

# **An exegetical reflection on creation time**

by

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

In my experience as a scholar of theology and science, both share in the search for truth and understanding. However, a major difference between them is that science by definition should be empirically testable whereas theology deals with issues accepted by faith.

Science follows a very specific path in order to generate an acceptable theory. Giancoli (1998:2-3) explained that the standard scientific method in the field of physics should always begin with observation. From your observations, you create a hypothesis, which must be substantiated in as many different settings and environments as possible. Conclusions from the tests will lead to either one of two outcomes. Firstly, if the tests continuously confirm the hypothesis it will become an accepted theory, or secondly the tests will disprove the hypothesis in which case one has to create a new hypothesis. Brady and Holum (1996:3-4) agreed that this standard scientific method is also true in the field of chemistry, as did Mader (1998:11-14) for the field of biology. We can therefore conclude that this standard scientific method would also be applicable to all other scientific fields (McDowell & Williams 2006:100).

Demarcated areas within the study field of theology can also follow the above-mentioned standard scientific method; however, there are aspects which cannot be tested and therefore have to be taken by faith. For example, “By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible” (Heb 11:3 NIV). Atkinson (1990:17) agreed that science in itself will never be able to fully explain everything concerning creation. In a similar fashion, science also therefore has to make certain leaps of faith to support its theories. Sarfati (2005:15) commented, “Creationists often appeal to the facts of science to support their view, and Evolutionists often appeal to philosophical assumptions from outside science”. Because theology and science are driven to gain understanding, both attempt to provide answers to life’s most basic questions; “Who

am I?"; "Where do I come from?"; "What is my purpose?"; "Where am I going?" and "What should I value?" (Sala 2008:23). The second of these five questions, which deals with the concept of origin, will set the undertone throughout this dissertation (Lucas 2003:130).

Generally speaking scholars in the natural and biological scientific fields, like Gould (2002), Dawkins (1996 [1986]) and Darwin (1859), approach this question of origin primarily through a theory called Evolution. At the opposite end<sup>1</sup> we frequently find scholars of theology, like Batten (2006), Aston (2001) and Hamilton (2000), who approach this question through a theory called Creationism. In their general form, these two approaches stand in total opposition to one another. The theory of Evolution would state that nothing, through chance and time, brought forth the universe and everything in it. On the other hand, the theory of Creationism states that a supernatural Creator, created the whole universe and everything in it. Within both of these two approaches, one does find numerous sub theories and hypotheses; however apart from these, one does not find any other theory of origin that has any significant level of credibility (McDowell & Williams 2006:101-103).

A common belief held by many, especially within a group of the Christian community prior to the nineteenth century, was that the earth and the entire universe were relatively young (McDowell & Williams 2006:96). Bishop James Ussher was one of the first people to make a calculation of the creation's age, which he did in the seventeenth century (Walton 2001:48-49). His estimates predicted creation to be around 4004 BC, the flood during Noah's life around 2349 BC and the arrival of Abraham in Canaan around 2126 BC. Other dates have also been suggested, but most would fall fairly close to Ussher's initial dates. This view was greatly changed between the 1830's and the 1860's however, when a lawyer from Scotland, Charles Lyell (1830), published his book, *Principles of Geology* in 1830. In the book he describes what is now commonly called 'The Geological Column'; a chart in which he ordered different layers of rock and soil as he supposed they were to have aged over millions of years. The dilemma is that he had to give arbitrary dates to these

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<sup>1</sup> For neither the natural and biological sciences, nor theological approach is this an absolute. One does find numerous scholars who do not adhere to this generalization.

rock layers as it was only years later that the first radiometric dating tests were available. His book had a most unexpected impact on society in that people could now for the first time ‘see evidence’ that the earth might not be as young as previously thought.

One person to be influenced by the book was Charles Darwin (1859), a theology graduate<sup>2</sup> who turned agnostic after reading it (Darwin 1887:304). Today, Darwin is seen as the father of the theory of Evolution based on his works, *On the Origins of Species* first published in 1859 (Sala 2008:177). Following its publication an increasing number of people, alongside some of the more influential thinkers of their time like Thomas Huxley and George Bernard Shaw (McDowell & Williams 2006:109), suddenly began questioning the commonly held belief of a relatively young Earth. People who supported this view were seen as daring and independent thinkers. Zacharias’ reflection:

“While technology was blazing the trail for humanity with tools for the future, Charles Darwin was unveiling humanity’s primordial past. Science, in fact, was elbowing its way onto becoming the sole interpreter of the past and the sufficient hope for the future. As confidence in humanity’s creative capacity was increasing, confidence in God’s creative power was diminishing.”

Zacharias (1996:32)

Some of the first fields this new possibility of a much older creation influenced were that of cosmology and astrophysics. Today the idea that the universe has a finite existence is generally accepted in most spheres of society, but this was not always the case. Ancient Greeks believed that the universe was eternal and their view dominated most of Western thought even up to the twentieth century. Not only the Greeks, but many other ancient cultures also believed in an eternal universe as it was connected to a commonly held view of a transcended creator. Their point of view was that the creator also had to exist somewhere within the vastness of the universe, therefore neither could be placed before the other. They reasoned that both were therefore

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<sup>2</sup> Notably Darwin studied under William Paley who was a strong advocate that all species had stayed the same since creation (Bowden 2005:448).

eternal. Even when Christianity, which clearly propagates a finite universe, became the basis of Western thought from the third century AD, the general view on the existence of the universe was never openly challenged. Ashton & Westacott (2006:32) remarked that even Newton apparently thought that the universe was eternal, though the earth was of a finite existence.

One of the first significant arguments in favour of a finite universe was the ‘*Kalam*<sup>3</sup> cosmological argument’. Today it is still seen as one of the most notable cosmological arguments, which also gave rise to the ‘first cause’ argument. It was first proposed by Christian theologians, though adapted and refined by both Islamic and Jewish theologians, as counter argument for the dominant classical Greek view that the universe and everything in it was eternal. The *Kalam* cosmological argument was based on three arguments, which are supported by Scripture, in favour of a finite creation. These arguments were:

1. The universe had a specific beginning and could therefore not be eternal.
2. The universe did not simply begin as some random event, based only on change, but was perfect in design and motive.
3. The beginning of the universe had a personal influence and was not an impersonal event.

The *Kalam* cosmological argument therefore argued in favour of a beginning versus no beginning, caused versus uncaused, and personal versus impersonal (Ashton & Westacott 2006:39-40).

The first major challenge within the scientific community came about in the 1920’s when Einstein (Ashton & Westacott 2006:32) proposed his ‘General Theory of Relativity’ which suggested, among others, that the universe had to be finite as it is either expanding or contracting. George Lemaitre was the first person to table a model of explaining how these expansions or contractions, proposed by the General Theory of Relativity, might work. His model was known as the ‘Cosmic Egg<sup>4</sup>’ which in due course was modified and became known as the ‘Big-Bang’ model<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>For a complete outline of the *Kalam* cosmological argument, see Craig (2000) and Ashton & Westacott (2006:39-48).

<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that the concept or belief of the earth hatching from a cosmic egg is already seen as far back as fourteenth century BC Egypt (Sala 2008:188).

<sup>5</sup> For a more comprehensive overview on the history of the Big-Bang model, see Byl (2001:42-48).

Alternative cosmological models<sup>6</sup> of the universe were also introduced at about the time of Lemaitre's model. One of these models became known as the 'Steady State'<sup>7</sup> theory (Ashton & Westacott 2006:32-33), which retained the idea that the universe was eternal. Boice (1982:13) defined a Steady State universe as "ungenerated and indestructible." Boice continued that the Steady State theory was widely rejected within the scientific community, following the discovery of cosmic background radiation by Penzias and Wilson in 1965. This radiation was predicted by the Big-Bang model, though the Steady State theory made no such predictions. The Big-Bang model therefore became the most widely accepted model of origin for the universe since the 1960's.

Many natural scientists and Christians soon accepted the Big-Bang model as proven fact, while others saw it as a direct attack on Christianity (The New Catholic Encyclopaedia 1967b:684, 693). The general conclusion presented was one of either God having made use of this model during His creation, or that there was in fact no God and nature was its own architect (Ashton & Westacott 2006:33). This brought significant tension within the scientific community as a group of theistic believers stood on the premise of an omnipotent and transcendent Creator that was behind the whole creation, in contrast to the a group of atheistic believers which, for the first time in history, had a possible model which could explain origin without a creator. These two groups were subsequently labelled as 'Creationists' and 'Evolutionists.'

The group of Creationists soon realised they had made a critical error in accepting the Big-Bang model as proven fact as it was ultimately shown that the model was indeed flawed<sup>8</sup> filled with random assumptions<sup>9</sup>.

"Many people simply do not understand the real issues involved. They really believe scientists have proven evolution and every related issue. For many people, a belief in such positions as theistic evolution, the Gap theory, and

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<sup>6</sup> For other derivative models of evolutionary origin see *Appendix A*.

<sup>7</sup> For an overview on the Steady State theory see Copan & Craig (2005:224-226).

<sup>8</sup> For more detail on some of these critical errors, see Ashton (2001:93-94).

<sup>9</sup> Byl (2001:48-66) goes into quite some depth explaining some of the problems relating to the Big Bang theory as well as other possible interpretations of used data sets.

progressive creation came out of sheer pressure from their belief that scientists had proven, if not all, aspects of evolution.”

(Ham 2004:129)

By the mid-1960's, Creationists got actively involved in debates, court cases, etc, in defence of their literal interpretation of biblical passages concerning a relative young creation (Bowden 2005:298). One of the major obstacles, while trying to unify their biblical view and Big-Bang models though, was the issue of time. Ashton (2001:83) and Humphreys (2000:54) noted that a first read of biblical dating gives rise to the idea that God created the entire universe and everything in it around 6000 years ago as Ussher first remarked, while the Big-Bang model literally needs billions of years from start to where we are today.

On the one side of the Creationists group, you therefore got those who fully rejected the Big-Bang model and the entire theory of Evolution and on the other, you have a kind of middle ground where Creationists still believed in a Creator, but also accepted the Big-Bang model and some parts of the theory of Evolution. Their view is predominantly explained by two different models called 'Theistic Evolution' and 'Progressive Evolution'. For matters of this discussion, we will call the first group 'Young Earth Creationists' and the latter 'Old Earth Creationists'.

Colson (2006:9) provided a good summary for us on the current major views of the universe. The first perspective states that the universe is just an illusion and that we are not really here. The second states that the universe is self-created, in other words came about through evolution. Thirdly we have the perspective of the universe being pre-existing and eternal. Nobody knows where it came from, so it might as well always have been here. The fourth perspective points to an external force, a designer or a creator, who brought the whole universe into being and placed governing laws (both natural and moral) within it.

This dissertation will not so much focus on the natural science (maths, physics, chemistry, etc.) concerning the theories of Creation and Evolution, but rather with the premise from which both of these views originate. Sarfati (2005:16) noted, "It's not a question of biased religious Creationists versus objective scientific Evolutionists;

rather, it is the biases of the Christian religion versus the biases of the religion of secularism resulting in different interpretations of the same scientific data. On this point I stand in agreement with Sarfati as well as Ashton (2001:134-135) and therefore reject the notion that Creationism is predominantly a religious / theological view of origin and evolution a scientific view of origin, rather that both views have a theological / philosophical premise or starting point, followed by a series of testable scientific experiments and measurements.

## **1.2. Actuality and relevance**

Gitt (1996:8) noted that God share his thoughts with mankind in two ways: the Bible (theology) and His creation (science). Frequently these two disciplines presented as opposites to each other, but if Gitt is indeed correct in his statement, it means that one should be able to find a mutual ground for conversation between these two disciplines. From my point of view, there are three main reasons why a study of this nature is of cardinal importance. Firstly, it deals with one of the greatest underlying issues concerning our origin. Hawking (1992:171) summarised this questions when asking, “We find ourselves in a bewildering world. We want to make sense of what we see around is and to ask: What is the nature of the universe? What is our place on it and where did it and we come from? Why is it the way it is?” In response to Hawking, Boice (1982:15) noted that “Genesis is important because it gives us our origin – not merely the origin of one particular family but the origins of matter, life, values, evil, grace, the family, nations and other things – in a way that unites us all.”

Secondly, in light of all the ‘creation vs. evolution’ debates<sup>10</sup> and lawsuits<sup>11</sup> going on across the world, the relevance speaks for itself (Pigliucci & Futuyma 2002:206-208; Strum 1982:54-56; Guest & Clayton 1981:822). Torrey (2003:43) stated, “There is no part of the Bible that scholarly opponents of its divine origin are more fond of attacking than the very first chapter in the Book.” Scholars spend countless hours in research on the topic and books like Tom McIver’s (1988) *Anti-Evolution – An Annotated Bibliography* were written simply to list publications concerning the issue at hand.

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<sup>10</sup> For a more complete summary on the ongoing discussions and debates between Creationists and Evolutionists, see Sarfati (2005:15-30).

<sup>11</sup> For a more comprehensive legal overview since the first “Scopes trial”, see Scott (1997:272-285).

I am of the opinion that the central issue regarding these debates is the aspect of ‘time’. In both the Young Earth and Old Earth creation theories, time does not have such a large impact (though it will most likely settle their argument as well), but it does present an enormous impact on all evolution theories. Both the creation theories have a Creator / Designer incorporated who could have created at any time, but in order for the evolution theory to be plausible it must have a phenomenal amount of time available. If billions of years are taken out of the equation, the only alternative must be a Creator. Numerous critiques would protest that we are comparing apples and pears; that science and religion cannot be compared. Atkinson (1990:18-19) provided insight to this challenge where he notes that science exists because of patterns. Subsequently, one of the first points noticed in Genesis 1 is the striking patterns by which God created. The author is intentionally concerned with order structure within the creation account.

The third aspect to take into account is the matter of paradigms through which people approach the Scriptures and its interpretations. Eveson (2003:29-30) indicated that both the scientist as well as the theologian can misinterpret data. Superimposing the one interpretation on top of the other, could potentially be dangerous both ways. When we consider a statement like, “the God of Israel is the universal and omnipotent Creator of all things” there are a number of different ways in which it can be interpreted. The Antiochian school of the Greek Church Fathers thought it was a materially factual description (literal-historical approach). The Alexandrian school interpret it as allegorical, while St Augustine (1952 [398]) among the Latin Fathers hesitated between the two (The New Catholic Encyclopaedia 1967a:424).

In light of these three paradigms it becomes interesting to see that very few scholars prior to the mid nineteenth century disagree on the matter of when creation took place; however this changed dramatically following the introduction of the theory of Evolution (The New Catholic Encyclopaedia 1967b:685). People suddenly began interpreting Scriptures from the presupposition that science had already proven that the universe and everything within it had to be much older (Ham 2004:129). Batten (2006:23) also commented that most church leaders of today don’t accept the ‘days’ as ordinary days either. He is convinced that this phenomenon is not due to a clear conclusion from studying the Scriptures, but from outside influence that dominates

their worldview. Even the Catholic Church began questioning their beliefs; not on the basis of what Scripture had to say, but on a preconception of what science “had proven”. “The generality of Catholic exegesis up to modern times favoured a strictly literal interpretation... Struggles came with modern science to a point where it is now accepted as more allegorical” (The New Catholic Encyclopaedia 1967a:424). It is therefore of great importance to gain a reasonable understanding of what the author of Genesis 1 tried to communicate through his narration of the six days creation outside of the modern day scientific paradigm.

Apart from the influence of the natural and biological sciences, there is a second level of influence now common with the interpretation of Scripture. This is found in comparative text analysis, where the biblical accounts are interpreted by making use of other Near Eastern literature (Hess 1994:24). Allowing such paradigms, or any others, to influence your study, is one-sided and evades the aspect of hearing what the Scripture wants to communicate. I will therefore enter into discussion with some commentaries, i.e. Eveson (2003); Hamilton (2002); Waltke (2001); Walton (2001); Garret (1991); Atkinson (1990); Ross (1988); Boice (1982); Brueggemann (1982); Von Rad (1972); and Gunkel (2006 [1895]) among others, though only after I have set a biblical premise, following an extensive exegetical analysis of Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25.

### **1.3. Problem statement**

Atkinson (1990:44) observed that the issue of time is one of the most prominent features of Genesis 1. He also argued that time is a gift from God to create order in the created world. However, the issue we are faced with is the fact that nobody seems to know when time began or even if there was a beginning to time. As I stated, most of the ancient world - which was dominated by Greek philosophy - believed in an eternal universe. In contrast to this belief the Bible states in over 37 verses that there was in fact a specific beginning. The biblical view could therefore not be united with the general view of the time in which it was written. The general accepted view of the theory of Evolution would agree with the biblical view that there was a beginning<sup>12</sup>, as explained by the Big-Bang model, even though the biblical view would generally

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<sup>12</sup> See *Appendix B* for the theory of Creation and the theory of Evolution timelines.

date around 6000 years ago and the evolutionary around 20 billion years ago (Hawking 1992:46).

Returning to the Scriptures we now face with five primary different<sup>13</sup> opinions as to when the beginning was. These five views are commonly called:

1. **The Gap theory** – Argues that God began with creation in the beginning, but only a long time afterwards did He create everything on and around the earth. The ‘gap’ of which it speaks is a very long time (billions of years) that passed between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 (Ham 2004:129; Scott 1997:270).
2. **The “Day-Age” theory** – Propose that the six days of creation were not six literal, 24-hour earth days, but six ages, periods or eras. A frequent biblical justification for this comes from Ps 90:4 (Ashton 2001:341; Scott 1997:270).
3. **The “Days-of-Revelation” theory** – Suggests that the six days are not referring to six literal days in which creation took place, but six days in which the narrative of creation was revealed to the author (Ashton 2001:341).
4. **Progressive Creation** – Stipulates that God both initiated and guided the creation process, but did so over a long period of time. Each day (as found in Gn 1) consequently refers to a specific act in which God created (Boice 1982:63-66).
5. **The literal six-day creation model** – This theory holds the view that God created the universe and everything else in it around 4000 BC. Creation took place in six literal, 24-hour earth days. It is the most face-valued interpretation of Genesis chapter 1 (Ashton 2001:342).

A second aspect of the problem one faces pertains to the presence or absence of a creator. Fact is, the universe exists and is real. Both theists and atheists acknowledge its existence and admit to its grandness (Jastrow 1977:19-21). The general accepted view of evolution would under-scribe an atheistic worldview, where time and chance were the “creators” of this universe, as opposed to Creationism where a Creator is a necessity. I am of the opinion that it is a much easier task to prove the existence of something or someone than to disprove the existence of it, which in the case of a

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<sup>13</sup> I have chosen five popular approaches, though one must recognise that there are other approaches also. Scott (1997:267) lists nine different approaches.

creator would lead you to an absolute negation<sup>14</sup>. I am of the opinion that a design calls for a designer. If it can be proven beyond reasonable doubt that there is a design in nature, which includes aspects like order and purpose, it would be safe to conclude that a designer was involved in its creation.

#### **1.4. Aims and objectives**

There are three main aims I will set out to achieve in this dissertation. Firstly to conduct an exegetical analysis of Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25, being assisted by a variety of commentaries on the subject of creation. Secondly, to present the results of the analysis to the five selected creation time views. Thirdly, concluding the study by conversing with four selected fields in the natural and biological scientific fields, i.e. Cosmology, Genetics, Geology and Paleontology. The study will include the following sub-aims in mind.

- Outlining the presupposition which the natural and biological scientific view has caused on our exegetical approach of Scripture.
- Presenting a holistic overview of Pentateuch research history that will set the stage for the exegetical analysis of the selected texts.
- Understanding the origin, author, time and context in which both Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25 was distinctively written.
- Discovering the nature, theme, message and theologies that Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25 is trying to communicate.
- Analysing the relationship between the Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25 creation account.
- Understand what is meant by the concepts of “day” and “beginning” and when the most plausible time in history for this event could have taken place.
- Expanding on where and how the five main arguments concerning creation time fit into Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25.

The emphasis of this study will not be to defend or explain which one of the five creation time theories are correct or not, but rather to let them engage in conversation

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<sup>14</sup> In order to prove the existence of a creator, one needs to have but one piece of evidence. However, the opposite is impossible to prove, as one would by definition have to know everything before one can say with certainty there is no creator. As a result, by the time a person knows everything, he himself would qualify to be god.

with one another. Gibson (1981:8) noted that “One of the chief barriers that prevents Genesis chapter 1 or for that matter 2 and 3 getting a fair hearing today is... the widely held opinion that they have been discredited by science.”

### **1.5. Methodology**

This study will be a literature and exegetical study; though, noting that I am not sufficiently schooled in the use of the ancient Near Eastern languages in which Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25 was written. I will therefore depend on the use of mainly three literal Bible translations for my analysis. These three being:

- The 1995 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
- The 1987 Amplified Bible (AMP)
- The 1769 King James Version (KJV)

Two primary forms of literature will be considered i.e. academic publications (which include journals, dissertations, articles and books) and non-academic publications by people involved in the practical field, relating to the topic. Included in this dissertation are strong references to both the theological and natural sciences; I will however keep to the approach as one with a theological background.

The exegetical study will be done in accordance to Gorman (2001). Attention is given to all three method groups, i.e. the synchronic approach, the diachronic approach and the existential approach. The synchronic approach deals with the final form of the text as we have it today. Special attention is given to the following methods:

1. ‘Literary Criticism’ is applied to identify different aspects of the Genesis 1 and 2 texts like its form, genre, texture etc.
2. ‘Narrative Criticism’ is applied to analyse the narrative components of Genesis 1 and 2 as the underlining tone behind the text.
3. ‘Rhetorical Criticism’ is applied to understand the structures and devices used within the text to effectively communicate its message to its readers.
4. ‘Social-Scientific Criticism’ is applied to gain understanding into the social surroundings of the ancient Near Eastern world and what effect it might have had on the text.

The diachronic approach deals with the origin and development of the text. Special attention is given to the following methods:

1. Historical linguistics is applied to gain understanding regarding the original use and intent of certain key words within the text.
2. ‘Form Criticism’ is applied to gain insight on the use of oral traditions within the text. It will also help provide us with an understanding if there were any more ancient oral traditions that influenced the text.
3. ‘Source Criticism’ is applied to help us identify if there were any other sources the author made use of in the text.
4. ‘Historical Criticism’ is applied to identify any historical events that took place around the time the text was written and what effect it might have had on the text.

In the existential approach, Gorman (2001) deals with a number of different issues, generally more often with how we see and understand the text in our modern day setting. Special attention is given to ‘Canonical Criticism’ that applies to the analyses of the context of smaller sections in regards to the Bible as a whole. No preference will be given to any specific method above each other, however; I will give time to each in its own right (Gorman 2001:12-20 & Ross 1988:23-36).

As part of this study, it will be appropriate for me to clarify my position and approach concerning Scripture. Regarding this position, I agree with Ross (1988: 23), “The starting point for this study is the presupposition that Scripture is revelation, a message from God to his people. Genesis thus has a dimension very different from the comparable literature of the ancient Near East”. My understanding in regards to ‘revelation’ is that God inspired different people, mostly authors, but also redactors and editors to write down God’s message and plan regarding relationship, salvation and restoration for all mankind.

### **1.6. Hypothesis**

My hypothesis was developed in reflection on the different aspects relating to time, as found in the biblical creation accounts. Consequently it articulates that the author of the Genesis 1 and 2 creation narratives did not intend to write a scientific account, but rather a historical reference to a covenant people found within a foreign environment. This however does not imply a non-factual or fictional description of God’s creative

processes. On the contrary, though the author had no knowledge regarding modern scientific discovery, his intention in the accounts was to convey the idea that the entire universe and everything within it, was created relatively recent and that all of creation took place in six literal 24-hour earth days. Modern science on the other hand would generally dictate a vastly older universe, evolving over much greater time periods.

Subsequently one is faced with three options, a Creator who created over a short period of time, relatively recent; naturalistic evolution taking place over vast amounts of time; and a unified theory where combinations of different elements from both the other two options are added together. From a biblical perspective, I postulate that the author left no space for the latter two options, as he exclusively promoted the concept of a Creator who created over a short period of time, relatively recent.

## **1.7. Definition of terms and concepts**

This study is done from the perspective of a scholar with a theological background; numerous terms within the natural and biological scientific fields therefore need to be defined.

### **1.7.1. Definitions**

- Beginning – Refers to the initiation, start, or the first time something came into being (Sinclair 2000:139). For the reference of this dissertation, it will point to the moment at which the Creator first began with His creation.
- Big-Bang model – “A cosmological theory postulating that approximately 15 000 million years ago all the matter of the universe, packed into a small super dense mass, was hurled in all directions by a cataclysmic explosion. As the fragments slowed down, the galaxies and stars evolved but the universe is still expanding” (Sinclair 2000:152). The exact time of when the Big-Bang took place has been estimated at between 20 and 15 billion years ago.
- Cosmology – Our understanding of the structure and order of the universe and everything that is within it. For our reference, cosmology will also include our understanding regarding the origin of the universe and its fulfilment or

conclusion; otherwise also called ‘cosmogony’ (Lucas 2003:130; Sinclair 2000:359)

- Theory of Creation – Sinclair (2000:371) defined creation as, “The whole universe, including the world and all the things in it”. For the reference of this dissertation, this theory will point to the biblical view of a Creator who created the entire universe and everything within it, at the beginning. This is in contrast to the view of the theory of Evolution (Scott 1997:266).
- Creationism – “The doctrine that ascribes the origins of all things to God’s acts of creation rather than to evolution” (Sinclair 2000:371).
- Creationists – Any person or group of people that adheres or agrees with the view of Creationism. See Alexander (2003:291-301) for a historical overview on the Creationist movement.
- Creation time – The period surrounding the origin of creation and its accompanying events.
- Theory of Evolution – “The gradual change in the characteristics of a population of animals or plants over successive generations: accounts for the origin of existing species from ancestors unlike them” (Sinclair 2000:536). “An irreversible process of developmental changes in time, which during its course generates novelty, diversity, and higher levels of organisation. It operates in all sectors of the phenomenal universe but has been most fully described in the biological sector” (The New Catholic Encyclopaedia 1967b:685). For the reference of this dissertation, evolution is seen as much more than just a biological change in nature, but also includes the evolution of cosmology (Scott 1997:265).
- Evolutionists – Any person or group of people that adheres or agrees with the theory of Evolution.
- Old Earth Creationists – Any person or group of people that adheres or agrees with the view of Creationism, but also distinguish themselves further by believing that creation took place billions of years ago and over a very long period of time (Scott 1997:269-270).
- Progressive Creationism – Proposes that God made use of the evolutionary process that He set in motion millions of years ago, but unlike Theistic

Evolution, He interfered in the process at certain key times to create more advanced forms of life (Ham 2004:174; Ashton 2001: 86; Scott 1997:270).

- Theistic Evolution – Proposes that God made use of the evolutionary process that He set in motion millions of years ago, through which He achieves His act of creation (Ashton 2001: 85, 240; Scott 1997:271).
- Time – “The continuous passage of existence in which events pass from a state of potentiality in the future, through the present, to a state of finality in the past” (Sinclair 2000:1602). The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967c:157-158) ascribe three main characteristics to the contextualisation of time as always being in motion, continuous and measurable.
- Young Earth Creationists – Any person or group of people that adheres or agrees with the view of Creationism, but also distinguish themselves further by believing that creation took place around 6000 years ago in 6 literal 24-hour earth days (Scott 1997:267).

### **1.7.2. Abbreviations**

- OT – Old Testament
- NT – New Testament
- NASB – New American Standard Bible
- KJV – King James Version
- AMP – Amplified Bible
- NIV – New International Version
- Gn – Genesis
- Ex – Exodus
- YEC – Young Earth Creationists
- OEC – Old Earth Creationists
- DNA – Deoxyribonucleic acid
- mtDNA – Mitochondrial DNA

### **1.7.3. Reference system**

The reference system used in this dissertation is in accordance with the adjusted Harvard reference system as prescribed by the Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria. Abbreviations for biblical books are as recommended by the NTSSA.

## 1.8. Chapter outline

- Chapter 1 – Sets the stage for the discussion in the dissertation. It references the ancient Near Eastern view of an eternal universe that is not coherent with the biblical view, followed by modern day scientific discovery that the universe in fact is of finite existence. This is followed by a brief historical overview concerning modern day science dealing with the question of origin, beginning with Lyell and Darwin, up until the point where the theory of Evolution and the Big-Bang model is formulated. The discussion then turns from the observation that a biblical worldview differed from that of the ancient Near Eastern worldview concerning an eternal versus finite universe, to a biblical worldview that differs from the theory of Evolution on the issue of a Creator versus spontaneous existence and young creation versus old evolution. The main issue that is highlighted throughout the chapter is the problem of our understanding of ‘time’ and ‘beginning’. The chapter concludes with the open question of whether or not the author of Genesis 1 intended its reader to understand the text as six literal 24-hour days, or something else.
- Chapter 2 – Begins with a short overview on Pentateuch scholarly history, specifically its origin and authorship. From the Pentateuch overview, we move in closer to a scholarly overview and the nature of the book of Genesis, followed by a more detailed overview of Genesis 1-11 where we look at the theme and structure. The chapter ends with a focus on the two main portions of Scripture under study i.e. Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25.
- Chapter 3 – Begins with a formal exegetical analysis of Genesis 1:1-2:4a. We will once again consider aspects like structure, theme and origin relating to this portion of Scripture. The exegetical study is done from the three selected Bible translations i.e. New American Standard Bible, Amplified Bible and the King James Version. The analysis begins with introduction of the portion (Gn 1:1-2) followed by the development of the six days (Gn 1:3-31) and concludes with the conclusion of the first creation narrative (Gn 2:1-4a).

- Chapter 4 – Continues with the formal exegetical analysis of the second selected portion of Scripture i.e. Genesis 2:4b-25. The chapter will begin with the introduction of the section followed by the account of the creation of man. This will be followed by outlining the creation of trees, rivers, etc and climax at the challenge concerning companionship for the man. During this challenge, God creates other animals and the man receives his commission. Following these events, the man also receives his companion, the woman. The chapter concludes with their introduction to one another.
- Chapter 5 – Begins with the summary of chapters 3 and 4 regarding their exegetical analysis. The summary is then presented to the five predominant creation views followed by the introduction to the evolutionistic view. The chapter finds its climax when it ends in dialogue with four different natural scientific fields, Cosmology, Genetics, Geology and Paleontology.
- Chapter 6 – In response to the dialogues that have taken place in chapter 5, a conclusion will be made as to how the Scriptural understanding of creation time relates to the different modern-day interpretations and understandings regarding this topic.

### **1.9. Summary**

I have now set the background tone for this discussion between Creationists and Evolutionists that will be brought to the fore again in chapter 5. Due to the nature of this ongoing discussion, there are countless angles from which a person can join in. As this dissertation will primarily concern itself with biblical exegesis, I will firstly establish a reasonable argument concerning the Scriptural motive and intention regarding creation time, with the main emphasis of the study placed on Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25. Following the exegetical study, I will venture back to the background discussion and present the argument to both Creationist and Evolutionist. Whatever the outcome, it will surely set the stage for an increasingly greater amount of research still to be done in this field.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

At the start of any exegetical study, it is of utmost importance to clarify expectations regarding the literary unit. There is a basic understanding that every word fits together in a sentence, every sentence in a passage, every passage a section, sections in books and finally all fit together as the authoritative and inspired Word of God; for this reason the logic that words only find meaning in context. Time permitting, one should always try to understand what the larger context of any unit in study is. For purposes of this dissertation, I have therefore identified Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Genesis 2:4b-25 as the main literary study units. However, a study of this kind would be somewhat incomplete if I simply ignored any larger context in which these passages were written. I have therefore decided to present, if only in brief terms, some context within the greater Pentateuch and Hexateuch research history, narrowing it down to the context within the book of Genesis, and then finally to the primeval history of Genesis 1 to 11 within its ancient Near Eastern context (Ross 1988:38).

In his commentary on the book Genesis, Gibson (1981:1) highlighted the origin of the different names used. The word *Genesis* was first used in the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament. The word would literally translate as “origin<sup>15</sup>” which also has the same meaning as the word *Bereshit* that is used in the Hebrew Bible. Eveson (2003:17) noted that the word could also reference ‘generations’ or ‘genealogy.’ The book of Genesis together with four other books (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) forms the first five books of the Bible, commonly known as the *Torah* or “the Law” by the Jews. This collection of books was also called *Pentateuchos* by the Greeks.

#### 2.2. Pentateuch research history overview

Generally speaking, any person who would open and read a Bible will assume that there is a certain order, or at least an arrangement of the books contained in it; that it begins with the oldest and ends with the newest. Another general idea would be that

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<sup>15</sup> Miller & Miller (1973:219) indicates that *bereshit* can simply mean “in the beginning.”

the people within each specific era were responsible for the authoring of such passages. This view held especially true when it came to the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. Not only do the stories contained in it tell of the most earliest times of Israel's history, but they also contain numerous references that Moses had a great deal to do with its authoring. These references led to the nearly uncontested view regarding the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch for thousands of years among both Jewish and Christian scholars. External references confirmed this view (Arnold 2003:622). For instance, contained within the New Testament are direct references by Jesus that Moses wrote about Him (Lk 24:27, 44; Jn 5:46). Miller & Miller (1973:219) indicated that, since the Persian era, Jewish scribes attributed the authorship<sup>16</sup> of the Pentateuch to Moses. This tradition continued with Judaism and Christianity (Larue 1968:26-27).

### **2.2.1. Origin and authorship**

When one begins the search for origin of any ancient text, apart from the obvious facts that it is old and that somebody had written it, there are very few other aspects that we can be certain of. Walton (2001:20) commented, "Though we cannot reconstruct all that may have been going on in the author's mind, we can try our best to take our place among those in his audience, assume that he communicated to his audience successfully, and benefit from that communication in the way that anyone in his audience would have." On matters dealing with the Pentateuch, and more specifically the book of Genesis, Ross (1988:23) suggested guidance as to certain other aspects that can be taken as fact. The text had to be written by people; it had highly developed levels of meaning for their local community; and many of the genres are foreign to our way of thinking.

With these guidelines in mind we will therefore now look at a concise history overview of the Pentateuch research regarding its origin and authorship as it developed since the time of Christ up until today's most current research.

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<sup>16</sup> Apart from the last eight verses in Deuteronomy (Dt 34:5-12), which was ascribed to Joshua following Moses' death.

### 2.2.1.1. From Christ to the seventeenth century

Hess (1994:3) indicated that since the Hellenistic Period there were certain challenges placed upon the authorship of the Pentateuch in respect to other ancient Near Eastern literature. Baker (2003:799) mentioned this contrast to the traditional view of Mosaic authorship, the challenge came in that the text contained the reflections of someone looking back in history concerning the time of Moses rather than him actually narrating the stories first hand. Baker (2003:800) continued that there were also certain anachronisms and inconsistencies within the stories that led to doubting the Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch. Some of the first scholars to pick up on these irregularities could be traced back long before the time of the reformation, as Philo of Alexandria and Josephus Flavius noted their problem with Mosaic authorship because the end of Deuteronomy mentions the death of Moses. By the twelfth century, scholars like Ibn Ezra noted some of the first real challenges contained within verses like Genesis 12:6 and Deuteronomy 1:1. Others included Martin Luther, who believed Moses obtained some of his material from Gentile sources which he in turn simply presented in a more purified form (Deist 1989:5).

One of the main forces opposing these challenges came with the rise of Orthodoxy in the mid fifteen hundreds in which a belief of the infallibility of Scripture was upheld through the doctrine of inspiration. Historical interpretations like those of Carlstadt and even Calvin were therefore greatly undermined. Andreas Masius was one of the first orthodox scholars who began challenging Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch from a literary art point of view. Masius proposed that the books of Moses were of a diverse origin and that a final redactor compiled them from many sources. His ideas were propagated through one of his students, Pedeira, who began to influence Catholic scholars like Richard Simon (Deist 1989:8-12).

Isaac de la Peyrère partly dealt with the matter of Pentateuch authorship in his *Systema theologicum*. Due to his work - often termed “beyond the Jordan” - he became very sceptic regarding the possibility of Moses being the author of the first 5 books of the Bible (Larue 1968:27).

Scholarly challenges during this era (*circa* the seventeenth century) gave rise to what we now know as ‘Historical Criticism’. The general idea of these scholars was to try

and find the editors or redactors that rewrote and altered the Scripture, especially in the postexilic and Hellenistic period. These scholars postulated that the biblical canon as we have it today is the product of successive editorial works since the time they were first told. The historical critic therefore attempts to remove all “layers” of the Scripture to try and reconstruct what the original historical context was. The problem in doing so is that most of the time they also remove God as the Divine agent of inspiration, consequently equating Scripture to any other ancient Near Eastern text (Price 2007:94). Wenham (1987:xxvii) mentioned that one of the central aspects of debate during this time was the relation between the source and their relative dating.

These challenges were further taken up in certain medieval commentaries, though the first real alternative view surfaced during the seventeenth century. By 1631 Jacques Borfrère, a Jesuit, produced a commentary in which he made outright claims that the Pentateuch was the work of a redactor who made use of additional sources (Deist 1989:13). Philosophers Benedict Spinoza and Thomas Hobbes made a proposal that Ezra was in fact the author of the Pentateuch, though he made use of certain Mosaic materials. Spinoza published this proposal among others in his work *Tractatus theologico-politicus* which was largely based on twelfth century scholar Ibn Ezra’s work who first noted problems with verses like Genesis 12:6 and Deuteronomy 1:1. Their proposals became the key in unlocking four centuries of research regarding the origin and authorship of the Pentateuch (Arnold 2003:622). Deist (1989:13) mentions that Hobbes, a contemporary of De la Peyrère, concluded in 1651 that only the parts which explicitly claimed to have been written by Moses could be ascribed to him. The rest all belonged to someone else. Richard Simon, who is often called the ‘father’ of ‘Biblical Criticism’ gathered all the parts pertaining to critical analyses available and proposed his challenge through a literary historical point of view. In doing so, he ushered in a new era for the application of techniques used in the study of non-sacred literature to the Bible (Larue 1968:28).

#### **2.2.1.2. Eighteenth century**

As the Age of Enlightenment dawned during the eighteenth century, human rationality and traditions were openly challenged. One area in particular: human dealings with the supernatural and divine revelation became one of the main focal points. Critical Pentateuch research was ignited as theologians, philosophers and

various groups of scholars began openly questioning certain beliefs regarding its origin, authorship, structure and composition (Arnold 2003:622).

Jean Astruc (1684 – 1766), a French medical student was one of the first scholars who applied a source-critical approach to the Pentateuch. In Astruc's model, he separated the use of the divine names of God, *Elohim* and *Yahweh*, as the basis of the sources that could have been used in compiling Genesis. A classical example of these two names can clearly be seen in this study unit where Genesis 1:1-2:3 makes exclusive use of God (*Elohim*) and Genesis 2:4-25 of Lord God or *Yahweh Elohim*. Astruc named the texts containing *Elohim* 'source-A' and those containing *Yahweh* 'source-B'. Even though Astruc made use of some further division and parallel texts, he never questioned the fact that Moses was in fact the author of the Pentateuch (Arnold 2003:622-623; Larue 1968:28).

