory is accepted in varying degrees by these views, the evolutionary time-frame is imposed on the text. This seems to be the primary reason for a non-literal approach.

While it is true that the term, *yom*, can be used in other than a literal sense, the question is whether it is used this way at the end of each record for each day. The term for “day” has a general indefinite meaning, as used by Moses as in Ps. 90:10. Even within the Gen. 1:1-2:3 context, the term is used to refer to the entire six-day period in 2:4. In 1:5, 14, 16, and 18 it is used to refer to the daylight portion of the day. So while the term can be used for time periods other than a literal solar day, yet that does not mean it is non-literal when used at the end of each description of the day, i.e., “one day”, “second day”, etc. The question is whether Moses intended to describe each creation day as a natural 24-hour time span or some long extended period of time or age.

The exegetical evidence supports a literal view of the days in Gen. 1. First, the term is used over 2,000 times with about 95% of the uses being in the literal solar day sense. Basic hermeneutics teaches us to accept a word’s primary usage unless the context demands otherwise. Nothing in the context suggests that we deviate from the literal sense for the creation days. But there are other details that support the literalness. Context is the best determiner of meaning, and the context of the creation narrative indicates a normal, literal meaning.

Second, Gen. 1:14 makes a distinction between days, years, and seasons. In this passage seasons are literal seasons, years are literal years, and days are literal days. There is no basis to interpret the word “days” used in these passages differently.

Third, the term appears to be specifically defined in its first use in 1:5. A hermeneutical principle, the principle of first use, suggests that the author was careful to define such an important word early in the text. In 1:5 the day is specified as consisting of a daylight portion and a night portion with an evening and morning.

Fourth, when the term is used elsewhere with numerical qualifiers, it is always a literal solar day.<sup>65</sup> At the end of each record of each day in the creation text, a numeral is included, i.e., “one day”, “second day”, etc.

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<sup>65</sup> Also see Jer. 51:15, 27:5.

<sup>66</sup> Allen P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing – A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 1996), 109.

Fifth, qualifying phrases in the text confirm that the days are literal. The phrase, “there was evening and there was morning ...” occurs on each of the six days. The recurrence of the phrase emphasizes the continuity of the days. Also, the terms “day” and “night” explain the nature of the days under discussion in 1:5, 14-18.

Sixth, if Moses intended to refer to long ages or an indefinite time period, he could have used other terms instead of the word “day”. Hugh Ross, who attempts to interpret the days of Genesis as long ages, is wrong in stating that “In biblical Hebrew (as opposed to post-Mosaic and post-Davidic Hebrew), no other word besides *yom* carries the meaning of a long period of time.”<sup>67</sup> Moses used *olam*, meaning “long duration”, “antiquity”, and “futuraity”<sup>68</sup> in Gen. 3:22. He used *arak*, meaning “long” and almost always used of time<sup>69</sup>, in Gen. 26:8, Deuteronomy 5:33, 22:7, and Exodus 20:12. The absence of these terms in Gen. 1 makes it clear that Moses had solar days in mind.

Seventh, Scriptural evidence other than Gen. 1, both Old and New Testament, supports the literalness of the days, for example, Genesis 5:1-2 and parallel phrases in the flood narratives. Another example is Exodus 20:11, in which the basis of the fourth commandment is the fact that creation took six days and on the seventh day God rested. This passage is part of the Ten Commandments authored by God and inscribed in stone. To re-interpret the days in Gen.1 as ages undermines Moses’ point in Ex. 20. This command is reiterated in Exodus 31:12-18, emphasizing again seven literal days. God could have sovereignly created all things instantaneously had He chosen to do so. He didn’t need to rest on the seventh day because he is omnipotent and immutable. However, he condescended and chose to create over a six-day period and used this as a pattern for the work and rest cycle for human benefit.

Additional evidence could be supplied for the literalness of the creation days. The evidence I have given provides the primary exegetical details closely related to Gen. 1. Moses could hardly have been clearer when he used *yom* for day. I conclude that Moses clearly intended to describe the creation week as consisting of literal solar days. This is acknowledged by scholars, including Hebrew scholar, James Barr, who is neither a conservative nor a young earth creationist:

Probably, so far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or OT at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Gen. 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that (a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience (b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story (c) Noah’s flood was understood to be world-wide and extinguish all human and animal life except for those in the ark. Or, to put it negatively, the apologetic arguments which suppose the “days” of creation to be long eras of time, the figures of years not to be chronological, and the flood to be a merely local Mesopotamian flood, are not taken seriously by any such professors, as far as I know.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Hugh Ross, *The Genesis Question*, 65.

<sup>68</sup> B. D. B., 761.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>70</sup> Cited by John Morris in *The Young Earth* (Colorado Springs, CO.: Creation-Life Publishers, 1994), 31, from a letter to David Watson from Barr, 1984.



