

**Because it Had Rained:
A Study of Genesis 2:5-7
With Implications for Genesis 2:4-25 and Genesis 1:1-2:3**

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Part 2 of 2

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Implications for the Reading of Gen 2:4-25

The narrative of Gen 2:4-25 flows at a steady pace, moved along by a sequence of waw-relative verbs. The “most obvious and frequent” use of the waw-relative is “that of simple chronological succession.”³⁰ “That is, when a *wayyiqtol* verb is used, the story usually takes an incremental step forward along a timeline.”³¹ So, the *prima facie* reading of Gen 2:4-5 is chronological. A clear exception to the apparently chronological sequencing of material is the information provided in vv10-14, pertaining to the river; this section is marked as non-sequential and circumstantial in the normal manner: by the use of the waw+subject+predicate construction (*w^enāhār yōšē*).³² External considerations (comparing Gen 2:4-25 with Gen 1:1-2:3) and internal considerations (the flow of the narrative in Gen 2:4-25), however, disallow a strictly chronological reading of Gen 2:4-25.

An external example of dischronology is found in Gen 2:19a, “Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them.”³³ The Hebrew verbs translated “formed” and “brought” are waw-relatives, resulting in the *prima facie* sequence of God's forming (*wayyîšer*) of Adam (v7a), followed by God's forming (*wayyîšer*) of the animals (v19a). A straight forward, reading of Gen 2:19, in other words, puts Gen 2:4-25 in conflict with a chronological reading of Gen 1:1-2:3, where the animals were formed before the man (Gen 1:24-27). One may resort to the use of the waw-relative for a past perfect in this case in order to harmonize the two texts,³⁴ but a waw-relative is not the *obvious* syntactic choice for dischronologized material, as Gen 2:10 has already shown. The point is that while the *prima facie* reading is chronological, a closer reading (aided by an external comparison with Gen 1:1-2:3) leads us to the conclusion that the *prima facie*, chronological reading is not correct. The author is guided at this point by concerns that are not chronological.³⁵ For, in keeping with the style of the text, had Moses been concerned about strict chronology and the chronological harmony of Gen 1:1-

2:3 with Gen 2:4-5, he could have syntactically signaled the dischronology of Gen 2:19 with the *waw*+subject+predicate construction, as in Gen 2:10, or with a relative clause containing a perfect verb for the past perfect, as in Gen 2:8 (*“šer yāš ar*, “whom he had formed”).

A key internal consideration confirms that strict chronology is not the organizational control for Gen 2:4-25. Having formed Adam (v7a), God proceeded to place Adam in the Garden (v8b),

⁷Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. ⁸And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.³⁶

But then in v15 we read,

Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.³⁷

Again, the verb translated “took” in v15 is a *waw*-relative, that, if taken to indicate chronological sequence, would result in Adam being placed in the garden in v8 and then being placed in the garden a second time in v15. I suppose one could argue that Adam was put in the garden in v8, was removed from the garden or that he left the garden without our being told, and was subsequently put back in the garden in v15, but such straining to maintain a chronological reading of the text is unwarranted, especially since there is an easier solution, one that is explicable within the conventions of Hebrew style.

Gen 2:4-25 provides an example of the Hebrew stylistic technique of synoptic/resumption-expansion.³⁸ A Hebrew author will at times tell the whole story in brief form (synopsis), then repeat the story (resumption), adding greater detail (expansion). Such is the case in Gen 2:4-25.

Genesis 1 is the prolog to the entire Book of Genesis,³⁹ and Gen 2:4 is the heading to Gen 2:4-4:26, the first of ten “toledot” sections that provide the structure for the Book of Genesis as a whole.⁴⁰ Gen 2:5-7 provides the setting for Gen 2:8-25 in particular. Gen 2:8 is a synopsis of the whole that is resumed and expanded in Gen 2:9-25.

The synopsis has a twofold nature, in keeping with the twofold nature of the introductory vv5-7. First, God planted a garden (v8a), then he placed in the garden the man whom he had formed (v8b). This synopsis with its focus on vegetation and

the man in the garden is clearly integrated with and flows from the preceding concern with the lack of vegetation and the lack of a man to cultivate the ground. In other words, the coherent picture that emerged in vv5-7 continues to manifest itself in the synopsis of v8. Gen 2:4-25 is not a second account of the creation of the heavens and the earth, but is an account that focuses on the planting of a garden and human life in that garden (vv9-25), as the introduction anticipates and the synopsis articulates.⁴¹

Verses 9-14 resume and expand v8a, the planting of the garden. Verses 15-25 resume and expand v8b, the putting of the man in the garden.