Building on some of Astruc's work Johann Eichhorn produced a three-volume introduction to the Old Testament by the latter part of the eighteenth century. He made use of Astruc's source divisions, but renamed the *Elohim* texts as 'E' and the *Yahweh* texts as 'J'. Eichhorn, however, was more sceptical concerning the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and sought further evidence regarding the division of texts based on style and content; also for other external sources that might have been used. This approach he applied to the rest of the Pentateuch. In due time he became convinced that Moses was indeed not its author. Eichhorn's 'Documentary Hypothesis' soon became popular as an acceptable explanation regarding the Pentateuch's composition. There were however two major questions raised as a result of his work; questions that kept European scholars busy for nearly a century, searching and trying to find satisfactory answers. The first problem related to how one could explain the unity of the Pentateuch in light of the diverse amount of sources that had been used in the compilation; and the second as to what the basic characteristics of each of these sources by themselves were (Arnold 2003:623).

With Eichhorn's work as a backbone, scholars continued to search for more document isolations. Some claimed to have isolated as many as seventeen different sources in Genesis alone. In 1798, K D Ilgen, while working with documents of the Jerusalem archives, separated the *Elohim* text by indicating two different sources (Rogerson:

1985:20). He called them 'E<sup>1</sup>' and 'E<sup>2</sup>'; therefore bringing eighteenth century Pentateuch research work to a conclusion with three main sources: J, E<sup>1</sup> and E<sup>2</sup> (Arnold 2003:623).

### 2.2.1.3. Nineteenth century

As the nineteenth century dawned, the two- or three-document hypothesis began losing its popularity. Scholars began to believe that the Pentateuch consisted of a great number of fragments all woven together by a redactor or an editor rather than just a few documents placed alongside one another. Some claimed that as many as thirty-eight of these fragments were used and edited together either in the time of Solomon or around the time of the exile (Arnold 2003:623).

However, certain scholars like Paul de Lagarde challenged this notion in that they theorised that there was only one original or archetype document that was the direct descendant of the autograph textual critics reconstruct, which he designated as the *Urtext* (Price 2007:97).

Wilhelm de Wette was among the first scholars to advocate the 'Fragment Hypothesis' in which the Pentateuch consisted of a collection of E and J fragments (Rogerson 1985:28-49). However, his work was challenged by Heinrich Ewald, resulting in a change of his position to a supplementary type hypothesis by mid nineteenth century. According to historical view, Moses supplied the Israelites with a complete legal system including the sacrificial cult and the priesthood system. De Wette however argued that Moses did in fact not provide such a system, as is commonly assumed, and that it would be impossible to say exactly what Moses did provide. His research led him to assume that Deuteronomy was the last of the Pentateuch books, which could not have been written before the seventh century BC. This conclusion came partly from his conviction that a section of Deuteronomy had been the 'Book of the Law' that was found in the temple around 621 BC during the reign of King Josiah (Arnold 2003:623-624; Larue 1968:29).

De Wette was not the first to provide arguments in favour of fragmented section in the Pentateuch, as F V Fulda had introduced the concept in 1791 already. Shortly afterwards J C K Nachtigall, writing under the name of Othmar, published such

claims in his articles of 1794 and 1796. Vater strongly supported Nachtigall's view as published in his *Pentateuch* (Rogerson 1985:29).

By 1832, Ewald proposed his 'Supplementary Hypothesis' which came as a result of following his emphases on the unity of Genesis in contrast to the fragmentation view (Rogerson 1985:91-103). In his 'Supplementary Hypothesis' he postulated that E was the core document, which was supplemented by J and portions from the book of Deuteronomy or 'D' as he called it. However, the hypothesis did not account for all the material contained in the Pentateuch, especially the legal parts. Ewald later proposed another model, which he called the 'Crystallization Hypothesis.' This model focused not only on the Pentateuch, but also included the book of Joshua, which as a unit became known as the Hexateuch. The model proposed that there were a great number of narrators and editors that made use of certain core or centre structures, surrounding it with many outer cluster parts. Due to the complexity of this model, it was soon abandoned for other simpler models (Arnold 2003:624).

By 1853, Hermann Hupfeld expanded on the arguments first postulated by Eichhorn in that the Pentateuch had three self-contained documents known as E<sup>1</sup>, E<sup>2</sup> and J (Rogerson 1985:131-134). Hupfeld was convinced that E<sup>1</sup> provided the outer framework around which E<sup>2</sup> and J was interwoven. In the same year Eduard Riehm proposed that the book of Deuteronomy was in fact a self-contained, independent source (Arnold 2003:625).

In the following period, four main sources of the Pentateuch were identified as E<sup>1</sup>, E<sup>2</sup>, J and D. Karl Graf initially agreed with this sequence of Hupfeld, but changed his mind over time due to the favourable arguments put forward that the Law was only introduced late in Israel's history (Rogerson 1985:258-259). Graf followed De Wette's explanation and fixed the date of D at 622 BC, from where he effectively argued that E<sup>1</sup> had to be an exilic source. His new proposed sequence of E<sup>2</sup>-J-D-E<sup>1</sup> was widely accepted as he also suggested the significant role that Ezra had played during the exile in compiling the priestly and legal material into E<sup>1</sup>, which in turn he incorporated with E<sup>2</sup>, J and D to form the Pentateuch. Soon after the hypothesis was introduced, Abraham Kuenen challenged the sequence in which he suggested the

Yahwist text was the oldest (De Vries 1989:56-76), subsequently changing the model to J-E<sup>2</sup>-D-E<sup>1</sup> (Arnold 2003:625).

Julius Wellhausen continued in the footsteps of Graf and Kuenen (Rogerson 1985:260-268). He took their source theory and skilfully combined it with ‘Historical Criticism’ to form a hypothesis that, for the first time, presented a suitable explanation regarding the question of the Pentateuch unity amidst its many sources. This ‘Documentary Hypothesis’ became known as the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis and is still one of the most popular source hypotheses regarding the Pentateuch in use (Arnold 2003:625-626).

#### **2.2.1.3.1. Documentary Hypothesis**

The ‘Documentary Hypothesis’, which is based on a literary-analytical approach, rapidly gained support from several classical writers. It is said that Astruc’s original eighteenth century model and later modifications made use of four separate columns, each of which contained a certain collection of passages. Column A was used for all the corresponding passages referencing *Elohim*, column B for all the passages referencing *Yahweh*, column C passages with repetitions in the use of the names and column D with interpolations of names (Garrett 1991:14).

The hypothesis<sup>17</sup> articulates that the Pentateuch was compiled by making use of four main source documents. In reference to Astruc’s model the columns were subsequently renamed J (*Yahwist*), E or E<sup>2</sup> (*Elohist*), D (*Deuteronomist*) and P or E<sup>1</sup> (*Priestly Code*). Wellhausen called this original document Q in reference to the four sources that it contained. He was convinced that numerous redactors freely shaped and reshaped, and even authored some of the source texts. By the time J and E were combined, they had undergone so much editing that the combination could have been known as R<sup>JE</sup>, alternatively as J<sup>3</sup> and E<sup>3</sup> in reference to this redactor work. Wellhausen called this redactor the *Jehovist* in contrast to the earlier *Yahwist* for J and *Elohist* for E. He saw this *Jehovist* redactor (R<sup>JE</sup>) as the creator of the Hexateuch (Garrett 1991:14; Larue 1968:29-31).

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<sup>17</sup> Alternatives within this method have also been suggested in that more sources could possibly be present (J<sup>1</sup> and J<sup>2</sup>) or less sources in that E could be left out all together (Garrett 1991:17).

Different authors provided different perspectives on the topic of date and area where the sources originated. J is generally viewed as the oldest and dates from the Southern Kingdom between the Solomonic period (Garrett 1991:14) and *circa* 850 BC (Ross 1988:25). It begins with Genesis 2:4b and includes large portions of the rest of Genesis as well as portions of Exodus, Numbers and short portions of Deuteronomy. It contains personal, biographical, anthropomorphic and prophetic elements, as well as theological reflection. E was produced some time after J (Ross [1988:25] proposes 750 BC), originating mostly within the Northern Kingdom of Israel. E begins with Genesis 15 and includes other portions of Genesis and Exodus. E was written more objectively and less consciously tinged with ethical and theological reflection. These two documents might have been combined as early as the sixth century BC.

Two different dates are given for the production of D; Garrett (1991:14) proposes it took place during the Josianic reformation period where Ross (1988:25) specifies 621 BC under Hilkiah, as a more specific date. D covers most of Deuteronomy, however borrows from both J and E concerning the use of divine name. Last to be produced was P, between 570 and 445 BC, which dates in the exile period. The Priestly Code begins with Genesis 1:1 and includes other large portions of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers and all of Leviticus. This document includes accounts of origin and institutions of the theocracy, genealogies, and sacrificial rituals. There are a few short sections that do not fit into any of the four source documents (J, E, D and P). These short sections combined with the four source documents constitutes what we know as the Pentateuch (Hamilton 2002:20-21; Möller 1997:5-6; Garrett 1991:14-15; Ross 1988:24-27; Driver 1897:11-13).

Though the ‘Documentary Hypothesis’ includes the entire Pentateuch, I will only focus on the section dealing with the primeval history as found in Genesis 1-11. The structure will therefore look as follows:



J	E	D	P
			1:1-2:4a
2:4b-3:24			
4:1-26			
			5:1-28
5:29			
			5:30-32
6:1-4			
6:5-8:22*			6:5-8:22*
			9:1-17
9:18-27			
			9:28-29
			10:1-7
10:8-19			
10:21			
			10:22-23
10:24-30			
			10:31-32
11:1-9			
			11:10-27
11:28-30			
			11:31-32

\*Certain passages are of an uncertain affinity and could potentially have originated from either source (Garrett 1991:187). Gibson (1981:3) rightfully pointed out that at most there could only have been two authors or traditions involved in narrating the first eleven chapters of Genesis.

The four source documents do not agree on the ‘first use’ of divine names. According to J *Yahweh* was first introduced around the antediluvian period in Genesis 4:26 (a J text). Contrary to J, E makes use of *Elohim*. According to E, *Yahweh* was only introduced during the exodus period in Exodus 3:15 (an E text). P also makes use of *Elohim* as it agrees with E in that the name *Yahweh* only first appeared in Exodus 6:3 (a P text) (Garrett 1991:15).

The logic of this proposed argument, in which J was introduced first, is not convincing to me for the following reason. It argued that Genesis 2:4-25 has J as source, though this unit (including many others in Genesis) makes use of the combined term *Yahweh Elohim*. Within the ancient Near Eastern world, *Elohim* was frequently used to indicate a variety of gods. From my point of view, the introduction of the personal name Yahweh would therefore point to a later development, consequently placing J after P, which makes exclusively use of *Elohim*. In case of Genesis 1:1-2:3 (regards P as source) and Genesis 2:4-25 (regards J as source) this would not only seem more accurate, but would also be supported by the chronological manner in which they appear (Garrett 1991:14).

Although the Documentary Hypothesis has been accepted in many arenas, there are still opposing views that question this position (Garrett 1991:191; Archer 1973:127-128). The challenge presented to the Documentary Hypothesis is one of 'Narrative Criticism' within the flow of Genesis 1 through chapter 2 and into chapter 3. From a narrative point these chapters seems to be inconsistent with each other. Though this aspect will be discussed in depth later in this dissertation, it is worth mentioning that almost all creation myths deals with human history. Genesis 2 and 3 correlates exactly with this view, whereas Genesis 1 is not only unique in this regard to the Bible, but also to all other creation myths. Rather than dealing with human history, its focus is that of an external and eternal 'Creator's' view (Garrett 1991:191-192). This view would raise a defence to the fact that the seemingly inconsistent flow rather emphasises the uniqueness of the Creator in that the Scriptures not only deals with human history, but also with a larger eternal perspective on the Creator. Garrett continues his argument that the eternal God's perspective on creation (Gn 1) should precede that of humanity (Gn 2).

Reflecting on nineteenth century scholarship, Sarna (1967:xxiv) highlights some of its shortcomings. According to him, they show an unmistakable bias towards the people of Israel. In doing so they made numerous unsupported or insufficient conjectures through methods that were not scientifically validated. Sarna also points to the vast amount of *argumenta e silentio* that was used during this period of so-called 'Higher

Criticism’. With all this said, the one central concept that did survive into the following centuries was the idea of a non-unitary origin of the Pentateuch.

#### **2.2.1.4. Early twentieth century**

Two centuries of scholarly research regarding Pentateuch origins and authorship was suddenly and unexpectedly challenged from a completely new perspective at the start of the twentieth century. Arnold (2003:627) noted that even though archaeology was already well established as a science, great new discoveries regarding Egyptian hieroglyphics, Mesopotamian cuneiform tablets and many other ancient Near Eastern texts yielded many new insights. William Albright, an American archaeologist was one of the most influential thinkers of this period. Not only did Albright reveal many new insights regarding Pentateuch research, but many of his students also continued his work. Although very few of these archaeological discoveries had any direct relationship with the Old Testament or its people, hope was created that it could serve as a checklist regarding previous scholarly research into this field.

“The American Albright ‘school’ contended that archaeology and ancient Near Eastern studies provided hard facts, objective evidence of an ancient world very much like the one described in the Pentateuch, and the properly defined comparative methods were more fruitful than the subjective and unverifiable constructions of nineteenth-century European scholars.”

(Arnold 2003:627)

Arnold continued that the Albright school did not reject Wellhausen’s ‘Documentary Hypothesis’ outright, but did challenge its developmental process and the provenances of its sources. By making use of archaeological parallels, they showed that much of the ancient Near Eastern world did in fact relate to the world reflected within the Pentateuch. Albright was particularly opposed to the popular History-of-Religion angle taken by nineteenth century scholars, especially the idea that the religion moved from polytheistic to henotheistic to monotheistic development. He argued that monotheism was clearly illuminated throughout the history of Israel.

Albright and Cross presented their theory in 1955 that all the textual witnesses like the proto-Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch, etc, could be grouped

and traced to the geographical places of origin. The differences between them could therefore be explained by the lack of contact between them (Price 2007:97)

Further acclaimed works of the early twentieth century came through Skinner and Heinisch respectively who published their commentaries on Genesis in 1910 and 1930. Both commentaries stressed shared features between the Genesis account and other ancient Near Eastern literature (Hess 1994:10). Two other significant contributions during this period came from Hermann Gunkel's introduction of 'Form Criticism' and Gerhard von Rad's combination of 'Form' and 'Redaction Criticism'. Gunkel generally agreed with Wellhausen's model, but rather than accepting the idea of an editor working with source documents, he was convinced that there were many oral sagas behind these texts, originating from Israel's pre-literary age. Von Rad agreed with the Documentary Hypothesis, but argued that at the core of the text there were numerous small historical creeds. He motivated that these creeds were the backbone of the text with various redactorial works woven into them (Arnold 2003:627-628).

Miller & Miller (1973:219) mentioned that some of the more questionable contributions during this period came from scholars like Pfeiffer who identified another source in Genesis which he labelled "S" because he presumed it had come from Seir in Edom, or the southern parts of the ancient Near Eastern world. Julian Morgenstern, a Jewish scholar, singled out what he believed to be the oldest document. He called it "K" as it kept the account of Moses' relationships with the Kenites. Martin Noth (1972) presented another view when he argued for a common basic source "G" (labelled after the German word Grundlage for "ground-layer" or "foundation") upon which both J and E was later developed (Larue 1968:30-31).

#### **2.2.1.5. Late twentieth century**

Prior to the eighteenth century, a Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was generally accepted. As time passed the general notions of origin and authorship moved further and further away from this original view, with some exceptions like the Albright findings, towards a situation where scholars like Thomas Thompson (2002 [1974]:1-16) outright refuted any archaeological evidence for a patriarchal era. For Thompson these were nothing but literary creations and theological myths, conjured up by the

authors of the J document, without any historical value. According to his model, (he also refuted the Documentary Hypothesis) the text developed in five stages. First was small units and tails; second was larger units and compound tales; third was traditional complex-chain narratives; fourth was *toledoth* structures and five was post-*toledoth* structures which sufficed as the whole narrative of Genesis (Garrett 1991:247-251).

Thompson was not the only one making such claims as others like John van Seters (1975) also denied any second-millennium setting for the patriarchal narratives. To Van Seters the Abrahamic stories were but fictional characters conjured up for theological reasoning. He is convinced that the redactors of the source documents only completed their works, e.g. the book of Genesis, around 300 BC. Van Seters similarly questioned the existence of an E source altogether (Arnold 2003:628).

During this period of scholarly work, there were also scholars that outright challenged the very basis of ‘Historical Criticism’ as it developed through the centuries. Price comments:

“It is impossible to interpret ancient history, especially the history of Israel, without understanding that God had directed that history and is an inseparable part of it. In addition, not only God has been removed as an agent of history, but the text has been continually revised by ‘creative editors’ who produced numerous different ‘editions’ (recensions) of biblical books in response to ‘new religious situations,’ then the concept of the literal historical fulfilment of prophecy, such as messianic prophecy, is rendered meaningless.”

(Price 2007:94-95)

Sala (2008:95) strongly disagreed when he stated, “Totally without foundation is the myth that the Bible has been copied and recopied, translated and retranslated, so that today what we have doesn’t even resemble the original written by Moses.... Those who allege this demonstrate their ignorance of the facts.” Unfortunately, Sala does not go into much detail explaining these “facts.”

There were certain European scholars that were not in agreement with these claims of Thompson and Van Seters. Rolf Rendtorff argued that these tradition critical approaches were no longer consistent with the classical Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis. In his commentary *Das überlieferungsgechichtliche Problem des Pentateuchs* (1977), he spent a considerable time criticising the Documentary Hypothesis; revealing that there is an impossible link between ‘Form Criticism’ and the Hypothesis. He also refutes the concept of certain key Hebrew words that have been used to identify sources like J and P. Rendtorff was not only a critique of the Hypothesis, but also proposed his own model, which can be summarised as running across Genesis and not through it. Unfortunately, some of the exact arguments he proposed against the use of certain key words, he subsequently introduced in his own model (Garrett 1991:244-247).

Wenham (1987:xxxiv) summarised in his commentary, “Current discussions of Genesis has shown how some of the most deeply rooted convictions of the critical consensus have been challenged in recent years. The extent and date of H, the existence of E, the date of P, even the standard criteria for source division have been questioned.” Clines (1994:285) indicated that even in the midst of all these challenges, most scholars still hold to some version of the Documentary Hypothesis. The twentieth century could therefore be called the balancing century. On the one side you had scholars advocating individual critical methods, frequently taking them to the extreme, while on the other hand you had scholars who anew were searching for more balanced methods. One trademark aspect of the latter group were that they not only worked with the history of the text (the diachronic investigation), but also with the text itself as we have it today (the synchronic investigation). This approach became particularly popular among American scholars. One of the significant developments in this respect was the outcry that came from James Muilenburg in the late 1960’s regarding scholars who sought a new rhetorical analysis in which they could seek to understand Scripture within its larger context as well as retaining its historical context (Arnold 2003:629).

Sanders elaborated on this idea as he first coined the term ‘Canonical Criticism’. He was convinced there were specific traditions spanning the entire Scripture that could only fully be understood as a whole. Childs (1979:82) disagreed somewhat with him,

as he felt this new concept was not an exegetical method, but a hermeneutical project focusing on canonical context. Childs argued that the exegete should rather place less emphasis on the origin and transmission of the text and more on the literary shape and present form of the text (Ross 1988:33).

#### **2.2.1.6. Challenging authorship**

In light of the short overview, I have provided regarding the history of Pentateuch scholarly research, it is still clear that the question concerning Mosaic authorship has never fully left the table. Whybray (1995:12-13) commented that with five centuries of scholarly work, “we still don’t know when, why, how and through whom” the Pentateuch reached its final stage as we have it today. Opinions regarding date estimations vary by more than five hundred years. Alexander (2003:65) agrees that accurate dating is obstructed by the lack and fragmented nature of the evidence. Furthermore, even though evidence from archaeological discoveries portrays some sort of picture, dates still vary by up to half a century.

Alexander (2003:64) provides us with three potential keys in order to establish a possible dating reference:

1. If a person could isolate the latest tradition among other fragments, we would conclude that final editing could not have taken place prior to that date<sup>18</sup>.
2. External references on the Pentateuch, like archaeological discoveries could help provide dates or indicate cultural references.
3. If it were possible to understand the purpose behind authoring the Pentateuch, one would be able to determine who its original audience was. From this deduction, one could extrapolate a possible date.

Prince (2007:102), reflecting on the work of Talmon, argues that the ancient authors, compilers and scribes must have enjoyed a “controlled freedom from textual variations.” By this he means that they had the freedom to enhance the text as language grew and developed (as we would do with new translations of the Bible), but never to make any critical changes to the message of the text. In light of what Prince states I would therefore propose the concept of ‘enhancing editors’, defined as

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<sup>18</sup> See Alexander (2003:64-65) for an example of such arguments surrounding the Genesis 23 text.

editors who were faithful to the content of the text, but had the freedom to update and enhance the meaning and understanding thereof; in contrast to ‘editors’ who simply added and changed the text as time progressed.

Gibson (1981:1-2), who ascribed to an older tradition, is therefore of the opinion that if one speaks of an author you have to include the whole nation of Israel and never a single person. More specifically, he stated that it would include the bards and singers of tales during the wilderness wanderings. Mettinger (2007:35) made another contribution to the study when he listed a number of reasons why the narrator should be seen as omniscient. Obviously, the only *person* qualified to be such would be God Himself, yet it would be illogical to assume that God personally wrote the account. The physical author therefore needed to have a close or supernatural relationship with the Creator.

With this in mind and in light of the overview of the previous section, I have provided many references to possible authors and ‘enhancing editors’ as well as the dates in which the documentation of these accounts could have taken place. In conclusion of this section, I will shortly present some of the arguments in favour and against a Mosaic authorship in light of the three above-mentioned keys. Yet, as we search for evidence of Mosaic authorship, Walton (2001:21) reminds us that the thin line between the sections, which could originally have been penned by the man Moses, and those of ‘enhancing editors’, are often indistinguishable.

#### **2.2.1.6.1. Was Moses involved?**

In a general observation Walton (2001:41) states, “... the man Moses makes him perfectly suited, indeed, a most logical candidate, to complete the book.” In our search of understanding whether or not Moses could possibly have been the author (for most parts in any case) of the Pentateuch, I will divide the arguments into two categories. The first are references by external sources that ascribe authorship to him and the second are textual references that claim he himself wrote them. Furthermore, when we talk about the second references, it will be necessary to understand what the evidence for writing in general was, in, and prior to Moses’ life; for we have seen that scholars like Gunkel have argue in favour of a long pre-literary history, even though the Albright school would argue against this from an archaeological point of view.

Firstly, people within the time of the Bible narrative, were convinced that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch (Gibson 1981:1). 2 Chronicles 35:12 and Nehemiah 13:1 both refer to “the book of Moses” pointing to the law which Moses received from God. Two of the Gospel authors (Luke and John) noted that Jesus Himself mentioned that Moses had written about Him, “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he (singular) wrote about Me” (Jn 5:46), “Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures” (Lk 24:27) and “Now He said to them, ‘These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled’” (Lk 24:44).

A further observation I want to make is that when Jesus explained the Scriptures to the Emmaus travellers (Lk 24:13-36), He did not merely begin to explain to them from the time when Moses lived, but in light of John 1:1 began in the beginning of creation which Moses wrote about. Ham (2004:161) concluded “Because of the reference in the New Testament by Jesus to Moses and his authorship of the Pentateuch, there is very strong evidence to suggest that Moses was responsible for the Book of Genesis.” Another point we have to consider is Psalm 90:2 which was either written by, or dedicated to Moses, rendering that idea of a Creator God<sup>19</sup> (Eveson 2003:16-17).

Amongst early Jewish scholars, there was consensus that Moses was responsible for the authoring of the five books ascribed to him. The earliest reference of this is found in the works of Josephus Flavius, *Contra Apion* 1:8 which states that the Jews have twenty-two sacred or divine books. He credited the first five to Mosaic authorship (Larue 1968:437). Price (2007:87) agreed that Josephus, among all other rabbis and church fathers of the time, reflected this traditional belief that they possessed an unchanged and unchangeable Hebrew text, the *Hebraica veritas*.

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<sup>19</sup> An extended reference list of Mosaic authorship from the Old Testament are Jos 1:7; 8:32-35; 14:10; 1 Ki 2:3; 1 Chr 6:49; 2 Chr 33:8; 34:14; 35:12; Ezr 3:2; 6:18; 7:6; Neh 1:7-8; 8:1,14; Dn 9:11,13; MI 4:4. From a New Testament perspective including references to “the Law of Moses” in Mt 8:4; 19:7; Mk 1:44; 12:26; Lk 2:22; 16:29,31; 24:27,44; Jn 1:45; 8:5; 9:29; 19:7; Ac 6:14; 15:5; 26:22; 28:23; Rm 10:5; 1 Cor 9:9; Heb 9:19; 10:28.

Secondly, the idea of ‘writing’ is found approximately 60 times in the Pentateuch and it is definitely recorded as purported by Moses. There are six instances that Moses wrote or was commanded to write (Ex 17:14, 34:27, 39:30; Nm 17:2-3; Dt 10:4, 31:24) and frequently other people as well in his time (Dt 6:9, 27:3, 31:19; Jos 8:32). Following Joshua’s defeat of the king of Ai, he constructed an altar as prescribed in “the book of the law of Moses”, thus declared the existence of such a book not many years after the death of Moses (Jos 8:31). A few chapters later (Jos 24:26) we read about Joshua writing in “the book of the law of God”, once again emphasising the existence of such a book. Scripture clearly asserts that Moses, during his time in the desert, was in fact authoring “books” or at least parts of manuscripts (Larue 1968:433; Orr 1939).

Another aspect the text reveals when placed under close scrutiny, is the number of times people who lived prior to the Mosaic era would have broken the law if indeed they had it. In other words, if the patriarchal narratives were only conjured theological stories, as Thompson (1974) and Van Seters (1975) would argue, authored in an exilic or post-exilic period, why would they allow the characters in the narratives to break the law? Genesis 20:12 provides such an example where Abraham married his half sister as well as Genesis 29:15-30 where Jacob married two sisters, both instances prohibited by the law.

Considering the Old Testament text as a whole, one can see another aspect being brought forward in the chronological unity of the books contained in it. From the Old Testament canon, we can gather evidence of how people used to live before the Mosaic era in comparison to those afterwards. The one central aspect of change within the Hebrew nation was the introduction of the Torah during their wilderness experience. It is evident from the writings contained both in the time of the judges and the monarchies, that they were well aware of the existence of the Law (Alexander 2003:69-70)

Unfortunately, as we have seen, the question of authorship is not as simple, for there are a few legitimate arguments against Mosaic authorship. Baker (2003:800-801) referenced five main points:

1. The presence of anachronisms within the text. Examples include, firstly, that the last eight verses in Deuteronomy were clearly written by another person. Secondly, the name ‘City of Dan’ as found in the narrative concerning Abraham and Lot was only officially named so by the time of Judges. Thirdly, the appearance of different names for the same place, i.e. Bele / Zoar (Gn 14:2,8); Siddim / Dead Sea (Gn 14:3); Valley of Sheveh / King’s valley (Gn 14:17). Fourthly, Genesis 36:31; Numbers 24:7 and Deuteronomy 17:14-16; 28:36 seem to assume an Israelite monarch, although it was only established in 1 Samuel 8-12. Fifthly, in Genesis 40:15, Canaan is called “the land of the Hebrews”, but at the time there were no such designations. Sixthly, the Trans-Jordan (or beyond the Jordan) referenced in Genesis 50:10-11, gives the perspective of one looking from the west eastward though the Israelites were still on the eastern side of the river at the time. Seventh, Moses is frequently referred to in the third person as “he” rather than “I” (see Dt 1:1). Eighthly, in Numbers 12:3 we find a statement concerning Moses as being more humble than any other man on earth. If he personally penned such a statement, it would immediately have disqualified him from such a statement.
2. The use of divine names as seen in the use of YHWH which is a proper noun, used for the name of God, contrary to Elohim which is a common noun.
3. The presence of duplicate narratives as seen in the creation of humans, first simultaneously (Gn 1:27), then separately (Gn 2:21-22) and the flood stories as seen in Genesis 6:5-8; 9-13 compared to Genesis 6:18-22; 7:1-5.
4. The use of different literary styles and vocabulary as seen in Genesis 1, which is formal, precise and repetitious compared to Genesis 2, which is fluid and accessible.
5. The presence of possible contradictions and divergences are noted between the two creation accounts as well as the order in which things took place.

In light of the previously mentioned keys presented by Alexander (2003:64), I will draw the following conclusions. Regarding the point of the latest fragment as it appears in the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis or in other source hypothesis, it is still unclear to scholars whether any piece does in fact point to a time of post-Mosaic period. There are numerous arguments for and against this. Regarding the point of external source, I conclude that there is in fact sufficient evidence to support the

notion the Moses did have a great hand in its original authoring. Whether or not later ‘enhancing editors’ got hold of it is still an open question. Ross (1988:35) noted that he most probably did make use of lots of different sources that were conveyed by his ancestors through genealogy and family history. “It is reasonable to suggest that Moses gathered ancient records and traditions, and it makes better sense for the message of the book in the Pentateuch.”

Thirdly, regarding the question of motive for writing the text and who its original audience was, I would like to postulate a potential hypothesis. It is evident from the Pentateuch that the Israelites were aware of the existence of Yahweh as well as His interactions with people. As far as scholars can tell they did not possess any written form of text that would have recorded this, therefore I have to agree with Price (2006:91) and conclude that it came through oral traditions. This would have been especially true concerning history of their own people. Sala (2008:106, 127) argued that this is an unfounded statement due to the archaeological findings at Mari, Syria and the Ebla tables which proved that writing skills were already advanced enough by the time of Moses.

Following a period of about four hundred years among a foreign and pagan nation, few Hebrews could have been sure of their specific origin, neither what Yahweh expected from them. Following their exodus from Egypt, it would have been a most logical assumption that Moses did in fact have to provide the people of Israel with a guideline, a Law, including a well documented history of the Hebrew’s origin and past. As Moses was raised in the house of the Pharaoh, doubtless he would have received the best education and literary skill available in their time (Sala 2008:35, 256). I would therefore conclude that Moses definitely had both the motive and the means to author parts of the Pentateuch, during the time Yahweh allowed Moses and the covenant people to wander in the desert for forty years.

Some scholars argue that the language of the Hebrew Bible came from the first millennium BC and did not exist at the time of Moses (Price 2007:89). Averbek (2006:8) argued against this point stating, “Just because Moses did not write in exactly the same script or exactly the same form of the language as we find it in the first millennium, does not mean that he could not have written the Pentateuch in the

Hebrew language.” In a similar fashion, one could argue that no Bible translations, such as the KJV, existed in the fifteenth century; for the current language use, as found in the New KJV, did not exist during that era.

Therefore, it seems that there might be sufficient evidence for a case that Moses could have authored a large portion of the Pentateuch. The remaining question, however, concerns the issue of where he got his information. One of the general notions, which I will return to in chapter 5 under “Days-of-Revelation”, is that he received a number of direct revelations from God (Exell 1974:2).

Möller (1997:1) presents us with another hypothesis as to how Moses could have received his information for a chronological Genesis narrative. Adam and Eve spent their first day on earth (which was the seventh day of creation) in the company of God (Gn 3:8 presents the idea that God spent time walking with Adam). As the concept of *God being tired* in a physical sense and in need of rest, is totally foreign to the Bible, one might conclude that the true reasoning behind the seventh day rest was God’s undivided attention to the crown of His creation (Hamilton 2002:26). Möller continues that during the seventh day there would have been a great amount of conversation and questions<sup>20</sup> on Adam’s behalf. The possibility that God neglected to explain the seventh day rest to Adam is minimal. This in turn would obviously have raised the question of what happened in the previous six days of creation. Möller’s view could therefore potentially be linked to Gunkel’s conviction of more ancient oral traditions, but differ in terms of the fact that Moses most probably penned these traditions which were handed down from Adam.

Aalders (1932:30) confirms this notion in that the seventh day rest was not a new concept to the Hebrews when Moses presented them with the fourth commandment of the law. “We have to note: these things were not made known on the occasion of the pronouncement of the law with its ten commandments; it was rather assumed as a fact, and therefore was presented as the ground and urgent reason for Israel to rest on the Sabbath”. The oral tradition that Adam began following his conversation with

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<sup>20</sup> As part of the introduction of the dissertation, I list the 4 basic questions that humans ask regarding their existence. Adam most probably among others also asked these questions.

God during the seventh day was well-known not only to his decedents<sup>21</sup> the Hebrew people, but also in a great number of different versions to all his other descendents. Walton (2001:42) would agree that Moses most probably had numerous sources, both oral and written. Though I will highlight my final suggestions to authorship in chapter 5, I do agree with Walton at this point when stating, “The principle inspired, purposeful, and creative mind behind Genesis was Moses.”

### **2.3. Genres and nature of the book Genesis**

Boice (1982:19) reminds us that the question concerning the nature (fact or fiction) of the book Genesis, must be settled before the exegete can attempt to analyse it. One is consequently confronted with the issue of genres and the textual nature of Genesis. What would appear as narrative for the most part of Genesis, could also be indicative of mythology, saga, epic, genealogy, parable, folktale, fable or even history (Walton 2001:45). Commentaries like that of Gibson (1981:2) clearly stated that Genesis is folk literature, leaving very little room for other possibilities. Therefore, due to the great division among scholarly opinion regarding this issue I have decided to divide this section into three of the more important views. These three views hold that the book of Genesis mostly consists of myth, saga or history. In my attempt to dialogue with these three groups, I will begin by addressing the mythical view.

#### **2.3.1. Myth**

I must agree with Walton (2001:27) when he notes that most Christians become highly agitated and sometimes defensive when the Bible is compared with make-believe stories like the Romans and Greeks mythologies. Gibson (1981:11-12) agreed that, the way the concept of myth is generally applied would reference no more than religious stories conjured by ancient people to describe their beginnings.

We would therefore have to define what we mean by myth before we can make any conclusions. The term itself is not found within the context of the Old Testament, though there is a related word “*muthos*” found within the New Testament. Strong (1980) translated this word as “a tale that is fiction, myth or fable”. Bruce (1981

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<sup>21</sup> See *Appendix C* as indication that Adam’s oral tradition might only have needed to pass through nine to ten people before Moses received it.

[1949]:67) explained *muthos* as “primarily signifies ‘speech or conversation.’ The first syllable comes from a root ‘*mu*’, signifying ‘to close’; hence ‘a story, narrative, fable, fiction’ or the English use of myth.” Bruce also provided further information, “‘*muthos*’ is to be contrasted with ‘*aletheia*’ – ‘truth’, and with ‘*logos*’ – ‘a story, a narrative purporting to set forth facts’”. Sarna (1967:6-7) mentioned that *muthos* could simply just mean something that was spoken, like a tale.

Schutte (2007:2) referred to Bultmann on his position on myth, as the mindset or mentality of where things that are natural, is ascribed to the work of deity, due to the people’s lack of suitable knowledge or understanding of the subject. Van Aarde (2003:1-24) described a mythical worldview as one that would include 3 primary groups of characters, which one could label deities or gods, the natural like the heavens and the earth, and people with whom the gods interact. Eliade provided a definition in more practical terms:

“Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial time, the fables time of the ‘beginnings.’ In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality – an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behaviour, an institution....”

(Eliade 1963:5-6)

According to Walton (2001:27), myth would serve the ancient world in much the same line as science would serve the modern world. Where science is based on natural law, myth was based on the purposes of god’s and the corresponding activities of men. According to him, both are in search of understanding. This is especially true when it comes to the understanding of origins.

One of the views among scholars is that all ancient literature and stories are based on myth and legend. Schutte (2007:2-3) concluded that myth is the backdrop from which all ancient literature should be read. He argued that myth is simply the way or language in which an encounter with a god was expressed. Loader (2003:316) argued that all biblical texts were written with a mythical worldview in mind. By this he meant that what we called supernatural would have been quite ordinary for them.

Leach (1969:7) stated, “All stories which occur in the Bible are myths for the devout Christian, whether they correspond to historical fact or not”. I challenge this statement by Leach in that most devout Christians would rather see the Bible in its totality as the authoritative word and truth of God. His statement would more likely be accepted by someone who would hold to the idea that there are no differences between the Bible and text like the Talmud or Quran.

Theodore Gaster (1969:xxxv-xxxvi) argued that “myth is the natural language of religion, transmuting the historical data into religious truth”. Ross (1988:50) referred to De Catanzaro on his position regarding Genesis 1-11 as being mythical when he said, “Its purpose is, in part, that of filling in a gap by relating the origins of things in symbolic form where the author lacked more precise, scientific knowledge”.

Groenewald (2007:10-11) however pointed to the fact that there is still a great debate amongst scholars as to what we should consider as being mythical or myth in origin as well as its role in literature and society. On the one hand, when considering references like Bruce and Strong we see that myth is more closely related to a fable or a conjured story trying to explain a certain reality or dealings of ancient people with their gods. On the other hand we see scholars like Van Aarde (2003:1-24) who argued that myth must not be seen as a primitive, unsophisticated story or an untrue fable.

As to my understanding of myth, it comprises more of the first mentioned definitions, for if I had to agree with the view of scholars like Van Aarde, then every person in our modern day context, that had any form of experience or encounter with God would be classified as mythical within a few years.

#### **2.3.1.1. Gunkel on creation myth**

Any study on the subject of the mythical content of Genesis would not be complete without bringing Hermann Gunkel to the table. Ross (1988:51) has rightfully called Gunkel the pioneer of the mythical study of Genesis. Since Gunkel published his commentary on Genesis, *Schöpfung und Chaos* in 1895 he began drawing contrasts between history and the contents of Genesis 1-11. Following the publication, the issue of whether or not this unit was factual history was satisfied for most scholars as

Gunkel argued that the Hebrews borrowed stories from Babylonian mythology to form their own creation myths. Ross (1988:51) referenced five reasons, as presented by Gunkel, regarding why Genesis 1-11 cannot be considered as factual history.

1. History is found in written documents and not oral traditions.
2. History relies on outside evidence and not family stories.
3. History tells of the possible whereas they narrate the impossible
4. History seeks to inform whereas they are poetic in nature and intend to delight and inspire.
5. They are different in form from the true Hebrew historiography as found in David's court.

His views on this issue spread quickly and influenced a great number of other researchers.