Barr is not saying that these Hebrew scholars are young earth or global flood advocates nor that they necessarily agree with the authorial intent of Gen. 1-11.

It appears that the driving force behind all non-literal views of the days in Gen. 1 is a desire to harmonize with the current theories of science. As I have attempted to show, there is sufficient scientific evidence that actually supports a young earth, which in turn would support a literal interpretation of the days in Gen. 1. The literal day view has been the historical position of the church throughout church history.<sup>71</sup> A desire to find deep time in the Genesis record first appeared after the so-called “discovery” of long ages in geology, astrophysics, and evolutionary theory in recent history.

## 5. The Sequence of Events

When a literal sequence of events in Gen. 1 is compared to an evolutionary sequence, theistic evolution and other accommodating views that accept evolution are untenable. A careful evaluation of these inconsistencies will show the huge differences between the two opposing worldviews. The differences simply cannot be harmonized. Other views not based entirely on evolution, such as the framework view, still accept the evolution time frame. Therefore they must take a non-sequential and non-literal approach.

One example of the most glaring inconsistency includes the creation work of the fourth day. The sun, moon, and stars were created after the creation of the earth and vegetation. This is totally in conflict with any naturalistic scientific theory of origins. Progressive creationists and proponents of the framework hypothesis explain the inconsistency by proposing that the sun, moon, and stars were created earlier but only became visible on day four. The text does not use terms with a meaning suggesting “appearance” as Ross proposes, but instead uses the same creative words used elsewhere.<sup>72</sup> The creation word “made” (asah) is used in 1:6, then the word “placed” is used in 1:17. Moses does use the word for “appear” in 1:9 but not in 1:14-17. Day four is not a recapitulation of the creative work done on day one, as Irons proposes.<sup>73</sup> These interpretations are more clear examples of eisegesis by reading current theory into the biblical text.

The following is a summary of the major sequential inconsistencies:

Day 1	1:3-5	creation of light before the sun, moon, stars, or galaxies
Day 2	1:6-8	creation of the universe with no hint of the big bang

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<sup>71</sup> There are 3 chapters (1-3) that provide documentation for the literal interpretation of the days of Genesis in church history in *Coming to Grips with Genesis – Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*, ed. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury (Green Forrest, AR.: Master Books, 2008), 23-104. See also J. Ligon Duncan & David W. Hall in *The Genesis Debate: three views on the days of creation*, 47-52, 99-106.

<sup>72</sup> Hugh Ross, *The Genesis Question*, 41-43.

<sup>73</sup> Lee Irons, “The Framework View” in *The Genesis Debate: three views on the days of creation*, 228-230.

Day 3	1:9-10 1:11	creation of earth before stars and galaxies creation of vegetation first on earth and not in oceans creation of complex forms, such as fruit trees, before animal life
Day 4	1:16	creation of sun, moon, and stars after the earth and vegetation
Day 5	1:20 1:21	both aquatic and flying creatures made simultaneously creation of birds before reptiles creation of mammals and reptiles on same day creation of plants, marine creatures, and birds simultaneously
Day 6	1:24 1:26-27	creation of mammals not amphibians then reptiles, birds then mammals creation of man without any prior hominids

## 6. The Fixed Nature of Kinds

A major conflict between creation science and evolutionary theory is the relationship between all life forms. According to evolution theory, there is a continuity between all life forms, from single cell plant and animal life to the most complex forms, including humans. But the Gen. 1 text radically opposes this theory. There has never been a documented case of the observation of one species of either plants or animals evolving into a new species. There clearly is variation, some times called microevolution, within the kinds but no macroevolution. Recent discoveries in microbiology support the biblical description, making this issue a major problem for evolution theory.

Gen. 1 describes a discontinuity between the created life forms. Plants (1:11-12) and animals (1:21, 24-25) are created after their “kinds” and distinct from one another. The Hebrew term for “kinds” is *min*, which occurs 10 times in Gen. 1 and 33 times in the Old Testament. Distinct categories are emphasized by repetition of the term and in related phrases in 1:12 and 29. In every case, usage in the OT refers to distinct categories of plants or animals. For an example outside Gen. 1, the animals in the flood narratives entered the ark according to their “kinds.” Creationists recognize that the DNA genetic code provides the capability of great variation. For example, there is great variation within the dog kind with many dog varieties. But the category of the “kind” sets the boundary for variation. This concept is supported by the Apostle Paul in the New Testament:

1Cor. 15:39 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish.

The “kinds” of Gen.1 do not necessarily correspond to modern biological taxonomy categories, but clearly are a category above the level of species. This means there is a definite conflict between Gen. 1 and evolution theory.