Verses 9-14 resume and expand v8a. In v9a the planting (*nt*) of the garden is detailed in terms of God causing to sprout (*šmh*) from the ground “every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food.” Pleasing to whose sight and good for whose food? The man's sight and his food, obviously. In addition God caused the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to sprout (v9b); both of these trees find their meaning in relation to the man as well. Not only does v9 pick up the first half of the twofold synopsis in v8a, but it also picks up the first half of the twofold problem in v5a: there was no vegetation. Verses 10-14 go on to describe the river that waters the garden and that then divides and flows through such places as Havilah, Cush, and Ashur: places where *people* live. The gold and precious stones are of value to the *people* who would live in these places and to those with whom they would trade. Gen 2:9-14 describes a *garden of vegetation* clearly designed for *human habitation*.

Verses 15-25 resume and expand v8b. Verse 15 repeats v8b with different vocabulary and adds the explicit purpose for placing the man in the garden: “to cultivate (*bd*) it.” Not only does v15 pick up the second half of the twofold synopsis in v8b, but it also picks up the second half of the twofold reason in v5b: “there was no man to cultivate (*bd*) the ground.” Verses 16-17 explicitly connect the man and the vegetation, as the two were implicitly connected in v9. The remainder of the text (vv18-25) provides the details of how God created a suitable helper for the man in the garden. By the end of Genesis 2 the man and the woman are living blissfully in the garden.

Summary

Gen 2:4-25 is a highly structured topical account with a twofold focus on *vegetation and humanity*. The twofold problem of no wild vegetation and no cultivated vegetation (v5), owing to the twofold reason of no rain and no cultivator (v6), provisionally solved in a twofold way by the sending of rain clouds and the forming of a man (v7), is roundly resolved in the twofold synopsis of God planting

a garden and putting the man in the garden to cultivate it (v8), and the twofold expansion with the same focus on *vegetation and humanity* (vv9-25).

Implications for the Reading of Gen 1:1-2:3

Gen 1:1-2 and 2:1-3 form a frame around the creation account. The initial sentences of the opening and closing sections with their repetition of “the heavens and the earth” form an *inclusio*.

Genesis 1 begins with the grand affirmation that in the beginning God created everything. Like Gen 2:5-7, Gen 1:2 provides the setting for the following material. Parallel to Gen 2:5 with its twofold problem, Gen 1:2 presents a twofold problem: 1) the earth was “unproductive and uninhabited”⁴² and 2) “darkness was over the surface of the deep.” Both of these problems are resolved in the following material, just as the twofold problem of Gen 2:5 was resolved in the text that follows it.

Gen 2:1 signals the end of the account by means of the repetition of “the heavens and the earth.” Gen 2:2-3 then brings us to the *telos* of the text, God’s sabbath rest.

Gen 1:3-31 tell the story of God's eight creative acts in six days.⁴³ Day 1 recounts the first creative act (“And God said, ‘Let there be light’”), Day 2 recounts the second (“And God said, ‘Let there be an expanse’”), then Day 3 recounts the third and fourth (“And God said, ‘Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear’” plus “And God said, ‘Let the land produce vegetation’”). Like Day 1, Day 4 recounts a single creative act, the fifth (“And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky’”); like Day 2, Day 5 recounts one, the sixth (“And God said, ‘Let the water teem with living creatures and let the birds fly above the earth’”); like Day 3, Day 6 recounts two, the seventh and the eighth (“And God said, ‘Let the land produce living creatures’” plus “And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image’”). This arrangement of 1+1+2 followed by 1+1+2 makes the parallel nature of Days 1 through 3 and Days 4 through 6 obvious.

The parallels go beyond that of the number of creative events and days, however. There are other obvious parallels between Days 1 through 3 and Days 4 through 6. The creating of light on Day 1 parallels the creating of the luminaries on Day 4. The creating of the waters below and the sky above on Day 2 parallels the creating of the fish and the birds on Day 5. The creating of dry land on Day 3a parallels the creating of land animals on Day 6a, and the creating of vegetation on Day 3b parallels the creating of mankind on Day 6b.