Ross (1988:51) however disagreed with Gunkel and argued that his conclusion would not stand under close investigation; he felt. To Ross it seemed that Gunkel was trying to superimpose a modern day model of historical understanding on one that must be understood in the context of ancient history. The validity of oral traditions in history is much greater than Gunkel accredited to it. In fact, most of the ancient records that were written down began with an oral tradition of an eyewitness account. Concerning the study of the origins of different races, the most part it began with a family story which then grew to include a much larger public event. A prime example of this is the case of the nation of Israel that began with the family history of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Gunkel's third point largely also ungrounded, as apart from religious history there have been countless historical moments which seemed impossible but did in fact take place. As to his fourth remark, Ross pointed to the fact that we have a number of examples of the writer's poetry within the narratives. Removing this poetry would not make it any less historically correct. As for the last argument, Gunkel would only provide a valid point if the Pentateuch was in fact authored during the time he suggested. The same argument could also be used the other way around if the text was in fact authored any time before the courts of King David. Supposedly, the clearest assumption one can draw from this point is that it was most probably not

written during the time of David, as there is an obvious progression in writing and documenting history.

Gunkel (2006 [1895]:5) considered the comparative work that Wellhausen has done on Genesis 1 and 2 in order to discover the manner and thereby the date of the account of the world's creation. Concerning the Garden Narrative (Gn 2), Wellhausen "recognised a marvellous myth for which the colourful tradition of ancient Near Eastern world has provided material". In contrast to the Garden Narrative, the Genesis 1 account is very different in that it is a "thoroughly circumspect consideration". Regarding this statement Gunkel means that the Genesis 1 account has a much more informative and systematic construction with an obvious flow of events, unlike its counter unit which could be described as fantasy.

Building on the initial work done by Wellhausen, Gunkel (2006 [1895]:5-12) tried to provide evidence that Genesis 1 is not a free construction of the author. The first point he raises is from the images of chaos, which Wellhausen considered traditional and common to other myths. He continued that cosmogonies such as Genesis 1 are generally not created by individuals, but are more often based on traditions. Furthermore, he pointed to the fact that many other creation myths introduce the concept that the world began with water and darkness. Gunkel concluded that if only a fragment of cosmogonic-mythology was added to the section, the whole might as well be myth.

In his book *Creation and chaos in the primeval era and the eschaton* (1895), Gunkel postulated that Genesis 1 could not have been written outside of Babylonian influence. Hess (1994:18) referenced Lambert who supports Gunkel's view in that Babylonian influence can be clearly seen in non-religious items and ideas. Gunkel started off in chapter 4 of his book by drawing attention to possible similarities between the Babylonian myth and other biblical passages. Using this as his premises, he then continues in chapter 5 to draw similarities<sup>22</sup> between Genesis 1 and the Babylonian myth.

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<sup>22</sup> See Gunkel (2006 [1895]:21-77) for proposed similarities between the Old Testament and the Babylonian creation myth.

For Gunkel (2006 [1895]:78) the issue of Genesis 1 is settled, “that this narrative is simply the Jewish adaptation of a much older thing, which originally must have been more mythological”. What exactly those older origins were is still a question under discussion. Atkinson (1990:15) started by referencing the *Epic of Atrahasis*, written around 1600 BC, which has similarities both as a creation as well as a Flood Narrative. He pointed to the Babylonian creation account of *Enuma Elish* which was written much later. Suggestions have also been made of a polytheistic origin while others point to astral religions. Gunkel pointed out that many of the themes correlate with Phoenician, Greek and Indian stories. There are speculations regarding the Palestinian climate and ancient Hebrew beginning of the year that oppose a local origin of the narrative. However, these aspects could strongly point to Babylonian influence. Walton (2001:28-29) went into some discussion on popular tales like the *Tale of Adapa*; the *Epic of Atrahasis*; the *Gilgamesh Epic* and the *Enuma Elish*. Due to Gunkel’s point of view, however, I will only spend some time on the last mentioned account.

Gunkel postulated that even though Genesis 1 and the Babylonian creation myth seem at first glance to have nothing in common, there are numerous similarities worthwhile exploring. I will therefore discuss this matter in two sections, one dealing with the differences and one concerning the similarities.

The first similarity we find is within the pattern of the two narratives. This is restricted only to the introductions as we only possess a minor fragment of the full Babylonian creation myth. The second similarity we find is that both refer to the world in the beginning as consisting of water and darkness. Thirdly is the issue of God separating the primal waters into two parts, by the division of the heavens. Gunkel (2006 [1895]:78-80) stated this matter to be Babylonian in the strictest sense for there are no other references regarding this in other Old Testament texts. Fourthly is the correlation between God’s almighty word of creation and that of the divine word in the myth. Fifthly, we find that both narratives use the same classification for land animals: cattle, wild animals and reptiles. The emphasis on heavenly bodies as “rulers” is in close correlation with Babylonian astral religions. On the sixth point it is of note to see that both agree that light was already there before the creation of the stars. Gunkel stated that with these parallels in place it confirms that Genesis 1 is but

one link in a greater chain that has already been identified as a Babylonian origin. He continued to state that in the light of historical examination one cannot regard Genesis 1 as our ancestors did, as a remnant of a special revelation which was, perhaps for the *first* human beings.

Looking at the obvious differences, which Gunkel (2006 [1895]:79-80) deemed as “could hardly be conceptually greater”, we find that there are deviations in pattern in regard to the Sabbath found only in Genesis 1. Gunkel believed this is due to the arrangement of the material in Genesis 1 that resides in a more ancient origin. From a theological perspective there is a vast difference between the Babylonian and biblical creation reports. In reference to the theological perspective, one may postulate, as Gunkel put it, “received among the Hebrews in unadulterated form but received among the Babylonians in mythological corrupted form.” The Babylonian myth consists of very wild and grotesquely titanic barbaric poetry where as Genesis 1 is an ordered and even tranquil flow of events. In the myth the gods arise during the course of events while in Genesis 1, God stands as the unchangeable Creator that spoke the creation into existence. On the other hand stands the god of Babylon who slew a monster in the heat of battle and formed the world from its body.

The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967a:418-419) highlights some other differences found between the two accounts. In the Genesis account, there are no generations of gods as Yahweh has always existed and lives utterly outside of the cosmic process. Neither are there any sexual connotations to God, which could also present a counter statement to the Canaanite fertility cult of Baal. Nowhere do we find any form of struggle between Yahweh and other monsters. Yahweh created, ruled and controlled them all.

The question does however arise that if Genesis 1 is a mythical reconstruction based on Babylonian origin, why aren't there any other versions? Gunkel stated that given the “fullness” of Genesis 1 there would clearly be no need and that it has superseded all other attempts (Gunkel 2006 [1895]:81).

Gunkel (2006 [1895]:82) consequently outlined the summary of his religio-historical sequence regarding the creation myth as follows:

1. Babylonian (*Marduk*) myth – The Babylonian myth is transferred to Israel.
2. Poetic recension of the Yahweh myth – There it loses many of its mythological elements and nearly all of its polytheistic elements.
3. Genesis 1 – In Genesis 1 it is, as far as it was possible, completely Judaized.

### 2.3.1.2. Response to Gunkel

According to Barr (1959:3-4) all language is symbolic in some sense, but this does not make it a myth. Symbols and metaphors could be used in just about all contexts, however it does not constitute that it has now changed into a myth. Ross's conclusion regarding myth is that it is not merely symbolic language, but the expression of reality for ancient people:

*“Reality in the Old Testament differs radically from the prevailing view of the ancient world. The Hebrew believed in an absolutely sovereign God who brought them into existence as a nation. Their concept of time was not cyclical but eschatological and full of hope, their ritual was not cosmic but redemptive, and their concept of space was not limited to primeval but actualized in history.”*

(Ross 1988:52)

Expanding on the idea of myth being used within context of a nation, Ross (1988:52-53) continued that for ancient people their myths were created to define reality. It was therefore integrated into every fibre of their society (for example, the year's harvest was poor because the god was angry with them). To a greater measure, when it dealt with what was held most sacred to the ancient people, either the totality, or no part of the concept would have been taken up in myth. To reason that it contains only traces or small sections of myth is ungrounded. If we are therefore to take single concepts or terms out of its cultural relevant setting, we may end with any conclusion. Consequently Ross concluded that Genesis is not myth; rather a well preserved record of the reality concerning the origin of the people of Israel<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Frankfort (1946:237) goes into great depth on the issue of how the Hebrews broke with the mode of speculation that had prevailed prior to their time.

The establishment of the Hebrew faith was radically different to that of the ancient Near Eastern mythological worldview in that they sought correspondence between the human and the divine. Barr (1959:7) observed that the main issue for the Hebrew faith was the differentiation between human and divine, and that of God and nature. The result being that all mythological concepts within the language use of Israel was subjected and controlled by the historical sense. Atkinson (1990:16) quoted Gordon Wenham as saying “The author of Genesis 1... shows that he was aware of other cosmologies, and that he wrote not in dependence on them so much as in deliberate rejection of them.”

Thordarson (1974:218) held that as far as the good forces were concerned (God and his interaction with humanity) mythology was totally done away with through Yahwism. As far as the evil forces were concerned (concepts like Death, Chaos and the Underworld) he allowed that they could still perhaps have been used in a more mythological sense. Hasel (1974:91) did not even allow for this much mythological remnant. He concluded that the individual terms were actually used as polemics:

“It appears that the Genesis cosmology represents not only a ‘complete break’ with the ancient Near Eastern mythological cosmologies but represents a parting of the spiritual ways brought about by a conscious and deliberate anti-mythical polemic which meant an understanding of the prevailing mythological cosmologies.”

(Hasel 1974:91)

Von Rad (1972:50) argued that since the beginning of the previous century there has been a strong notion to interpret creation events in terms of mythological concepts borrowed from other ancient religions. This notion now seems to be turning as our understanding grows regarding the seeming similarities in language use between the Scriptures and other ancient neighbouring texts. Some of the examples we find are for instance, the Hebrew word *tēhôm* meaning primeval flood. There is a possibility that it could have a linguistic affinity with *Tiamat*, the Babylonian dragon of chaos, but any relation beyond this cannot be assumed. Hamilton (2002:25) suggested that even if such a link could be made, this could in no way be used to prove any mythical allusions used by the author. He also pointed out that in the case of the Babylonian

myth there is tension and enmity while in the biblical creation narrative there is no such tension. Tsumura (1994b:31) outright objected against such notions when stating, “I have thoroughly re-examined the problem from a linguistic point of view, and it is now clear that it is phonologically impossible to conclude that *těhôm* ‘ocean’ was borrowed from *Tiamat*.”

The same is seen with the Hebrew word *bōhū* and Baau, the Phoenician mother-goddess. *Bōhū* is a noun, which denotes emptiness or desolation. This point’s to the fact that the author did not have to borrow from other mythologies to complete their own stories, but once again emphasises the uniqueness of Scripture and the influence of a Creator God personally dealing with His own people (Von Rad 1972:50).

Hamilton (2002:27-28) explained that according to the Genesis creation narrative, man is placed on the centre pedestal with all of creation surrounding him. The added focus on the specific creation of the woman is found nowhere else in other “pagan” creation accounts; most of which man is but an afterthought. Miller & Miller (1973:117) summarised as follows, “Whether there is any direct relationship between the Babylonian and Old Testament stories of Creation is uncertain. There are similarities, but the differences are even greater, and the theological superiority of the Hebrew account is beyond any question.”

Schutte (2007:4) concluded that “the true subject matter of myth is the place of human beings in the world, and the function of myth is to describe that place, therefore to express humanity’s understanding of itself in the world in which it lives.” Therefore the moment you begin to introduce the concept of mythology into the Hebrew’s concept of reality, you depart from what they believed at large. In light of the New Testament, it testifies to the fact that the Old Testament is based on actual historical events and not just a gathering of ancient Near Eastern myth. Von Rad (1962:136-151) suggested that Yahweh's revelation to Israel rather opened them to the realm of history and not that of myth. From a theological perspective, one would also then begin to question, *what is truth?* For both the Christian and the Judaist the truth to which the Scriptures testify is not only absolute in a physic-historical context, but also transcends space and time.

In conclusion to the possibility of myth as the genre of Genesis, I would agree with the broad definition when myth deals with the interaction between man and God, however I would disagree with a view of myth being a theological or religious creation of ‘fictional’ events conjured up to describe certain truths to its audience. I therefore agree with Tsumura (1994b:28-33) when he concludes that the arguments for direct relationship between the Genesis account and other ancient Near Eastern mythologies, as posed by scholars like Gunkel, would not stand under scrutiny of individual case examination. Concerning the appearance of isolated mythical terms and concepts, I must propose that they should be seen in the context of anti-mythical polemics<sup>24</sup>.

### **2.3.2. Saga**

Coats (1983:5-7) described a saga as a long traditional story or narrative. He indicated that it usually contains an episodic structure that is built and developed around a specific topic, theme or character. Often sagas are the result of many different contributing tales ranging from oral translations, reports, legends, anecdotes, hymns and various other pieces of literature. In contrast to the world of fable and myth, saga deals with the real world, usually set in the time of the author. However, saga can borrow from the fictional ideas contained in fable and myth, but would transform them to have real day relevance. It was most commonly used in story telling within ancient society, therefore also containing some elements of entertainment.

Westermann (1980:31-35) provided a three part division of what he calls a saga-cycle. First is the primeval saga, which deals with the creation of the heaven and earth and the world surrounding that time. The primeval saga can further be divided into the events surrounding the creation account and the flood account. Secondly is family saga, which deals with family related stories. Thirdly, is the heroic saga, which deals with people who provided leadership to their people and helped them to endure challenging times.

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<sup>24</sup> See Hasel (1974:81-102) for examples and explanation on anti-mythological polemics.

According to Coats (1983:38) and Westermann, Genesis would for the most part fit into the saga genre, as it deals with numerous different stories spread over more than a thousand years. As we have seen in the section dealing with Pentateuch research history, these different stories could have originated from many sources, both oral and written, which was compiled into a single work at any time from the Mosaic era up to a postexilic era.

I would agree with these definitions that the book of Genesis could potentially be seen as saga for it deals with the real world and actual events. However, in light of this I would also have to disagree if one would attempt to show that these events or translations had any origin apart from what the Israelites understood as truthful.

### **2.3.3. History**

Walton (2001:42-43) pointed out that the issue of historical authenticity regarding the Bible, even more specifically the book of Genesis, might be greater than any other work ever composed. The book of Genesis presented a historical framework for countless centuries up to the latter parts of the age of Enlightenment when the onslaught of rationalism and empiricism began probing it. Critical scholars began questioning every aspect that was taken as truthful and accurate history. Walton continued that in order to establish an accurate understanding of the genre, one first has to understand what it meant to the people it was addressed to. He concluded that if one did not begin there, one might read anything into the text.

Coats (1983:9-10) therefore defined the genre of history as a kind of writing that was designed to record events as they actually took place in the past. As far as its structure is concerned, he concluded that it “is controlled, then, not by the concerns of aesthetics, nor by the symbolic nature of a plot, but by the chronological stages or cause-effect sequences of events as the author(s) understood them.”

Sanders (1952:143) mentioned three distinct principles to establish historiography. The first is the bibliographical test, which is used to examine the textual transmission through which ancient documents reached us through time; or more simply stated, how reliable are the copies of the documents that we have? The second is the internal evidence test used to determine the credibility of the documents we have. Thirdly is

the external evidence test, which relies on other historical material like archaeology, to confirm or deny the internal testimony of the documents at hand. In chapter 5 I will revisit these three tests proposed by Sanders in order to establish the level of historical correctness of the first two chapters of Genesis.

Another perspective on the issue of literary genre came from Möller (1997:2-3) who questioned whether it was history in the sense as we know it; or something more symbolic and mythical. Möller concluded that “Primarily we should keep in mind that the Bible is divinely inspired, and for that reason it does not quite fit any literary genre. Although the portrayal of the creation events has been written in a particularly narrative and historical style, it is nevertheless also presented in a prophetic-historical style.” This ‘Prophetic-Historical style’ refers to a combination of accurate historical events, which was also so designed by the Creator to point to something even greater in the future.

I want to conclude this section pertaining to the genre of Genesis with the following ideas. In light of what the Pentateuch research history has postulated, it would be unwise to try to classify the whole book of Genesis under a single genre. Consequently, the comments made by Walton (2001:42-43) regarding our understanding of how the original audience understood the text, leads me to the conclusion that within the field of exegetical studies it is of great importance to recognise a specific order in which such a study should be conducted. The greater part this chapter dealt with diachronic methods that will mostly change to synchronic methods in the chapters to follow. If my understanding of Walton is correct, it should be the other way around. I will therefore accommodate the idea that the book of Genesis could potentially portray an historical account. Perhaps not in the sense as to how we would communicate modern history or even as we would find it in other biblical texts like the books of Kings and Chronicles, but in the sense of an author who was either narrating the truth as he experienced it, or the compilation of that which oral traditions informed him of the past. Whether or not Genesis 1 and 2 is therefore closer to history than saga or myth; or perhaps a mixture, I will only conclude in chapter 5.

## 2.4. Structure

In his commentary on Genesis Gunkel (2006 [1895]) brought in an initial two part division of the book of Genesis. According to Gunkel the first part, ranging from Genesis 1-11, is mythical in nature, which according to Otto (2007:21) was given to the covenant people as an ethical statement against aspects like violence, while the second part (Gn 12-50) contains the legends of the patriarchs. For Gunkel a much older oral tradition preceded the written Pentateuch for a couple of centuries. Gunkel argued that by making use of certain critical techniques it would be possible to retrace these stories from the written text (Garrett 1991:36-37).

Garrett (1991:44) pointed out that both Von Rad and Noth claimed that the Pentateuch, as we have it today, came through a long tradition of oral transmission from one generation to the next. Many of the traditions were transmitted independently from one another and therefore changed as it suited the generations need. Noth argued that even though the traditions were changed, five themes remained throughout. They include; the guidance out of Egypt and to the arable land, the guidance in the wilderness with the revelation at Sinai and the promise to the patriarchs.

Douglas Knight (1985:266) describes the work done by Von Rad and Noth as “dissolution” in which he points to twelve aspects where modern critical scholars found their claims to be inconclusive and wanting. One of the major aspects that he cites is the fact that one cannot determine with absolute certainty the presence of oral transition within a written text (Garrett 1991:45; Anderson 1972; Trueman Dicken 1966:1-78).

In light of the work done by Garrett (1991:186); Kikiwada & Quinn (1985:47-48) and Coats (1983:28) I have postulated a structure of the Primeval History (Gn 1-11).

Genesis (1:1-11:32)

1. Creation (1:1-2:3)
  - a. Summary of the work of God
  - b. Creation of man
2. First threat (2:4-3:24)

- a. Account of earth and heaven
- b. Adam and Eve
3. Second threat (4:1-26)
  - a. Cain and Abel, genealogy
  - b. Lamech's taunt (in genealogy)
4. Final threat (5:1-9:29)
  - a. Genealogy
  - b. Noah's flood, salvation in ark
5. Resolution (10:1-11:32)
  - a. Genealogy
  - b. Tower of Babel and dispersion, genealogy
  - c. Abram leaves Ur

Garrett (1991:192) presented us with an alternative to the meaning of the six-day creation as found in Genesis 1. His hypothesis is based on the fact that Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 consists of a heptadic structure. In more simple terms it refers to the fact that the section could be divided into seven main movements or more accurately six plus one where the six refers to the six creation acts and the seventh to the day in which the Creator took rest.

There is another portion of Scripture in which we find a literal day reference to the six plus one pattern, as found in Genesis 1. This deals with Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai. Exodus 24:16 tells the story of how Moses was called to the mountain of God. For six days, the mountain was covered by a cloud, and on the seventh, Moses was called up the mountain and into the cloud where he remained for forty days. There is an additional observation that one can add to Garrett's hypothesis. In Exodus 33:23 Moses discloses his desire to behold God face to face. God's answer to him is that no man can see His face and live, consequently God provided him with an alternative. Moses stood in a cleft of rock while God covered Moses' face with His hand. God then passed him while calling out His name, and removed His hand for Moses to see Him from behind. One can speculate that the concept of God's 'back' could possibly refer to more than just a 'physical hind side;' including those things that God did in the past, i.e. creation and that history leading up to the Mosaic era.



With Garrett's observations, I will conclude this chapter as an open question; for countless years of scholarly work is still to follow. As mentioned at the start of this chapter, my aim is not to challenge these aspects, but rather to provide an overview, as well as establishing my position on some of the issues at hand, before commencing with a more in-depth study of the actual literary sections of Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25.

## CHAPTER 3

### EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF GENESIS 1:1-2:4a

#### 3.1. Introduction

Ross (1988:23) postulated an interesting concept regarding the understanding of Genesis 1 and 2, for both its readers in ancient Israel as well as its readers today. If the Bible is God's authoritative and inspired work, our methods of analysing the texts should reveal the will of God through the text. According to Ross, any method not illuminating God's desire for His people might give the impression of some mystical or derived arbitrarily and would therefore challenge the very premisses of biblical authority.

Ross (1988:23-24) made only one great division between two fractions of scholarly approaches regarding date, source and authorship of the study unit. On the one hand Ross indicated a more traditional<sup>25</sup> or conservative approach where it is still believed that Moses received inspiration directly from God, which he in turn taught the Israelites. There might be some disagreement on the fact if Moses actually sat and wrote it all down during his time in the desert or if via oral traditions it might have been penned at some later stage as we have seen in the previous chapter. It is of note that in light of the biblical Canon as a whole, this view of Mosaic authorship is strongly supported (see section 2.2.1.6.1.) On the opposite end are the more modern or critical scholars; who generally argue that the Pentateuch came from several sources and traditions in later periods.

Therefore, considering the literature review of chapter 2, I have examined some of these different possibilities regarding the larger context in which this study unit finds its expression. I have also indicated that in many instances there is more than one persuasive argument concerning structure, theme, genre etc. During the next two chapters, I will make a detailed analysis regarding the main two study units, and also provide further exposure to some of these arguments.

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<sup>25</sup> By traditional I mean that this view was primarily upheld by the Jewish rabbis and the first century church. By conservative, I mean the theological understanding of the Evangelicals and certain Baptist and Methodist groups (Garrett 1991:239-241).

### 3.2. Structure of Genesis 1:1-2:4a

In light of the Documentary Hypothesis, the whole of Genesis chapter 1 would find its placement within source P. Though the chapter concludes in verse 31, the actual conclusion of this section according to the Documentary Hypothesis should only be in Genesis 2:4a (Garrett 1991:187). A narrative view would correspond closely to that of the Documentary Hypothesis though the section rather concluded in 2:3 as seen in the KJV and NASB.

By making use of Waltke (2001:55-73); Atkinson (1990:19); Ross (1988:75); Coats (1983:41-48) and Brueggemann (1982:22-39) among others, I provided the key elements of the Genesis 1 creation account:

- The title of the account deals with the creation of the universe and everything in it (Gn 1:1).
- The main characters are God who is the Creator and life-giver as well as the Spirit of God who is His accomplice (Gn 1:1-2).
- The preferred method that the Creator God used was by speaking and separating creation into existence (Gn 1:3, 1:4).
- The “antagonist” in the account is that of chaos who is represented by darkness and void (Gn 1:2).
- The creation is initiated by God (Gn 1:1, 3).
- Creation on Day One deals with the separation of light and darkness; day and night (Gn 1:3-5).
- Creation on Day Two deals with the establishment of heaven to separate the expanse of water above and below (Gn 1:6-8).
- Creation on Day Three deals with the separation of seas and dry land, as well as vegetation brought forth from the land (Gn 1:9-13).
- Creation on Day Four deals with the establishment of the heavenly bodies for illumination and the division of time (Gn 1:14-19).
- Creation on Day Five deals with the creation and blessing of both marine and bird life (Gn 1:20-23).
- Creation on Day Six deals with the creation and blessings of animal life as well as the creation, blessing and commissioning of human life (Gn 1:24-31).
- Completion of creation:

- Day Seven reflects on God who rested following His acts of creation and blessing (Gn 2:1-4a).

### 3.3. Theological theme of Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Ross (1988:45) commented that when one considers the subject of any biblical passage, you will basically find two strands; those ideas with God as the subject and those ideas with man as subject. Regarding this comment I want to make the proposal that both God and man could in some instances simultaneously be the subject<sup>26</sup> in that the passage dealing with God as the central theme also has a direct implication on mankind.

Atkinson (1990:15) suggested that Genesis 1 should be seen as praise rather than a hymn of worship. On the other hand, Eveson (2003:21, 38) described it as “not poetry, neither is it a hymn of praise. Rather, it is a moving and powerful statement of God’s creative activity which should stir us to worship and adore the great King of creation”. The statement therefore captures the idea that the theme of Genesis 1 is not humanity or the creation, but rather the magnificence of God, the Creator of everything. McIntosh (2001:38) was in agreement that Genesis 1 is not poetry, for Hebrew poetry makes use of parallelism and repetition which is quite foreign to Genesis 1. Rather it has a chronological flow of stating facts. Ross (1988:65) continued that when creation is brought into picture the focus is also extended to include this Creator God’s blessing as He bestows it on His creation. Clines (1994:285) points out that the theme of the Creator’s blessing is found throughout the account; first on all living creatures, then to man and finally to the seventh day.

Brueggemann (1982:22-24) disagreed with Eveson and McIntosh in that he proposed the passage to be poetic, thereby considering the theme as “God and God’s creation are bound together in a distinct and delicate way.” By this statement, he indicates that there is an eternal bond between the Creator God and his creation. Even though there may be many challenges placed upon this bond, like the issue of sin, God always

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<sup>26</sup> Francois du Toit (2007:21-24) proposed that Jesus, who is the perfect representation of the Creator God, did not come to the earth to be an example for mankind, but an example of mankind. The implication of his proposal is that mankind will only find their true identity and nature within God. Many Scriptural references regarding God therefore also address mankind simultaneously ([www.mirrorreflection.net](http://www.mirrorreflection.net)).

stays faithful and provides a means of salvation for His creation. Brueggemann continued that the theme of Genesis 1 is not only restricted to this scriptural unit, but can also be seen as the golden thread running through the entire Bible. Gibson (1981:5-6) agreed with Brueggemann when he indicated that the message addresses the sovereignty of God. He created all, and everything belongs to Him. As to Brueggemann's golden thread, Gibson highlighted Scriptures like Psalm 24:1-2; 89:11; 95:3-5; 100:3, Is 43:1; 46:4; 48:12-13 as examples of ancient Israel's understanding of this sovereignty.

The theme of Genesis 1 should also be understood in the light of its implication on surrounding nations. Hamilton (2002:22) therefore pointed to the emphasis placed on the oneness of God. The Creator God has no spouse or counterpart, nor is there a real antagonist in the narrative. He also believed that this opening theme to the Scriptures could possibly indicate that this Creator God is therefore self-fulfilled, and that His act of creation was not made to bring fulfilment to Him. Rather that creation in itself could never be self-fulfilled and would therefore always need to stay in relation, or bound to its creation as Brueggemann would put it. This view of God was foreign to the surrounding pagan religions of the time whose views were based mostly on a type of polytheistic religion.

Waltke (2001:55) also proposed that the idea behind the creation account was to establish the concept that the God of the covenant community (people of Israel) is the same Creator God who established the universe and everything in it. Ross (1988:102-103) elaborated that this Creator is therefore also the Redeemer and Lawgiver, both of which He has established by His Word. Hamilton (2002:22) added that even though this is true, it also makes a clear division between the Creator God and man as His creature. Even though God relates to mankind in a number of different ways throughout the Scripture, this line of Creator / creature is never broken.

Many of the surrounding pagan nations in the ancient world believed in a great number of god's, each responsible for their specific area of dominion like the sun or the water. Not only does the author clearly establish that this Creator God made everything in the universe, but also named a multitude of them i.e. darkness He called "night"; light "day"; dry land "earth"; etc. Eveson (2003:34) argued that through both

these acts of creating and naming God showed His ultimate supremacy over all of creation.

Von Rad (1972:65) would add to this discussion in that this text introduced Israel to the concept and origin of time. Von Rad is therefore convinced that it is the author's intention that the seven days should be understood as seven literal days and not seven lapses in time. Atkinson (1990:17) however, is of the opinion that it would never have been the author's thoughts or intention to settle our debate between evolution and Creation Science.

### **3.4. Origin of Genesis 1:1-2:4a**

Eveson (2003:22) presented us with the idea in light of Job 38:4-6 that no human being could ever qualify to speak with certainty on the subject of origin, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone." According to Eveson, the Genesis creation account was not mere speculations, nor an apologetic answer or even Moses debating the issue of origin in the courts of Pharaoh, but the result of God providing revelational insight on the issue of creation to mankind. Walton echoes this idea in his commentary.

"We assume that a biblical author, including the author of Genesis, is not simply putting together a jumbled combination of unrelated sources or random thoughts. Rather, he is writing intelligently with a purpose, and each narrative and each segment of text (whatever the genre) is intentionally chosen to contribute in some way to the purpose."

(Walton 2001:21)

Eveson (2003:22-23) continued that time, space and matter is not eternal, but that there had to be a moment at which all three of them began. In light of Eveson's comment, it would be inconsistent to try and explain the existence of one of these

three fundamental properties without the existence of the other<sup>27</sup>. My proposition is that all three had to have come into existence at exactly the same moment in eternity; a moment which could possibly be called “the beginning.” The biblical canon as a whole frequently reflects on the concept of the beginning<sup>28</sup>.

Von Rad (1972:45-46) had an opposing view to that of Eveson. As he presented his exposition of creation within the context of the Hexateuch the focus is shifted from what he called “a doctrine of creation” to that of salvation and election. This means that Yahweh as the Creator no longer takes the central position; rather the covenant that Yahweh made with Abraham, also happens to be the same Yahweh who is the Creator. Speiser (1990:8) added his opinion in that the text would have served as a credo of the Creator God and not a scientific theory.

Even though Von Rad (1972:47, 63) shifted the focus of creation to that of salvation and election, he was still convinced of the importance of Genesis 1 as Priestly doctrine. For him it was not merely written as a good introduction to the Hexateuch, but

“It is doctrine that has been carefully enriched over centuries by very slow growth. Nothing is here by chance; everything must be considered carefully, deliberately, and precisely.... ancient, sacred knowledge, preserved and handed on by many generations of priests, repeatedly pondered, taught, reformed and expanded most carefully and compactly by new reflections and experiences of faith.”

(Von Rad 1972:47, 63)

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<sup>27</sup> If you have space and matter without time, when would you place the matter? If you have time and matter without space, where would you place it? If you have time and space without matter, what would be in that space?

<sup>28</sup> It can be seen from the writings of the gospel according to John that at the beginning the Word of God was already present (Jn 1:1-2). John continues in verse 3 by making use of a repeating statement to insure the full implication is understood, “All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.” This is also seen in the message that Paul and Barnabas preached in Lystra, “a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them” (Ac 14:15). Even the Psalmist echoed this, “Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God” (Ps 90:2). This message of a Creator God is a theme interwoven through all Scripture from Genesis 1 to Revelation 21 where God exclaims “Behold, I am making all things new” (Rv 21:5).

Brueggemann (1982:22-25) confirmed this notion that Genesis 1 should be seen as part of the Priestly materials, therefore addressing a community in exile or shortly thereafter around the time of the sixth century BC.

On the other hand, if Moses was indeed the original author of at least large sections of the Pentateuch, his motive would clearly be seen as one to provide an account to his people who did not have any fixed reference of origin. Consequently the same argument proposed by Von Rad and Brueggemann for a post Babylonian exile period could be used for a post Egyptian period. In fact, a post Babylonian period of 70 years would not carry nearly the same motivational weight as a post Egyptian period of 400 years.

Speiser (1990:10), as well as the New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967a:417), argued that the Genesis tradition must have borrowed from the Babylonian accounts. He also stated that there could not have been another unnamed source from which both accounts were derived. Speiser unfortunately provided no clear reasoning as to why this would have been so. On matters pertaining to an unnamed account, I would like to add at this point that such an account may not have existed in a written form, but could have been transmitted in oral form. According to the biblical timeline, Moses lived about a thousand years after the Noachic flood. If people had any oral traditions they all must have had their origin from the time of the flood passed from Noah to his three sons. The basis for the stories could have stayed the same with some major variable added over time, but the nation of Israel with whom this Creator God made a covenant, kept to the real tradition. This may be part of the reason why God decided to make a covenant with them instead of any other nation.

Gunkel (2006 [1895]:3-4) presented an additional hypothesis regarding the origins of Genesis 1. Firstly, there is the notion that the Babylonian creation myth lies behind Genesis 1. Secondly, it might have been through dissension and adaptation of the account over a long period of time. The third hypothesis postulated that it might have originated from the Assyrian influence on Judah. A fourth view suggested that it could have been in “the days of the kingdoms of Israel.” During this time, Babylonian influence was already strong through the mediations of the Phoenicians. Fifthly, possibilities of an earlier time have been suggested with the discovery of the

Tell el-Amarna tablets. There are however, two predominant opposing views that would both argue in favour of Genesis 1 as being a free construction. The difference between the two views is based on the fact that the one suggests it was a free construction from the exilic authors, whereas the other would argue it was free construction from all influence prior to the exile.

If Genesis was indeed the work of men and woman centuries after Moses, it would seem like an even greater contradiction to the cultures among which they lived. This contradiction can be seen in the fact that the ancient Babylonians and Greeks (even some scientists today) believed that matter is eternal. Consequently, this notion is opposite to what the author of Genesis indicated; that matter had a specific origin and creator (Eveson 2003:22). In a similar manner at present, as referenced in chapter 1, we have the ongoing debate between the theory of Evolution and that of Creation. Many evolutionists try to base their work on scientific deductions as the ancient Babylonians and Greeks did, contrary to where Creation Science not only makes use of scientific deduction, but has a supportive belief and understanding from Scripture that a Creator was involved. Ross (1988:101) rightfully pointed out that from both a historical as well as a literary context the creation account “contrasts radically with other stories of creation in the ancient Near East.” I therefore have to conclude that it seems fairly illogical to argue that the author of Genesis 1 and 2 would challenge the other ancient world thinkers on such a seeming elementary topic if there was in fact not a great amount of inspiration accompanying his authoring. Concerning the source origin of the text, as we have already seen in chapter 2, the most likely candidate for such inspiration would be Moses.

### **3.5. Exegetical outline of Genesis 1:1-2:4a**

The chronological flow of events contained in Genesis 1:1-2:4a seems to be fairly straightforward when dividing it into smaller sections. However the complexity of concepts and rareness of terminological use contained in the units, makes it a challenging text for analysis. My proposition regarding the division<sup>29</sup> would therefore be as follows:

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<sup>29</sup> My proposed layout followed the consulting of Eveson (2003); Waltke (2001); Garrett (1991); Ross (1988); Coats (1983); Von Rad (1972) and Gunkel (2006 [1895]) on their versions.

1. Introduction: First encounter with God who is about to begin with His creation (Gn 1:1-2).
  - a. Introduces the reader to God who was present before anything else (Gn 1:1).
  - b. Setting and time includes everything visible and invisible at the moment of “the beginning” (Gn 1:1).
  - c. Describes the condition of the earth as formless and void at the beginning of creation (Gn 1:2).
  - d. God’s Spirit was in close proximity to the earth (Gn 1:2).
2. Development: Stage is set for the “filling” of a just created, formless and void earth and universe (Gn 1:3-31).
  - a. First three days in which God established order and form in His creation (Gn 1:3-13).
    - i. Day 1: God created light and brought a division between it and darkness (Gn 1:3-5).
    - ii. Day 2: God divided the waters by creating an expanse between them (Gn 1:6-8).
    - iii. Day 3: God gathered the water below the expanse in one place and thus brought forth dry land. The dry land brought forth vegetation (Gn 1:9-13).
  - b. Second three days in which God brought about fullness and harmony (1:14-31).
    - i. Day 4: God created lights in the expanse (Gn 1:14-19).
    - ii. Day 5: God filled the seas and the sky with fish and birds (Gn 1:20-23).
    - iii. Day 6: God filled the dry land with animals and ended with the creation of His representative – the man (Gn 1:24-31).
3. Conclusion: God blessed and sanctified His creation (Gn 2:1-4a).
  - a. God rested on the seventh day following a completed creation (Gn 2:1).
  - b. God blessed and sanctified the seventh day (Gn 2:2-3).
  - c. Closing statement emphasising that this was the creation account (Gn 2:4a).

In this exegetical exposition, there are a few aspects we should keep in mind in order to proceed accurately. The unit under discussion is complex in structure as we have seen. Any attempt to gain a greater understanding without consideration the structure would be futile.

### **3.5.1. Introduction (1:1-2)**

Brueggemann (1982:29) states that, “Chapter 1, verses 1-2, contains the premise of all of biblical faith.” Accordingly Brueggemann would argue that it is fundamental to understand these verses before one can go on to the rest of the Scripture. Our understanding of the opening two verses in the book of Genesis therefore sets not only a premise for the creation account, but also a much greater theological and perhaps even a natural scientific truth. Exactly what the author meant in these two verses is extremely difficult to say. As far back as the fourth century AD, Augustine (1952 [398]:99-110) already mentioned a number of different possibilities. One of which Atkinson (1990:21) stated as the author clearly desired to reject any possibilities for *pantheism*. I will however refrain from addressing all these arguments and only present some of the prominent thoughts.

The first main challenge we are face is that scholars are in disagreement as to the translation of the language used in the first three verses of Genesis. Gibson (1981:14-15) named three options, in that the first, used by most of the older and literal translations, would employ each verse as a separate statement to be understood on its own. The second opinion would have verses one and two as a single unit which would serve as the introduction to verse 3. Thirdly, it can be viewed that verses one to three are all a single unit expressing God’s initiation to creation. Regarding this issue, I will elaborate in the next section.

Ross (1988:105-106) would agree with the older tradition and is therefore of the opinion that the wording of verse 1 rather provides a summary statement where verse 2 provides circumstantial clauses. Verse 1 declares the magnificence of God; His sovereign power to create and His timeless existence before any created thing. He then arrives at a conclusion by arguing that verse one calls for an original creation, otherwise the wording would have been quite different.

In view of Von Rad's (1972:50-51) statements, verse 2 could be seen as a step backward from verse 1 as the narrative rather begins with verse 2; verse 1 therefore being the overarching statement of the creation account. Von Rad also mentions the restitution hypothesis (Gap theory) which many theologians have assumed. The hypothesis argues that in the time span between verses one and two, an angelical or Luciferian war took place in which God banished Lucifer and his followers to the earthly realm following his rebellion against God. One of the common assumptions of the hypothesis is that God created the heavens and the earth during verse one, but since the fall of Lucifer the earth became void and empty as a result of his activities. The Genesis 1 account can therefore be seen as a type of recreation following the fall of Lucifer. The hypothesis therefore implies that time passed and events took place between verse one and verse two (Eveson 2003:26).