In conclusion, other exegetical details could be supplied to show inconsistencies between the biblical text and evolutionary theory. The non-literal interpretations of those who accept accommodating views distort the biblical text. The exegesis of Gen. 1-11 using the GHC approach results in so many inconsistencies with naturalistic scientific theories of origins that harmonization is impossible. Sufficient scientific evidence exists to support the literal interpretation view.

## **7. The Universal Flood & Biblical Time Frame**

After doing a detailed exegesis of Gen. 6-9 using the GHC method of interpretation, I find no support for any of the accommodating views described in this paper relating to the Genesis Flood. Instead, Moses, the original author, intended to document a historical record of God's universal, global destruction of the earth and the salvation of only eight individuals. To present my exegesis is beyond the scope of this paper. A similar presentation as the six arguments above for Gen. 1, from the detailed exegesis could be generated for the Flood narratives as well. This would show that the original author intended to document a universal flood. There is sufficient scientific evidence, as noted above, to maintain the view of a global flood of unimaginable scale.

Similar arguments could be made from an exegesis of the chronological data of Gen. 1-50 for a relatively young earth/universe. There exists a very clear and consistent chronological system from the entire book where every major event and person can be dated provided that a tie-in date can be correlated to extra-biblical history. The chronological system comes from the dating provided for the births of all major persons either in the genealogies of Gen. 5 and 11 and other specific passages. Even the Flood narrative contain clear dating for all the major events, including the beginning, and ending of the Flood. Even if time gaps are permitted in the genealogies, there is nothing in the text to suggest a time frame in the billions of years. Instead the biblical time frame supports a young earth of approximately 6,000 years old, especially if the days of Gen.1 are taken as six literal days. There is sufficient scientific evidence to maintain this relatively young universe view.

## **The Theological Indefensibility**

As with all the above categories there is much that could be discussed here, but I will focus briefly on the primary theological issues that make the accommodating views indefensible. The four main theological issues include attacks on Theology Proper, Bibliology, Christology, and Anthropology.

First, any accommodating view tends to undermine the nature of God himself (Theology Proper). The introduction of evolutionism to the creation process undermines God's many attributes, such as omnipotence and sovereignty. The biblical descriptions of God's creative work set forth purely miraculous acts with no evidence of natural means and no random processes. God sovereignly works with omnipotent and wise action. God speaks the creation into being out of nothing. God creates, God speaks, God separates, God makes, God places, and God blesses. Evolution is a brutal process of the survival of the fittest involving billions of years of suffering and death. But Gen. 1 teaches that the original creation was "very good" reflecting a loving, good, and gracious God. He is shown to be holy and separate from sin and death. His creation was good, but was corrupted by human sin and death. Humans are

responsible for the corrupted condition present in creation today. R. J. Berry, a theistic evolutionist, saw such suffering as a divine institution when he said:

It was God himself who subjected the creation to futility [Rom. 8:20]. The processes we see in nature are God's processes, even if they are processes set up to deal with a fallen world rather than a perfect world. Natural selection [and its concomitants -- suffering, death, etc] is a divine institution, in just the same way as the State is a divine institution, or as it was the Father's will for his Son to suffer.<sup>74</sup>

Gen. 1 clearly presents a transcendent God who is separate and distinct from creation. Evolutionism is closer to the pagan idea of continuity of being, including God. But David Lane, in his critique of theistic evolution theology, correctly commented on mutations when he wrote:

Why should the omniscient God, who knows precisely what He wants, set in nature groping her way forward as if she were blind, to find the path of least resistance? Why should the omnipotent God choose such a wasteful and cruel method to 'create' life?<sup>75</sup>

Second, accommodating views raise questions about the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture (Bibliology). When attempts are made to accommodate the Scriptures to modern theories of science, the inevitable result is a stretching, distorting, and destroying of the meaning of the biblical text. The damage to the text is proportional to the extent of the accommodation. When scientific theories are given more authority than God's revelation, it results in a denial of the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. The result is weak exegesis or eisegesis and poor theology.

Third, accommodating views distort the doctrines about the finished work of Christ (Christology). The New Testament makes a clear link between the first man, called the first Adam, and Christ, called the second Adam (Rom. 5:12-14, 1Cor. 15:20-22, 45-49). The NT bases the doctrine of atonement on a literal, real, historical Adam. The NT never suggests anything but a literal interpretation of the creation narrative. When unintended non-literal elements are introduced to the text, we must ask where the non-literal approach ends? Is Adam historical? If not, then the relationship between Christ and Adam is destroyed and the doctrine of atonement is undermined. The doctrine of the resurrection is also affected because the relationship is extended to it in 1Cor. 15:12-23.

Fourth, accommodating views undermine the biblical teaching on the fall of man (Anthropology) and the nature of the original creation (natural theology). Many of the accommodating views make God the creator of a fallen world rather than the result of man's sin. They tend to make suffering, death, and sin a natural part of the original creation. At best they are very unclear on the origin of sin. Man appears in the creation after long ages of suffering and death. Gen. 1-3 is clear that the original creation was very good followed by the sin of man. Sin produced moral and spiritual effects on

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<sup>74</sup> R. J. Berry, *God and Evolution: Creation, Evolution and the Bible* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1988), 90.