It may seem that the parallelism breaks down at the end, because vegetation and mankind may not seem like much of a parallel. But when one recalls the twofold focus on vegetation and humanity in Gen 2:4-25, the parallelism becomes evident. The parallelism between vegetation and people is not only evident in the text but is highly significant for the theology of the text (see below).

The first three days find their *telos* in the creation of *vegetation* on Day 3b, and the second three days find their *telos* in the creation of *humanity* on Day 6b. Thus Gen 1:1-2:3 has the same twofold focus as Gen 2:4-25, a focus on *vegetation and humanity*. Rather than being two disparate accounts from two disparate sources, Gen 1:1-2:3 and Gen 2:4-25 form a highly integrated literary unit. Rather than being a second creation account, Gen 2:4-25 is properly read as a resumption and expansion not of Day 6 but of Days 3b and 6b taken together as a unit.

Day 3b speaks of the creation of vegetation (*deše*) in two broad kinds: “seed-bearing plants” (*ēšeb mazrîa zera*) and “trees that bear fruit” (*ēš p^erî ôšeh p^erî*).⁴⁴ Day 6b specifics that people are permitted to eat from both kinds of vegetation: “seed-bearing plants” (*ēšeb zôrêa zera*) and “every tree that has fruit with seed in it” (*kol-hâ êš “šer-bô p^erî-hâ êš*). So Days 3b and 6b are bound together by linguistic repetition as well as by thematic conception. So too, the people of Day 6b are bound to the vegetation of Day 3b through the motif of food.⁴⁵

Gen 1:3-31 is topically arranged. Granted 1) the common focus in Genesis 1 and 2 on vegetation and humanity, 2) the general parallels between Days 1 through 3, 3) the specific parallels between Days 3b and Day 6b, 4) the fact that Gen 2:4-25 resumes and expands Days 3b and 6b taken together, and 5) the topical nature of Gen 2:4-25, we should not be surprised by the suggestion that the coherent reading of Gen 1:1-2:3 (that is, the reading that coheres internally as well as externally with Gen 2:4-25) is topical rather than chronological. Such a reading is confirmed by some further details from Days 1 and 4, as well as by the theology of Gen 1:1-2:25.

The parallelism between Days 1 and 4 goes beyond the general correspondence between the creation of light on Day 1 and the creation of the luminaries on Day 4. What did God *accomplish* on Day 1 by means of the creation of light? “God divided the light from the darkness” (*wayyabdêl ‘lôhîm bēn hâ ôr ûbēn hâhōšek*), and the result was “day” (*yôm*) and “night” (*laylâ*). So by the end of Day 1 God had successfully divided the light from the darkness and established the sequence of day and night. Now, what was God's *purpose* in creating the luminaries on Day 4? We are given a variety of purposes, e.g., they will serve as signs and will rule the day and the night. But what is the overarching purpose? The overarching purpose is indicated by the repetition of “to divide” (*l^ehabdîl*) in v14 and v18, a

repetition that forms an *inclusio* around Day 4. In v14 we are told that God created the luminaries “to divide the day from the night” (*lʿhabdîl bēn hayyôm ûbēn hallaylâ*). But God had already divided the day from the night on Day 1! In v18 we are told that God created the luminaries “to divide the light from the darkness” (*lʿhabdîl bēn hā ôr ûbēn haḥōšek*). But God had already divided the light from the darkness on Day 1! These linguistic parallels between Day 1 and Day 4 must not be overlooked. Either God's work on Day 4 is redundant, reaccomplishing the same thing he had already accomplished on Day 1, or the accounts of God's work on Days 1 and 4 are two different perspectives on the same creative work.

The forming and stationing of the sun, moon, and stars are attributed to day four. Their functions with respect to the earth are also stated here, first in the fiat section (Gen 1:14, 15) and again (in reverse order) in the fulfillment section (Gen 1:16-18). They are to give light on the earth and to rule by bounding light/day and darkness/night, as well as by demarcating the passage of years and succession of seasons. These effects which are said to result from the production and positioning of the luminaries on day four are the same effects that are already attributed to the creative activity of day one (Gen 1:3-5). There too daylight is produced on the earth and the cycle of light/day and darkness/night is established.⁴⁶

The repetition of language binds the work of the Days 1 and 4 together into a single activity.