Gibson (1981:27) noted that this was a common view held by many old Rabbis and early church Fathers. Von Rad (1972:50-51) however clearly stated that there is no evidence contained within these verses that would support a theory like this. I would add to Von Rad's conclusion that from a biblical point of view, the fall of Satan cannot be separated from the creation of man. If man had not been created yet, there would have been no reason for Satan to rebel.

Some of the other challenges we are faced with when analysing verses one and two are summarised by Brueggemann (1982:29-30). Accordingly, he is not convinced that verse two speaks of creation out of nothing, but that God creatively fashions the formlessness into what He desired. Secondly, he points that the "formless and void" could be theological reference to the condition of the community in exile. If this account did in fact address such a community, the idea was to present them with a hope that God could restore them to perfect goodness and order. Thirdly there is an inconsistency between verse 1 which presents us with the idea of creation out of nothing and verse 2 which presents us with the idea of creation out of chaos. Brueggemann also indicated that the text itself does not advocate the one before the other, but presents them as a unity. His conclusion is therefore that we should also not make such a distinction, but rather understand the purpose that each one presents.

I support Ross's (1988:105-106) conclusion, that there could not have been a prior creation, as well as Von Rad's (1972:50-51) rejection to the fall of Lucifer placed between these two verses. In response to some of the issues which Brueggemann brought to light, I want to propose that verse 1 is not simply just a summary statement, rather an opening statement to the account that is about to follow as well as an opening statement for the book of Genesis, the Pentateuch and the entire biblical Canon. This leads me to conclude that verse 1 and 2 are in fact a combined and chronological event. Neither is verse 2 referring to a first creation now in chaos, but out of nothingness, creation sprung by the word of God and worked through a formless and void (chaotic) state to the completed and ordered creation<sup>30</sup>.

### 3.5.1.1. Genesis 1:1

NASB	KJV	Amp
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.	In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.	IN THE beginning God (prepared, formed, fashioned, and) created the heavens and the earth.

Sarna (1967:10) explained that the Genesis narrative is by far the best non-mythological outlook among all other texts of its kind. The account does not begin with an assumption of God's pre-existence, rather a declaration of His existence. The text does not provide the birth, origin, ancestry or biography of Him, simply that He is God. This is far different from any of the other ancient Near Eastern traditions. Gibson (1981:18) made a similar conclusion in that the opening statement never tries to defend the concept of the existence of God. Rather it would naturally have been assumed by all ancient people that a god existed, the question therefore would rather be who he was and what the activities associated with him were.

According to Hamilton (2002:30-31) the verse presents us with two options of construction. The first being a dependent temporal clause, which means that Genesis 1:1 is dependent on further information found in Genesis 1:2-3. The second is an independent clause (as with the case in all three translations I am making use of),

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<sup>30</sup> Metaphorically speaking we might look at the concept of Michelangelo's David or St Matthew statue. Initially it was only a block of marble, without form or shape; one could say in chaos. However, in his mind's eye Michelangelo could already see the statue in its complete form though it took some work to get it into that condition (Atkinson 1990:24).

where Genesis 1:1 needs to be understood separately from all other verses. The problem as far as Hamilton can see is in the understanding of the first word of the Bible, *b<sup>e</sup>rē'shît*, or “in the beginning.” Hebrew nouns are classified according syntax resulting in the word as either being a construct or an absolute. If *b<sup>e</sup>rē'shît* is to be seen as a construct, this would point to a dependable clause; however if used as an absolute it would be seen as an independent clause. Due to the sentence construction, one would have to allow both options, though Hamilton clearly indicates that the latter would seem more logical under the circumstances. Boice (1982:25) added that the Genesis 1 account makes use of a simplistic sentence construction; a dependable clause construction would therefore not be consistent in the author’s method. Interesting to note that Speiser’s (1990:12) argument is quite similar to that of Hamilton’s, though he makes exactly the opposite conclusion.

In Brueggemann’s (1982:29-30) description of this challenge he points out that verse one could be subjected to a temporal clause, “when God *begun* to create....” The grammatical use is however unclear as to whether this would be a more accurate translation. The consequences of such a clause would point to the fact that creation is an ongoing event and could not be contained in this account only. Batten (2006:57-58) viewed this challenge in reverse, when he looked at the start of verse 2. Verse 1 makes use of a subject-and-verb clause while verse 2 contains a circumstantial clause. According to Batten these two verses are connected through the conjunction *waw*, or ‘and’, which indicates a continuation of verse 1. In other words, what the author intended to say in verse 1, only found its conclusion in verse 2. Boice (1982:26) quoted Young as stating that the only real reason scholars would opt for a temporal clause is because the Babylonian Epic Creation account starts in such a way.

One of the first impressions upon reading the verse implies that apart from God there was a time or *pre-time* of *nothingness*. As far as the verse points out, *nothingness* came to an end at “the beginning” when God began the creation of the heavens and the earth. One can therefore consider that the concept of time itself also only began at “the beginning”. The verse also creates the impression that God exists outside of our understanding of time and that He is both the beginning (and the end) at the same

time<sup>31</sup>. Considering a “time of nothingness” could therefore more accurately be viewed as an era of eternity. Möller stated,

“We who ourselves have a temporal-spatial existence, can in no way observe or imagine anything that did not exist at a certain time, at a certain place or in a certain space. Therefore, time has to be seen as something which originated together with everything else that has been created. Thus time is something that also had to have been created.”

(Möller 1997:6)

Gibson (1981:19-20, 25) elaborated that this Creator must have been transcendent. By this he means that the Creator stands outside the creation and that creation would not influence Him in any way; rather that He is the sovereign Lord over all creation and “absolutely” independent of us. “In Himself God is ‘before’ time and ‘beyond’ space, and only enters time and space because He wants to.” He supported this view in light of the word used for ‘create,’ which would clearly indicate God standing outside of what He creates. Gibson concluded that this concept of transcendence is totally unique to the Hebrew understanding of creation in the entire ancient Near Eastern world. Some of the first scholars we find grappling with the concept date as far back as Augustine in the third century AD. Möller (1997:6), reflecting on the work of Augustine, remarked that Augustine noted that creation did not take place in time, but together with time.

When it comes to the theological aspect of worship, humanity has only three options. Either they worship something that is created (ultimately all visible things are created, including humanity), or they worship some invisible, imaginary idea conjured up in their own imagination (as for example the ancient Greeks and Romans did with their gods), or they can worship the true living God. Möller (1997:8) therefore argued that the theological truth, that there is only one true living God, behind verse 1 is the reason why God absolutely forbids humanity to worship anything else except Him (Ex 20:2-5a). Boice (1982:26) highlighted three apologetic aspects of verse 1. First is a denial of atheism, second a denial of materialism and third is a denial of pantheism.

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<sup>31</sup> From a canonical point of view, this concept would be supported by passages like Colossians 1:16-17.

In a more detailed analysis of verse 1, it can be divided into five main sections from which one can derive arguments.

1. In the beginning – The reader’s attention is immediately arrested by the fact that there was a specific beginning of all things. I mentioned in chapter 1 that this was quite contrary to the Babylonian and Greek belief that matter is eternal. The question one faces is *when* such a beginning was. In the context of this unit it seems more in line that there was a moment when everything began, followed by the rest of creation. This notion would provide support to the case of a chronological flow from verse 1 to 2. In context of the biblical canon we also find another use for the term *beginning* in what Jesus said, “Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female” (Mt 19:4 KJV). A conclusion from Jesus’ words is that the beginning could possibly also encompass the whole creation account. This would support Ross (1988:105-106), in that verse 1 could simply be a summary of the whole creation event. Waltke (2001:58) agreed that it refers to an overarching statement for the six-day creation and that the beginning is not only a reference to the events in verse 1. Waltke was also opposed to the possibility that verse 2 would be a continuation following the beginning as advocated by people like Luther and Calvin, whom he mentions. Waltke however only cited a grammatical problem between verse 1 and 2, but never goes into any detail explaining it.
2. God – Boice (1982:24) noted that God is the first subject mentioned in the Bible. My understanding of what he means by this statement is that even though no one can fully understand the creation, the fact that God was there means it had a “first cause,” a design and a purpose. From the structure of the unit, we can see that God did not let anything happen at random<sup>32</sup>. Waltke (2001:58) reminded us of the fact that, “God, unlike human beings, is without

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<sup>32</sup> The author of the letter to the Hebrews also communicates that, “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed (fashioned, put in order, and equipped for their intended purpose) by the word of God, so that what we see was not made out of things which are visible” (Heb 11:3 Amp). He supports the notion that the creation cannot be redone as an empirical experiment, but that it asks for a certain measure of faith in God. According to Wood (1996:239) this should be our starting point for any study of origin.

beginning, begetting, opposition, or limitations of power.” Ross (1988:105) noted that grammatically God (*Elohim*) is used in its plural form. This could possibly point to His majesty or to the fact that He was both the Creator God and the Spirit of God, present at the time.

Eveson (2003:21-22) stated that in the same way the English language uses the word God for both the One True God and any other foreign or pagan god so also the Hebrew word *Elohim* is used for both of these. In reference to the work done by Targum Jonathan and Philo, the reason for plural indication here is convincing to Gunkel (2006 [1895]:8). Accordingly, God is seen as grouped with a “divine council” of other *Elohim* (gods) and therefore addressing them in plural form. I would like to draw attention to the fact that even though the concept of the *Trinity*<sup>33</sup> of God might have been foreign to this text, (though both the concept God and Spirit was separately understood) it does provide leeway to what we understand from the New Testament; God has always been a trinity, thus the use of plural form.

3. Created – Religion (philosophy) and natural sciences<sup>34</sup> agree that there are only two predominant views as to the origin of the universe. The first option is the theistic view that there is a god or some sort of divine, Supreme Being or force that created everything. By definition, this god or being would then have to exist beyond and outside our understanding of creation. The second option is that the universe created itself, consequently evolving into the form as we have it today. In other words, all matter (including humans) exhibits

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<sup>33</sup> Genesis 1 does not introduce its audience to the concept of the trinity as one understands it from a New Testament perspective, though verses 1 to 3 do leave us with a possible hint. Verse 1 refers to God, which may point to the God the Father; verse 2 mentions the Spirit, which can be understood as the Holy Spirit; and verse 3 introduces us to the concept of God speaking, or rather sending forth His word. Accordingly John 1:1-2 states that the word of God is the Son – Jesus Christ. Consequently, one may conclude that the first three verses in the Bible introduce its readers to the three persons of God. Furthermore the concept of trinity may also be expressed four times in verse 1. First, God can refer to the total Trinitarian Godhead. Second, the word “beginning” references time which is a trinity consisting of past, presence and future. Third, the word “heavens” reference space which is a trinity consisting of three dimensions; length, width and height. Fourth, the word “earth” references matter, which is a trinity, observed in the three phases of solid, liquid and gas.

<sup>34</sup> Science here is used in the context of natural and biological science as opposed to the study field of biblical / religious science, which in this context, would be the contrasting view of Religion.

some traits and aspects of godliness as commonly believed amongst Humanists and those adhering to New Age teachings (Möller 1997:7).

The verse introduces us to the idea of creation out of nothing or *creatio ex nihilo*<sup>35</sup> as many scholars have come to call it. Bowden (2005:298) referenced that though the concept is not found in Scripture itself, it was later introduced in 2 Maccabees 7:28. Brueggemann (1982:29) agreed with this concept, but highlight the fact that the word “creation” or *bara* as we find it in the Hebrew, could reference both “creation out of nothing” as well as “creation out of something”. The word “creation” is used sparsely in the Old Testament, however, when it is used, God is always the subject (Eveson 2003:24). Hamilton (2002:24, 32) agreed here with Eveson and also elaborated on the sparse use of the word *bara*. He also argued that wherever the verb is used, the ensuing object is always that which is created and never the material used for the creation act. In this case, the word never indicates any type of material being used; consequently, a logical conclusion would be *ex nihilo*. In Genesis 1:1, the author makes use of the word 3 times and then another 3 times in Genesis 1:27. He also points out that this concept is never followed by an explanation of the material that Yahweh used in these creation acts.

Ross (1988:105-106) opposed this notion in that the concept in itself does not mean to make something out of nothing, but rather to make something new and perfect. Möller (1997:8) agreed with Ross on the matter that *bara* means to create a condition from something that already existed, but that this is only a secondary meaning. He contended that the first and foremost use of the word is always in connection with a divine act and never ascribed to any natural or human activity. In the context of “the creation” it is therefore to be understood in light of *ex nihilo*. *Bara* also has an exchangeable use with *asah* or “to make” (Gn 1:26) and *yatsar* or “to form” (Gn 2:7) (Gibson 1981:23). Von Rad (1972:53-54) was of the opinion that *asah* is an older and more primitive form, whereas *bara* should be seen as a more complex construction. Whether or not this is indeed the case, the author’s intended use of these

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<sup>35</sup> See Wood (1996:239) for a more detailed description.

words were highly interwoven and did not show any traces that the one could potentially replace the other. Ross (1988:106) also indicated that this verb is an indication of the activities which are to follow. Otto (2007:14) disagreed with this understanding of *ex nihilo*, based on verse 2 and 3, which he argued to be a continuation of verse 1.

4. Heaven / s – Eveson (2003:23) as well as Waltke (2001:59) presented the concept of “heavens and earth” as a single phrase which, according to them, pointed to the Hebrew understanding of the universe and everything in it. Although I agree with them, I still decided to separate the phrase into its individual components for a more detailed understanding. The fourth point is therefore probably the most debated concept of them all. Similar to the grammatical use of the word God, heaven is also found in its plural form. The main issue of argument therefore is what “the heaven / s” refer to. Brown-Driver-Briggs (1996) introduced the three possibilities as the sky or atmosphere, the abode of the stars or universe, and the Heaven as the abode of God. In the context of this unit it seems more obvious that it refers to the sky or perhaps the outer space beyond the planet’s atmosphere. It could possibly be both. Ross (1988:106) introduced the idea that “the heavens and the earth” together signifies the whole universe. Others have argued that these concepts together refer to more than just the universe and include both the invisible and the visible. Heaven therefore being the dwelling place of God and the spiritual creatures. Still others contended that this reference of heavens refer to all three together as Brown-Driver-Briggs has listed them. Due to the lack of information provided in the Genesis 1 account, I would also have to allow for all three possibilities.
5. Earth – In the ancient context the reference to earth was more that of the dry land and not so much a reference to the planet (Gn 1:10). However, looking at verse 2, one can observe that the earth began as a mass of water which seemingly represents the whole of the planet much closer than just dry land. As already mentioned in the context to heavens, it might also refer to everything that is visible.

### 3.5.1.2. Genesis 1:2

NASB	KJV	Amp
The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.	And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.	The earth was without form and an empty waste, and darkness was upon the face of the very great deep. The Spirit of God was moving (hovering, brooding) over the face of the waters.

As mentioned previously, verse 2 could be seen as a continuation of the statement made in verse 1, or it could be the actual beginning of the narrative with verse 1 providing an overview. In light of the ongoing debate on the matter, I have decided to go with the latter. Gibson (1981:26) therefore directed us to the question of whether God was responsible for the creation of the chaotic earth and the darkness? Eveson (2003:27) drew our attention to a number of parallels contained in the verse. Firstly, we have “darkness” paralleling the “Spirit of God” and secondly we have “surface of the deep” paralleling “surface of the waters.” In a more detailed analysis, verse 2 can be divided into three main sections from which one can derive arguments.

1. The earth was formless and void – In Waltke’s (2001:59) view, the opening idea of verse two is somewhat confusing, as it does not tell its audience anything concerning the creation of the planet earth, the darkness, or the water mass. This leads one to conclude that either verse 1 provided some of the answers to these questions when seen as a continuation of statement, or the author simply did not have the information at his disposal, or withheld it on purpose.

Batten (2006:58-59) stated that the original language use allows *haya* only to be used as “was” void and empty and does not allow for the use as ‘became’ void and empty. Furthermore, *tohu* and *bohu* translates as “formless and empty”, which can also be seen as “unformed and unfilled”. They are only seen together in two other places in Scripture, i.e. Isaiah 34:11 and Jeremiah 4:23. Tsumura (1994a:310) indicated that these two words can also translate as “invisible and unformed”, “an emptiness and a nothing”, or “unworked and indistinguishable.”

Humphreys (2000:18-22) proposed another model in understanding the terminology used within this verse. To him the word ‘earth’ indicates much more than the planet earth as we know it. He explains that verse 1 tells of the creation of the heavens or the vastness of space, with a singular water mass contained within it. Humphreys continued in the mathematical detail concerning the size of this singular water mass. According to his model, this water mass was called earth, which God created in verse 1. This water mass was the origin from which all physical matter, contained in the universe, originated.

In Ross’s (1988:75) perspective, this concept of formless and void should be seen as ‘chaos’ reigning on the earth. He concluded that the only way this could have happened was if the rebellious judgement of Satan took place beforehand. As I have previously concluded, this seems like a most unlikely event. Waltke (2001:59) rather saw this concept as a type of antonym to the concept of heavens and earth. To him it is an indication that the earth was uninhabitable and unproductive. Atkinson (1990:24) argued that it reference a lack of order. Gibson (1981:27) noted that it could simply refer to a lack of descriptive language use in the ancient time.

2. And darkness was over the surface of the deep – The question of what darkness is, as the text does not reference God creating it, I want to address in the following manner. ‘Darkness’ is frequently connected to the concept of evil, as light is to goodness. Darkness and evil are not created things, but rather the lack of that which is created (Eveson 2003:27). In verse 3 one sees that when God created light it drove away or filled the darkness. From a physics point of view one knows that darkness contains no substance, however light is produced by a particle called a photon (Giancoli 1998:829). When light is released the photon particles fills that area which is a void called darkness. Atkinson (1990:24) pointed to the idea that this “dark deep” is but the first stages of creation on its way to perfection. My conclusion is therefore also that the concept of darkness, as seen in verse 2, is an indication of emptiness at the beginning of creation. It creates anticipation for that which is to follow.

3. And the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water – For the first time the audience is specifically introduced to the concept that God is not alone, even though God in verse 1 is indicated by a plural form. It is now revealed to the audience that there is at least two aspects or persons contained within this God, i.e. the Creator God and the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God or *rûah* can be translated as “wind of God”. Waltke (2001:60) made use of the concept of an eagle like hovering over the water mass. Eveson (2003:27) supported this view, as the concept of a hovering eagle is again found elsewhere in the Pentateuch (Dt 32:11). The Amplified translation adds the word “brooding,” as a hen would brood on its eggs in anticipation for their hatching. Similarly, the idea of God’s Spirit brooding over the surface creates an anticipation for something that is about to happen.

### **3.5.2. Development (1:3-31)**

Following verses 1-2 the author has now set the stage for the narrative account which is about to follow. There are however a few main concepts which the author specifically had to build into the development stage presenting an emphasis on that which was intended to be communicated. The first concept that can be seen in the account is its chronology; highlighted by specific references of numerical value i.e. day one, day two, etc. Secondly, each section contains a unique description of events taking place within that specific day. Thirdly, throughout the account we find that it is the same Creator God which is responsible for all the actions taking place, as well as the same method through which He creates. Fourthly, every section (day) is concluded by stating that it became evening and it became morning, referencing that the duration of a day had passed. Eveson (2003:29) noted that even though the text does not give a precise indication of the duration of this evening and morning, the author intended to communicate something to his audience that would closely resemble a 24-hour period as we would know it. Fifthly, we find the repetition<sup>36</sup> of different clauses through the section.

- “God said” is repeated 10 times during the development.
- “God saw” is repeated 7 times during the development.
- “God called” is repeated 3 times during the development.

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<sup>36</sup> Eveson (2003:21, 30-31); Waltke (2001:56) and Brueggemann (1982:24) identified these key words.

- “God made” is repeated 3 times during the development.
- “God created” is repeated twice during the development and once in the introduction.
- “God blessed” is repeated twice during the development and once in the conclusion.
- “Let there be” is repeated 3 times during the development.
- Something that was “good” is repeated 7 times during the development. One of these instances was referenced as “very good.”
- “God separated” is repeated twice during the development.
- “There was evening and there was morning” is repeated 6 times during the development.
- “Let ‘something’ bring forth” is repeated 3 times during the development.

Possible reasons why the author would have used such repetitions in a text includes unity of the unit and, or emphasis as to what he tried to communicate. Brueggemann (1982:30) highlighted the fact that the structure of the creation days is remarkably symmetrical; its progression is in a very specific order:

1. Time – “it was evening and morning”
2. Command – “God said”
3. Execution – “And it was so”
4. Assessment – “God saw that it was good”
5. Time – “it was evening and morning”

Although the text does deviate slightly from this sequence every now and then, taken as a whole we can clearly see an intentional order provided by the author. Brueggemann also stated that the idea behind the “command and execution” should also be seen in light of an original audience called to a place of “confession and celebration.”

The creation account presents the audience with another interesting concept. Waltke (2001:57-58) explained it as the concept of “form” or *tōhû* (void) versus “fill” or *bōhû* (empty). Accordingly, God formed or created certain things from nothing, *ex nihilo*, while other things were filled or created out of something pre-existing. By making use of these two concepts, he provided a framework in which the different days of

creation could be placed in contrast to one another, i.e. what God created out of nothing and then used to create something else out of it. Faid (1990:91-92) highlighted this relationship between days 1 & 4; 2 & 5; 3 & 6.

Form or <i>tōhū</i>		Fill or <i>bōhū</i>	
Day	Resource	Utiliser	Day
1	Light	Lights	4
2	Firmament	Inhabitants	5
	Sky	Birds	
	Seas	Fish	
3	Dry land	Land animals	6
	Vegetation	Human beings	

The comparison points to a progression in the creation account. God did not simply use the same process repeatedly, but creatively began with nothing. Consequently, instead of creating something new, He also provided Himself with the “building materials” for further creation.

### 3.5.2.1. Day 1 (1:3-5)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.	And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.	And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.
God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.	And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.	And God saw that the light was good (suitable, pleasant) and He approved it; and God separated the light from the darkness.
God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.	And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.	And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

The first day is the introduction to many of the concepts that one finds throughout the other days as well. At the dawn of the first day, we are introduced to the concept of God who speaks. Brueggemann (1982:24) added that the Creator God brought all

things into reality by the authority and power of His word. According to Sarna (1967:12) some scholars had sought possible correlations between the concept of God speaking and other ancient Near Eastern traditions, but no such correlations could be found. The closest ideas found within these traditions are words used in the sense of magical or enchantment. The idea of an authoritative and powerful word is found nowhere outside the biblical text.

According to the text, the first thing God spoke into existence was light. Von Rad (1972:51) proposed that this light is the “sublimest element” and was a necessity to precede all of creation. Von Rad continued that the creation of this light has troubled scholars throughout the centuries as the text does not reference the creation of the source of this light. Only in day four does the author proclaim God creating the sun and stars<sup>37</sup>, which we now know to be sources of light. We are left therefore with three options as to the meaning of this light. The first possibility is that the light must have had a different source. Secondly, that the text is referring to something other than or different to what we know as light. Thirdly, that the days as the original author had used them were shuffled around by later redactors.

The latter of these three options seems to be the least credible. The idea would postulate that originally day four would have preceded day one in that the sun was created before the light. If a redactor did in fact read and compile the Genesis 1 account from such an earlier version, it would seem most unlikely that he would have deliberately taken a concept like the creation of light, which was placed after the creation of the sun and moved it all the way to the front. There would be no logic in such a reordering of days. As to the second option, the rest of the text supplies us with a further understanding. From verse 4, we gather that before the creation of light, darkness was everywhere. Darkness in itself is not a substance, but rather an absence, or emptiness, or a void as indicated by verse 2. Consequently when God created the light He separated (or divided) it from the darkness. This should be understood in the same manner as a person switching on a light in a dark room, which immediately brings separation between the darkness and the room. I would therefore

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<sup>37</sup> I intentionally did not include the moon in this list, as the moon is not a source of light, but only a reflection, mainly of the sun.

conclude that the light which God created was the same light as we have it today, leaving us with option one as to what the source of this light was?

Eveson (2003:32-33) considered a possibility that can be found in an external biblical references to the creation account. The idea holds that the light came from God Himself, that He was the source of light to all of creation until the time that He created the sun and the stars<sup>38</sup>.

The author introduces his audience to a much greater theological truth by stating God's opinion towards His creation as being "good"; in that this Creator God is a good God, who also makes good things. Nowhere in the creation account do we find the Creator God making anything that He did not find to be good. God also provides names for His creation as the text reference that He called the light day and the darkness night. Von Rad (1972:53) drew our attention to the fact that in the ancient Near Eastern world it was considered an act of exercising a sovereign right when you provided a name for anything.

One of the main objectives in this dissertation is in the understanding of the word 'day'<sup>39</sup> or *yom* and what it refers to in terms of time duration. Gitt (1996:51) noted that the first physical measuring unit introduced in the Bible is that of time, which God Himself calls "day". Day one is therefore the first time we are introduced to the concept of a day. The author also provides two different references for this word in the section. First is that day is defined as when there is light in contrast to when it is dark. This can be seen as a reference regarding the substance of day. The second definition is found in the concept of evening and morning, which can be seen as a reference to its duration.

Batten (2006:26) as well as Ashton (2001:344-345) stated that aside from Genesis 1, the word *yom* is used another 410 times, where it stands in direct relation to a numerical number. In this context, it always indicates an ordinary literal 24-hour day.

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<sup>38</sup> There is a number of biblical references that would support this idea of God being a source of light, i.e. Is 60:19; Jn 1:4; 2 Cor 4:6; 1 Jn 1:5; Rv 21:23.

<sup>39</sup> Batten (2006:25-27) goes into quite some detail explaining the English use of the word 'day'. So too does Ashton (2001:344).

Therefore, Genesis 1 should not be treated otherwise. My conclusion from these passages is that the author’s intention was to indicate that the duration of a day spans from the beginning of one evening to the conclusion of the direct following morning. This is in line as to how Israel would have defined a day, as well as how we see it in a modern Western society (although we would just begin with morning, and conclude with evening.)

### 3.5.2.2. Day 2 (1:6-8)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.”	And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.	And God said, Let there be a firmament [the expanse of the sky] in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters [below] from the waters [above].
God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so.	And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.	And God made the firmament [the expanse] and separated the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse. And it was so.
God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.	And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.	And God called the firmament Heavens. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

On day two, the author brings his audience back to the concept of water, which is first found in verse 2. We can assume that this is the same water above which the Spirit (wind) of God moved. God speaks for a second time, and an expanse or a firmament is formed in the midst of the water. According to the KJV, the word expanse or firmament is only used 17 times in Scripture and therefore presents us with somewhat of a difficult image to understand. Von Rad (1972:53) indicated that the word firmament (*rāqīa*) has the same root form as the Phoenician word for “tin dish”. The imagery created by the word is that of a hampered piece of steel or the fashioning of a bell. The idea that the author most probably tried to convey was that this firmament was a strong, perhaps arch-like structure somewhere in or as part of the sky.

One way in which the creation of this firmament can be understood is in the sense of a bubble that formed between the waters. Another possibility is that it refers to a column of air that formed between the waters. Irrespective of how one wants to view it, this firmament brought the separation between waters that were above and waters that were below. Creator God called this expanse heaven. One of the common views regarding the positioning of this expanse would postulate that because the earth was covered by water at this stage (waters below), the heaven (or sky as we have come to call it) is that part between water surface and the earth's atmosphere where the waters above were to be found. However, Humphreys (2000:34-36) presented us with a second option, in that planet earth as one knows it was a minute part, somewhere within the waters below and that heaven (or extra-terrestrial space as one has come to call it) brought the separation between these waters below and the waters above which would be situated somewhere beyond the boundaries of our universe.

It is indeed very difficult to comment on either argument, for one knows by common knowledge that there is no layer of water surrounding the earth, apart perhaps from clouds, but we also do not know what lies behind the boundaries of the universe. Looking at the first statement, it is important to note that in light of Genesis 2:5-6 it did not rain on the earth during the time of creation. The atmosphere could therefore have been quite different to what is apparent at present.

Another challenge one faces in verse 1, is that the concept of heaven and earth could refer to the dwelling place of God or the spiritual realm. The word which the author used is the same in both these verses. One is therefore faced with the consideration of heaven, either referencing the sky, or space, or the spiritual realm. Even though the author used the same word, it seems unlikely that he intended the same thing in both verses. Considering the different English translations I make use of, one can see that the translators indicated a difference by sometimes contrasting the singular and the plural form as well as capitalising the word "heaven" in some instances.

Day two reveals another interesting aspect in that the text does not indicate God's evaluation regarding the day's creation. It is therefore the only day in which we do not see God reflecting on His creation as being good. Von Rad (1972:54) postulated that the reason why the text does not reveal God's opinion is that He might not

consider that specific part of creation’s work as completed. Only during day three, would God complete this part and share His opinion. Day two is concluded with the same measure of duration, that of evening and morning, as was the case with day one.

### 3.5.2.3. Day 3 (1:9-13)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.	And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.	And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be collected into one place [of standing], and let the dry land appear. And it was so.
God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good.	And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called the Seas: and God saw that it was good.	God called the dry land Earth, and the accumulated waters He called Seas. And God saw that this was good (fitting, admirable) and He approved it.
Then God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them”; and it was so.	And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.	And God said, Let the earth put forth [tender] vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees yielding fruit whose seed is in itself, each according to its kind, upon the earth. And it was so.
The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good.	And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.	The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed according to their own kinds and trees bearing fruit in which was their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good (suitable, admirable) and He approved it.
There was evening and there was morning, a third day.	And the evening and the morning were the third day.	And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

The third day deviates somewhat from the pattern of creation; up to this point, in that God speaks twice during the day. With the first speech, He gathered the waters together into one place to produce dry land. This dry land was called earth. In the model presented by Humphreys (2001:36-37) he pointed to the possibility that the land which gathered into one place could be a reference to the planets that God

created amidst the waters. According to him, the statement “into one place” simply refers to planet earth and not the rest of the planets, which through the same process would also have been created, as this creation account centres mainly on the earth. God therefore called this dry land, earth. The more common view would simply regard this as the dry land mass as we know it. As part of this reference, the statement “into one place” could potentially be explained in light of the Pangea theory. This theory, first introduced by Alfred Wegener, holds that there was a time in the past when all the continents were connected to one another and through an unknown cause, broke away (Thompson & Turk 1995:109-117; McL & Duff 1993:32-34; Brown & Hawkesworth & Wilson 1992:167-168). Walton (2001:46) indicated that it would be difficult to assert, if this was indeed the author’s intention. Accordingly, the best supportive Scriptural evidence to such a hypothesis would be found in Genesis 10:25, “... for in his days the earth was divided.” Alternatively, it has been suggested that the continental division could have taken place during the Noahic flood. God also named the waters (referring to the waters below) sea. This reference poses a challenge on the work by Humphreys for we do not find sea between planets, rather between the dry land mass on the surface of the planet.

Verses 9 and 10 reveal that God was the one who set boundaries in place for the sea and the dry land. Theologically speaking this would indicate that the Creator God is a God of order and structure. This idea of order and structure would have provided comfort to a desert community or even a people in exile (Eveson 2003:33). This section of day three’s creation is completed, with the text revealing God’s assessment as being good towards creation. As I indicated regarding the previous day, it might be that God only considered day two’s work completed half-way through day three. The second section of God’s creation work could therefore include the dividing of the waters and air, as well as the dividing of the waters and the dry land.

Day three continues as God speaks for a second time during the day. For the first time God addressed something specifically to bring forth something else, i.e. God commands the earth to bring forth what is called vegetation; what we would collectively refer to as flora. From the three translations I am using, it is challenging to see whether God created two or three different types of flora. The NASB and the Amplified translations both refer to two types, plants yielding seed and fruit trees

bearing fruit, which is collectively known as vegetation (Von Rad 1972:55). The KJV rather translates the collective vegetation as grass and indicates it as a separate type of flora along with the other two that God created.

Verse 12 states that each kind of plant brought forth after its own kind. Where exactly the biblical definition of “kind” fits into the flora hierarchy is difficult to say. Eveson (2003:35) speculated that this definition would be broad enough to include ‘species,’ ‘class’ and ‘groups.’ From this I would conclude that no plant or tree produced any type of seed or fruit that would be foreign to that specific kind. Each was true only to that which it had been created to be. The importance of this concept will be highlighted in chapter 5, in that the text does not provide leeway for one species giving rise to another.

Day three again presents another new concept in that it is the first time that the text refers to God speaking something into creation. The text confirms that it did in fact happen. In the case with light / darkness (day 1); water / firmament (day 2); and waters / land (day 3), the text states that God spoke and then named it. This time God spoke to the earth to bring forth flora and then confirms that the earth did in fact do so. A possible reason was that in the case with the previous three subjects of creation, God immediately did what He intended to do. He created light and it was there, but when He commanded the earth to bring forth flora, it might have taken the flora some time to grow. Therefore, the text assures us that the earth did in fact bring forth flora.

Once again, the text reveals God’s assessment as one being good concerning the day’s creation work. Day three is concluded with the same measure of duration, that of evening and morning, as was the case with day one and two.

#### 3.5.2.4. Day 4 (1:14-19)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be	And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for	And God said, Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be signs and tokens [of

for signs and for seasons and for days and years;	signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:	God's provident care], and [to mark] seasons, days, and years,
and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so.	And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.	And let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light upon the earth. And it was so.
God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also.	And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.	And God made the two great lights- -the greater light (the sun) to rule the day and the lesser light (the moon) to rule the night. He also made the stars.
God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth,	And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,	And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth,
and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.	And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.	To rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good (fitting, pleasant) and He approved it.
There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.	And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.	And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

Day four shifts the attention of the reader once again beyond the boundaries of the earth. Day one, the source of the light that God created could not have been the sun, for only on day four do we find God creating the other heavenly bodies. The text refers to two specific bodies that God created; a greater light and a lesser light. It would be safe to assume that at some later stage humans named the greater light "sun" and the lesser light "moon". The text also indicates that God created all the stars on day four. From a natural scientific point of view, one would understand that our sun is in fact one star among an uncountable number of stars. The only object that God created on day four that would not fit this category would be the moon, which would rather represent a planet than a star. The text does not reference any other stellar bodies like planets, moons, comets, etc, which God created, though it would seem logical that God did create all these other stellar bodies during the same day.

Both Eveson (2003:33-34) and Atkinson (1990:16) argued that the author could possibly have intended the fourth day's creation act as a polemic statement against

surrounding nations. Numerous ancient Near Eastern nations saw the sun and the moon as chiefs among their gods, whereas they are now reduced to mere sources of light and references to time. The author calls neither the sun (*shemesh*) nor the moon (*yariah*) by name, as this could be interpreted as the sun god *Shamash* and the moon god *Yarih*.

Von Rad (1972:55-56) pointed out that nowhere in the text does it provide names for these heavenly lights, i.e. the sun and the moon. If the text did indeed originate from an earlier tradition, as he argued for, then the use of the name of the sun in the common Semitic language would have been considered a divine name. The credibility of such a deduction however would seem small, as the author of the creation account seems highly comfortable in using the other divine names for the Creator God Himself, as well as His Spirit.

As to the purpose of why God created these great stellar bodies, the text provides three main reasons. The first was to bring *separation between* the day and the night. Speiser (1990:6) provided the second when he stated that the phrase in Genesis 1:14b should literally be translated as “let them be for signs and for seasons and for years and for days.” Accordingly, the sun and the moon are not the determining factors of *seasons, years, days*; but only serve as the signs for the fixed time periods set in place. One could therefore conclude that the “fixed time periods” were already set in place during the first creation day, as daily change in time first appears on day one. A third purpose they would serve is the *source of light* to earth. Ham (2006:166-167) compared the source of light in the first three days to the rest of the day that follows. The sun created on day four was only a shift in the source of light (we do not specifically know what the source was before the sun was set in place) and that it still continued to be evening and morning. The text also provides no evidence that one should see the duration of evening and morning of the first three days in any other way than the duration of them in the latter days.

Humphreys (2000:37-38) concluded his cosmological model on day four as he went into great mathematical and exegetical depth explaining how this day could provide a possible explanation in age differentiation in the universe. I will return to Humphreys’s model in chapter 5, as his proposition for a relative old and young universe at the same time is unique.

Verse 18 again reveals God’s assessment of His creation work on day four as being good. Day four is concluded with the same measure of duration, that of evening and morning, as was the case with day one, two and three. The concept of the duration of one day in the creation account has been strongly challenged, especially prior to day four in that there was no sun to provide this reference of time. One submission that I do want to bring in here however, concerns the duration between day three and day four. God created flora on day three, most of which survive by a process called photosynthesis. Photosynthesis<sup>40</sup> takes place when plants absorb sun-light through their leaves into organelles called chloroplasts. Without sun-light these plants cannot grow. If the duration between day three and day four was anything longer than a day or two as we know it, there would have been no way for these plants to grow. God only created the source of their light on day four, therefore placing it very close to day three.

### 3.5.2.5. Day 5 (1:20-23)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then God said, “Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.”	And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.	And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly and swarm with living creatures, and let birds fly over the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.
God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good.	And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.	God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good (suitable, admirable) and He approved it
God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the	And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.	And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let the fowl multiply in the earth.

<sup>40</sup> See Mader (1998:113-125) for a complete overview of the process of photosynthesis.

earth.”		
There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.	And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.	And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

Day five presents its reader with the same pattern as was found in day three. God addressing something, in this instance the water, to bring forth something else. On this occasion, it brought forth a multitude of creatures, which we can call marine life, as well as numerous different types of birds. The text then confirms that this was indeed what God had done as the oceans were filled with marine life and the sky filled with birds. Eveson (2003:37) pointed to the fact that God specifically created the flora, and now began with the fauna, and that it was not some random event driven by chance as the evolution theory would hold.

A notable reference contained in verse 21 is that of the “great sea monsters”, which the KJV translates as whales. This could be a possible reference to remnant pieces of a more ancient oral tradition as in the case of the Babylonian creation myth *Enuma Elish*, which contains the story of Tiamat the great monster. Another possible explanation could refer to the creation of dinosaur-like animals like the Leviathan that became extinct somewhere in the past. Paleontology has provided more than enough evidence up to date, that many giant-like animals once roamed the face of the earth (Mader 1998:323, 328-329). The verse 21 reference would most probably be the closest reference to these animals.

Von Rad (1972:56) noted that the author again makes use of the word *bara*; this time in relation to the creation of living things. According to Hebrew thought, plants do not fall in this category. Von Rad continued that the “mythical creatures” which the author mentions would have served a specific function in light of the ancient Near Eastern world.

Day five introduces its readers to the concept of God’s blessings for the first time. God once again saw that everything was good. God then pronounced the blessing of fertility and multiplication over the marine life and the birds of the air. Contained in the blessing is something of a revealing of the character of the Creator God, in that He desires His creation to continue growing and reproducing. On day three the author

specifically refers to the seed of both the plants and the trees. The seed is the primary component of a plant’s reproduction. On day five one now finds that God blessed the marine life and birds, specifically regarding their reproduction. One can therefore conclude that it was God’s intention that His creation should grow enlarge by a self-driven mechanism which He placed inside it. Day five once again comes to its conclusion in the same manner as the previous days.