<sup>75</sup> David H. Lane, "Theological Problems with Theistic Evolution," 166.

humans and all creation. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul explained that all sin resulted from the first parents (Rom. 5:12) and that the creation is under its effects, which is described as “the curse” (Rom. 8:18-22). The creation we see today is corrupted and very different from the original creation and intention of God. This has implications on the nature of man, sin and nature. Michael Johnson, a theistic evolutionist, writes that humans evolved after millions of years of development:

The physical development of human beings from pre-human stock, as well as their spiritual awakening (becoming aware of God and his commands) ...neither the first use of tools plus fire (H. Erectus) nor the earliest evidence of ceremonial burials (Neanderthal Man) necessarily indicate the presence of biblical man (made in God’s image) with his distinctive spiritual capacities.<sup>76</sup>

Johnson may be extreme, but other accommodating writers are forced into similar conclusions about the issue.

Other areas of theology are also undermined by a non-literal approach, such as soteriology and eschatology. But these are sufficient to show that most AAs are theologically indefensible.

## Conclusion

There are many accommodating approaches relating to the creation account of Gen. 1-2, to the flood of Gen. 6-9, and to the biblical time frame of Gen. 1, 5, and 11. These have been described briefly. Virtually all these approaches interpret Gen. 1-11 non-literally because they accept some elements of evolutionary theory with its deep time frame. I have attempted to demonstrate that if the GHC hermeneutic is used to interpret Gen. 1-11 there is no support for evolution, a local flood, or the deep time frame in the biblical text. A detailed exegesis of Gen. 1-11 using the GHC approach refutes any AAs. This exegesis results in the following conclusions showing the inadequacy of these AAs:

1. The Philosophical Intolerance - Accommodating approaches that accept any aspect of evolutionary theory are faulty because creation and evolution theory are totally antithetical.
2. The Hermeneutical Inadequacy - To support AAs a non-literal biblical hermeneutic along with the imposition of current scientific theory upon the biblical text must be applied. AAs also accept in some measure the common naturalistic scientific methodology in interpreting the scientific data. This is in contrast to interpreting the data from a biblical worldview.
3. The Scientific Insufficiency - Evolution theory along with its deep time frame is lacking in scientific evidence. In contrast, good science from a biblical worldview results in an understanding of nature that is consistent with a literal interpretation of Gen. 1-11.

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<sup>76</sup> Michael R. Johnson, *Genesis, Geology and Catastrophism: A Critique of Creationist Science and Biblical Literalism* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1988), 87.

4. The Biblical Inconsistency - There are too many inconsistencies in the biblical text to allow for evolution theory, creation in other than 6 literal days, a local flood, or the existence of a universe in the billions of years old.

5. The Theological Indefensibility - AAs introduce too many theological problems for them to be acceptable to the conservative evangelical theologian.

AAs to Genesis leads to the undermining of Scripture, which in turn produces a distortion of other doctrines, which in turn results in the apostasy of the church, which in turn confuses the Christian in the pew. Since Gen. 1-11 is the foundation of all Scripture, it is important that we have an accurate understanding of it. If our conclusions are wrong, then everything else will be distorted. It is best to maintain the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture and use sound grammatical-historical-contextual hermeneutical principles coupled with careful exegesis to interpret Gen. 1-11. The stakes are too high to do otherwise.

Gen.1-11 is not only foundational to all of the rest of Genesis but also to the rest of Scripture, all the way to the end of the Book of Revelation. Gen. 1-11 is also the source of foundational information for all of the sciences, for all historical studies, and in fact for all knowledge. In fact, all science as we understand it today was set in motion during the creation week and after the Genesis flood. All history has its beginning with the words "In the beginning God ...." All laws of physics have their origin in Gen. 1-2 and perhaps some laws modified after the fall of man in Gen. 3 and during the flood of Gen. 6-9. All principles related to biological systems, both plants and animals, have their origin in Gen. 1 and some modified after the fall of man. All principles related to geology have their origin in Gen. 1 and modified by the flood. All studies in anthropology begin with Gen. 1-2 and the corruption of the fall. All ethnicity studies, all studies of nations, all studies of languages, and all studies in sociology begin in Gen. 1-11. The list can be extended to every area of knowledge. If we get Gen. 1-11 wrong then we will have a distorted view of all Scripture and of all reality. Gen. 1-11 gives a framework to begin every area of knowledge. Therefore it is best to maintain a consistent hermeneutic in interpreting this crucial passage. May we glorify our Lord by giving His Word all the authority and care it deserves.

**--End--**