In terms of chronology, day four thus brings us back to where we were in day one, and in fact takes us behind the effects described there to the astral apparatus that accounts for them. The literary sequence is then not the same as the temporal sequence.⁴⁷

But the account of Day 4 adds information to that given on Day 1: the luminaries are the sources of the light created on Day 1, and there are subordinate purposes for the creation of the luminaries as well. In other words, Days 1 and 4 are another application of the synopsis-resumption/expansion technique employed on a variety of levels in Genesis 1 and 2. There is a consistent style of narration employed in both texts: just as Gen 2:15 is not chronologically sequential to Gen 2:8b, but is a repetition with additional information regarding the placing of the man in the garden, so Day 4 is not chronologically sequential to Day 1, but is a repetition with additional information regarding the creation of light.⁴⁸

One might object that had Moses wished to represent Gen 1:14-31 as an overlay of Gen 1:3-13 he would have begun v14 with the expected *wʿ lōhîm âmar*

(waw+subject+predicate), and that the use of the waw-relative indicates that the events of Day 4 are temporally sequential to those of Days 1 through 3. But as we have already noted, the waw-relative (here *wayyō mer*) can be used for temporal overlay when either lexical repetition or knowledge of the real world signals such an overlay.⁴⁹ Here both criteria are met: lexical repetitions abound between Day 1 and Day 4, and light without luminaries is not part of the real world in which the original audience lived.⁵⁰

Summary

Gen 1:3-31 is a coherent account of creation that has been arranged topically to focus the reader's attention on *vegetation and humanity*. This focus sets the stage for the sequel, Gen 2:4-25, which resumes and expands upon this twofold focus in a variety of ways, one in particular being the role that rain plays in the production of the vegetation that people eat. These literary conclusions have significant implications for understanding one key aspect of the theology of the text.

Implications for the Theology of Genesis 1-2

The literary structure of Genesis 1 and 2 is significant for the theology of the text in a variety of ways. The primary reason for lifting the event of Day 4 to the main event-line (rather than marking it grammatically as a temporal overlay) and shaping the account after the pattern of a week is clearly the sabbatical theology of the text. The theology of the Sabbath is certainly central to the theology of Gen 1:1-2:3. In his self-published work, "Kingdom Prologue," Meredith G. Kline spells out the sabbatical theology of Gen 1:1-2:3 and its relation to the parallel arrangements of Days 1 through 3 and Days 4 through 6.⁵¹ He also articulates the sabbatical theology of Gen 1:1-2:3 in his recent article.⁵² Here I want to focus on a different but vitally important aspect of the text's theology by answering the question, "Why the concern with rain and the resultant vegetation that people eat?"

Who is the presumed original reader of Genesis 1-2? Assuming a late date of composition, many read Genesis 1 against the backdrop of Mesopotamian religion with a presumed post-exilic reader in view. Genesis 1 is consequently read as a theological polemic against Mesopotamian religion. What difference for the theology of the text would it make, if we presume the original reader to be a pre-exilic Israelite and the polemic to be against Canaanite religion?⁵³

The dominant religious threat for pre-exilic Israel was Baalism.⁵⁴ "The agrarian peoples of the ancient Middle East were acutely aware of the most basic equation: water = life."⁵⁵ So water played a major role in the theologies of ancient Near Eastern peoples. Canaan, however, was not like Egypt or Mesopotamia, where

agriculture was based on irrigation from rivers. Canaan was a land where agriculture was dependent on rain,⁵⁶

The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden. But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. (Deut 11:10-11)

Canaanite religion was consequently not concerned with river gods, as were the religions of Mesopotamia and Egypt.⁵⁷ The primary god of the Canaanites was Baal, “the rider on the clouds,” the storm god whose rain was considered absolutely necessary for the growth of crops and hence for life itself.⁵⁸

When the Hebrew tribes left the stable environment of Egypt and headed toward the land of Canaan, they encountered a people who worshipped the storm god called Baal and his retinue. Such an encounter created a culture conflict. Israel had been led by Yahweh through the sea and the desert, but as she entered the new land, Israel asked, “Was Yahweh also the god of Canaan?” As the Israelites settled in Canaan, they were tempted to ask their Canaanite neighbors, “How does your garden grow?” Such inquiry was seen by later writers as having led to eventual apostasy and exile as Israel became idolatrous and eventually drowned in Baalism.⁵⁹

This struggle against Baalism is part of the fabric of Genesis through Kings.⁶⁰ The contest on Mt. Carmel brought this struggle into sharp relief. The alternatives were clear: “If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him” (1 Kgs 18:21). The means of determination was clear: “The god who answers by fire—he is God” (1 Kgs 18:24). When Baal failed to answer by fire and the Lord sent fire from heaven, the conclusion was clear: “The LORD—he is God! The LORD—he is God!” (1 Kgs 18:39).