### 3.5.2.6. Day 6 (1:24-31)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind”; and it was so.	And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.	And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creeping things, and [wild] beasts of the earth according to their kinds. And it was so.
God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.	And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.	And God made the [wild] beasts of the earth according to their kinds, and domestic animals according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good (fitting, pleasant) and He approved it.
Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”	And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.	God said, Let Us [Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] make mankind in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have complete authority over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the [tame] beasts, and over all of the earth, and over everything that creep
God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.	So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.	So God created man in His own image, in the image and likeness of God He created him; male and female He created them.

God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”	And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.	And God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it [using all its vast resources in the service of God and man]; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature
Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you;	And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.	And God said, See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the land and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.
and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food”; and it was so.	And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.	And to all the animals on the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the ground--to everything in which there is the breath of life--I have given every green plant for food. And it was so.
God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.	And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.	And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good (suitable, pleasant) and He approved it completely. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

Day six is the climax of all God’s creation; however according to the sequence of the text it was not until late in the day that God reached this pinnacle of His creation, as Sarna (1967:14) would call it. Verse 24 notes that God spoke for the third time to something in order to bring forth something else. In this instance, He spoke to the earth, commanding it to bring forth animals. The text refers to three different types of animals brought forth by the earth. First were the cattle or domestic animals, second all the creeping animals which would include reptiles and insects (Eveson 2003:38), and third the beasts or the wild animals (Von Rad 1972:56-57).

Verses 26 and 27 bring the Genesis 1 creation account to its climax. Three times God addressed something to bring forth something else; now for a fourth and final time He does this again. Among the eight creative acts, only once does God address Himself<sup>41</sup>, saying that He would now create man in His own image and likeness (Brueggemann 1982:31). However, before we begin to speculate concerning this ‘image and likeness’, we first have to understand whom the concept ‘us’ refer to. Speiser (1990:7) highlighted the plural possessive use of grammar although no other divine being is mentioned. Hamilton (2002:22-23) indicated that from a biblical perspective this could implicate the Trinity, but from a strict exegetical perspective one cannot make such a deduction. He then continued to list at least six possible interpretations.

1. Possibly this Creator God is chief among many and therefore addressing the other deities.
2. That this Creator God could be speaking to the earth, making it a partner in the creation process.
3. The Creator God might also be addressing the angels and other heavenly beings.
4. It could possibly also reflect the plurality of His majesty.
5. This could simply describe a plural of self-deliberation.
6. In Hamilton’s perspective, the sixth and most plausible explanation is that the Creator God is speaking inwardly to His own Spirit already mentioned in 1:2.

Von Rad (1972:57-58) defined ‘image’ or *selem* as “predominantly an actual plastic work, a duplication, sometimes an idol.” He continues to define ‘likeness’ or *demut* as “predominantly something abstract: ‘appearance,’ ‘similarity,’ ‘analogy.’” Atkinson (1990:36-37) also referenced that this statement should be seen among other things as a human’s upright stature in comparison to the animals, moral choice, as well as rational and spiritual conscience.

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<sup>41</sup> The fact that God was addressing Himself indicates the presence of more than one of the God person present. From the creation account, one could assume this included the Spirit of God which was present since the beginning, but as the Amplified translation also indicates, it most probably included the whole trinity of God.

Consequently addressing the issue of ‘image and likeness’, Gunkel (2006 [1895]:9) firstly referred to the concept found in Genesis 5:1-3 which states that Adam was made in the likeness of God and in the same manner Adam brought forth Seth according to his likeness. He then proceeded to Genesis 9:5 where he obtained the notion that both humans and animals should behold the divine image within humanity and therefore avoid injuring it. For him the conclusion is concrete: the likeness refers to the human body. Interestingly enough, directly after this conclusion he provides a leeway that does not exclude the possibility of a spiritual sense. The problem he faced regarding the consideration of this opinion is that it was not very apparent to the author of P. He also continued that the ancient Hebrews always thought of Yahweh in anthropomorphic terms. This means that the idea of God being a non-corporeal being, having a spiritual existence would have been totally inconceivable.

Hamilton (2002:26-27) provided us with additional options to these questions. The first is that the word ‘image’ and the word ‘likeness’ may be used in synonyms in this passage. This he qualifies by referencing verse 27 that deals with the actual work of creation, where only “image” is used. A second option is that ‘likeness’ modifies or softens the ‘image’ in that mankind is not an exact little copy of Yahweh. A third alternative is the reverse of the second in that ‘likeness’ enhances ‘image’ where man not only carries the physical image of Yahweh, but also alike in nature and character.

In light of the problem Gunkel faced regarding the spiritual likeness of mankind, I propose a possible solution. Firstly, the notion that Gunkel made the ancient Hebrews always thought of Yahweh in anthropomorphic terms seems quite the opposite in context to the rest of the Pentateuch. In regard to the encounter with Moses, God manifested himself in the form of a blazing bush (Ex 3:2), and later on Mount Sinai in smoke and fire (Ex 19:18). We see that Israel knew God in the form of a cloud during daytime and a pillar of fire at night-time when He led them through the desert (Ex 13:21). There is no indication that Israel met with God at any stage as a corporeal being. Secondly, if the body was indeed what the author meant by ‘image’, it would certainly not be the primary aspect, but rather second in terms of concepts like nature, character and ultimately the fact that people are in true essence also spiritual beings.

Brueggemann (1982:31-33) decided to interpret the concept of 'image' in juxtaposition to Israel's resistance to any image of God. He is convinced that the setting of this text was exilic and therefore provided the congregation with the objective of affirming God's otherness and transcendence, unlike that of the Babylonian gods. He indicated that it announced freedom from exile. Brueggemann concluded his exposition on the concept of image by indicating that it was to present the antitype of a god's image that was to be found in any carved or human made object. There is only one creature that represents God on the earth: that is humanity, whom He created as His representative. Von Rad (1972:58) referenced that the text would have been significant in light of ancient Egyptian understanding that the Pharaoh was the "image of God living on earth."

As for 'likeness', it could possibly refer to the characteristics which man shares with God, or concepts like authority and dominion, intellect, responsibility, emotions, free will, love, etc (Sarna 1967:16). This is the first time during or before creation that the text reveals any being that in the slightest way reflects or represents God Himself. Apart from man, there is no other creature in the image and likeness of the Creator God. If the creation account is a statement of the magnificence and splendour of this Creator God, it is also a reflection of the greatness that He has placed in and upon humankind.

Eveson (2003:45) summarised the implications of man created in the image of God. Firstly, man has no excuse regarding his knowledge of God. Secondly, man can only find his true rest in God. Thirdly, man is a moral being with a free will that needs to take responsibility for his actions. Fourthly, God created man as a creature, but he is special and different to all other creatures.

Verse 27 indicates that God had a specific reason why He decided to create man in His own image and likeness. This reason is revealed when God announced that man was to rule and have dominion over His creation. The text highlights a list of things which man is supposed to rule over; all of these things were brought forth from something else like the marine life, fauna and flora; and not creations out of nothing like the light, water and land.

Verse 28 introduces another concept, namely that God created man in His image and likeness; man being in singular form. However, the text concludes that He created them, plural, male and female. I want to postulate a possible notion regarding this language use in that the ‘man’ concept refers to the spirit of humanity that would be without gender, which God then placed in two different types of bodies, a male and a female body. The previous two verses stated that humanity was created in the image and likeness of the Creator God. Male and female, as well as the spirit of mankind, therefore contain unique reflections or aspects of this image and likeness. Sarna (1967:12-13) pointed out the importance of this verse as it once again departs greatly from ancient Near Eastern traditions. Apparently, God did not have a need for a personal counterpart, nor did he have a need for procreation. Rather the issue of sexuality was purely given to mankind.

Brueggemann (1982:32-34) listed a couple of important aspects reflected in this verse. Firstly he agreed with Sarna (1967:12-13) that sexuality belongs to creation and not the Creator. Secondly, that sexuality is good and ordained by God. Thirdly, he highlights the use of the singular, then plural form of the word. This could indicate that God sees all of humanity as a single unit, though also acknowledges the existence of community within humanity.

Verse 29 provides us with a possible explanation of why God made two bodies. For a second time God pronounces a blessing relating to the fruitfulness and reproduction of mankind. This would not have been possible if God did not create two different gender bodies. God reconfirms His commission to mankind that they are to rule over all of creation and subdue it. The KJV translates the word ‘subdue’ with the concept of ‘replenish’. If the KJV poses to be a more accurate translation of the word, it could possibly support the idea of an original creation which had gone bad and that God had to re-create this new one. However, as we have seen in light of the events in the introduction verse, this original creation or a Luciferian-like fall is not the most obvious conclusion.

The day concludes when God instructs man only to eat from the seed bearing plants and fruit bearing trees. One can therefore deduce that God’s original intent for man was to live from a vegetarian type of diet. God instruct that the fauna was supposed

to eat from the seed yielding plants. Eveson (2003:45) highlighted some concluding facts regarding the closing verse 31 when for the first time the text adds an adverb when God saw that His creation act was ‘very good.’ There is also a difference in the way which the text conveys the concept of day, though the KJV does not reflect this. Up to day five, the text only references to it as ‘a day’ where it is now changed to ‘the day.’ This is true for both the sixth and the seventh day.

### 3.5.3. Conclusion (2:1-4a)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.	Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.	THUS THE heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.
By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.	And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.	And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.
Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.	And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.	And God blessed (spoke good of) the seventh day, set it apart as His own, and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all His work which He had created and done.
This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, <i>in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven.</i>	These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, <i>in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,</i>	This is the history of the heavens and of the earth when they were created. <i>In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens</i>

Though modern Bible translators concluded chapter 1 of Genesis at verse 31, the actual creation account only ends with Genesis 2:4a. There is however an inconsistency amongst commentaries, whether the account should end with 4a or 3. Garrett (1991:196) and Ross (1988:72) amongst other scholars argued that 4a should be seen as the heading for the second creation account and not the close of the first. For this dissertation, I will make use of 4a as the closing statement for the first creation account and 4b as the introductory statement to the second account as used by Gunkel.

The conclusion of this unit begins by stating that God had completed His creation of the heavens and the earth including their hosts. Von Rad (1972:61) indicated that in all of the P documentation this would have been the most daring and remarkable of them all. Here we are introduced to a new concept regarding the actions of God in that He rests on day seven. It is the third time that He pronounces a blessing, but this time not in reference to reproduction, but in sanctification. The concept of sanctification could be seen as holiness or being set apart for a specific task. Eveson (2003:51) was quick to mention that the concept of a Sabbath rest goes directly against the theory of Evolution which would claim that the process is continuous, without any ‘breaks’ in-between. According to the Creation account, God clearly took a day in which He did not continue any creation acts.

Brueggemann (1982:35-36) provided a few ideas behind the seventh or the Sabbath<sup>42</sup>. Firstly, one sees that God did not spend the day in exhaustion from His labour, but in peace and serenity. Secondly, it announces God’s confidence in His creation and that He is in control. Thirdly, it speaks of the relation between God and mankind. I would like to elaborate on this point in light of Atkinson (1990:35), as God concluded His creation work during the latter part of day six when He created man. Day seven was therefore the first full day that man experienced on earth. God sanctified this day in order to spend uninterrupted and undivided time with the crown of His creation. Fourthly, one finds that because mankind was created in the image of God, they too are called to this Sabbath rest.

Sarna (1967:18-19) fixed attention on the fact that the text does not in any way mention that the Sabbath is a ritual, which is supposed to be kept on a fixed weekly basis. This concept is only introduced as part of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:11. However, it is clear that the Israelites were familiar<sup>43</sup> with the Sabbath day concept at the time of the introduction of the Ten Commandments, even though the Scriptures never mention it between the creation account and the revealing of the Ten Commandments. The Israelites therefore had to be familiar, if only with an oral

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<sup>42</sup> Sarna (1967:18) elaborates that the word Sabbath is a vocabulary construction meaning “to desist from labour” as the text itself never mentions such a word.

<sup>43</sup> Exodus 20:8 begins with the statement of “remember the Sabbath.” The word ‘remember’ points to a well familiar tradition of the Israelites.

tradition of the creation account, prior to the time of Moses. Atkinson (1990:48) therefore concluded that it was God's intention to connect His covenant people to His creative acts during the creation through the Sabbath.

Sarna (1967:20) explained in quite some depth the possibility of the adoption of the Sabbath concept from the Mesopotamia calendar, but concluded that this was not the case. If the Israelites did in fact borrow anything from this ancient culture, it would only have been the concept of a seven-day week.

Day seven does however deviate from the other days in the fact that it does not mention the end of the day; that it became evening and morning. From a theological point of view, the lack of this statement would indicate that God's rest is ever continuing. In light of Brueggemann (1982:35-36), the above-mentioned comment and Hebrews 3, this continued rest is available to all of humanity (Eveson 2003:30).

Verse 4a is therefore of great importance to us as a closing verse. As Genesis 1:1 is seen as an opening statement that encompasses the whole creation account, this closing verse provides a similar idea. The author does not want his readers to simply consider this a mythical or fictional tale of creation, but stresses the idea that this is in fact the account, or history (as the Amplified translates it), of when the heavens and the earth were created.

#### **3.5.3.1. The seven-day week**

In our modern day, it will be quite strange to challenge the concept of a seven-day week, however, as recently as the French Revolution this idea was still disputed. Eveson (2003:49-50) provided a short overview to the history of our seven-day week understanding. The first people who divided time as we know it (sixty seconds in one minute; sixty minutes in one hour; and twenty-four hours in one day) was the ancient Near Eastern Sumerians. Mostly this was based on their understanding of the solar and lunar movements from which they created their first calendars. The challenge we face is that a seven-day week does not fit these models, yet this phenomenon occurs frequently throughout ancient literature. As far as Eveson could conclude this influence had to come from the Israelites as they would have been familiar with the Creation account where God ordained the seven-day week. This cycle of seven was

once again highlighted during the time of Noah as well as in the covenantal agreements of the patriarchs and the Ten Commandments. Also interesting to note is that the Hebrew word for ‘week’ *shabua*, translates as “that which is divided into seven.”

From Eveson’s comment, it is noteworthy to me how such a seemingly small and insignificant nation like Israel could have influenced such a large part of the world regarding the aspect of a seven day week. Personally this enforces the concept of a purposeful creation. The Creator did not only provide this seven day structure in the first chapter of Genesis, but also used it Himself in His dealings with the created world.

## CHAPTER 4

### EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF GENESIS 2:4b-25

#### 4.1. Introduction

In chapter 3 I have presented the first creation account, as found in Genesis 1:1-2:4a, which deals with creation from a cosmic or eternal perspective. The second, as found in Genesis 2:4b-25, accounts for creation from a more human or personal view. Consequently, placing these two texts next to each other, one is immediately confronted with the question, of whether they give account of the same events from different perspectives, as in the case of the Gospel writers, or whether they refer to different events? According to Kikiwada (1994:169), the occurrence of a double creation account was not uncommon in ancient Near Eastern literature as he referenced Sumerian, Akkadian and Hebrew accounts. Although we find the appearance of double creation stories in other traditions, Eveson (2003:59) stated that, “Many suppose that these verses introduce a second and contradictory account to creation from that given in Genesis 1. This is to misunderstand completely their significance and purpose.”

Hamilton (2003:20-21) summarised four notions as to why some scholars regard the Genesis 1 and 2 creation accounts as different and originally independent creation stories. The first notion is based on the different and sometimes seemingly contradictory account of events. In the first account, the order deals with vegetation, followed by birds and fish, then by animals, concluding with man and woman. The second account's order is man, followed by vegetation, then by animals, concluding with the woman. The second notion highlights that the first account exclusively refers to the Creator as God or *Elohim* where the second account refers to Lord God or *Yahweh Elohim*. The third notion notes that the first account mainly reflects on the Creator as One who creates through speaking and separating. In the second account, He is strongly portrayed as a craftsman or potter. The fourth notion indicates that the first account deals more with the question of cosmology or the universe and everything in it, while the second account deals more with anthropology or the understanding of man.

Waltke (2001:79) considered that there seems to be a paradigm change between the two creation accounts in that God is no longer the sole actor, but humanity becomes the reactor. There is also the subtle change in wording in that “the heavens and the earth” now becomes “the earth and the heavens.” The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967a:418) pointed out that Genesis 2:4b - 25 does not describe the creation and production of the earth, but elaborates on the garden planted by God and the formation of man.

Hamilton (2003:21) argued that one should understand the Genesis 2 account not as a separate story that was independently authored, but as a continuation or a more specialised account following the panoramic view of the first account. To him the first deals with the global overview, creation in relation to its Creator, while the second deals with the creation in relation to man. He concluded that much of what is contained in Genesis 2:4b-25 is an elaboration of Genesis 1:26-29. Atkinson (1990:54) agreed as he called the Genesis 1 account a “panoramic vista” followed by the Genesis 2 account as a “more intimate homely style.” Mettinger (2007:14) indicated that the primary focus of the second account centre on the events immediately following the creation of man and woman.

In summary, I would propose that the two creation accounts could be viewed in one of four different ways. Firstly, we can see them as totally independent constructions by different people and far apart in time. Secondly, both reference different creation acts. Thirdly, due to the technique of narrative discourse used, both refer to the same account from different perspectives; where the first account deals with the macro-cosmological world and the second account with the micro-world in relation to man. One could say that the second account zooms in on a specific portion of the first. The fourth option would be to view the two accounts as a chronological continuation where the Creator first created the entire universe and everything in it, followed by the events within the Garden of Eden (Tsumura 1994b:29-30). How one views the relationship between the two accounts will therefore have a great impact on the way we understand the texts. I will therefore conclude this question in the next chapter, following my analysis of the second account in this chapter.

## 4.2. Structure of Genesis 2:4b-25

Atkinson (1990:54) divided the Garden Narrative into three sections, man's relation to his natural environment, man's relation to animals, and man's relationship with other people. He noted that each section is concluded by a law or governing ordinance to guide these relationships.

In light of the outline provided by Waltke (2001:80-81); Brueggemann (1982:40-50) and Ross (1988:120-121) amongst others, I will provide a summary of the main elements contained in the second creation account:

- The account title reflects on the creation of the earth and the surrounding universe (Gn 2:4b).
- The main characters are the Lord God (*Yahweh Elohim*) who is the Creator and life giver accompanied first by the man and later by the woman (Gn 2:4b, 2:7, 2:22).
- The preferred method by which the Lord God creates is by forming or making things (Gn 2:4b, 2:7).
- The 'antagonist' in the account is that of loneliness or the lack of a counterpart / helper (Gn 2:18).
- The Lord God, who formed man from the dust of the earth (Gn 2:7), initiates Creation.
- The main events include:
  - Forming of the man (Gn 2:7)
  - Planting of the first garden (Gn 2:8)
  - Making vegetation (Gn 2:9)
  - Establishing rivers (Gn 2:10-14)
  - Commanding and commissioning man (Gn 2:15-17)
  - Forming of wild animals and birds (Gn 2:19)
  - Fashioning the woman (Gn 2:21-22)
- The Garden Narrative concludes with the statement of union between man and woman (Gn 2:23-24).

### **4.3. Theological theme of Genesis 2:4b-25**

Pertaining to the theme of Genesis 2, both Ross (1988:117) and Brueggemann (1982:40) agreed that it should not be understood apart from the third and fourth chapters of Genesis which should all be seen as a whole. Due to the scope of this study I will not elaborate on these following two chapters apart from agreeing with Ross (1988:76) that chapter two reflects on the created world which the Lord God made; the blessing of the man and woman; followed by the fall of mankind and destruction upon the face of the earth. Atkinson (1990:52) stated that this larger portion of Scripture primarily deals with the origin of human pain and suffering brought about by sin; how the “very good” which God created, becomes the agent of the disorder.

There is a clear difference in focus between Genesis 1 and 2 in that the former deals with the origin and creation of the universe as a whole, and the latter only deals with matters pertaining to creation on earth, especially in the realm of man (Speiser 1990:18). Brueggemann (1982:50-51) continued that there are two main themes revealed in the text. The first and greater theme concerns itself with the relationship between man and his Creator. Creation belongs to the Creator; though man is placed in a position of authority; consequently he is still subordinate to the Creator’s instructions. The second and lesser theme deals with the relationship between man and woman, though the narrator refrains from going into any great detail on this relationship.

Hamilton (2002:22) highlighted another important aspect pertaining to the theme of Genesis 2, in that, according to Mesopotamian chronologies, such as the Sumerian King list, all their remotest ancestors were of divine nature. This made the distinction between man and god somewhat impossible to distinguish. The biblical account of Genesis 2 keeps this differentiation clear in that the Lord God created man to have dominion here on earth and not to be a lower type of god.

As man takes a central position in the Garden Narrative, the author reveals something of man’s dual nature in reference to his heavenly and earthly origin. Although man is a physical being made from the dust of the earth, he is simultaneously a spiritual being (in reference to the breath of God that brought man to life) who has the capacity

to communicate with his Creator (Eveson 2003:60). The Lord God is also portrayed as being moral and holy in that He provides clear instructions to the man and the woman as to what they may and may not eat, (Hamilton 2002:23).

#### **4.4. Origin of Genesis 2:4b-25**

Speiser (1990:9) was convinced that the creation account of Genesis 2 was familiar with the Mesopotamian Primal history. He supported this argument in that the second creation account clearly did not borrow from the first account, as it describes totally different events. One could conclude the exact opposite to Speiser's view, in that the same author specifically desired to describe two different events during creation. Atkinson (1990:53) supported this view as he was convinced that the author had borrowed from various familiar mythological stories and transformed them into a totally new and original story. Consequently, according to him, the Garden Narrative should be primarily seen as saga, but also contains traces of history. It would therefore not be accurate to view them as fable or mythology.

Mettinger (2007:124-126) argued for a reconstruction of primarily two older accounts, which he calls "The Adamic myth" and the "Deuteronomistic theology". Accordingly, one could explain both the elements of creation, - like man, plants and trees, - as well the legal components of command and disobedience.

Hamilton (2002:20) referred to scholars who would still hold to the once popular view of the Documentary Hypothesis, which would place the Garden Narrative at a much earlier period during which the Yahwist (J tradition) would have narrated it. This could have been any time between the Davidic era (tenth century BC) and the Babylonian exile period. I therefore conclude with the notion that there is still insufficient evidence to prove that the Garden Narrative was either written totally independent of the Genesis 1 creation account, or that it was the same author portraying two different views. Following my analysis of the first account in chapter 3, I would agree with Hamilton (2002:21) that it seems more logical to place the Garden Narrative after the Genesis 1 creation account, consequently allowing for the same narrator with two different focal points on the creation narratives. Tsumura (1994b:30) agreed as the flow of discourse in the accounts supports this view.

#### 4.5. Exegetical outline of Genesis 2:4b-25

Though the second creation account has a clear flow of events, it is by far less chronological than the first. The question of chronology is also central to our understanding of this text. If indeed the account does follow chronologically on the first, one would have to accept that the events followed directly after each another. However, if one understands the account to be a more in-depth understanding of certain events within the first account, the chronology is not so important. My proposition regarding the division<sup>44</sup> of the second account is therefore as follows:

1. Introduction: Stage and conditions for the creation account is set (Gn 2:4b-7).
  - a. Setting: The earth in the day that the Lord God created the earth and the heavens (Gn 2:4b).
  - b. Circumstances: the earth is uncultivated and unproductive, due to the lack of rain and a cultivator (Gn 2:5-6).
  - c. Creation: The Lord God forms a living man / cultivator from the dust of the earth and His own breath (Gn 2:7).
2. First stage: The Lord God plants and establishes the Garden in Eden (Gn 2:8-17).
  - a. Introduction: The Garden in Eden is planted (Gn 2:8).
  - b. Trees: The Lord God makes a variety of trees (Gn 2:9).
  - c. Rivers: One main river flows out of Eden, divided into four sub rivers. Eden becomes a source of life to other regions on the earth (Gn 2:10-14).
  - d. Man's responsibilities: The Lord God commissions and prohibits the man (Gn 2:15-17).
    - i. Man is commissioned as cultivator (Gn 2:15).
    - ii. Man is prohibited to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gn 2:16-17).
3. Second stage: The Lord God address the issue of companionship (Gn 2:18-24).
  - a. Problem statement: Man should not be alone and needs a helper (Gn 2:18).
  - b. Animals: The Lord God formed animals and man names all of them (Gn 2:19-20).

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<sup>44</sup> My proposed layout followed the consultation of Eveson (2003); Waltke (2001); Garrett (1991); Ross (1988); Coats (1983); Von Rad (1972) and Gunkel (2006 [1895]) on their versions. See Mettinger (2007:16-17) for an alternative proposal on a seven-scene arrangement.

- c. Woman: The Lord God makes the woman, taken from within the man to be a companion for the man (Gn 2:21-24).
  - i. Creation of woman: Account of the creation of the woman (Gn 2:21-22).
  - ii. Response to man's companion: Man exclaims a statement of unity between all the men and woman which were to follow (Gn 2:23-24).
- 4. Conclusion: Statement of union between the man and woman (Gn 2:25).

#### 4.5.1. Introduction (2:4b-6)

NASB	KJV	Amp
<i>This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven.</i>	<i>These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,</i>	<i>This is the history of the heavens and of the earth when they were created. In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens</i>
Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.	And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.	When no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up, for the Lord God had not [yet] caused it to rain upon the earth and there was no man to till the ground,
But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.	But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.	But there went up a mist (fog, vapour) from the land and watered the whole surface of the ground

Similar to the first creation account, the second's opening verse is loaded with a great amount of information to reflect upon. Von Rad (1972:76) stated that only Genesis 2:4b might reference cosmic creation in the total second Creation account or Garden Narrative. Here we face the similar challenge of whether this opening statement was given as an encompassing statement of the whole account, or whether it is simply the chronological place where the account begins. It is notable to see that the opening verses of both accounts' can be divided into five different parts, with some distinct differences.

1 <sup>st</sup> Creation Account		2 <sup>nd</sup> Creation Account	
Aspect	Content	Content	Aspect
1	Beginning	Day	1
2	God	Lord God	2
3	Created	Made	3
4	Heavens	Earth	4
5	Earth	Heavens	5

One of the main standing questions raised by Wellhausen, and many other scholars, in particularly those who ascribe to the Documentary Hypothesis, is that of multiple authors. Focusing on the opening statements, can we possibly observe something of the author's intent between the two accounts? Perhaps the first indicates a more universal account of creation events, with man as one of the many created objects, whereas the second relates to a more human narration; that is one of a close relationship between man and God.

1. In the day – The second creation account begins with a time allocation concerning that which is to follow. The time defining word used is “day” in contrast to the first account that use “beginning”. The word “day” could once again be understood in two possible ways. A first possibility would be to ascribe it to a 24-hour day, therefore interpreting it as a normal earth day in which the Lord God created the earth and the heavens. In relation to the first account, such an event would best correlate with Genesis 1:1, being the time and place where everything began.

A second possibility would be to understand “day” in the context of an event taking place, which stretches beyond a normal earth day; as in the case of the wording “in the day of our Lord” (1 Cor 1:18). Batten (2006:40) mentioned that the text does not quantify the word ‘day’ by a number (as frequently used in the first Creation account), but rather signifies a period of time. Such an understanding of the word would lead to the conclusion that this “day” could potentially include the whole creation process of the earth and the heavens. In our understanding of “day” versus “beginning”, as used in the accounts, beginning would surely relate to a more specific or abstract understanding,

whereas day is something closer to normal human understanding. Speiser (1990:15) indicated that Genesis 2:4b would more accurately translate as “on the day...” which would provide a stronger argument for the first option, namely that there was a specific day on which the Lord God made everything.

2. Lord God – The concept of Lord God or *Yahweh Elohim* is a new introduction to the text compared to the first account, which simply makes use of the concept God or *Elohim*. Vine (1949:223) explained *Yahweh* as follows, “One focus is that this God was an eternal, self-existent One with unique being; another is that He ‘will be’ present to the people of his covenant promise to Abraham.” It continues to say that “YHWH often has the personal focus of relationship.” The understanding of ancient Israel was certainly one of a God who was close to them as a covenant people; therefore perhaps adding this concept of *Yahweh*, indicating that personal element of relationship; as opposed to many other pagan religions that also made use of the same word for their gods. Consequently, this brings a clear distinction between the Covenant God of Israel and the rest of the pagan gods. Eveson (2003:60) noted that this reference to God is only used sixteen times in the Old Testament, of which twelve are found in Genesis 2 and 3.
3. Made – In contrast to the first creation account, the author now makes use of the word *asah* (made) and not *bara* (create.) Gibson (1981:23) mentioned that these two words are sometimes used inter exchangeable, though *bara* is more strongly related with the concept of *ex nihilo*. *Asah* on the other hand more often relates to something being made or reformed out of something already in existence. Boice (1982:25) agreed with Gibson on this point.
4. Earth – A notable observation between the two accounts is found in the concept “heavens and earth” which is now replaced with “earth and heaven”. As I have indicated, the account has a much greater focus on man as the centre of the Lord God’s activity and not merely creation as seen in the first account. Therefore a possible explanation, as to why the author would have chosen the wording in such a way, could be found in the closeness of relationship between the Lord God and man. Atkinson (1990:55) indicated that the word

“earth” should be understood as relating to the habitation of man, therefore most likely referencing the planet earth as we know it. Speiser (1990:18) showed that the author’s intention with the first creation narrative was to address the creation of the universe as he begins the account with “heaven and earth,” where the second deals with the earth in respect to man by opening the account with “earth and heaven.”

5. Heavens – By now our conclusion regarding the focus of the second creation account has been well established. With man as the centre of the narrative, the word ‘heavens’ would most probably relate to that which man would call the heavens or the sky which is above him. As we once again find the word in its plural form, it could also be an indication that man understood that heaven was more than just the sky above him and could therefore include the dwelling place of the Lord God (Atkinson 1990:55).

The rest of the introduction to the second creation account contains many circumstantial clauses. The author presents the concepts of plants and herbs as though the reader would be well familiar with these two concepts, unlike the first account where it is specifically told when they were created, on day three. The author presents his audience with two further concepts, the first being plants that were not yet in the earth and the second the herbs, not yet sprouting or growing. The meaning of these two concepts is rather unclear, as all three of the abovementioned translations ascribe different meanings to these concepts. A possible interpretation would be that all the plants were still in their seed form and not established as fully grown plants, where the second concept would point to a confirmation that no herb had begun to grow. Though we do find the same word for herb in the first account, the word for plants is totally foreign to the first account. The NASB translates the word for plants as a shrub or a bush type of plant.

The author’s intention of stating that vegetation had not yet grown should not be understood separately from the two following clauses. Plants and herbs had not yet grown, firstly because it had never rained on the earth and secondly there was no man to cultivate and work the ground. Unlike the first account the author makes no mention of the creation of the sun and celestial bodies, which would be a necessity for

plant growth, but indicates that the only missing components for their growth is that of water and cultivation.

The introduction concludes with a notable concept. The author had just told the reader that plants and herbs had not yet grown because there was no rain, however concluding his line of thought he states that rain was not a source of water, as mist used to fill the earth, consequently watering all the ground. Walton (2003:204) added that the concept of water as life giving should not be seen separately from the Creator as the life-giver. This leads us to conclude that the only real missing element of growth was that of the cultivator (Von Rad 1972:76).

In conclusion to the opening verses, I want to emphasise that, in contrast to the first account, it certainly recalls the narrative from a much more human point of view. Both the wording and the emphasis on the absence of a cultivator prove to be keys to this conclusion.

#### 4.5.2. From dust to man (2:7)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then 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.	And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.	Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath or spirit of life, and man became a living being.

Following the introduction of the second creation account, we are immediately introduced to the main character in this account, man. Man was not simply a product of time and change, but the Lord God was his designer and maker. Von Rad (1972:77) noted that during the first creation account man was seen as the pinnacle of creation. During the Garden Narrative, man is now seen as the “centre of the circle.”

The text indicates that there were two components in the making of man, the first being from the dust of the ground and the second being the breath of God. Sarna (1967:14, 16) highlighted the comparison between the Hebrew word for ‘dust’ and the word ‘clay’. He continued that the word “make” (*yasar*) is the same Hebrew word

used when a potter works with his clay. Essentially one can say that the Lord God is a potter, who had sole mastery over what He wanted to make out of the clay. Atkinson (1990:56) indicated that this forming process of the man's body indicates closeness in relationship between the Creator and the creation. As he puts it, God got "his hands dirty to bring us to life."

The text reveals two distinct sources or 'materials'<sup>45</sup> in the making of man. The dust from the ground was used to make his body. God took it from the earth and it will return following his death. God provided His own breath for the life or spirit of man, which came from Him and should return to Him following the death of man. The NASB and Amp translations say that man became a living being, when the dust and the breath or the body and the spirit came together. The KJV translates the concept of "being" with the concept of "soul"<sup>46</sup>. The Scripture therefore brings the idea across that without the body and the spirit being together man cannot be or does not have a living soul.

Ham (2004:155) illuminated another possible interpretation of Genesis 2:7 that the dust which formed man was an ape-like creature that evolved through natural processes<sup>47</sup>. This creature only became human when God breathed into his nostrils. This view would be inconsistent with the text, however, as Genesis 3:19 states that man will return to the dust from which he came; in other words he would die one day. This return to dust most certainly does not point to a stage where he will once again begin to function as an ape-like creature.

Speiser (1990:16) noted that there is an obvious "play on words" contained in the verse between "man" (*adam*) and "ground" (*adamah*). According to him, this was also a practice common in other ancient literatures.

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<sup>45</sup> Sarna (1967:14) indicated that this is a unique occurrence for man is the only created thing where the text reveals the substance of. This could be a further indication of the importance placed upon man.

<sup>46</sup> From a canonical perspective 1 Thessalonians 5:23 references man as a trinity, consisting of spirit, soul and body. This could reflect the Trinitarian understanding of God in that He made man in His own image.

<sup>47</sup> This view is called Theistic Evolution, which I will address in more detail in chapter 5.

### 4.5.3. Garden in Eden (2:8-17)

The story line has now been set for the audience as well as the introduction of the main characters. The author moves to the setting in which the creation account continues. Sarna (1967:23-34) referenced another unique aspect of the Garden Narrative amongst other ancient Near Eastern literature; the latter predominantly dealt with war and evil, whereas the garden was different; a place of tranquillity, beauty, peace and goodness.

#### 4.5.3.1. Introduction of the Garden (2:8)

NASB	KJV	Amp
The Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.	And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.	And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden [delight]; and there He put the man whom He had formed (framed, constituted).

From the preceding passages, one can gather that the earth had already been formed and the mist was watering the soil so that vegetation could begin to grow. By now, the Lord God had also made a man who could be the cultivator of this garden. However, the Lord God could not send this man into the vastness of the earth to go and cultivate it. Therefore, the Lord God planted a garden, a specific area of plant and vegetation growth ‘in the east’. What the exact intention of the author is, using the concept of “garden” in the passage is difficult to say. Is he only referencing a geographical area intended for the garden, or does it also include the plants in the garden? From the following verses, we can gather that the Lord God only planted the trees at a later stage. Therefore, a good conclusion to the concept of “garden” would be a type of introduction of that which is to follow, the actual establishment of the trees and plants in the garden.

Eveson (2003:61) noted that the garden certainly included a geographical region here on earth and not just some mythical place or utopian dream in the author’s mind, as we sometimes like to use the concept of ‘paradise’. Speiser (1994:175) indicated that the detailed description of the rivers found within the narrative is evidence enough that the author had a specific area in mind. Von Rad (1972:78) agreed that all

mythical elements have been completely stripped away from the narrative. This was a garden given to man as a gift from his Creator.

The reference to “east” should be understood in the context of a Jewish author to whom Israel (Palestine) would have been the centre of the world. Everything east from there would point in the direction in which the garden was planted. The garden was planted in an area or land called Eden. Speiser (1990:16) stated that Eden pointed to a geographical region, but could also be associated with the Hebrew noun for “enjoyment”. Mettinger (2007:15) highlighted the possibility that Eden should be seen as the “‘emblem’ of human richness and happiness.”

Once the Lord God had completed the planting of the garden, He took the man and placed him within the garden. From the passage one cannot say for sure how closely verses 7 and 8 are connected; that is whether the Lord God first made the man, leaving him somewhere on the earth for a while, planted the garden where He then placed man, or whether He simply made man and directly placed him in the garden. From my perspective, this verse clearly illustrates that God had a purpose behind His actions.

#### 4.5.3.2. Growth of trees (2:9)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.	And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.	And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight or to be desired--good (suitable, pleasant) for food; the tree of life also in the centre of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of [the difference between] good and evil and blessing and calamity.

The focus of the Lord God had now shifted from the creation of the earth to this geographical place or garden in Eden. The Lord God had chosen where it would be and had placed the man inside this garden. The text indicates that it is the Lord God who ‘causes’ the trees in the garden to grow. In reference to verse 5, one can speculate that the intended meaning of “before the plants were in the earth” is

connected to the idea that the Lord God caused the trees to grow. The seed of the trees could therefore already have been placed in the ground by the Lord God, but as of yet it had not begun to grow.

The author adds two extra indicators to the growth of the trees, which he does not make mention of again. The first is the idea that all the trees in the garden were pleasing or pleasant to look at. The second was that these trees were intended to serve as food for the man and most probably to the animals later. Atkinson (1990:43) highlighted the fact that this is a strong deviation from all other Near Eastern mythologies, where it was man's function to serve the gods by offering food. From these verses, we gather the exact opposite, in that it was God providing for His creation. From the Garden Narrative we can gather that God's intention for the man was to live from a type of vegetarian diet, for nowhere do we find any references of the Lord God providing man with meat to eat. Whatever the tree and plant diet consisted of had to be somewhat different from our current understanding of a vegetarian diet, for man would otherwise most probably have had a lack of protein and certain essential fatty acids in his diet.

While the Lord God caused the trees to grow, the author references two very unique and special trees which the Lord God placed in the middle of the garden. The concept of placing them in the middle of the garden indicates their importance to both God and man, as the man's work and life would have revolved around these two trees or rather what they came to represent. The Lord God planted these trees together; one therefore has to understand them in relation to each other and not necessarily in contrast to one another. The first tree is the Tree of Life, the second the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Sarna (1967:25-26) indicated that the former was a well known concept in ancient Near Eastern literature, though the second is most unique to the Garden Narrative. Notably the focus of man's dealings in the garden centres on the latter rather than the first.

