

## A CRITIQUE OF THE FRAMEWORK INTERPRETATION OF THE CREATION WEEK

Presented at the Evangelical Theological Society

19 November 2008, Providence, RI

Robert V. McCabe, Th.D.

Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary

4801 Allen Road

Allen Park, MI 48101

rmccabe@dbts.edu

Until the rise of modern geology, the prevailing interpretation of the creation account was that it was a sequential record of God's creative activity in six literal days.<sup>1</sup> However, over the last couple of centuries various nonliteral interpretations of the creation account have risen. One of these interpretations is the framework interpretation. This view affirms that the creation "week" itself is a literary structure.<sup>2</sup> According to the framework theory, Genesis 1, therefore, does not address and provide any information to establish the age of the earth, though a result of this scheme is that it allows for the demands of modern science that the earth is 4 to 5 billion years old. This understanding of the creation account was initially set forth in 1924 by Professor Arie Noordzij of the University of Utrecht.<sup>3</sup> While Noordzij's framework view did not initially gather many adherents, it acquired more prominence through N. H. Ridderbos's book, *Is There a Conflict Between Genesis 1 and Natural Science?*<sup>4</sup> However, the current popularity of this interpretation is largely a result of the work of Reformed scholar Meredith G. Kline.<sup>5</sup> His initial entry was an article in 1958, "Because It Had Not Rained."<sup>6</sup> Since Kline's initial article, other reputable Christian scholars have attempted to provide defenses of the framework interpretation.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the framework interpretation.

---

<sup>1</sup>J. Ligon Duncan III and David W. Hall, "The 24-Hour View," in *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian (Mission Viejo, CA: Crux Press, 2001), p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>This paper is adapted from a chapter that I have in the forthcoming book *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books).

<sup>3</sup>For a summary and critique of Noordzij's 1924 work, *God's Word en der Eeuwen Getuigenis*, see Edward J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1964), pp. 43–105.

<sup>4</sup>Trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957).

<sup>5</sup>"Space and Time in the Genesis Cosmogony," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 48 (March 1996): 2.

<sup>6</sup>*Westminster Theological Journal* 20 (May 1958): 145–57. See also Kline's subsequent article, "Space and Time," pp. 2–15.

<sup>7</sup>In this paper, I use Kline's view of the framework interpretation as the basis for my critique. It should be noted, however, that not all framework advocates would use all three of these arguments that I outline in this paper. More precisely, some framework advocates use Gen 2:5 to support the creation week being controlled by ordinary providence, while others do not. The chief advocate using Gen 2:5 to support the framework has been Meredith G. Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," pp. 145–57. Others who follow Kline include: Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning*, trans. David G. Preston (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984), pp. 53, 56; Mark D. Futato, "Because It Had Rained: A Study of Gen 2:5–7 with Implications for Gen 2:4–25 and Gen 1:1–2:3," *Westminster Theological Journal* 60 (Spring 1998): 2–10, 13–17; Mark Ross, "The Framework Hypothesis: An Interpretation of Genesis 1:1–2:3," in *Did God Create in Six Days?* ed. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., and David W. Hall (Taylors, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999), pp. 122–28; Lee Irons with Meredith G. Kline, "The Framework View," in *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian (Mission Viejo, CA: Crux Press, 2001), p. 230; W. Robert Godfrey, *God's Pattern for Creation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2003), pp. 52–53.

However, other framework interpreters do not use Gen 2:5 to support their interpretation of the literary framework in Gen 1:1–2:3. See Mark A. Throntveit, "Are the Events in the Genesis Creation Account Set Forth in Chronological Order? No," in *The Genesis Debate: Persistent Questions About Creation and the Flood*, ed. Ronald

In essence, the framework view asserts that the creation “week” of Genesis 1:1–2:3 is a literary framework intended to present God’s creative activity in a topical, non-sequential manner, rather than a literal, sequential one. The framework theory is supported by three major arguments. First, the literary nature of the creation account demonstrates that it is topically arranged rather than chronologically. Second, ordinary providence governed the creation account. Third, the unending nature of the seventh day indicates that the six days of the creation week are not normal days. These three theses provide an appropriate structure to evaluate the framework view.<sup>8</sup>

### ***THE LITERARY NATURE OF THE CREATION ACCOUNT***

The framework interpretation argues that God used the imagery of an ordinary week to serve as a rhetorical structure for God’s acts of creation.<sup>9</sup> I will initially provide an explanation of this argument followed by an evaluation of it.