But this contest was not about which deity controlled fire. The issue at hand was, “Who controls the rain?” The struggle began with Elijah’s words,

As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word. (1 Kgs 17:1)

And the struggle ended when the Lord God of Israel sent rain,

The sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain came on.... (1 Kgs 18:45)

The polemic against Baalism is at the heart of OT covenant theology. Having quoted Deut 11:10-11 above, let me now quote those verses again in the context of a few of the verses that follow:

The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden. But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. It is a land the LORD your God cares for; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end. So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the LORD your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul—*then I will send rain* on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, *so that you may gather in your grain*, new wine and oil. I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied. Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. Then the LORD's anger will burn against you, and he will shut the heavens *so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce*, and you will soon perish from the good land the LORD is giving you. (Deut 11:10-17; emphasis added)

The land of Canaan was not a land that just “naturally” drank in rain from the sky. It was a land that drank in rain from heaven because YHWH, Israel's God, cared for the land. Covenant loyalty to YHWH would result in rain, vegetation, and life. Worshiping other gods would result in no rain, no produce, and death. Now, what god in particular would Israel have been tempted to turn to with a view to procuring rain and the resultant vegetation? Baal, of course.

Reading the OT, it becomes clear that it was the Baal cult that provided the greatest and most enduring threat to the development of exclusive Yahweh worship within ancient Israel. The fact that the Israelites were settled among the Canaanites, for whom the worship of Baal was so important, and that Palestine is a land utterly dependent for its fertility upon the rain, accounts for the tempting nature of this cult as well as the strength of the OT polemic against it.⁶¹

The ubiquitous threat of Baalism provides the theological context in which Genesis 1-2 is to be read.

Genesis 1-2 proclaims that YHWH, the God of Israel, is the Lord of the rain, the resultant vegetation, and life. This central aspect of the message of Genesis 1-2 is embedded in the structure of the accounts. Why the twofold focus on vegetation and the people that live on that vegetation? Why even bring into consideration the lack of vegetation owing to a lack of rain? Is this simply geographical decoration?

No, for the Book of Genesis serves as the prolog to the history of Israel.⁶² Genesis makes the point that the God of the nation of Israel is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 12-50), and that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the Creator of the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1-11). The God of Israel is the Creator. From the beginning the God of Israel, not Baal, has been the provider of the rain that is the prerequisite of life. *YHWH God of Israel has been the Lord of the rain from the beginning!* Redemptive theology, as exemplified in texts like Deut 11:10-17 and 1 Kings 17-18, is rooted in the creation theology of Genesis 1-2. Redemption is rooted in creation. YHWH God of Israel claims to be the true and living God, the God whom Israel must serve to the exclusion of all rival deities, Baal in particular. This claim is most deeply rooted in the fact YHWH God of Israel created all things by his powerful word (Ps 33:6), including the sending of the very first rains in the beginning, and has ever since sustained all things by his powerful word (Heb 1:3), including the sending of all rains subsequent to the beginning.

Conclusion

One central aspect of the kerygmatic message of Genesis 1-2 is now clear: Not Baal but “*The LORD—he is God! The LORD—he is God!*” This is true simply *because it had rained.*⁶³

³⁰S.R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew: And Some Other Syntactical Questions* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1881) 80. See also Waltke and O'Connor, *Syntax*, 33.2.1a.

³¹Randall Buth, “Methodological Collision Between Source Criticism and Discourse Analysis: The Problem of ‘Unmarked Temporal Overlay’ and the Pluperfect/Nonsequential *wayyiqtol*,” *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics* (ed. Robert D. Bergen; Dallas, TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994) 138.

³²See Buth, “Collision,” 140, and Niccacci, *Syntax*, 35-41. See also C. John Collins, “The Wayyiqtol As ‘Pluperfect’: When and Why,” *TB* 46 (1995) 118.