The first tree represented life and seen as the source of life to the entire garden. The second tree represents two contradictory concepts of good and evil. This tree would ultimately cause the deception and fall of man, who desired to become like God by acquiring this understanding of good and evil (Gn 3). I would therefore conclude at

this stage, that man did not understand the concept of choosing between that which was good and that which was evil. The differentiation between these two concepts of good and evil might have been overwhelmed by the presence of the Lord God. In a sense one could speculate that man did not yet know that he actually had a choice between what the Lord God commanded and his own free will. One thing that does stand out to me in this verse however is that the Lord God had a purpose and plan for placing the trees in the garden

#### 4.5.3.3. Establishing rivers (2:10-14)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers.	And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.	Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four [river] heads.
The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.	The name of the first is Pishon: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;	The first is named Pishon; it is the one flowing around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.
The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there.	And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.	The gold of that land is of high quality; bdellium, pearl and onyx stone are there.
The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush.	And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.	The second river is named Gihon; it is the one flowing around the whole land of Cush.
The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.	And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.	The third river is named Hiddekel [the Tigris]; it is the one flowing east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

One of the major questions arising concerning the Garden Narrative pertains to the location of Eden. One of the best ways to position Eden is by establishing the location of the four rivers mentioned by the text. Speiser (1990:19-20) referenced that

recent data<sup>48</sup> had indicated that the existence of these rivers were factual and that the four rivers would have converged near the head of the Persian Gulf.

Focusing on the text the author informs his audience of a single river flowing out of the garden, but does not indicate where the river originates. It could be assumed that apart from the mist that the earth brought forth (Gn 2:6); this river would be the main source of water for the garden. The life giving water of the garden did not end in the garden; rather it flowed out into the rest of the earth, perhaps making the garden a source of life to other parts of the earth. Genesis 2:10 indicates that this main garden river divided into four, by the time it left Eden. These four rivers are called Pishon; Gihon; Tigris (or Hiddekel); and the Euphrates. Not much is said about the last three rivers apart from the countries that they flowed into; however, more information is supplied on the first river, perhaps indicating the greater knowledge of the river on the author's behalf. On the other side Eveson (2003:61-62) argued that the lack of information regarding the rivers indicates that the original audience could have been familiar with their location, as a South African would be aware of the Orange, Vaal and Limpopo Rivers. Hamilton (2002:29) noted that the locations of the Tigris and Euphrates, two well-known rivers in modern times, would indicate Mesopotamia. Atkinson (1990:15) added that it would more specifically refer to the region formerly known as Babylon, or Iraq as we know it today. Eveson concurred with this deduction.

Genesis 2:11-12 tells that the first river or the Pishon flows around the land of Havilah. It is indicated that this land had a good quality of gold, as well as bdellium and onyx stone. One can therefore assume that the land of Havilah was indeed a wealthy country, but also that the author already possessed knowledge of these precious metal and stones. Speiser (1990:20) indicated that the Hebrew translation of the rivers' names would have referenced something like "the Gusher" and the Gihon something like "the Bubbler." The audience is then simply informed that the Gihon flows around the whole land of Cush; the Tigris around Assyria, but no indication of where the Euphrates flows. As previously mentioned, this could either be an

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<sup>48</sup> Data was collected through, among other techniques; sand pattern analysis and satellite photography (Walton 2003:204).

indication that the author had no sound knowledge of the rivers, or that his original audience was well familiar with them. Speiser highlighted the fact that the land of Cush should not be mistaken with the biblical reference to the land of Ethiopia, but rather the land of the Kassites which Eveson (2003:62) referred to as people living in the area of Babylonia.

Von Rad (1972:79) was puzzled by this addition to the Garden Narrative. He argued that this verse was fully independent and was not able to undergo inner assimilation. I disagree with Von Rad as the mentioning of the four rivers would highlight the fact that this was not some mythical garden set in the mind of the author, but had a specific location somewhere in the ancient world. Proof of this can be seen in that most of the Middle East is oil rich today. Oil is naturally produced through a process where carbon decay (usually from a great amount of trees and plants) is pressurised under high temperatures over long periods of time. In modern times, nearly all of the Middle East is one big dessert, with very little plant growth. The large amount of oil however indicates that this was not always the case; most probably pointing to the garden and Eden region in this area.

#### 4.5.4. Man’s responsibilities (2:15-17)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.	And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.	And the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and guard and keep it.
The Lord God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;	And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:	And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, You may freely eat of every tree of the garden;
but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”	But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.	But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and blessing and calamity you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

Again, the audience is told that the Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden, but this time it is added why He did so. Trees had been planted which the

man had to cultivate, look after and keep. Brueggemann (1982:46) stated that ‘work’ was good, and something given by God even in the midst of ‘paradise’ and not a result of the fall of man. Only later was hardship or a curse added to this work (Gn 3:19).

Eveson (2003:68) referenced a parallel in the use of the two verbs ‘to cultivate’ and ‘to keep’ in that they are only used in conjunction with each other in one other place in the Old Testament. This is found where Moses provides guidance to the Levites as to how they are to cultivate (or serve) and keep the tabernacle (Nm 3:6-7). Based on the similarity one could argue similar authorship. A second observation regards the fact that the tabernacle was erected as God’s dwelling place among His people, yet it was the people’s responsibility to take care of it. Similarly, we find the Lord God dwelling with man in the garden (Gn 3:8), yet the upkeep was again given to the man.

The Amplified translation makes use of the concept ‘to guard’ the garden. When looking at the idea of guarding the garden, one is immediately confronted with the question of guarding from what or whom? Surely the Lord God did not make or create anything that would be a threat to the garden, yet the man had to guard it. Eveson (2003:65) noted that it could simply be a reference to where the animals were allowed to graze.

With the man’s new position as cultivator and keeper of the garden, the Lord God also instructed him concerning food. Man received the instruction, but also a prohibition and warning: that he was allowed to eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which if he did eat from, would cause his death. According to Brueggemann (1982:45) the issue here was never centred on the tree that would have caused the death of man, but in the fact that man was given a direct command from his Creator. Eveson (2003:67) added that the tree rather represents man’s ability to live autonomously from God. The choice of disobedience had to be given in order to test this autonomy. Accordingly, the conclusion is clear; man was not made to live independent of God.

Speiser (1990:17) commented that the punishment of death was not one that would immediately follow the event of disobedience, rather in a much larger picture; death

to the relationship he enjoyed with his Creator. Mettinger (2007:22-23) agreed with Speiser, that the sentence disobedience would not immediately be executed. In light of this command we are tempted to speculate if man was originally immortal<sup>49</sup> like his Creator; as a consequence of his disobedience man did die, even though it was only 930 years later (Gn 5:5).

The question comes to mind as to why the Lord God had placed that tree in the garden in the first place if He knew it could cause the fall of humanity. One possibility is that the Lord God had to give man the option of choice, whereby He could truly test man's obedience. From Genesis 3 we know that this single act caused humanity's expulsions from the garden. As I have come to understand these verses in relation to the rest of the Bible, it seems clear that the Lord God not only knew would happen, but also already made a plan for humanity's salvation<sup>50</sup>.

#### **4.5.5. Introducing companionship (2:18-24)**

In the previous chapter, I stated that the specific attention given in the Genesis 1 creation account to the creation of the woman is unparalleled in all other Near Eastern literature. The author obviously had a specific intention for going into such detail. Hamilton (2002:28-29) highlighted some ideas. Firstly, that God's command to rule was given to both the male and the female. Secondly, that the origin of both the man and the woman is the same; they came from the same raw "earthly" material. Thirdly, the woman is described as the "helper fit" for the man. This concept of helper is predominantly given to God elsewhere in the Bible as the One who helps us. Fourthly, we see that the man's first words upon seeing the woman are not only an affirmation of their kinship, but also loyalty towards one another. Finally, (though this goes beyond the scope of this study) that the man and the woman are equal in creation, but as a result of the fall there is now subordination on the woman's behalf.

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<sup>49</sup> Paul states in some of his epistles that death only came into the world because of sin, which came through Adam. See Romans 5:12 and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22.

<sup>50</sup> Revelation 13:8 perhaps refers an eternal plan of salvation, which the Lord God made, even before He began with creation.

#### 4.5.5.1. Problem statement (2:18)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”	And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.	Now the Lord God said, It is not good (sufficient, satisfactory) that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper meet (suitable, adapted, complementary) for him.

From a canonical perspective, there is the idea that God in the form of Holy Spirit is a helper to man (Jn 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7), though this was clearly not God’s intention in the garden. The Hebrew word used here is *ezer negdo*, which translates as ‘helper’ and ‘equal and adequate’ (Waltke 2001:88). Atkinson (1990:68-69) observed that this creature needed not only to be the man’s helper, but specifically one that would be of the same kind. Brueggemann (1982:47) continued that this helper needed to be an “earthling,” a creature and not the Creator. Emphasis is placed here on the word “suitable”, which could reflect on the notion, that an all-knowing and sovereign God would not be ideal to assist in the tasks given to the man.

#### 4.5.5.2. Forming of animals (2:19-20)

NASB	KJV	Amp
Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.	And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.	And out of the ground the Lord God formed every [wild] beast and living creature of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them; and whatever Adam called every living creature, that was its name.
The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.	And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.	And Adam gave names to all the livestock and to the birds of the air and to every [wild] beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a helper meet (suitable, adapted, complementary) for him.

The idea of the Garden of Eden being this utopia place of rest from our labour is quite foreign to the author’s intention concerning the activities in the garden. Eveson

(2003:65) argued that man was synonymous with labour from the moment of his creation and not as a result of sin, following their expulsion from the garden. Genesis 2:19 is the first time where the author makes mention of how man exercised his dominion and authority on earth in that it was his responsibility to name the animals. As the Creator God began with the naming process since the start of creation, He now surrenders this task to man to complete; as the text clearly states that He brought the animals to the man. The KJV references the word “every” three times in verse 19, indicating that the Lord God also did not make anything without purpose. Not only did He make everything, but brought everything to the man to name it.

Von Rad (1972:82) highlighted another interesting aspect that points to the use of language. In order for the man to name the animals, he would have to be familiar with the use of a first or most ancient form of language. According to Von Rad, the naming of the animals served two main purposes. First, was the exercise of creativity in the use of language and second, was the arrangement or rearrangement of language use in order for man to set a structure for his dominion (Otto 2007:17).

Atkinson (1990:69) mentioned that in ancient times the function of naming something was exercised in sovereignty. Man’s Creator God gave him the privilege of naming the animals as his first task of exercising his sovereign dominion over the animal kingdom. Not only would this serve as a token of his authority, but also a sign to the intelligence and ‘otherness’ which man received in comparison to all other animals. Man has the capability to reason and establish order; an ability only shared by him and his descendants.

#### 4.5.5.3. Fashioning the Woman (2:21-24)

NASB	KJV	Amp
So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.	And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;	And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and while he slept, He took one of his ribs or a part of his side and closed up the [place with] flesh.
The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and	And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and	And the rib or part of his side which the Lord God had taken from the man He built up and made into a

brought her to the man.	brought her unto the man.	woman, and He brought her to the man.
The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.”	And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.	Then Adam said, This [creature] is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of a man.
For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.	Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.	Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall become united and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

In a modern-day world where the liberation movement of woman is prominent in everyday life, a great number of wrongful accusations have been cast over this portion of Scripture. In close scrutiny of the text, one would see that there is no aspect of subordination to be found, yet there are two prevailing arguments (Eveson 2003:42; Atkinson 1990:35). Brueggemann (1982:50-51) mentioned these two as seen in the fact that the woman was made after the man, and (though it is only seen in the next chapter) that the woman was the tempter of the man to sin. God’s intention for man was not that he should rule over the woman, rather that the woman should assist and help the man in his appointed vocation. Atkinson (1990:71) conveyed the idea that God took the woman from the man’s side as a symbol that she was to stand next to him, an equal counterpart. The garden therefore speaks of mutuality and equality. Only as a consequence of the fall do we find the first traces of a hierarchical system being introduced (Gn 3:16).

Ham (2004:154-155) considered some scholars’ arguments that the concept of “dust to Adam” literally means the chemicals which God used to make Adam. The problem however comes to play when we look at “rib to Eve.” It is clear that Eve was taken from Adam and not also made from dust. Ham continues by pointing to some extremely far-off speculations that claim Adam could potentially have represented a first type of mono-sexual being which God made through evolution and from them came Eve or the second type of human which were bisexual. This would obviously not hold in light of chapter 4, which speaks of the children of Adam and Eve.

When Brueggemann (1982:53) reflected on man’s exclamation following his introduction to the woman, he concluded that it should be seen as a covenant statement or agreement of their oneness. This was a happy and cheerful agreement as both man and the Creator was pleased with it. It would be safe to assume that marriage came as a result of this covenant relationship.

Atkinson (1990:75-76) noted that the man’s statement concerning his new counterpart rests on three concepts. First is the concept of “leaving” in that a newly wedded couple establishes a new family unit. Second is the concept of “cleaving” which refers to the faithfulness in the covenant. Third is the idea of “one-flesh” which not only speaks of their sexual union, but also life that is shared together in all facets. Another aspect of the man’s statement I want to highlight is that he immediately created order by stating that the woman will leave her parents. Apart from the naming the animals, which the Lord God instructed man to do, this is the first time that the man showed a characteristic only evident in the Lord God. Von Rad (1972:85) observed that this exclamation is most curious, as the idea of leaving your parents was not prominent among the patriarchal families.

#### 4.5.6. Conclusion (2:25)

NASB	KJV	Amp
And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.	And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.	And the man and his wife were both naked and were not embarrassed or ashamed in each other's presence.

Genesis 2:25 is a most peculiar conclusion which the author had chosen for the end of the Garden Narrative. Von Rad (1972:85) highlighted that the nakedness of the man and the woman reference their lack of shame. This he says must be seen “as the signal of the loss of an inner unity, an insurmountable contradiction at the basis of our existence.” Atkinson (1990:79) agreed and continued that it also marks a life without guilt or the sinful perversion of lust.

Another aspect I want to present is that this nakedness can be seen as a metaphor in reference to the man and woman’s purity, innocence and trust, not only in the sight of their Creator, but also in each other. Consequently, the author finds a suitable ending

for his narrative. Through the conclusion he again sets the stage for that which is to follow in the next chapter of the story where one is introduced to the idea that man placed the blame of wrong doing on his companion rather than defending her ‘nakedness’ (Waltke 2001:90).

In conclusion to the second creation account, I want to highlight the fact that it deals much less with the concept of time than the first account. The systematic pattern of creation, connected with the measuring unit of ‘day’ is absent, as is the specific pattern in which things are created. Following the analysis of these two chapters, I have come to the conclusion that the first in particular deals more with the abstract understandings of creation, like measurements and time, while the second has a total different agenda. I would therefore promote the idea that if one desire to better understand the issue of time as found in creation, one has to study the first account in more detail. On the opposite hand, if one focused on the interaction of relationship and companionship, the more humane aspects, one should study the second account. Since the focus of these two accounts is clearly different, yet contains numerable overlapping, it would be unjust to conclude that they relate to different stories.

## CHAPTER 5

### IN DISCUSSION WITH EXTERNAL SOURCES

#### 5.1. Reflecting upon Genesis 1 and 2

Following my report on the Pentateuch research history in chapter 2, I have come to a similar conclusion as Pelsner (2002:26) when he stated, “Die bekende Wellhausen-skool benader gevolglik die Hebreeuse godsdiens met die voorveronderstelling dat dit bloot die produk van evolusie was, onaangeraak deur die Goddelikheid.” Consequently reflecting on an ancient piece of literature, most probably originating from oral tradition, in relation to modern day scientific data is no small task. Faid (1990:81) stated, “There can be, and always has been, conflict between theologians and scientists.... Often there is no real dialogue between them, resulting in polarisation between their points of view.”

I will therefore outline matters primarily pertaining to the concept of time, as it was understood in the first and second chapters of Genesis, followed by a brief comparison of results with current scientific understanding. Ham (2004:129) indicated that one of the major problems at hand between evolution (science) and Christianity (religion) is that until recently, Christians had not conducted a great deal of scientific research in order to be able to explain all the problems with the theory of Evolution. I will make use of “Creation Science” authorities in order to dialogue more meaningfully with the natural and biological sciences. Due to the vastness of scientific field possibilities, I have chosen to primarily engage four fields, i.e. Cosmology, Genetics, Geology and Paleontology.

I will keep my focus specific within each of these four areas, consequently treating them with the respect they deserve, each as an extensive scientific field in their own right. One of the limiting factors in need of notation at this point is that Genesis 1 and 2, without incorporating an understanding of the Flood Narrative (Gn 6-9), will leave a number of challenges unanswered in our dialogue with these natural and biological sciences.

My focus within cosmology will be based on the origin and age of the universe as outlined in Douglas Giancoli's book *Physics*. Secondly, in genetics the focus will be on genetics and human population origin as outlined in Stephen Oppenheimer's book *Out of Africa's Eden*. Thirdly, geology, the age of geological formations and certain physical laws as outlined in Brian Skinner & Stephen Porter's book *The Dynamic Earth*. Lastly, within paleontology, the fossil records as outlined in Colin MacRae's book *Life Etched in Stone*. Although there are many great authorities within each of the fields, I have selected these four books on recommendation, as well as their popularity among scholars within their respective fields.

### **5.1.1. Conclusions of the exegetical analysis**

Eveson (2003:14) highlighted that Genesis was not written to be a scientific textbook. However, when it reflects on matters dealt with by scientists it is accurate. Faid (1990:98) agreed with this. Eveson continued by referencing Maury who, according to him, laid down the foundation that the Creator of nature is also the Author of Scripture. He asserted that even though there might be differences, "... they are equally true, and when they bear upon the same point... it is as impossible that they should contradict each other as it is that either should contradict itself. If the two cannot be reconciled the fault is ours, and it is because, in our blindness and weakness, we have not been able to interpret aright either the one or the other or both." Faid (1990:81) elaborated when he said, "There can never be any conflict between the Bible and science, for the author of the Bible is also the author of the scientific principals which govern nature, the universe, the workings of an atom, and everything else in between, from the snowflake to the quasar." I would agree that the problem lies with us as scholars.

During my research, I came across many different views pertaining to Genesis 1 and 2 in relation to scholars in the natural and biological scientific fields. There are scholars from both disciplines that would argue that a dialogue between the Bible and science is as meaningless as dialoguing between the Babylonian creation account of *Enuma Elish*, or one of the Greek mythologies, and their respective fields. Religion is often reduced to mere mythology (perhaps fictional would suffice as a better word) and science exalted to a non-fictional and factual understanding of the world. In light of such an argument, one would be able to oppose what I am trying to accomplish if

Genesis 1 and 2 were indeed mere fictional narratives. On the other hand, if it can be established that the Genesis accounts, though religious in nature, is more than just myth; and contains traces of history and science, albeit from an age long since gone by, such a dialogue would surely take on a whole new dimension.

In chapter 2.3.3, I left Sanders' (1952:143) test for historiography purposefully unanswered until after my exegetical study. The first of the three tests was that of bibliography, or in other words the reliability of the text. In order to answer this, one has to understand authorship of the text, which I dealt with in quite some detail in chapter 2. From my point of view I would conclude that the oral tradition must have begun with Adam and Eve, informing their offspring concerning what had happened in the Garden as well as the knowledge they possessed concerning the creation processes that God revealed to them.

More frequently, stories change rapidly as they are conveyed from one person, or generation, to a next, although in ancient days the art of accurate story telling was much more refined than today, due to the lack of the written word. I am of the opinion that countless other creation stories and derivatives originated between the time of creation and the Mosaic era; many of which retained some level of accuracy, if only in imagery, to the original as found in the biblical account. Some of these accounts, like the Babylonian and the Phoenician, were perhaps penned down before the biblical version, but this would not make any difference to the authenticity of the biblical account.

As a Christian scholar of the Bible, I must accept that God kept His original account free from 'outside' influence, hence revealing and establishing His story to His people. Evidence that Moses was the first to compile and combine perhaps both oral and possibly other older written documents seems overwhelming. Harrison (1969:541) stated that "There appears to be no substantial ground for denying that the Pentateuch in virtually its extant form was in existence by the time of Samuel." Ross (1988:63) agreed with Harrison that there is no compelling evidence that would suggest a relative late dating for a book such as Genesis.

From the Mosaic period to the copies we then have today, it seems reasonable that certain changes or later introductions were made to the text. However I would not ascribe these to general editors and redactors as many scholars have done in the past, but to ‘enhancing editors’ who may have updated the use of language and geographical references, though strictly without changing the meaning of the text<sup>51</sup>. Consequently, in light of this deduction I will still argue in favour of Mosaic authorship for the first working document. How reliable are our copies of the original text then? I would say that we have an exceptionally well-preserved account of the original version.

Second was the internal evidence test that deals with evidence within the Bible itself. I will present two arguments. Firstly, Exodus 20:11 deals with a legal account which God provided to His people. It would seem quite unconventional to add a statement as creation-in-six-days within such an account if it were not factually correct. The text (Ex 34:1) expressed that God Himself was responsible for writing the 10 Commandments on the stone tablets. To argue that God wrote a false statement, contained in a legal document (or any other document for that matter) would be totally unacceptable to me as this is not the character of the God we are confronted with in Scripture. The second deals with the way in which Jesus referred to the book of Genesis and the beginning (see Mt 19:4; Lk 24:27, 44; Jn 5:46). As far as I can tell there is not one instance where Jesus did not ascribe a literal / historical meaning to any of His statements regarding Genesis.

Thirdly was the external evidence; perhaps the most difficult of all three to answer, as there is no ancient literature available to us that would confirm the events as told in the first two chapters of Genesis. In order to gain external evidence one would therefore have to engage the fields of natural and biological science. Though I will go into more detail on this discussion during the rest of this chapter, it is safe to say at this point that there is abundantly more evidence<sup>52</sup> in favour of a young earth creation than an old earth.

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<sup>51</sup> As referenced, the 1616 KJV of the Bible and 1995 NASB, though greatly different in use of language is still exactly the same Bible.

<sup>52</sup> See Ferrell’s (2001) book *The Evolution Cruncher* for evidence presented.

I am therefore of the opinion that Genesis 1 and 2 can be seen as historically accurate, though the text might not have been narrated as one would find a modern historical text book. Ross' (1988:58) opinion was, "This special kind of history shows that the Old Testament's world view transcends the historian's plane; it is not history for history's sake but records of past events for the purpose of educating people spiritually. It presents a theological view of history, interpreting with a divine cause as well as a human one." My understanding of Ross' opinion is that Israel might not have used the creation account as a scientific reference, yet they still accepted it as accurate historical records of past events, but with a profound spiritual implication, consequently using it for instruction.

Ham (2004:156) agreed that the book of Genesis represents actual history. Accordingly, if one were to interpret certain parts as symbolic and others as not, it would be inconsistent. When scrutinizing the two creation narratives, one has to apply the same logic to both accounts. I agree with Ham when he elaborated that it would be inconsistent to take at face value that God create everything, but then to say that the creation process as documented in Genesis 1 is only symbolic.

Boice (1982:19) added that the language used is not that found in poetry, leaving him a choice between scientific language and historical prose. Schaeffer (1972:15) concluded that, "Creation is as historically real as the history of the Jews and our own present moment of time. Both the Old and the New Testament deliberately root themselves back into the earlier chapters of Genesis, insisting that they are a record of historical events."

Some scholars would still argue that even though the narrative contains history, it would not fit the historical genre. What about saga and myth? I would agree with Coats' (1983:5-7) definition of saga, though not in the sense that it becomes fictional in nature. Of the many definitions regarding myth, Walton (2001:27) simply describes it as the sacred interaction between humans and the gods. Wood (1996:240) added that one can accept the concept of myth when it deals with God's actions in the past. With such a broad definition, I would conclude that Genesis 1 and 2 could be seen as saga-narrative belonging to a mytho-historical genre. Saga, in the sense that it contains traditional cultural and epic elements; narrative, in that it is written as a

story; myth, in that it deals with God and man; and history, in that it is an accurate and factual account of creation.

Consequently, a bridge can be built between such an ancient text and modern natural and biological sciences, even though it will not be an easy collaboration. Ross (1988:56) commented that, “The difficulty is that history, in contrast to the exact science, in which causation can be empirically determined under repeated identical conditions, is a social science, in which conditions never repeat.” If I understand Ross correctly, his statement implied that the creation event will never repeat itself again; consequently rendering it impossible to study it empirically direct. Historical study methods must therefore be incorporated in such research.

Ashton (2001:342-343) reflected on this ‘bridge’ in that many theologians have fallen into this trap of the separation of “faith” and “science”, which according to him is a common practice among people with a Western worldview. In contrast, the ancient Near Eastern worldview held that these disciplines are not separate entities, but intertwined with each other. For them, what pertained to matters of faith and matters of science could not be separated from each other. The author of Genesis 1 and 2 would therefore not have tried to separate the two either. What he wrote was to be taken both literally and by faith.

I agree with Ham (2004:161) and Batten (2006:37-38) when they concluded that the Genesis 1 and 2 accounts do not contradict each other, rather complement one another. Tsumura (1994b:27-29) added that the two accounts are not parallel versions of the same account either. Rather the second account being a continuation (and sometimes overlapping) of the first, however there is a major shift in theme, structure and characters. Accordingly, the Genesis 1 account sets out the chronological order of how events took place during the creation from an eternal perspective. Genesis 2 reflects and accounts for certain main events from a different perspective as set out in the Genesis 1 account. Pertaining to the relation of man and the garden, the second account goes into much greater detail. Consequently it was unnecessary to keep the chronology in the Garden Narrative; rather expressing the detail of the relationship between “man and the garden”, and “man and God” as a premise to move into Genesis 3 that reflects on the fall of man in relation to both the garden and God.

The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967a:421-423) highlighted the Catholic Church's teaching on creation as set out by the Vatican Council 1. To me this seems a sufficient summary pertaining to the theme of the Creation accounts. First, creation should be seen distinctly from the Creator. Second, creation is produced from nothing. Third, creation was brought forth out of love. Fourth, redemption was part of the creation from the start. Fifth, secondary causality is found in providence and time. Sixth, the goodness of the Creator is manifested. I would however add two additional statements to this summary. Firstly that the creation account should not be seen as fictional and secondly that, even though the text does not reflect on the methodology of creation, the account should still be seen as historically accurate.

### **5.1.2. Conclusions regarding creation time**

If one intends to discover the biblical use of time, firstly one has to discover the mental concept thereof in ancient Israel. The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967c:162) stated, "The Hebrew mind thought in concrete terms and ignored abstract speculations, whereas the Greek mind probed beyond the concrete to engage in philosophic enquiry". This is not to say that they did not understand that time could also relate to a period or a duration.

Atkinson's (1990:44-45) view is somewhat different in that the Hebrew understanding of time was more strongly connected to the significance of the event, than the order in which things happened. Hence, time should be understood in light of both a chronological sequence of events, as well as the significance of the event. Within the Greek understanding, this was evident as they referenced *chronos* as chronological time and *kairos* as significant time.

Gitt (2001:42-49) looked at these two words as used in the Greek New Testament. Chronological time or *chronos* deals with the time of man and is characterised by its constant progression that runs in one direction. By this understanding, the concept 'now' would not have any duration. Significant time or *kairos* deals with the time of God and is more strongly connected with events taking place. *Chronos* and *kairos* differ from each other not only in scale, but also in quality and dimension. One cannot convert between them and should not confuse the two either. Gitt concluded that *chronos* time was given to mankind to provide structure and order. Genesis 1 is

not only written in a pattern with structure and order, but its time indicators also contribute to it.

Atkinson (1990:45-46) referenced some of Augustine's<sup>53</sup> thoughts as he pondered on the concept of time. Augustine concluded that there was no time before God created the world because time itself was created alongside the world. He continued that while man is trapped within the passing of time, God stands in eternity or as Atkinson would put it, within His own time. Gitt (2001:105) rightly defined eternity as a time outside of time and not simply an infinitely lengthened period of time. Craig (2001:233-236) expanded on this idea that even though God exists in his own time, one cannot ask where God's beginning was or end will be, even though time is quantified as having a beginning and an end.

Ham (2004:169-170) stated that people often refer to Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 as an indication that time has no reference to God. Even though it is true, that God exists and operates outside of our understanding of time, He makes use of the same principles that govern people when He addresses and works with them (Wood 1996:1187-1188). Consequently, applying Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 as the premise for understanding God's creation in Genesis 1 would therefore be an inaccurate application. Batten (2006:35-36) agreed with Ham in that these passages have no creation intended purpose. Ham further stated that if you want to take these references as literal, the concept of day is contrasted by a thousand years, far from millions and billions of years.

Atkinson (1990:46) therefore concluded that God is not "timeless" but that His time is utterly different to how we describe time. The Bible states that He is the Alpha and the Omega; He is the beginning and the end (Rv 1:8, 21:6, 22:13). This statement would mostly be interpreted metaphorically, however it would be safe to conclude that this could also be seen as a reference to the fact that God existed when our time began and will still exist at the moment when our time concludes. Atkinson continued that "eternal life," the life which God offers all people who believe in Christ Jesus, transcends human time as we can partake in this from the moment of

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<sup>53</sup> See Augustine (1952 [398]: books 11 and 13).

salvation. Accordingly, God's eternal time centres on Jesus Christ who according to Hebrews 13:8 is unchangeable. As to the substance of time, Augustine made a most peculiar conclusion "I know well enough what it is, provided that nobody asks me; but if I am asked what it is and try to explain, I am baffled!" Atkinson concluded that biblical time should therefore more often be seen in relation to *kairos* and not necessarily *chronos*.

Ashton (2001:343:344) stated that the Bible repeatedly makes use of different kinds of measurement. This is not only a customary use throughout the entire Bible, but also points to the value placed on being accurate in measurement. The first measurement the Bible introduces is that of a day which also sets the stage for every other measurement that will be used. The idea that this first measurement could potentially mean anything else than what the author intended as a literal 24-hour day, is not only inconsistent with the biblical use of measurements, but also perplexing as a measure indicator.

Ham (2004:165) considered the meaning of *yom* (day) in that the word can either relate to an ordinary 24-hour period of time (which is its most frequent use), the daylight portion of a 24-hour day, or sometimes an indefinite period of time. Batten (2006:26) added that there are other options in the Hebrew language for communicating longer periods of time, such as *olam* or *qedem*. Another aspect of *yom* can be found in the fact that whenever it does point to an indefinite period of time, it is always well qualified within the context at hand that its intended meaning is not a specific 24-hour period.

Ashton (2001:344-345), as well as Batten (2006:26), stated that aside from Genesis 1, the word *yom* is used another 410 times in the Bible, where it stands in direct relation to a numerical number. In this context it always points to an ordinary literal 24-hour day. McIntosh (2001:38-40) agreed that *yom* should then be seen as literal. He continued that other portions of Scripture (Ex 20:8-11), support the view that Genesis 1 refers to literal 24-hour days.

Batten (2006:26) elaborated on certain other aspects relating to *yom*. Firstly, "evening" and "morning" appears approximately 61 times in Scripture outside of

Genesis 1. Every time it refers to an ordinary day. Secondly, *yom* and night is used in conjunction with each other in Genesis 1:5. This happens another 53 times in Scripture where the obvious reference is always an ordinary day. Thirdly, when *yom* is used in its plural form (which it never does in Genesis 1) it can be used to indicate a longer period e.g. “in those days”. Therefore using *yom* in its plural form in association with a numerical value would make no sense.

Boice (1982:24) left us with the idea that when Genesis 1 speaks of the beginning, it does not refer to some local event, but indeed to all that exists. Consequently if Genesis 1:1 says that God was the one who was in the beginning and He is the sole actor responsible for creation, nothing else could have existed before God, nor before this point we call ‘the beginning’. Genesis 1:1 should therefore be understood as the beginning of all things in existence.

I want to conclude this section with a reference by Gitt (2001:43) in that time cannot be separated from space and matter as indicated by Genesis 1:1. All three had to come into existence simultaneously. The moment you take one away, the other two will also dissipate. They are interlinked with a bond that cannot be broken.

## **5.2. Genesis 1 and 2 conclusions presented to five creation time theories**

Within the following section, I will illuminate some of the challenges presented to us by the different creation time theories through applying the conclusions of the previous section to their understanding. Consequently, Rensberger (1986:91) indicated that the origin of the universe remains one of the greatest questions in science. Nevertheless, as stated earlier in the study, if there is an inconsistency between science and Scripture, the error is on our side. Ham (2004:158) argued that “One has to recognise that science cannot prove the age of the earth. There are many assumptions behind all of the dating methods of which most people are not aware.”

Rensberger (1986:103-116) cautioned both the Creationists and the Evolutionists that the dating of the age of the earth is exceptionally difficult. Creationist, have to rely on the chronological dating of the Bible as well as current scientific theories. The Evolutionists on the other hand have only current scientific theories to rely on.

### 5.2.1. Gap theory

Nobody seem perfectly sure when the Gap theory<sup>54</sup> was first proposed, though Taylor (1984:363) referenced Episcopius in the latter fifteen, early sixteen hundreds. Boice (1982:50) pointed to Chalmers who first popularised the view in the early ninetieth century. Some of the most notable works in this regard were done by Pember in his book, *Earth's Earliest Ages and Custance in Without Form and Void*.

Batten (2006:49) continued that although Pember propagated the Gap theory, he still held to the idea that Scripture should be one's point of departure and not outside influence. His own struggle came when he could not see how the millions of years, recognised by science, could be compatible with any area of the creation account. He also recognised that a fossil record of death, decay and disease before sin was inconsistent with the Bible. His only option was to place these events between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, thus advocating the Gap theory.

Batten (2006:45-50) noted that no Western Bible commentary written before the eighteenth century had any reference to the Gap theory. It is apparent that this idea became entertained in the minds of theological scholars in the post Darwinian era. He continued that there are many different versions of the Gap theory. One of the most popular is the "ruin-reconstruction" version. This theory deals with the supposed millions of years that are placed between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2.

One has to ask what exactly the proposition of such a theory is. Boice (1982:50-54) indicated that the only real advantage the Gap theory provided Creationists is in dealing with the apparently long period of time that passed since the beginning. He added that there are two of the main propositions of events during this gap. The first is that most evolutionary processes took place. A second is that the rebellion and fall of Satan took place.

Does Scripture allow for such a gap? McIntosh (2001:40-41) was convinced that it is inconsistent with the text. According to him the problem appeared with the incorrect translations of the concept "became" as opposed to "was" void and empty (Gn 1:2).

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<sup>54</sup> Batten (2006:45-62) provides an extensive overview on the Gap theory.

Batten (2006:46-55) highlighted some of the inconsistencies with the Gap theory. First, the Bible states that God created everything in six days (Ex 20:11). Second, it puts death, disease and suffering before sin and the fall (Rm 5:12 & 1 Cor 15). Third, there could have been no men or pre-Adamic race before Adam (1 Cor 15:45). Fourth, Genesis 1:29-30 hints that man, as well as the original animals were vegetative in diet; only after the fall do we see them becoming carnivorous in diet. Fifth, everything up to the end of creation was still “very good.” Sixth, Romans 8:22 tells that the whole creation groans and travails in pain, indicating that something must have happened to it since the time of everything that is “very good.” Seventh, the Gap theory is logically inconsistent because it explains away what it is supposed to accommodate; i.e. supposed evidence for an old earth. If God had to recreate everything in six days, there would be no reason for their preconceived argument. Eighth, if all the fossil records came from that era, what happened when the earth became void and empty? How did they come to survive? Ninth, it does away with the evidence for a Noahic Flood. Tenth, they ignore both biblical and scientific evidence for a young creation. Eleventh, the Gap theory fails to accommodate standard uniformitarian geology with its long ages anyway. Twelfth, it brings into question the authority of the Scripture as a whole.

Batten (2006:46-50) concluded that all Gap theory versions entertain fundamental ideas outside of Scripture, therefore opening the door even wider for further misinterpretation. It is of note that most Gap theorists refute evolution, but do accept a more ancient origin of the universe (OEC).

I agree with Boice (1982:54) when he asked why we are even considering such a view. It is clearly not the intention of the Scriptures to hint at such a gap, neither are there any references to such an occurrence anywhere in Scripture. My only conclusion is that we have a preconceived idea of evolution, which we now try and fit into an account which it is clearly not consistent with.

### **5.2.2. Day-Age theory**

Day-Age theorists generally accept the pattern in which creation took place according to Genesis 1, though instead of viewing the six days as literal 24-hour periods, they would ascribe much longer periods to each one of these ‘days.’ Accordingly they

accommodate the long period of time proposed by many of the natural and biological sciences.

From my conclusions regarding the duration of a ‘day’ in Genesis 1 (section 5.1.2.), this was clearly not the author’s intended use for the word. Ham (2004:158-159) stated, “The six days cannot represent six periods of time of millions of years. The Bible states that Adam was created on day six; it also says that day six came to an end and day seven began.” If these ‘days’ therefore points to seven different eras or periods of time, it would be illogical to say that Adam died on day seven after he lived 930 years.

Batten (2006:39-41) highlighted two additional points discrediting such a view in that the text does not indicate evening and morning on the seventh day; consequently we must still be in it. The problem arises with the tense used, namely that God “rested”, not “is resting”, indicating that it happened in the past and is now over. The second is that if the plants were created on day three and the birds only on day five, how would pollination have take place if millions of years had passed in the mean time? I would add an extra point to this argument that if the plants were created on day three and the sun only on day four, how would the plants have photosynthesised during the millions of years in-between? I am therefore of the opinion that the Day-Age view is inconsistent with the author’s intended meaning of the Scripture.

### **5.2.3. Days-of-Revelation theory**

The Days-of-Revelation theory deals with an allegorical understanding of the meaning of *yom* in the Genesis 1 account. Rather than pointing to a literal 24-hour day it now represents six progressive revelations which the author narrated. In light of Mosaic authorship Ham (2004:159) noted that in Exodus 20 we read of the account where God provided the Law to Moses. Verse 11 affirms that God did create everything in six days and rested on the seventh. The nature of communication of the Law is one of legality, based on factual truths, which God desired His people to know and understand. It would therefore be an illogical conclusion and hermeneutically incorrect to see one statement as symbolic or metaphorical among many others which are based on factual truth.

Batten (2006:41) elaborated on this idea that some scholars proposed that the word used in Exodus 20:11 for ‘make’ *asah*, can also be translated as ‘show’; consequently Moses could have received the revelation of creation during a six-day period, leaving God to actually have done it in millions of years. This would be an incorrect translation and use of the word. Batten continued that if *asha* was an indication of ‘show’ and not ‘create’ it would subsequently leave the fourth day’s creation act only as a revealing of things already created. Once again, this is an inaccurate translation of the word as both *bara* and *asha* are used for creation in the context of Genesis 1. On the sixth day man was *asha* which obviously should not be taken as ‘showed’ or ‘revealed’, but that he was indeed created on that day.

In section 5.1.2., I concluded that the use of the word ‘day’ referred to a literal 24-hour period. The Day-of-Revelation view would therefore not be consistent with the language use in the Genesis 1 account, leading me to conclude that this view is also not consistent with the authors intended meaning of the account.

