

Historical (Textual) Creationism

A literal and realistic reading of Genesis 1:1-2:3 according to the semantics, grammar, and syntax of Biblical Hebrew

"God created in order to make" (2.3)

Genesis 1:1

This is a statement of fact regarding the creation of the universe, and all that was in it. A large scope of the universe is in the mind of the author: God created everything – the sun, moon, stars, rivers, mountains, valleys, plants, animals, etc. The word chosen for 'beginning' (*reshith*) refers not to a beginning *point in time*, but a beginning *period or duration of indefinite time*. This is not a title or a summary.

Genesis 1:2

This is a look at the initial state of the 'land' before it was made into a place suitable for mankind to dwell. Unlike 1.1, in 1.2 the author has a narrow scope in view, a specific land (c.f. Gen 2; 15) instead of the universe. At this point in the narrative, this land was an uninhabitable and unproductive place (*tohu wabohu*) for mankind to dwell. The deep covered the land, and the darkness of night was over the face of the deep. The Spirit of God, however, was hovering over the waters, ready to do the work of making (Exod 31.1ff). *This view is not a gap or modified gap theory.*

Genesis 1:3-2:3

This describes the specific week (six 24-hr days) where God prepared the Land as a habitable place for mankind. It is important to note that to make (*asah*) is different than to create (*bara*). *Asa* means to make something aright or suitable. Here, the Land is made a suitable gift for mankind. When God saw what he made had benefit for man, it was 'good'. When God finished the work He 'created in order to make', it was 'very good'.

Day	Preparing Activity	God makes
One day	The sunlight of the first morning of the preparation week breaks over the horizon. "Let there be light" refers not to bringing light into existence, but is God's command for the sun to rise (c.f. Gen 44:3; Exo 10:23; Jdg 19:26; Neh 8:3). It was good for the sun to rise over the waters: the land was becoming a habitable place for man. Both Day and Night will be important for mankind. Also, the special work of God will end as it had begun (Isa 8:22-9:2; Mt 4:13ff).	The sun rise over the land
A second day	The word Sky (heavens) refers to the open space above the land, containing the clouds, sun, moon, and stars. It is also the place where the birds fly. The purpose of this Sky was to separate the waters from the waters (1.6). This is a natural view of the world, of someone whose feet are planted firmly on the ground. The 'waters above the sky' refer to the clouds, where the rain comes from (c.f. Deut 33:26; Isa 45:8; Jer 51:9; Psa 33:6; 104:3; Prov 8:28).	Sky
A third day	There are two acts of God on this day: 1) The preparation of the Land and Sea, and 2) Furnishing the Land with 'fruit trees' and 'seed-bearing plants'. These specific trees connect the Land (Gen 1) with Eden (Gen 2), where they are 'good for food' (for man). This Land is the land from 1:2, and the rivers from 2:10-14 seem to correspond with the Seas. Other forms of vegetation are mentioned in 1:30, but only those significant for man are prepared on day three.	Land and Sea
A fourth day	Since God has already created the sun, moon, and stars in 1:1, something else is going on here, even though English translations do not make that clear. A better translation of v14-17 reads, "And God said, 'Let the lights in the expanse be for dividing between day and night and for signs, seasons, days and years, and let them be for light sources in the expanse of the sky to provide light for the land.' And it was so. Thus, God made the two big lights (the larger to rule the day and the lesser to rule the night) and the stars and he put them in the expanse of the sky to give light to the land." This is a careful translation of the original Hebrew. Such a reading explains <i>why</i> the lights exist, not <i>when</i> they were created. Here, Moses is explaining how God made these lights to not only give light over the land, but to be signs for the seasons, days, and years. Both of these purposes will be important for mankind.	The lights for lighting and for signs
A fifth day	On this day, the waters ('Sea' from earlier) and the Sky are filled with living creatures, and they are blessed. Even though the preterite of <i>bara</i> ('create') is used, these animals are not created on day five. The statement in 1.21 serves to explain why God created them in 1:1. Several observations support this: 1) God could not command the creatures and birds to fill their domains if they did not already exist. 2) For the first time 'blessing' (<i>baraka</i>) appears; its alliteration with <i>bara</i> is noteworthy, as blessing only appears in the creation narrative when used in correlation with <i>bara</i> . 3) There is no ' <i>and it was so</i> ' on this day, suggesting that God did not make (<i>asa</i>) or create (<i>bara</i>) on this day, but at an earlier time (in the beginning). Thus, the fifth day called for filling the land with creatures created in 1:1. Also, God may have only created animals <i>in the land</i> on this day, as it seems he did elsewhere (c.f. Exo 8:3-6).	Sea creatures fill the Sea and flying creatures fill the Sky
A sixth day	On this day, God does two main things: 1) He makes the land creatures, and 2) He creates mankind. Unlike the vegetation in 1.11-12, in 2.24-25 God makes the land creatures. Mankind, however, is set apart from the previous acts of God, since Man was created on day six, not in 1:1 (man did not evolve, but is a special creation). Several observations support this. First, there is no more 'Let there be', but 'Let us make man.' Second, man and woman are created in God's image and likeness, not after their own kind like the animals (this will be developed more in Gen. 2). Third, they are created with gender, something not stressed earlier. And fourth, man is given dominion over all other creatures. Man is also blessed to fill the land with children. Only what God creates (<i>bara</i>) does he bless (<i>baraka</i>). The theme of blessing tied to land and offspring throughout the rest of the Pentateuch (c.f. Gen 12:1-3).	Land creatures fill the land, and mankind is created to rule the land, sky, and sea in God's image, as the crown of creation
A seventh day	God neither speaks nor works on the seventh day, though he blesses and sanctifies it. This stresses how God is at 'rest' (c.f. 2.15). Rest and blessing are tied together throughout the Pentateuch. There is no end to the seventh day in the narrative world. At the end of this narrative, there is no hint of the tragic future.	REST for God and for man