Sequence would have been expressed by the waw-relative, *wayyēšē*; see Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar*, §159d-e.

³³*NASB*. The same sense is found in the *KJV*, *NKJV*, *1901 ASV*, *RSV*, and *NRSV*.

³⁴See Collins, "Wayyiqtol," 135-40, for a discussion of the issue in general and his application to Gen 2:19 in particular. The waw-relative can be used for the pluperfect in a limited set of environments: when there is lexical repetition or when knowledge of the real world leads to the conclusion that an explanation of a previous event or situation is being provided; see Buth, "Collision," 147. Buth, "Collision," 148-49, argues that Gen 2:19 does not meet the criteria for temporal overlay. See also Waltke and O'Connor, *Syntax*, 33.2.3 for a general discussion.

³⁵Using the waw-relative for the pluperfect in stead of the usual constructions (waw+subject+predicate or the perfect in a relative clause) serves to elevate the material to a main-line situation in the narrative, rather than demoting the material to a subordinate level; see Buth, "Collision," 148. An author may use the unexpected waw-relative form for a variety of reasons. Collins, "Wayyiqtol," 139, argues that the communicative effect in Gen 2:19 is to emphasize the anthropocentric nature of the story. A better explanation seems to be that introducing the forming of the animals at this point creates dramatic tension by raising the question, "Will a suitable helper for the man be found among the animals?" The answer is, "But for the man, no suitable helper was found!" (v20b). Then, after this dramatic delay, the suitable is helper is made, and the man exclaims, "zō t (This one [as opposed to the previous animals])! *happa am* (This time [as opposed to the previous parade])!" (v23).

³⁶*NASB*. The same sense is found in the *KJV*, *NKJV*, *1901 ASV*, *RSV*, and *NRSV*.

³⁷*NASB*. The same sense is found in the *KJV*, *NKJV*, *1901 ASV*, *RSV*, and *NRSV*.

³⁸Herbert Chanan Brichto, *Toward a Grammar of Biblical Poetics: Tales of the Prophets* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1992) 13-19.

³⁹Ian Hart, "Genesis 1:1-2:3 As a Prologue to the Book of Genesis," *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (1995) 315-36, and Kline, "Space," 11.

⁴⁰See Meredith G. Kline, "Genesis," *The New Bible Commentary* (ed. D. Guthrie and J. A. Motyer; 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970) 83, and Sarna, *Genesis*, 16-17.

⁴¹I understand Gen 2:5 as having a global reference that would parallel the situation prior to Days 3b and 6b, i.e., before God created vegetation (Day 3b) and people (Day 6b); see below.

⁴²Bruce K. Waltke, "The First Seven Days: What Is the Creation Account Trying to Tell Us?," *CT* (August 12, 1988) 43 and Cassuto, *Genesis*, 22, argue against over interpreting this phrase as having two distinct referents. But Tsumura,

Earth, 17-43, has made a compelling case for understanding the phrase to refer to the *earth* as *unproductive* and *uninhabited*; note that at the end of Day 3 the earth is productive (“The *earth* produced vegetation;” 1:12), and at the end of Day 6 the earth is inhabited (“And God said, ‘Let the *earth* produce living creatures;” 1:24), and thus the problem of the earth being “unproductive and uninhabited” has been resolved in a symmetrical way. The topic of another paper would be to trace this protology of “unproductive and uninhabited” through the typology of Israel as the new people in the new fertile land to the eschatology of the new creation inhabited by a people no one can number.

⁴³For a schematic presentation of this well known point see Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning: the Opening Chapters of Genesis* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1984) 54-55.

⁴⁴Whereas Gen 1:11-13 divides all vegetation into two general groups (non-trees and trees), Gen 2:5 divides all vegetation into two other groups (uncultivated and cultivated); both divisions are based on ordinary observation. It is clear by this point, moreover, that Gen 2:5 interfaces with Gen 1:1-2:3 at the end of Day 3a (when there was *ereš* but no vegetation) and the end of Day 6a (when there was no man); see David Toshio Tsumura, “Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern Stories of Creation and Flood: An Introduction,” *I Studied Inscriptions From Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Gen 1-11* (ed. Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994) 28-29, who situates Gen 2:5 at Gen 1:9-10, when the waters were cleared from the land but there was not yet any vegetation, but does not see the connection with Day 6b.