#### **5.2.4. Progressive Creationism**

Progressive Creationism came about as a result of Christians attempting to find the middle ground between what Scripture communicate at face value and the theory of Evolution. Ham (2004:174) noted that the theory was popularised by Christians who were sensitive to criticism of evolution. Boice (1982:63) defined Progressive Creationism as, “God created the world directly and deliberately, that is, without leaving anything to ‘chance’, but that He did so over long periods of time that corresponds roughly to the geological ages.”

Ham (2004:174) elaborated on this theory when he stated that life developed over vast periods, by an evolutionary process, but that God frequently stepped into the picture, providing some type of guiding hand. As opposed to the theory of Theistic Evolution, which states that in some cases God not only guided the process, but created something new at the beginning of each stage or era (for instance at the beginning of each day as stated in Gn 1). Evolution on its own would therefore not have had the power to make everything as we know it today, but required God to intervene every now and then. Boice (1982:63-66) noted that each day as it is found in Genesis 1

refers to a specific moment or act of creation where God entered the scene and directed the process in a specific direction.

In acknowledgement to the potential of such a unified theory, one major challenge still arises. The issue deals with one's research premis. Either Scripture or the natural and biological sciences become one's fundamental starting point; both can't be the premis at the same time. Accordingly, Progressive Creationism draws strongly on its support from the natural and biological sciences, not taking into account critical possibilities, like time and sequence, as stated by the biblical creation accounts.

#### **5.2.5. Literal six-day creation model**

The last of our five views is the six-day creation model. Boice (1982:54-56) defined the six-day creation model<sup>55</sup> as follows, "This theory views the Genesis account as involving six literal days, posits a relatively young earth, and explains the fossil records as having been formed by the great flood in Genesis 6 conceiving as having been universal and of immensely destructive proportions." Boice continued by adding that this is the most literal view of the biblical text pertaining to creation account.

I have already concluded in section 5.1.2. that *yom* (day) in the first Creation account should be seen as a literal 24-hour period as we know it. Batten (2006:22) concluded, "In every instance where someone has not accepted the 'days' of creation to be ordinary days, it is because they have not allowed the words of Scripture to speak to them in context, as the language requires from communication. They have been influenced by ideas from outside of Scripture." Ham (2004:159) added that in the verses pertaining to day four of creation, it mentions the word "day" five times. Every time it is quite obvious that it can only refer to a normal 24-hour day as we know it to be.

Batten (2006:23) considered the idea that most church fathers accepted days in a literal context. Those who did not agree with this and explained it as allegorical were mostly influenced by Greek philosophy. Interesting to note is that their understanding

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<sup>55</sup> For a summary of the literal six-day model, see Boice (1982:57).

of allegorical rather referred to the fact that God could not have taken so long to create everything and therefore did it in less than six ordinary days. Ashton (2001:86) noted that, “We find no evidence that the Bible ever ascribe creation over long periods of time. We find only one model in the Bible concerning creation: God created the universe and everything in it, in six days.”

Boice (1982:59) pointed to some further arguments in favour of this theory, which mainly points to the flood account. First is the fact that we do not observe constant additions to the fossil record. Second, geological strata layers are frequently not found in the correct order (younger rock formations above older formations). Third is the existence of large and complex fossil species.

Ashton (2001:92-93) summarised that during the past 35 years, numerous discoveries and convincing arguments regarding a young earth and global Noahic flood has been made by many scientists who under-scribes a literal six-day creation model. Some of these discoveries include several processes once thought to require long periods of time; that have now been proven to take place rapidly over short periods of time, testifying to young earth creation. Furthermore, Creationists are starting to make testable predications based on their theories, as well as become more quantitative in their modelling.

Unavoidably, there are also certain problems imbedded in this view. Boice (1982:60-61) indicated that two major challenges, posed to this theory, include the vast number of different scientific fields providing data that all point to a much older earth and universe (some of the main arguments are found in cosmology, physics, geology and paleontology). The second challenge is aimed at the Flood Narrative, which the model advocates to explain most geological and paleontological phenomena. Scholars in these fields argue that this would be an insufficient model for explaining all geological and paleontological phenomena.

Having considered the five primary selected time models presented outside the domain of the evolutionary view, the only logical conclusion is that in the creation account, the author tried to express the concept of time as a specific moment in time, where God began with creation that took six literal earth days. Considering, for a

moment that this conclusion might not be correct, I would pose the question, “What more should the author have stated to indicate such a meaning to the text?” One cannot expect a more simplistic and straightforward way in which an ancient text could have communised this to its original readers. Yet at the same time, even if this was the author’s intention, there seems to be an overwhelming amount of evidence pointing us in a different direction as to the understanding of creation time. Following this summary I will therefore now provide a short overview as to the current understanding of time and origin from the viewpoint of Evolutionists within the fields of natural and biological sciences.

### **5.3. Introduction to natural and biological science discourse**

During my studies in both the natural and biological sciences field, as well as theology, I frequently came across statements presented as absolute facts. I found that many of these ‘facts’ were either backed up by out-dated research, or interpretations of data, clearly suiting the scientist worldview, which could just as easily have been interpreted in a different way. Zacharias (2000:64) made an honest admission to this point when adding, “We scientists do seem to retain selective sovereignty over what we allow to be transferred to philosophy and what we don’t”.

Haggard (1995:56-63) presented a model to help clarify established facts from those presented as facts. Originally this model was based on theological statements, though it can also be applied to the sciences’. Consequently, the model provides three levels, or groupings of data. The first is called “absolutes,” which only deals with unchanging truths, which can clearly be observed in nature or stated by Scripture. As an example in theology, I would propose that the concept of a Creator must be seen as an absolute, where as in paleontology the existence of fossils would be an absolute. The second level is “interpretations,” which deals with the scholar’s understanding of absolutes, consequently interpreting his data based on what he assume to be correct. I have named a Creator as a theological absolute; the interpretation would therefore deal with exactly how He created. In paleontology, we find fossils, but exactly how old they are and where they came from would fall in the realm of interpretations.

The last level is “deductions” (I prefer to use the word “assumptions”), which deals with all the missing pieces of information that one adds to the interpretations in order

to make it more plausible. I propose that from a theological perspective, the concept of a Luciferian fall, placed between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, would qualify as such an assumption, for there is no indication within the text that this happened. In paleontology, one would assume that the fossilised bone had offspring which carried the exact same characteristics as the parent. It will therefore be one of my aims to highlight certain absolutes during my discourse with the natural and biological sciences, with a much lesser focus on the interpretations and assumptions.

#### **5.4. Theory of Evolution**

Evolution as a theory is mostly credited to Darwin, though the concept finds its origin as far back as the ancient Greeks. Some other noted scholars prior to Darwin who prepared the way for the theory include Bacon, Kant and Descartes. However, the first complete theory of Evolution came from Lamarch in the late eighteenth century (Boice 1982:37-38). The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967b:676) stated that some of the early evidence for the evolution of man came from findings of paleontology, anatomy, comparative physiology, embryology, and geography.

Darwin popularised the theory proposed by Lamarch through an array of observations collected during his time on the HMS Beagle. Klotz (1970:34-35) summarised Darwin's observations as follows:

- Postulate number one – ‘Variation’ occurs within individuals of the same species.
- Postulate number two – ‘Overproduction’ is seen in most cases where more individuals are born into species than will reach maturity.
- Conclusion number one – ‘Struggle for existence’ causes individuals to compete with other individuals of the same species for survival.
- Postulate number three – ‘Survival of the fittest’ promotes an environment of competition, where only the individual best fitted for survival will survive.
- Postulate number four – ‘Inheritance of favourable characteristics’ is seen where stronger individuals pass their ‘good’ genes on to a next generation.
- Conclusion number two – ‘New species’ come into existence through a continual cycle of survival and reproduction by those individuals who are best suited for the environment.

In light of the model for interpretation, I would propose that Darwin's first five points can be seen as absolutes; however point number six is a leap to interpretation. Point number four may perhaps be better worded as "survival of the luckiest" as it would not necessarily be the strongest animal that survives, but in the case of a whale feeding on a school of tuna fish; fitness and strength will have little to do with which tunas survive and which don't.

The theory of Evolution is built on the framework of *naturalism* which articulates that things made themselves, that no divine intervention took place, and that God has not revealed to us knowledge concerning the past (Sarfati 2005:16). Zacharias (2000:64) argued that the naturalist's only starting place is found in nature where the super naturalist can have God as a starting point. Evolution is therefore a deduction from the naturalist's assumption, which is essentially the idea that all things made themselves. The theory of Evolution consequently gave rise to Evolutionism, a philosophical worldview that states that biological theories would be sufficient to explain everything concerning the living world (Atkinson 1990:30). Byl (2001:75) added that neither theory of Evolution nor Creationism is scientifically testable; as a result, we need to work from an assumption, which must either be the involvement of a Creator, or not.

From another point of view, the naturalist's view articulates that complex structures came from simple ones (Boice 1982:33-38). Boice continued that the central mechanism behind evolution is 'natural selection.' Unfortunately natural selection does not explain how one species changes into another; rather it only allows for some individuals within a species to survive while others don't. Similar to a car manufacturing plan; cars with malfunctions will be selected and discarded, but this selection process will never change a Toyota into a BMW. The only way in which scholars of evolution can address this issue is through the occurrence of mutation.

Atkinson (1990:29) indicated that we find two primary strands<sup>56</sup> within the study of evolution. The first of these is known as the 'Special Theory of Evolution' which

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<sup>56</sup> See McDowell & Williams (2006:96-97) for a broader definition of evolution as well as its constant changes over time.

states that animals will undergo changes during the course of time that will bring forth new kinds of species. The second is called the ‘General Theory of Evolution’ which states that all living things have a single common ancestor which came from an ancient inorganic source.

Hovind (2009) was not satisfied with such a limited definition of evolution and insisted that the word must answer up to six different challenges as part of its definition:

1. Cosmic evolution – The origin of time, space and matter.
2. Chemical evolution – The origin of higher elements from hydrogen.
3. Stellar and planetary evolution – Origin of stars and planets.
4. Organic evolution – Origin of life from non-living matter.
5. Macro evolution – Origin of different species.
6. Micro evolution – Variations within species.

Although I assume Hovind is not familiar with the model of interpretation, he concluded that only the last option (micro evolution) has ever been observed (absolute) and that the other five are only speculations (interpretations and assumptions) presented to try and prove an already discredited theory ([www.drdino.com/read-article.php?id=66](http://www.drdino.com/read-article.php?id=66)). Pelsler (2002:33) agreed with Hovind in that there is no evidence for macro evolution. Pelsler continues that micro evolution should not even be named such as the term is misleading for no evolution, in the classical sense of the word, takes place.

Boice (1982:33) indicated that aspects like organisation, purpose and structure could only come from a creator, and that it is not possible for these qualities to be inherent in matter. There are those who would argue against such reasoning, as Brown, Hawkesworth & Wilson (1992:132) stated, “We have had to come to terms with a self-image of being the product of a gradual evolutionary chain, rather than chosen beings thoughtfully placed on a purpose-built planet.”

I disagree with such a statement, for as Boice began pointing out, matter left on its own would follow a specific pattern which the Second Law of Thermodynamics state as, “Natural processes tend to move towards a state of greater disorder” (Giancoli

1998:460). Giancoli continued that this level of disorder can be measured by what is termed “entropy.” Accordingly, the entropy of a natural system will always increase, hence the level of disorder. Order, purpose and structure calls for a creator. In light of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, Morris (1974:26) rightfully argued in favour of a specific beginning when stating, “The Second Law requires the universe to have had a beginning.” Consequently if we have a reasonably ordered universe, tending to disorder, by implication sometime in the past, it had to have begun as a more ordered system.

The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967b:685) mentioned that biologists and anthropologist assert that evolution as a historical process is established as thoroughly as science can establish events of the past not witnessed firsthand:

“Here the precise meaning of prehistoric fact must be understood. When the scientist probes for the origins of organisms that existed millions, even billions of years ago, his inferences must of necessity be based on indirect evidence. Putting together the pieces of the history of the biotic community is analogous to constructing the defence for a legal trail; the final judgment rests upon the best available accumulation of circumstantial evidence.”

(The New Catholic Encyclopaedia 1967b:685)

The New Catholic Encyclopaedia continued that there are three ways to make conclusions from indirect evidence:

1. Several lines of arguments from unrelated data
2. A lot of arguments support a similar outcome
3. Conclusion brings such a high conviction that the unbiased observer would accept it.

On a more practical level MacRae (1999:59) explained that though living organisms are highly complex, all consists of the basic elements carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen. These elements were struck by lightning somewhere in the past, which resulted in the formation of simple molecules and sugars. How they became more complex molecules that changed into living cells, no one knows.

MacRae (1999:269-273) referenced Lemonick as saying, “Humans are the animals who wonder, intensely and endlessly, about their origins.” MacRae continued that humans had their ancestors in the Cretaceous Period when three major groupings of mammals existed. Our group was the Placentals who were “small shrew-like insectivorous, tree dwelling nocturnal mammals” who lived with the dinosaurs 150 million years ago. They changed into primates around 65 million years ago though the oldest fossil thought to be human only dated 4.4 million years ago.

Another proposal made by the theory of Evolution was the rejection of Immediate Creationism, which states that there are as many living species today as God had first created. According to the New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967b:685) later evidence showed this not to be the case and therefore advocated a successive creation, in other words, there used to be species we no longer have and vice versa.

The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967b:680) named three essential factors accounting for evolution; a process known as the synthetic theory:

1. Mutations – “Sudden, hereditary modifications of one or more morphological or physiological characteristics through the transformation of one or more genes.”
2. Natural selection – “Survival of the fittest.”
3. Isolation of species – Climatic and environmental challenges cause a species to adapt and change accordingly.

In spite of all the scientific claims made by scientists, the theory of Evolution is still filled with enough gaps to fully discredit it as a theory (Rensberger 2005:47-56 & Boice 1982:46). McDowell & Williams (2006:97-100) asserted that at the root of the theory lies three assumptions,<sup>57</sup> which to date has not only been proven false, but goes against some of the very fundamental natural laws of science. These three assumptions are:

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<sup>57</sup> Ham (2004:147-164) proposed a considerable list of reasons why evolution as a theory is inconsistent.

1. That order can emerge naturally out of chaos.
2. That all life emerged from non-living matter.
3. That human intelligence and reason evolved by random chance.

Rensberger (1986:92) articulated that even Evolutionists admit that the universe had a beginning. He combines this with the principle of causality, which states that, “Everything which has a beginning has a cause.” He logically concluded that the universe therefore had a cause. Atkinson (1990:27) proposed that a biblical view on creation is one where God stands in a dynamic interactive relationship with all of His creation. This is not in line with the Newtonian view of a mechanical universe, nor the Clockmaker’s view, where God simply set everything in motion and is now waiting for its unwinding. The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967a:418) noted that some of the main characters in the Bible supported this view, i.e. Jeremiah and Isaiah concludes that God created the world (Jr 27:6; 31:35; Is 37:26; 22:11). Melchizedek speaks of the “Most High God... Creator of heaven and earth” (Gn 14:19). So also does Abraham who identifies with this God (Gn 14:22).

Any person advocating the premise of evolution will have to reach beyond science to a place of belief in order to explain the first definition of evolution as proposed by Hovind, i.e. the origin of space, time and matter. As a scholar of the Scripture the magnificence of the very first verse in the Bible already addresses this issue in the most significant way. I would propose that from a canonical perspective, one is confronted with four trinities in this single verse. Beginning is a reference to time – past, present and future. God presented in its plural form reference – the Father, the Son Jesus Christ, and Holy Spirit. Heavens is a reference to space – length, weight, and height. Earth is a reference to matter – solid, liquid and gas. Therefore, God is the creator of space, time and matter. If ever a person was in search of a reason to believe the Scripture, Genesis 1:1 would surely suffice.

Ham (2004:159-160) highlighted another aspect from the Genesis text in that the phrase “after his kind” or “after their kind” is found ten times in Genesis 1. This refers to the fact that not everything had a common ancestor as the theory of Evolution would state, but rather God created a great number of different “kinds” and they reproduced after their own kind. From my exegetical analysis (chapters 3 and 4)

I want to present the following differences between the Creation account and the theory of Evolution:

<b>Creation Account</b>	<b>Theory of Evolution</b>
Earth before the sun and stars	Stars and sun before the Earth
Earth covered in water initially	Earth a molten blob initially
Oceans first, then dry land	Dry land, then the oceans
Life first created on the land	Life started in the oceans
Plants created before the sun	Plants came long after the sun
Land animals created after birds	Land animals existed before birds

Ashton (2001:91) noted the central challenge within the theory of Evolution as the problem it has with time and dating. These supposed dates, sometimes in excess of billions of years; is changed so frequently that little can be taken as fact. Some would argue that as time progresses we become more accurate in our dating methods, but changing numbers within a few billion years is most certainly not becoming more accurate. If anything, it is just a new assumption based on someone's interpretation of a certain set of data. This gives rise to the constant changing of these so-called 'facts' of the theory of Evolution. Yesterday's facts are therefore no longer valid, which means they should never have been posed as facts in the first place, but rather as assumptions. The same could therefore be said concerning today's 'facts', for if they continue to follow the path set by the previous 'facts', they too will soon change.

Boice (1982:47) stated that it is altogether questionable if there is any 'real' evidence that lower species gave rise to higher ones and if living creatures came from non-living materials. The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967b:680) added that, "Chance, on its part, appears more and more as an essential factor that plays a truly constructive role."

In conclusion I want to highlight Boice' (1982:43) opinion regarding evolution in which it is so attractive to people because it articulates that everything is knowable and can be traced back to something before it. This also means that everything can be explained. It is a closed and self-contained system in which there is no need for God. Consequently, people are the 'highest' form of life and can do as they please.

Rensberger (1986:19) therefore rightfully stated that Gould and others have shown that Darwin's purpose was to destroy the idea of a divine designer.

#### **5.4.1. Cosmology**

I have chosen to engage the field of cosmology for the reason that it seems to be the most difficult field for Young Earth Creationist to respond to. Though Giancoli's book *Physics* (1998), which I have used as my source document in this section, is not solely dedicated to the field of cosmology, it does contain the generally accepted view on the subject field.

##### **5.4.1.1. Overview**

As a starting point it is important to note the difference between cosmology, which deals with our understanding of the universe as a whole, its order and structures; in contrast to cosmogony, which deals with the question of its origin, i.e. how the universe came into being as we know it (Lucas 2003:130). Gitt (1996:7) states that astronomy (the study of stars) is one of the oldest sciences, introduced by various ancient civilisations. One of the primary reasons behind these studies was that of measuring time and constructing calendars.

Giancoli (1998:999-1002) started the section on cosmology by stating that Einstein's theory of General Relativity serves as the basis for the entire field. Accordingly cosmology deals with the establishing of a theoretical framework to understand the observed universe, including its origin and future. Most ancient civilisations believed that the universe was self-contained with the Earth at its centre. This changed after Galileo's reported finding made through his first telescope observation in 1610. As far back as the 1750's, Wright already suggested that our galaxy – the Milky Way, is a great disk of stars. Since then cosmologists have estimated that the Milky Way is approximately 100,000 light years<sup>58</sup> in diameter. Further observations showed that galaxies tend to group together in clusters, which in turn belong to super clusters. McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:62) noted that in 1929 Hubble was the first to discover

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<sup>58</sup> A light year is the scale cosmologists use to measure distance, i.e. 1 light year (ly) = approximate  $(3 \times 10^5 \text{ km/s}) (3,16 \times 10^7 \text{ sec/year}) = 9,46 \times 10^{12} \text{ km}$ .

that the universe is expanding. This provided evidence that there was a time in the past when the universe was a lot smaller.

There are a few techniques used in measuring the relative distance between the earth and a star. One of the basic techniques is called a parallax of a star. This means the apparent motion of a star, against the background of more distant stars due to the earth's motion about the sun. Star parallax is used for measurements distances up to 100 ly. Another technique is measuring the apparent brightness of a galaxy by making use of the inverse square law. Alternatively, one can measure the brightness of stars within a galaxy. A third technique is the measuring of the red-shift<sup>59</sup> of a star (Giancoli 1998:1003-1005).

Giancoli (1998:1008-1020) suggested that evidence of evolving stars suggest that the whole universe is evolving. This process is called stellar evolution<sup>60</sup> which begins with a star being 'born,' goes through a life cycle until the point of star death which can result in a few different options depending on characteristics like size, etc of the star. Giancoli continues that the expansion of the universe is subjected to the cosmological principle – stating that the universe looks exactly as viewed from any point within it.

McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:61) stated that Hawking's introduced the idea of a fixed point in the past where time and matter must have been formed. This point he called a singularity. Giancoli (1998:1021-1022) continued that from this singularity everything began with a large explosion 10-15 billion years ago. This explosion is called the Big-Bang<sup>61</sup>. Accordingly, this dense mass did not explode somewhere in an empty universe, but the mass was the entire universe. Following the Big-Bang explosion, the universe rapidly increased in size<sup>62</sup>. Some of the methods used in calculating the age of the universe include the Hubble expansion, stellar evolution, radioactivity and cosmic microwave background. The latter method was also

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<sup>59</sup> See Giancoli (1998:1018) for an explanation on red-shift measuring.

<sup>60</sup> See Giancoli (1998:1008-1012) for an explanation on stellar evolution.

<sup>61</sup> Giancoli (1998:1024-1027) provides an explanation on what the Big-Bang must have been like from the smallest calculated time of  $10^{-43}$  seconds.

<sup>62</sup> See Copan & Craig (2005:221-222) for a more detailed description on the expanding of the universe.

primarily responsible for discrediting the Steady State<sup>63</sup> model, which was the Big-Bang model's best alternative view for a time. Boice (1982:13) agreed with this description of the Big-Bang model.

Rensberger (1986:91-92) added that, according to the Big-Bang theory, the universe began in an extremely hot state. During this early history of the universe, matter, - primarily the light atoms like hydrogen and helium - clumped together by gravitational attraction to form countless trillions of stars. The entire mass spiralled outwards, which gave rise to the formation of billions of galaxies, each with its own gravitationally bound cluster of billions of stars. These galaxies have now become most of the visible mass in the universe. Accordingly, stars produce energy from nuclear reactions, primarily the fusion of hydrogen to form helium. These and other processes have led to the formation of the other elements.

Guth & Steinhardt (1984:128) stated "... the observable universe could have evolved from an infinitesimal region. It's then tempting to go one step further and speculate that the entire universe evolved from literally nothing." Most cosmologists agree with this standard model approach<sup>64</sup>, which not only makes predictions concerning how the universe began, but also postulate three possible futures or conclusions to the universe (Giancoli 1998:1023-1031). Humphreys (2000:14-18) added more detail as he argues for two basic versions of the Big-Bang model. Accordingly, the first is based on a finite form, where, if you travel far and fast enough, you will end right back at the point where you started. In a sense one can picture this as a balloon being blown up, causing you to travel around it. The second is based on an infinite, from which exerts that no matter in which direction you travel, either you will never reach the end, or you might reach some sort of universal boundary (though the latter is inconsistent with the cosmological principle.)

MacRae (1999:58) indicated that approximately 4.6 billion years ago clouds of hydrogen and helium gasses, water, ammonia, methane, solid particles of iron and silicate minerals began to contract and formed a rotating disc. Matter at the core

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<sup>63</sup> See Giancoli (1998:1021) for a description of the Steady State model.

<sup>64</sup> See Copan & Craig (2005:222-224) for an additional description of the standard Big-Bang model.

began to attract other particles, which enlarged over time. Due to its internal gravitational forces, the mass began to spin. The increasing density radiated high amounts of heat energy that gave rise to our sun. Consequently the nebulae or dust cloud around the sun were not attracted into the gravitational field causing it to go through a similar process that produced the planets of which earth is one of them. Rensberger (1986:95) confirmed this view of solar and planetary evolution.

MacRae (1999:58) continued that during these initial stages of the earth's formation, the surface was totally lifeless. McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:167) concluded by explaining how life could have formed from non-living material. He called this "an anomaly in the context of the Second Law of Thermodynamics" as life seemed to have come into existence about 4,000 million years ago.

#### **5.4.1.2. Commentary on cosmological views**

Zacharias (2000:64) stipulated a fallible assumption, which most natural scientists make when presenting the Big-Bang model as fact. In his argument, he pointed to the fact that the general idea concerning the origin of the Big-Bang was that it was preceded by the existence of a singularity. The problem with this is that by scientific definition all natural laws break down within a singularity, meaning that the Big-Bang model must have been preceded by something "supernatural."

Boice (1982:13-16) agreed by indicating that if we were to accept the Big-Bang model, it would implicate that "everything" was caught up in the explosion, leaving science with no evidence as to what happened before the Big-Bang, nor the reason why such an explosion would have taken place. Genesis on the other hand confronts us with the Creator God who existed before creation and will still exist long after it comes to a conclusion. Boice stated, "The Big-Bang theory, even if true, tells us nothing about the things or One who caused it. Nor does it throw light on why the universe has such astonishing complexity and order or how life originated or many other things." Ashton & Westacott (2006:33) added "There is danger here: if we build our case with too much reliance on the Big-Bang, then if this model is someday discarded (as scientific theories frequently are), what will happen to our theistic arguments?"

Ferrell (2001:71-74) called for the abandonment of the theory as he listed ten reasons why the Big-Bang model could not have taken place. He then continued to list an additional six reasons why the outward effect of the Big-Bang could not have taken place. Boice (1982:34) emphasised one reason when he pointed to galaxies that are scattered irregularly and clustered together with vast amounts of open spaces in-between.

Ashton & Westacott (2006:34) stated that, “Suffice it to say that given it is the model of cosmic origin favoured by the vast majority of the (secular) scientific community, there are abundant improbable factors that make human life extremely unlikely. Yet here we are.” Ferrell (2001:46) remarked, “In spite of clear evidence that the theory is unscientific and unworkable, Evolutionists refuse to abandon it.” This might just be due to the fact that if they abandon the idea of a self created universe, all they are left with is a theistic framework, which too many would be inconsiderable.

Creationists have admitted on numerous occasions that functional cosmological arguments and models based on Genesis are few. Ashton (2001:94) mentioned a model proposed by Gentry, which accounts for the observed cosmological red shift and also explains the 2.7 Kelvin Cosmic Background Radiation. Humphreys (2000:43-50) listed and explained four more models, i.e. Mature Creation theory; Moon-Spencer theory; Decay in light speed argument; and Heating of Galactic Gas and Dust theory. I will however highlight one such model, which is a first of its kind in that it is based both on Scriptural and natural scientific evidence; a model presented by Humphreys.

Humphreys (2000:11-13) based his model on what is called “gravitational time dilation.” Accordingly, time might be constant relative to an object, but differ between two objects based on gravitational forces, which interact with them. Consequently it has been confirmed that time will pass quicker at higher altitudes relative to a lower altitude and vice versa.

Humphreys (2000:21-29) continued to explain the effect which gravitational time dilation would exert within the universe. This brought him to the theoretical existence of what is termed ‘black holes’ and ‘white holes.’ Accordingly black holes are stellar

phenomena (possibly a very large star that collapsed under its own gravitational field) with such strong gravitational pull that not even light can escape it. As a result, everything in its vicinity is pulled in. White holes on the other hand do exactly the opposite, where matter, light and energy are released into the visible universe. Humphreys' proposed cosmology is based on creation taking place (the first four days) inside such a white hole.

Humphreys goes on explaining that the outer limit or boundary, called the 'event horizon,' of these white holes would be the place where gravitational time dilation plays a large role. Consequently if any particle of matter or light passes the event horizon; time relative to the inside of the hole would seem normal, but due to the gravitational time dilation to the object on the outside, vast amounts of time would seem to pass.

The creation of the "heavens and earth", as we understand it from the first chapter of Genesis,<sup>65</sup> could theoretically have taken place inside and near the centre of such a white hole<sup>66</sup>. Three 24-hour days could have passed relative to the earth, when at the beginning of the fourth day other cosmological objects (following their creation) began to cross the event horizon of the white hole. Relative to the objects that crossed the event horizon early on the fourth day; billions of years could have passed due to gravitational time dilation, though relative to the earth, it would all still be the same day. Close to the end of the day, the earth itself crossed the event horizon; in essence still just four days old.

As I mentioned in my introductory chapter, natural science must adhere to the scientific method, where observation leads to a hypothesis, followed by tests that will either prove or disprove the hypothesis. Evidence seems overwhelmingly lacking to me where it concerns the Big-Bang model as we have it today; on the contrary there seem to be considerable evidence that would prove such a hypothesis incorrect. Having said this, in light of my proposed model of evaluation, we do however find as an absolute the vastness of space, as well as the time it took for the light of distant

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<sup>65</sup> For a complete biblical reference to this model see Humphreys (2000:31-39, 53-80).

<sup>66</sup> For a complete mathematical reference to this model see Humphreys (2000:83-128).

stars to have travelled to the earth. Consequently, Creationists still have a long way to go in order to find a more suitable and working cosmological model, though some of the first models have now been proposed. Ashton (2001:341) reminded us that, “Regarding the length of the creation days, there is only one information source, and that is the Bible.” A unified model, such as proposed by Humphreys, seems to me at the moment, to hold the key.

#### **5.4.2. Genetics**

I have chosen to engage in dialogue with the field of genetics for the reason that it pertains to the origin of humans in a significant way. With Oppenheimer’s book *Out of Africa’s Eden* (2003) as a source document in this section, I will conclude with some alternative views on the subject.

##### **5.4.2.1. Overview**

Genetics opened many new doors in science for unlocking the past and tracing human ancestry. Oppenheimer’s (2003:xviii) work was primarily focused on two unique sets of DNA<sup>67</sup> within the human body. The first is called Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) which is found inside Mitochondria; small organelles in every cell (though separate from the cell nucleus), that is responsible for energy production. mtDNA is inherited through solely from the mother (only the egg cell’s Mitochondria is transferred to the embryo, the sperm cell’s Mitochondria die off) making it possible to trace ancestry through the female lineage. The second is Y-chromosomal DNA, which is primarily responsible for determining the male gender, consequently only found in males. Similar to mtDNA, one can also trace genetic lineage, although Y-chromosomal DNA can only be traced in the male gender (Oppenheimer (2003:41).

The way in which we trace these ancestries’ is through mutations. Oppenheimer (2003:38-41) stated that approximately one mutation occurs on the mtDNA in every 1,000 generations. Accordingly, every person carries between 7-15 mutations on their mtDNA. This has led to the conclusion that the oldest changes took place between 150,000 – 190,000 years ago in Africa, although this is only an approximation. A similar method is used to trace the Y-chromosome, which could potentially produce

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<sup>67</sup> See Oppenheimer (2003:35-37) on exactly how genes and DNA work.

even more accurate information, due to a higher number of mutations. Consequently Oppenheimer (2003:xix) was convinced that the branching of a gene tree can be dated, though clearly leaving room for accuracy. As a result of this gene tree he argued that for most part of human history, humans did not migrate all over the globe, but stayed in one area most of the time. Interpretation of the gene tree points to specific migrations only over the last 80,000 years.

Oppenheimer (2003:xx, 51) endorsed a model called the Out-of-Africa view stating that all modern humans outside of Africa came from a migration off the continent of Africa less than 100,000 years ago. This is in contrast to the multiregional view, which would argue that human population came from *Homo neanderthalensis* (Neanderthals) in Europe and *Homo erectus* in the Far East. Oppenheimer stated early in his book that he is convinced that the Out-of-Africa view “wins the contest” due to the genetic trees that lead back to Africa<sup>68</sup>. Subsequently it does not seem that the Neanderthals are part of human ancestry; rather cousins where both share a common ancestor *Homo helmei*. His main argument for stating this is that according to the genetic tree there was only one major exodus from Africa which fathered all non-Africans; all of which carry one common genetic reference.

Oppenheimer (2003:3-5) argued that man as we know it is the product of a harsh environment and climate over millennia. He continued his argument that the first split between our ancestors and the ancestors of modern chimpanzees took place 7-8 million years ago. The most important change came in our bipedalism (ability to walk on two legs), although our first clear evidence, bipedalism only points to around 4 million years ago. As to why apes took on this posture is still an unanswered question as it would not necessarily have aided their survival.

Oppenheimer (2003:5-7) noted some of the famous skeletons from this era (3-4 million years) belonged to the Lucy’s family, who were half ape, half human, approximately 1-1.5 meters height and walking upright bipedal. From the Lucy family there came two distinct groups at the time, *Homo* and *Paranthropus*. Following them, about 2.5 million years ago the world became colder which led to yet

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<sup>68</sup> See McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:277-295) for additional explanation on human ancestor.

another ice age. The first humans *Homo genus*, which had much larger brains, soon followed and made their appearance in the Africa savannas. McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:10) highlighted evidence of our beginning that extended more than 1½ million years ago in the form of digging tools.

Oppenheimer (2003:8) seemed troubled by the question of whether, we first grew these larger brains and then decided what to do with them, or vice versa? The first option would go against the Darwinian principles which states, “Any new kind of behaviour always precedes the physical adaptation that evolves to exploit that behaviour.” But if this is the case, why are humans using so little of our brain capacity? As far as speech development goes, Oppenheimer (2003:29) gave leeway to what he terms “almost creationist” where it seems that language suddenly originated in modern humans between 35,000 and 50,000 years ago. The sudden appearance of word and syntax use was, as he puts it “recently genetically hard-wired into our brains in some kind of language organ.”

Evidently *Homo sapiens* (modern humans) were born over 170,000 years ago during the largest of all ice ages, of which only an estimate of 10,000 humanoids survived. Following this ice age, they began moving out of Africa (about 75,000-80,000 years ago) while the rest of the earth was still populated by other humanoid species, which would all eventually become extinct. Species like the European Neanderthals might have survived up to 30,000 years ago, but no genetic traces of them are anywhere evident in the current human population (Oppenheimer 2003:16).

Oppenheimer (2003:354-356) concluded that dating and time allocation is flawed with errors. This includes radiometric, carbon as well as genetic dating. He estimated that it is reasonably accurate up to 40,000 years ago, but becomes difficult beyond this. Unfortunately, Oppenheimer did not see a positive future for humans as we are certain to hit another ice age, bottleneck and become dependent on evolution if we are to survive the next climate changes.

#### **5.4.2.2. Commentary on genetic views**

Oppenheimer made a strong case in the field of genetics, though I feel he is hesitant to go into detail as to how all these mutations work, and consequently dated. Boice

(1982:40) noted that the main agreement behind genetic changes is found in mutations, which he defined as, “sudden unexpected changes brought about by otherwise unexplained alterations in the organism’s genes.” The problem we face with is that there is no evidence for any changes from one species to another through mutations, rather just variants within a species. Boice continued that in most cases it is only a matter of breeding our recessive characteristics. Consequently, mutations do not cause any new information to surface, only variants within.

Another argument which Boice (1982:41) made, is that there are clear limits of variants within species. No matter how much breeding and changes you try to make, a horse will never grow wings as in the case of Greek mythology; for mutations do not add information, they only change existing information.

Ferrell (2001:321-324) summarised that there are four major problems with mutations as the sole source for changes in species. The first is that mutations happen quite rarely. The second is that mutations are always random and not directed. The third is that we have never observed a truly helpful mutation in nature. Fourth, nearly all observed mutations are harmful rather than beneficial. Ferrell (2001:325-342) then continued to list an additional 28 reasons why mutations cannot be the cause of interspecies change.

Strobel (2004:281-283) went beyond the tracing of human DNA and first challenged the overall working of biochemical processes within the human body. To him this could not be a product of mere time and chance through the evolutionary process, but clearly pointed to a Designer. He continued that the composition of the human body and spirit indicated that humans are more than just physical beings; consequently calling for a Designer who Himself must be more than just a physical being.

Ferrell (2001:520-613) additionally spent a considerable amount of time on the issue of ancient man, providing evidence that historical data is scattered among numerous different examples, (all of which I need to add have a reasonable explanation within a contemporary setting); where scientists have arbitrarily placed them in an order to prove their hypothesis.

Boice (1982:48) concluded with the question as to why God would have chosen one individual from among a population of pre-human ape-like species and changed that individual into a man. What about the rest? And what made that particular one so special? Evidently as a result of my study in the field of genetics, I have to propose that the only absolute which I can identify is that minor mutations do take place, though I have not seen any beneficial<sup>69</sup> mutation. A second absolute I propose is that great variations are found within a species, however there is no evidence that one species have ever changed into another. In acknowledgment to the study done by Oppenheimer, I find it greatly challenging if he had to take one step back and explain where man a such came from, before we begin dialoguing regarding the changes within the ‘human species.’ Although his study reveals a lot of appealing data concerning variations within humans; I am yet to encounter evidence that would display a more convincing argument than the Genesis 1 account of human origin.

### **5.4.3. Geology**

I have chosen to engage the field of geology for the reason that it pertains to the formation of the earth in a significant way. With Skinner & Porter’s book *The Dynamic Earth* (1989) as a source document in this section, I will conclude with some alternative views on the subject.

#### **5.4.3.1. Overview**

Large variations in rock and soil formation are evident around the globe and this is the study field of geology. Skinner & Porter (1989:v) stated, “Geologists must study the Earth as it exists. From the assembled observations they draw conclusions about the processes that shaped the Earth and events that have affected it over the past 4-5 billion years.” As a premise, geologists adhere to the principle of *Uniformitarianism*<sup>70</sup>, which Skinner & Porter (1989:22-23) defined as, “The same external and internal processes we recognize in action today have been operating throughout most of the Earth’s history.” The consequences of this principle are that we can compare any rock’s characteristics, regardless of its age, to any similar rock

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<sup>69</sup> Interesting to note that as an undergraduate student I recall only one such a beneficial mutation (a mutation that would enhance a person) being highlighted, which was Sickle-cell anemia (see Ferrell 2001:343-344). Unfortunately, if you apply the same logic of such an argument, it would be similar to say that one must cut off their foot in order to avoid athlete’s foot.

<sup>70</sup> See Pelsler (2002:50-51) on how Uniformitarianism gave substance to the theory of Evolution.

forming today. McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:61) added that, “Geological time – difficult though it may be to conceptualise – provides a sense of security in that there was a beginning, and that time’s passage has been regulated and marked by familiar cycles such as day-night, the lunar month and the seasonal year.”

Skinner & Porter (1989:140) stated that the oldest rock formation is estimated at 3.8 billion years, belonging to the Precambrian age. This age stretched over a period of 3.2 billion years, for the youngest dates from these geological formations date 600 million years. Skinner & Porter (1989:21-23) highlighted evidence, showing that the rate of the rock cycles has continually changed over time. One reason for this is that the Earth is slowly cooling down. Another reason they provide is that, “It is possible that 3 billion years ago oceanic crust was created at a faster rate than it is now, and that continental crust was uplifted and eroded at a faster rate. Either one, or both of these actions would cause the rock cycle to speed up.” Remarkably, the age of the average rock contained in the continental crust seem to be only 650 million years old.