⁴⁵The man and the woman being permitted to eat from the trees in Genesis 1 is an obvious setting of the stage for Gen 2:16-17, where prohibition regarding eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is added to permission regarding eating from other trees; see Kline, “Space,” 11.

⁴⁶Kline, “Space,” 7-8.

⁴⁷Kline, “Space,” 8.

⁴⁸A rarely discussed but important text that bears on the question of a chronological reading of Genesis 1 is Job 38:4-7,

⁴Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?
Tell me, if you understand.

⁵Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!
Who stretched a measuring line across it?

⁶On what were its footings set,
or who laid its cornerstone—

⁷while the morning stars sang together
and all the angels shouted for joy?

This text assumes the creation of the stars before the founding of the earth and before the separation of the seas and dry land; see Ps 104:5-9 for this same architectural picture of the founding of the earth and the separation of the seas and dry land. Job 38-39 should give us all pause, if we think we fully comprehend God's ways at the time of creation.

⁴⁹Buth, "Collision," 147.

⁵⁰The objection that supernatural light (e.g., the light of God's glory as in Rev 21:5) is in view in Days 1 through 3 has been adequately countered by Kline's argument that such an interpretation "distorts the eschatological design of creation history, according to which the advent of God's Glory as the source of illumination that does away with need for the sun awaits the Consummation" ("Space," 9); see footnote 30 where Kline points out that in the consummation there will be light from the Glory and not from the sun, but that this is also joined with the absence of night, a situation that clearly does not pertain to Days 1 through 3, thus undermining the attempt to use Rev 22:5 to explain the light without luminaries of Days 1 through 3.

⁵¹Meredith G. Kline, "Kingdom Prologue," 26-32; see also Hart, "Prologue," 315-6, 324-30.

⁵²Kline, "Space," 10-11.

⁵³I am not the first to suggest a Canaanite background for Genesis 1-2. In *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), John Day read Genesis 1 as a demythologized Canaanite *Chaoskampf*: "In so far as *tehom*'s mythological background is concerned this is not Babylonian at all, but rather Canaanite..." (p50) and "The wind of Gen 1:2 derives ultimately from the wind of Baal employed against the sea monster" (p53). In "The Canaanite Background of Gen I-III," *VT* 10 (1960), F.F. Hvidberg said, "At the back of the narrative is the prophet's struggle against baal. It is against him the story fights" (p286) and "My aim has been to call attention to what they [Gen 1 and 2] have in common: a glimpse of the life-and-death struggle with Baal of the Canaanites for the soul of Israel" (p294). In "Interpreting the Creation and Fall Story in Gen 2-3," *ZAW* 93 (1981), N. Wyatt said, "We may then accept F.F. Hvidberg's general theory that the story is intended as a polemic against Canaanite religion, with the proviso that it is the cult of El and Asherah and not that of ba'al which is attacked" (p19).

⁵⁴John Day, "Baal," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ed. David Noel Freedman; 6 vols.; New York: Double Day, 1992) 1.547.

⁵⁵Fred E. Woods, *Water and Storm Polemics Against Baalism in the Deuteronomistic History* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994) 1.

⁵⁶Yehuda Karmon, *Israel: A Regional Geography* (London: John Wiley & Sons, 1971) 27, says of Israel, "Rainfall is the decisive climatic factor in the physical existence of population and for plant life and agriculture."

⁵⁷Woods, *Water*, 1, suggests that the unpredictable nature of the Tigris and Euphrates over against the predictability of the Nile helps to explain some of the fundamental differences between Mesopotamian and Egyptian religion.

⁵⁸Day, "Baal," 1.545, says that Baal "is clearly the most active and prominent of all the Canaanite deities...the great storm god: the fertility of the land depends on the rain this god supplies...."

⁵⁹Woods, *Water*, 2.

⁶⁰Of his own book Woods, *Water*, 17, says, "this study will demonstrate that the Deuteronomic History supplied the Israelites with polemical literary material, especially dealing with water and storm, in order to fight Baalism rather than to conform to it."

⁶¹Day, "Baal," 1.547.

⁶²Youngblood, *Genesis*, 10-11.

⁶³With this article I wish as a student and colleague to express my appreciation to Dr. Kline for the scholarly service he has rendered and continues to render to the Church.