Skinner & Porter (1989:86-87) spent some time on the formation of sediment rock. Accordingly, this happens through a process where the base of sediment layers is compacted due to the pressure of above layers, resulting in the formation of sediment rock. This type of rock is plentiful in the Earth’s crust. McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:11) noted that Lyell was the first to explain the mappings of the great thickness contained in sedimentary layers, as proposed by Hutton and Smith. MacRae (1999:47) stated that geologists are frequently confronted with the question on how complete rock sediment layers portray actual history. This is mainly due to the dynamic changes in and on the earth during its past.

One of the most well-known theories that came from geology is the Pangaea theory<sup>71</sup>, which deals with a superstructure continent that broke into smaller continents, resulting in the seven continents as we know them today. The theory proposed that this break took place through tectonics, which Skinner & Porter (1989:11) defined as

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<sup>71</sup> See Skinner & Porter (1989:374-376) for a description of the Pangaea theory.

“the study of movement and deformation of the crust on a large scale”, and continental drift<sup>72</sup>.

Thornes & Brunnsden (1977:28-51) summarised two different categories of dating methods. The first is called *relative* dating (28-41), which includes morphological techniques, sea levels and altitude, drainage patterns, stratigraphic techniques, faunal fossils, and artefactual materials. The second is called *absolute* dating (41-51), which includes exact time in calendar years, radiometric techniques<sup>73</sup>, dendrochronology, thermoluminescence, lichenometry, and historical records.

As to the dating of rock formation Skinner & Porter (1989:127) highlighted the principle of stratigraphic superposition<sup>74</sup>, which provides a comparison between two rock strata, where the top layer would be considered younger than the bottom layer. This does not provide absolute dating, but a relative comparison between the two strata. A second method used in dating rock formation, described by Skinner & Porter (1989:136-139) is that of radiometric dating. It works on the principle that an atom undergoes radioactive decay during which a parent atom (the original radioactive atom) produces a daughter atom. Consequently, the rate of radioactive decay is measured by the amount of parent and daughter atoms present in the rock sample. A third rock dating method described by Skinner & Porter (1989:142-145) is called the magnetic polarity time scale.

#### **5.4.3.2. Commentary on geological views**

Rensberger (1986:413) quoted Darwin as saying “Why is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediare links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduate organic chain; and this is the most obvious and serious objection which can be urge against the theory.”

Ferrell (2001:618-635) describes, an alternative to the geological models as proposed by Skinner & Porter, called the Flood model. In this model the Noahic flood is held

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<sup>72</sup> See McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:22-24) for an explanation on continental drift.

<sup>73</sup> See Brown & Hawkesworth & Wilson (1992:135-140) for more detail on radiometric dating.

<sup>74</sup> See Skinner & Porter (1989:130-135) for the Time-Stratigraphic units in which geological formations are dated as well as the Geological Column illuminating relative time scales.

responsible for the sediment layers, fossils, geological column, plate tectonics, etc. According to Ferrell, there is no need to look beyond any reference than what the flood presented us, in order to find answers for any geological phenomena. Pelsler (2002:93-114) elaborated on this flood model, describing it as a “Catastrophic Model”. Accordingly, such natural catastrophes, like the volcanic eruption of Mount St Helens, had dramatic impact on its surrounding environment, including the geological formations. Considering the possibility of a global flood, most geological structures would have been displaced and restructured.

Geologists mount a strong argument in favour of an old earth, however at the moment it seems to me that most dating models are still highly approximate and more frequently dependable on comparative analysis, which could lead to circular argumentations. This brings me to the challenging place of defining absolutes in the field of geology. To illustrate, if one looked at the Fish River Canyon in Namibia, the absolute would be that the Canyon exists. From an Uniformitarian premise, one would interpret the data that the Canyon originated as a result of millions of years of river erosion. On the other hand, if your premise is Catastrophe, one would interpret the Canyon’s existence as the result of a natural disaster, carving its way in a short time along the river banks.

Consequently, I will present as an absolute that we do find a great variety of rocks and geological formations on earth. However, the order in which we find them to be layered (geological column) and the reasons why they are layered in such a way leans to a great deal of interpretation and even assumption. Unfortunately my analysis does not include a study on the Flood Narrative. I will therefore refrain to further engage this field, apart from stating that there are strong alternative arguments and models in favour of a Young Earth Geological and Flood model.

#### **5.4.4. Paleontology**

I have chosen to engage the field of paleontology for the reason that it supposedly provides the most impressive arguments in favour of evolution. With MacRae’s book *Life Etched in Stone* (1999) as a source document in this section, I will conclude with some alternative views on the subject.

#### 5.4.4.1. Overview

In his book, MacRae (1999:1) reflected on the first fossil remains of living plants and animals as described by the Greek Philosopher Xanthos of Sardis *circa* 500 BC, followed by Aristotle in the fourth century BC. A few additions were made to their findings during the Roman period and the Middle Ages. Those described as fossils included any specimens that came from the earth. McCarthy & Rubidge (2005:11) stated that popularity of rock and fossil studies began to grow in the eighteenth century. By the mid nineteenth century, this view had completely changed in that naturalists believed that fossils were leftovers of once living organisms.

MacRae (1999:1-2) pointed out that marine fossils were found far inland; consequences of oceanic boundaries that must have moved. This enforced a belief that fossils were part of the flood; a view many Young Earth Creationists still hold today. The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967b:678) stated that the first important paleontological discovery regarding man was the Neanderthal man found in Germany in 1856. MacRae (1999:2) stated that “Scientists today accept that fossils are in a sense ‘rarities of nature’ that become preserved only when a number of stringent conditions were met and that it is unrealistic to expect a full sequence of fossils documenting the evolution of any particular species.”

MacRae (1999:3-10) provided a short overview of paleontology in South Africa stating that the first discovery in the RSA was made by Paterson near Port Nolloth in 1779. The next discovery was that of Lichtenstein in 1803 who presented the first impressions of an ‘eel fish’ near Calvinia. In 1830, the first publication in the RSA on fossils concerned specimens found in Cogmans Kloof in 1804. Soon afterwards, the HMS Beagle anchored in Simons Town where Darwin met Andrew Smith who became a key figure in paleontology in RSA. The man who came to be credited as the father of South African paleontology is Andrew Gibbes Bain who was influenced by Charles Lyell’s book *Principles of Geology* of which he owned a copy. In 1845, Guybon Atherstone joined Bain on a fossil expedition where they found the first dinosaur bone.

MacRae (1999:30) noted that the word ‘fossil’ comes from the Latin *fossilis* which means “something dug up.” He defined fossils as, “The preserved remains of once

living organisms, or traces left behind as a result of the activities of organisms which inhabited that Earth at some time in the geographical past and are now recorded or preserved in rock.” On the question of what can be fossilised he continued, “Almost any living organism, some part of an individual or even a tract that was left behind by some buried entity may enter the fossil record.”

To MacRae (1999:31-33) life becomes the “mystery force” that keeps unstable carbon compounds together. When something dies, its complex carbon molecules break down into simple molecules resulting in elements. Many factors determine whether an organism will enter fossilisation. This causes paleontology to be limited due to the lack of rock formations on the earth surface, as most of them are covered by soil. MacRae is still convinced that paleontology, despite its shortcomings, is still sufficient to give a fairly good picture of the history of life on earth.

There are basically two ways in which the age of a fossil is determined. The first is radiometric dating where the radioactive decay of certain radioactive elements in the rock is measured. The second is termed ‘relative dating’ and depends on the comparison of the fossil content of the strata. This method makes use of the ‘law of similar fossils’ which was termed by Smith in the late eighteenth century (MacRae 1999:47-49).

MacRae (1999:51-52) stated that, “It is well documented that evolution does and has, in the past, taken place.” Boice (1982:39) agreed that the only real historical evidence we have for evolution is in the fossil records. The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967b:687) made a similar comment. MacRae continued by explaining that the evolution theory stood the test of time under the scientific method and proved that higher animals came from more simple ones. He supports it by mentioning one area in South Africa where no record of mammals has been found in the fossils, therefore concluding that they did not live during that period which he claims was long before mammals existed. He further referenced some of the following indicators in support of evolutionary theory: comparative biology (common ancestor); comparative embryology; biogeography (groupings of animals on the globe); microbiology and biochemistry (showing genetic and DNA closeness in species).

#### **5.4.4.2. Commentary on paleontological views**

Batten (2006:43) mentioned three of the old Earth theories which he stated all drew strongly on the existence of the fossil records. Accordingly, scholars in these fields are convinced that it provides evidence that earth has been around for millions of years. Batten questioned why any scholar would refute the evidence of a Noahic flood so quickly, for two reasons. First, there are working models that provide answers as too many of the fossils that might have come from a post flood era and secondly if the fossils came from before the flood, such a global disaster would have distorted all the fossil layers.

Boice (1982:39) noted that the patterns in the fossil record generally do correspond to the expected pattern predicted by the theory of Evolution. He continued that this however does not prove the theory correct, as it creates just as many unanswered questions. As predicted, we do find more simple fossils in older rock formations and more complex ones in younger rock formations. Also that some species contained in the fossil records have become extinct. One of the main unanswered questions is the lack of continuity found in the fossil records around the world. This means that we expect to see a gradual change from simple to more complex organisms, which is not the case. We rather observe great leaps with sudden appearances of species as well as sudden disappearances of them, without any trace of transformation. Both Pelsner (2002:134) and Boice (1982:40) stated that it's not only a matter of some missing links; but almost every so-called connection point is missing. Another argument against the fossil record that he poses is in the subjective order in which fossils are arranged; many times this is not in the way which nature presents them. Pelsner (2002:129-130) reference the fact that though one do find "lebensvorme" (life forms) in the top third of the sediment layers, they are fully absent in the bottom two-thirds of the layers.

Ferrell (2001:411-517) spent a considerable amount of time on the issue of fossils, once again linking it with the Flood model, which provided an adequate explanation as to where all the fossils came from as well as the reasons why they are generally found in the order which paleontologists find them.

Although I have to agree with the impressive array of data collected, I fail to see the link between any species changing into another. To state two examples, if one has to walk into a zoo, there is never a question as to which species is in which cage; every species is exactly classifiable. If the fossil record contained evidence of the evolutionary process, all species should have to be in a constant state of transformation with literally countless hybrid in-between species evolving all over the planet. The second is the major assumption that every fossil had offspring. Let us assume that a fossil did prove the theory of Evolution (which I fail to recognise), one can never say that when that fossil was still alive it had any progeny that would have continued the line of change. Such a fossil might have contained a genetic defect, which made it unique to the rest of its species; a defect which perhaps was not passed to its offspring, if it had any.

#### **5.4.5. Evolution by design**

The theory of Evolution subsequently gave rise to another creation-linked view. Ham (2004:147) stated that many people argue that they can add evolution to the Bible. Accordingly, they think that by doing this they can explain life coming about, as a result of God using the evolutionary processes. These two views share the basis that the evolutionary processes took place, but do not leave this process to time and chance, meaning God is the one who is in control and He directs it where He wants it to go.

Consequently this theory is called Theistic Evolution. Boice (1982:44) explained Theistic Evolution as a theory where one accepts the theory of Evolution, except the view that God stands behind the evolutionary process is added. Their evolutionary understanding include aspects like long periods of time, simple to complex, living from non-living, man from animal, etc.

Boice (1982:46) continued that Theistic Evolution claims that the universe works according to fixed principles and laws set in motion by God. One other common aspect of the theory is that it accepts that God intrudes in this process, i.e. He is responsible for the change from simple to complex, non-living to living, etc. Ashton (2001:85-86) explained Theistic Evolution in detail.

## 5.5. Conclusion

The question as to what should be seen as absolutes, interpretations and assumptions are unfortunately not always so clearly definable. At this point, I have acknowledged some of the contributions made in the fields of cosmology, geology and paleontology regarding their dating methods. Looking at what they present, one would come to an absolute conclusion that the universe and the earth is indeed billions of years old. However, there are other “absolute” arguments that would still challenge this view. In illustration, cited from Hovind<sup>75</sup>, where he proposed a simplistic model for narrowing down dates by determining their maximum upper value. He named this model the “Treasure Chest” model. According to him if one finds a treasure chest in the sea, it could not have been there longer than the date on the youngest coin. By making use of this method, one can define certain upper barriers as to the age of the universe and the Earth.

Ashton (2001:92-93) provided such examples in that the catastrophic plate tectonics model has been developed, which explains many geological features left by the flood<sup>76</sup>, as well as the geomagnetic reversals and the post-flood ice age. Work on the earth’s electromagnetic field<sup>77</sup> has also proven its decay, which establishes the upper limit of the field’s age as about 10,000 years. McIntosh (2001:165-166) also mentioned the fact that the earth is “losing” its moon with every cycle. If one had to take into consideration the moon’s distance from the earth and the rate at which we are losing the moon, one would end with a number far smaller than millions of years.

I have abandoned the search to try to figure out how many such ‘treasure chest’ examples Ferrell (2001) listed in over 900 pages of his book *The Evolution Cruncher*; for it number in the hundreds. Creationists may indeed have a hard time explaining the challenges posed by Evolutionist, but the argument goes both ways. One great difference does however exist, Creationist theory makes ample allowance for what one could call ‘a miracle’ or an act of God, which might be beyond our explanation. Evolutionists on the other hand do not have such a luxury as their best attempts would only bring them to conclude that it was a matter of chance.

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<sup>75</sup> See “The Age of the Earth Part 1” DVD series produced by Creation Science Evangelism.

<sup>76</sup> See McIntosh (2001:158-176) for scientific arguments in favour of creation and the flood.

<sup>77</sup> See McIntosh (2001:164-165) for the Earth’s magnetic field problem.

McDowell & Williams (2006:101) argued that, “Theories about the origin of matter and life can never come under the umbrella of true science because they cannot be observed or proven scientifically.” Consequently we are working from fundamental assumptions. Following the research for this chapter I became convinced that the first and greatest of all these assumptions must be whether or not a Creator was involved.

McDowell & Williams (2006:101) continued that the problem with origin theories is that nature alone cannot supply the answers. The events that produced matter, life, and reason are beyond the reach of natural scientific enquiry, leading us to the field of metaphysics. Instead of staying true to the standard scientific methods, natural science has now begun overstepping their boundaries into the fields of philosophy and theology. The challenge as they put it, is that if there is a God, by definition He is supernatural, therefore no natural scientific method will or can ever prove His existence, let alone His creation. Munroe (1996:34:38) added to the argument, “If you want to know the purpose of a thing, never ask the thing.... Purpose is only found in the mind of a creator.”

Studying Scripture and nature alongside each other, I must accept that nature cannot be held responsible for its own creation, supported only by ‘chance’ and ‘time.’ Order<sup>78</sup>, design and purpose; all of these qualities demand a creator. Lewis (1970:52-53) approached this argument as follows:

“If the solar system was brought about by an accidental collision, then the appearance of organic life on this planet was also an accident, and the whole evolution of man was an accident too. If so, then all our thought processes are mere accidents – the accidental by-product of the movement of atoms. And this holds for the materialists’ and astronomers’ as well as for anyone else’s. But if their thoughts – i.e. of Materialism and Astronomy – are merely accidental by products, why should we believe them to be true? I see no reason for believing that one accident should be able to give a correct account of all the other accidents.”

(Lewis 1970:52-53)

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<sup>78</sup> See McIntosh (2001:144-155) for fundamental scientific evidence concerning order and design.

As to the question of which creator this may be, the biblical creation account has proven itself to provide a formidable challenge to all other creation theories. I therefore conclude that, if indeed the God of the Bible is responsible for this act of creation, providing His servants with the means to document this event, the account would hold true in light of any scrutiny. The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967b:694) rightfully stated that Creationism is the only theory that provides an adequate explanation of the origin of the human spirit. I am therefore in agreement with Faid's (1990:98) conclusion, "All scientists can do is discover and report what God has already accomplished."

## CHAPTER 6

### SYNTHESIS

#### 6.1. Introduction

In chapter 1, I began by highlighting three main reasons why I am convinced this study is relevant. The first reason dealt with the question of our origin, the second with current ongoing debates between Creationists and Evolutionists, and the third with preconceived paradigms of approaching Scripture, from both modern science and ancient Near Eastern literature. At the conclusion of this study, I am convinced more than ever of the relevance, as all three reasons were shown to be far from resolved. I am of the opinion that this study has made a small contribution to a much larger debate with countless more aspects and details yet to be analysed. One area in particular that would contribute to the discourse regarding time would be an exegetical reflection of the Flood Narrative (Gn 6-9) in order to have a more meaningful discussion with the fields of Geology and Paleontology.

Once the relevancy of this study was established, I pointed out the specific problem involved. This main problem dealt with our understanding of the concept of time; when it began and whether there was indeed a beginning. The two major opposing views I highlighted were that of the Evolutionists, advancing the idea of an old universe, in contrast to that of Young Earth Creationists, promoting the concept of a relatively young creation. A second problem I named deals with the presence or absence of a creator; which would support a theistic or atheistic approach to the question of origin. In regards to the presence or absence of a creator, one would find the Evolutionist advocating an atheistically approach, where both the Old and Young Earth Creationist works from the premis that there was a Creator. My proposed argument was that where you have a design, you have a designer.

#### 6.2. Aims and objectives

As stated in chapter 1, the aim of this study was not to prove or disprove either Creationism or the theory of Evolution, rather to understand what the Genesis 1 and 2 creation accounts would indicate if we viewed them with no presuppositions regarding time and origin. Batten (2006:44) noted “If we allow ‘science’ (which has

wrongly become synonymous with evolution and materialism) to determine our understanding of Scripture, then this can lead to a slippery slope of unbelief through the rest of Scripture<sup>79</sup>.” Accordingly, the aim was divided in three main objectives. First was my exegetical analysis, conducted in chapters 3 and 4, to gain insight into the author’s intended meaning of the text. I am convinced that Gunkel (2006 [1895]:78-80) would have agreed with such a study because he mentioned that modern man should understand the content of Genesis in the same way as its original audience. Secondly, the presentation of my conclusion regarding the author’s intended meaning of these two chapters was then presented to five well-known Creationist views of time, i.e. the Gap theory, the “Day-Age” theory, the “Days-of-Revelation” theory, Progressive Creationism and the literal six-day creation model. Thirdly, I concluded my study by conversing with the four selected natural and biological scientific fields of Cosmology, Genetics, Geology and Paleontology.

Consequently, I addressed the following sub-aims as defined in chapter 1. Firstly, I outlined the presupposition that the natural and biological scientific views has imposed on our exegetical approach of Scripture. Secondly, I presented a holistic overview of Pentateuch research history which had set the stage for the exegetical analysis of the Genesis 1-2 texts. Thirdly, I elaborated on the origin, author, time and context in which both Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25 was distinctively written. Fourthly, I discoursed with numerous sources concerning the nature, theme, message and theologies that Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25 is trying to communicate. Fifthly, I analysing the relationship between the Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25 creation account. Sixthly, I set out to understand what is meant by the concepts of “day” and “beginning” and when the most plausible time in history for this event could have taken place. Seventhly, I expanded on where and how the five main arguments concerning creation time fit into Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25. As this dissertation is presented at Masters Level, I am satisfied that these aims and objectives have meaningfully been met. Consequently in my final chapter I will now summarise and conclude my findings regarding creation time.

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<sup>79</sup> To state an example, many modern scholars refute the fact that Christ was raised from the dead, for science dictates that no person can come back from the dead after three days. Their conclusions are that these passages refer to the idea that Jesus’ teaching will live on through his followers and not a personal, bodily resurrection of the person (Zacharias 1994:291-296).

### **6.3. Methodology**

The research methodology I used was primarily build on a literature study and an exegetical analysis. As part of this methodology, I focused on three translations of the Bible, i.e. The New American Standard Bible (1995), the Amplified Bible (1987), and the King James Version (1769). My literature sources predominantly consisted of academic publications, but also included some non-academic publications. The exegetical study was done in accordance to Gorman (2001). I gave attention to all three groups of exegetical methods, i.e. the synchronic approach, the diachronic approach, and the existential approach. As part of the synchronic approach, I gave special attention to the following methods. ‘Literary Criticism’ was used to identify aspects like form, genre, texture, etc, in the Genesis 1 and 2 creation accounts. ‘Narrative Criticism’ was used to analyse the narrative components of the Genesis 1 and 2 creation accounts. ‘Rhetorical Criticism’ was used to understand the structures and devices used within the text used for effective communication. ‘Social-Scientific Criticism’ was used to gain understanding into the social surroundings of the ancient Near Eastern world and what effect it might have had on the text.

As part of the diachronic approach, I gave special attention to the following methods. Historical linguistics was used to gain understanding regarding the original use and intent of certain key words within the text. ‘Form Criticism’ was used to gain insight on the use of oral traditions within the text. ‘Source Criticism’ was used to help me identify whether there were any other sources the author made use of in the text. ‘Historical Criticism’ was used to identify any historical events that took place around the time the text was written and what effect it might have had on the text. As part of the existential approach, I gave special attention to ‘Canonical Criticism’, which was used to analyse the context of the smaller sections of text in regards to the Bible as a whole.

### **6.4. Chapter division**

This study was divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 focused on introducing the background, relevance, aims and objectives, methodology and hypothesis of the study which followed. As the study has its primary focus in the Old Testament, the first part of chapter 2 was used to provide and oversight on the Pentateuch research

history. The latter part of chapter 2 zoomed in on Genesis 1-11, presenting different opinions as to authorship, genre and structure.

Chapter 3 was the first of two chapters that focused on the exegetical analysis of the biblical text. The first selection of text, found in Genesis 1:1-2:4a dealt with the first creation account, which presents a more holistic or cosmic approach to creation. The account was written from an external or perhaps the Creators perspective with all of creation as the subject. Chapter 4 was the second chapter that focussed on an exegetical analysis of Genesis 2:4b-25. The section dealt with the second creation account, or Garden Narrative, which rather focuses on the events within the garden, than the whole cosmos. The Garden Narrative provides a much more human view on creation than the first account, where man now becomes the partner with the Creator.

Chapter 5 began by summarising the analysis of chapters 3 and 4. Special attention was given to the aspect of time and how it should be understood from the Genesis 1-2 accounts. Following the summary, I presented my findings to the five primary selected creation time views. In conclusion to the chapter I engaged in a simplistic conversation with the four selected natural and biological scientific fields of Cosmology, Genetics, Geology and Paleontology. In Chapter 6 I began by reflecting on the aims and objectives set out in this study and whether they have been met. The chapter and the study as a whole conclude with my final results as well as presenting my final hypothesis.

## **6.5. Results**

I noted many of my conclusions in chapter 5 sections 5.1.1. and 5.1.2. prior to engaging my discourse with the natural and biological scientific fields. I will therefore refrain from going into the detail of these discussions, consequently only highlighting the most relevant aspects.

As far as I am concerned, ancient Israel understood their history and the Scriptures to be truthfully accurate, unlike many of the surrounding ancient Near Eastern nations, as the Israelites frequently meditated on and referred to it. I agree with Von Rad (1972:65) who stated that “One cannot marvel enough at the power which made it

possible for Israel to break away from this world of ideas and speak about the relationship of God to the world in quite a different way.”

As mentioned in the previous chapter, I would place Genesis 1 and 2 in a category of its own being saga-narrative in the mytho-historical genre. Whichever way one wants to draw this conclusion pertaining to genre, ancient Israel understood the text as having a literal meaning which they took at face value. Ham (2004:171) noted that if the text does not mean what it says; then neither will the reader then know what it means. I would therefore highlight Fox’s (1991:148-149) view that the major problem with critical scholarship is their general unwillingness to take the text at face value. If Fox were indeed correct in making such a claim, it would be impossible for me to identify with the thinking or the line of arguments posed by critical scholars. Rather, there is a much greater logical conclusion to be found in Walton’s statement that:

“We are not trying to read anything into the text nor are we trying to squeeze something out of the text. We are not trying to sidestep the text or to avoid what it makes obvious. We are not trying to subordinate the text to our own agenda or purpose, nor are we trying to co-opt it for our theology or make it answer our questions. We are simply trying to understand the text in the way the author wanted it to be understood by his audience.”

(Walton 2001:44)

Part of the study was intended to ‘justify’ a meaningful conversation between the natural and biological sciences and Scripture. I am satisfied that such a conversation can and has been achieved (though it might only have been a very short and introductory one.) Speiser (1990:11) indicated that in ancient time science often blended into religion. It is for this reason that I would argue in favour of divine inspiration when the author penned this religious account. Though the focus might not have been one of creating a scientific thesis, the science contained therein is no less accurate than the history as contained in any other part of the Bible.

I fully concur with Faid’s (1990:81) conclusion regarding “science and religion” when he stated, “Any time that a conflict exists between scientists and theologians,

either the theologian does not have the proper interpretation of the Scripture, or the scientist does not have his facts straight.” Eveson (2003:14) agreed when he concluded that the statements made in Genesis and the facts of nature must be in absolute harmony. Strobel (2004:291) added that, “the universe is governed by both physical laws and spiritual laws.” Accordingly, the physical laws, which natural and biological sciences highlight, should direct us towards the Creator; whereas the spiritual laws, as found in Scripture, should point us towards a relationship with God.

Garrett (1991:240-241) provided an honest conclusion to his work when he said that neither he, nor any other person, could fully understand the origin of the text. To this he adds two further conclusions. Firstly, he was convinced that there was divine inspiration in the authoring and construction of the text. This inspiration began since the first oral tradition (most probably since Adam and Eve), found a climax in Moses as one of the key figures who compiled most of these stories, but also concluded with later ‘enhancing editors’ who would have been men of authority. Once again he highlighted that if there were a possibility for any editors or redactors, this would only have served to enhance and update the Scriptures; never to bring about any changes to its content. Walton (2001:19) agreed when he noted that we cannot be content by simply considering Genesis as mere human work.

Secondly, Garrett (1991:240-241) concluded that from the perspective of ‘Canonical Criticism’ one must understand that as we have the book Genesis today, it still carries exactly the same authority as it originally did during the Mosaic era. The mere argument that Scripture changed over time would mean that certain copies are more authoritative than others. This I cannot accept as I am convinced that divine authorship would have prevented this.

Following my exegetical analysis conducted in chapters 3 and 4 combined with the natural and biological scientific data contained in chapter 5, I came to the same conclusion as Eveson (2003:24) when he stated that the whole creation is an extraordinary purposeful act. I also concur with Ashton & Westacott (2006:37) when they concluded that any honest intellect must consider the possibility of a Creator God, at least as reasonable as the atheistic alternatives.

McIntosh (2001:144) reflected on the limited understanding, mostly based on interpretations and assumptions, which many scientists like Dawkins have demonstrated. In Dawkins' books *The Blind Watchmaker* (1996 [1986]) and *The Selfish Gene* (2006 [1976]) he tries to discredit the teleological argument, which implies that a design calls for a designer. How sad it is that an accomplished scientist could have such a limited view of reality cascading in a purposeless existence<sup>80</sup>. On the opposite end, we find scholars like Eveson (2003:28) who noted that God could have done His creation work in any number of ways. God however decided to take His time in doing this work; this is also the way He has chosen to interact with humanity.

Copan & Craig (2005:14) reflected on the work done by Torrance, in which they agreed that the universe was created out of nothing. God spoke and from His word came forth exactly what he intended. Copan & Craig (2005:16) continued by referencing Jenson regarding the ramifications of *ex nihilo*. Firstly, that there is indeed a reality other than God. Secondly, that this other than God reality is entirely dependent on His will. Thirdly, that both the above-mentioned statements hold to be true in the present tense, consequently the world would not be if God did not will it. Fourthly, that this other than God reality has a specific beginning.

## 6.6. Hypothesis and conclusion

Accordingly my hypothesis, as stated in chapter 1, articulate that:

“My hypothesis was developed in reflection on the different aspects relating to time, as found in the biblical creation accounts. Consequently it articulates that the author of the Genesis 1 and 2 creation narratives did not intend to write a scientific account, but rather a historical reference to a covenant people found within a foreign environment. This however does not imply a non-factual or fictional description of God's creative processes. On the contrary, though the author had no knowledge regarding modern scientific discovery, his intention in the accounts was to convey the idea that the entire universe and everything within it, was created relatively recent and that all of creation took place in six

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<sup>80</sup> See Ashton & Westacott (2006:9-10) for the reasoning behind a purposeless existence.

literal 24-hour earth days. Modern science on the other hand would generally dictate a vastly older universe, evolving over much greater time periods.

Subsequently one is faced with three options, a Creator who created over a short period of time, relatively recent; naturalistic evolution taking place over vast amounts of time; and a unified theory where combinations of different elements from both the other two options are added together. From a biblical perspective, I postulate that author left no space for the latter two options, as he exclusively promoted the concept of a Creator who created over a short period of time, relatively recent.”

Following this study I am satisfied with the hypothesis’s postulation regarding the author’s perspective in writing the accounts. Whether or not one would agree with such a conclusion from a modern scientific viewpoint is yet an open question. Young Earth Creationists, Old Earth Creationists, as well as Evolutionary models were introduced in this study, and acknowledgement needs to be given to certain aspects within all of them. At the conclusion of this dissertation, I am encouraged to continue this study in greater depth; for both biblical exegeses as well as other natural and biological scientific fields have much to reveal. As a result of the study, I am currently favouring the Young Earth Creationists model above the other two options. Ashton & Westacott (2006:36) summarise, “Of course, there is no way of scientifically testing any of these ideas.... If anything, this illustrates the desperate measures that many people take to avoid the consequences of design in the world.”

Though the conclusion to my hypothesis may seem foreign to modern scholarship, Bowden (2005:297) referred to the USA opinion poles since 1991 during which three ‘origin’ options were given. The first opted for God who created humans, more or less as we see each other today in less than 10,000 years (the Young Earth Creation view). The second stated that God drove the evolutionary process to bring forth humans over millions of years (the Old Earth Creationist view.) The third option was that man simply came about as a product of the evolutionary process (the Evolutionist view). Research indicated that more than 50% of the general population chose the first option, with less than 10% the third. In reflection of these statistics it is satisfactory to know that this study has contributed to the view which more than half

of the population in the United States hold; that of a Creator God who created everything in a relative recent time.

I agree with Boice (1982:43) when he concluded that the theory of Evolution will always stay popular, for it is the only alternative to Creationism; either there was a Creator, or the universe brought itself into being. Consequently there will always be those who so desire to undermine the Creator and His creative works; rather exalting man as the climax of all existence.

## APPENDIX A

### DERIVATIVE MODELS OF EVOLUTIONARY ORIGIN

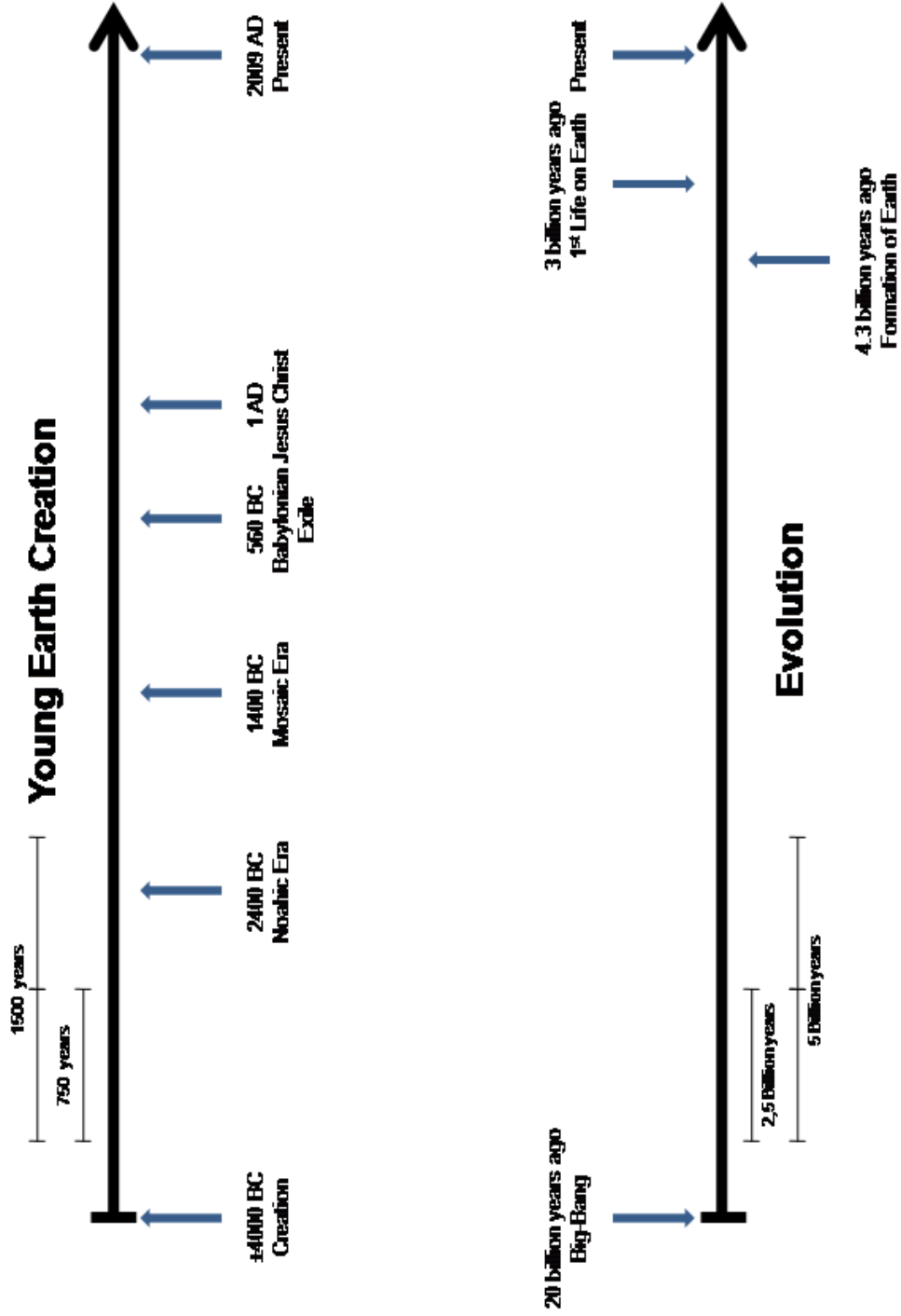
Many other derivative models of evolutionary origin soon followed the Big-Bang model and the Steady-State theory. I will therefore provide a short description on some of these.

1. A first derivative postulated that there might in fact not only be one universe, but numerous multi-verses, all contracting and expanding at different times. In this view there are many variants which postulate everything from absolute synchronisation between all the multi-verses to total independence where even natural physical laws will differ. These theories also hold that some of these multi-verses will be conducive to life, while others will not produce or sustain it (Ashton & Westacott 2006:35).
2. The plasma universe theory postulates that the universe is eternal, but subdivided into an infinite number of smaller regions which contracts and expands on their own (Ashton & Westacott 2006:35).
3. The Oscillating model holds that every expansion is preceded by consecutive small contractions, making the universe therefore beginning and endless (Copan & Craig 2005:226-229; Ferrell 2001:96).
4. The Vacuum Fluctuation model tables numerous fluctuations within the larger universe giving rise to new smaller universes. The bigger universe could therefore potentially be eternal and our understanding of beginning is only related to our small universe within a much larger one (Copan & Craig 2005:229-231).
5. According to the Chaotic Inflationary model, the wider universe was produced via inflations in separate domains that continue to recede from one another as the wider space expands (Copan & Craig 2005: 232-233).
6. The Inflationary Universe theory postulates that the universe and everything in it began as a single infinitesimal particle, though no-one could figure out where the particle came from (Ferrell 2001:97).
7. The Quantum Gravity model speculates that space-time can be rounded off prior to the Planck time, so that although the past is finite, there is no edge or begging point (Copan & Craig 2005:233-238).

8. The Ekpyrotic model (Copan & Craig 2005:238-240).
9. The Big-Bang model itself gave rise to numerous other hypotheses. They include everything from one big original bang to an infinite chain of Big-Bangs. The latter proposed that the universe begun with a Big-Bang, and then expanded followed by contraction and finally total collapse or a big crunch, in which case it just set up the motion for the next Big-Bang. It also postulated that all physical laws are reshuffled during such “in between” state (Ashton & Westacott 2006:35).



## Appendix B – Young Earth Creation vs. Evolution timeline chart



## Appendix C

### Longevity summary from Adam to Moses

Following the genealogical accounts in the book of Genesis, oral traditions could have been passed on as follows:

Generation	Father	Son	Age at birth	Age after birth	Age at death	Ref
1	Adam	Seth	130	800	930	Gn 5:3-5
2	Seth	Enos	105	807	912	Gn 5:6-8
3	Enos	Cainan	90	815	905	Gn 5:9-11
4	Cainan	Mahalaleel	70	840	910	Gn 5:12-14
5	Mahalaleel	Jared	65	830	895	Gn 5:15-17
6	Jared	Enoch	162	800	962	Gn 5:18-20
7	Enoch	Methuselah	65	300	365	Gn 5:21-23
8	Methuselah	Lamech	187	782	969	Gn 5:25-27
9	Lamech	Noah	182	595	777	Gn 5:28-31
10	Noah	Shem	502	448	950	Gn 5:32; 9:28-29
11	Shem	Arphaxad	100	500	600	Gn 11:10-11
12	Arphaxad	Salah	35	403	438	Gn 11:12-13
13	Salah	Eber	30	403	433	Gn 11:14-15
14	Eber	Peleg	34	430	464	Gn 11:16-17
15	Peleg	Reu	30	209	239	Gn 11:18-19
16	Reu	Serug	32	207	239	Gn 11:20-21
17	Serug	Nahor	30	200	230	Gn 11:22-23
18	Nahor	Terah	29	199	148	Gn 11:24-25
19	Terah	Abraham	70	135	205	Gn 11:26-32
20	Abraham	Isaac	100	75	175	Gn 21:5; 25:7
21	Isaac	Jacob	60	120	180	Gn 25:26; 35:28
22	Jacob	Joseph	?	?	147	Gn 47:28
23	Joseph				110	Gn 50:22

Summarising the generational links, it seems evident that Adam could have known Noah, who could have known Peleg, who could have known Abraham, who could

have known Jacob, who could have known the children of Joseph. Consequently only six people were necessary for the oral tradition to reach Joseph from Adam. Unfortunately, the genealogies from Joseph onwards do not provide us with the same level of information as found between Adam and Joseph. Luke 3:33 stated that Joseph's brother Judah had a son Perez, who had a son Hezron, who had a son, Ram who had a son Amminadab. Additionally, Exodus 6:23 stated that Aaron, Moses' brother, married Amminadab's daughter. Moses could therefore have known Amminadab in person. One could assume that another two to three generations were needed if grandson received the tradition from grandfather. I would therefore argue that the total number of people needed to have carried the oral tradition of the creation accounts, from Adam to Moses, were between nine to ten.

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