#### **EXPLANATION**

According to Kline, “Exegesis indicates that the scheme of the creation week itself is a poetic figure and that the several pictures of creation history are set within the six work-day frames not chronologically but topically.”<sup>10</sup> To gain a more complete picture of this argument, the “six work-day frames,” the creation account’s topical arrangement, and its arrangement as a “poetic figure” require a more detailed analysis.

#### **Six Workday Frames**

The overall literary structure used in the creation account is a scheme of “six work-day frames,” with each day of work in Genesis 1 serving as a picture frame. Each day of the creation “week” is introduced by a divine announcement, *wayyō’mer ’ēlōhîm* (“God said,” Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24). In addition, *wayyō’mer ’ēlōhîm* is used twice on two different days: the third day (Gen 1:9, 11) and the sixth (1:24, 26). According to the framework position, these eight uses of *wayyō’mer ’ēlōhîm* provide a structure for each day of the creation account,<sup>11</sup> and it is from these eight uses that framework supporters assert that there are eight creative events.<sup>12</sup> Within each frame, the author of Genesis either gives one snapshot of God’s creative work, such as is

Youngblood (Nashville: Nelson, 1986), pp. 36–55; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), pp. 19, 39–40; Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), pp. 53–56; Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), pp. 24–33; Bruce K. Waltke with Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), pp. 56–58, 73–78; and R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, Preach the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), pp. 24–27.

<sup>8</sup>A fourth thesis is Kline’s two-register cosmology. In a 1996 paper, Kline proposed this thesis as additional support for the framework. This argument provides a rationale explaining why the time indicators in Genesis 1:1–2:3 are non-sequential (“Space and Time,” pp. 2–15). In a 2001 paper, Irons and Kline more fully develop this argument (“Framework View,” pp. 236–52). For an evaluation of this thesis, see my “Critique of the Framework Interpretation of the Creation Account (Part 2),” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 11 (2006): 116–30.

<sup>9</sup>Kline, “Because It Had Not Rained,” p. 157.

<sup>10</sup>“Genesis,” in *New Bible Commentary*, ed. D. Guthrie and J. A. Motyer, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), p. 82; see also Ross, “Framework Hypothesis,” p. 114.

<sup>11</sup>Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 56.

<sup>12</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 227–28; Hamilton, *Genesis*, p. 119; Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 56; Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, pp. 6–7.

reflected by the fiat-fulfillment expressions (Gen 1:3, fiat: “Let there be light”; fulfillment: “and there was light”), on the first day, second, fourth and fifth, or he gives two snapshots on each of the remaining days, the third day and the sixth. When the six workday frames are viewed as a whole, the eight creation events are symmetrically divided into two parallel units of three days, with Day 1 corresponding to Day 4, Day 2 to 5, and Day 3 to 6. Thus, the first three days form a unit of four creative activities that are paralleled by the last three days with the same number of creative events, with the concluding day in each triad, Days 3 and 6, presenting two snapshots of creation. The first triad has been classified as “creation kingdoms” (the creation of empty and undeveloped mass and space) and the second as “creature kings” (things created to develop and fill what was created in the first triad).<sup>13</sup> The intent of both triads is for literary and theological purposes, rather than chronological. As such, the literary parallels of the two triads are subordinate to the seventh day that is set up as a Sabbath rest of the “Creator King.”<sup>14</sup> The following chart reflects the framework’s view of the symmetrical design of the creation “week.”

<b>Creation kingdoms</b>		<b>Creature kings</b>	
Day 1	Light	Day 4	Luminaries
Day 2	Firmament: sky & seas	Day 5	Inhabitants: sea & winged creatures
Day 3	Dry land Vegetation	Day 6	Land animals Man
<b>The Creator King</b>			
Day 7		Sabbath <sup>15</sup>	

As this chart shows, the structural arrangement of both triads indicates that the literary arrangement of the creation account was not to establish a chronological sequence, but to have a literary structure of creative activities that “culminates in the Sabbath.”<sup>16</sup>

### A Topical Arrangement

This structure reflects the contention of framework defenders that the creation account was written topically. To demonstrate that the creation week is a topical account, the author of Genesis has supposedly placed some obvious inconsistencies into the early chapters of Genesis. Framework advocates note that an obvious example of an intentional inconsistency relates to God’s creation of light. On the first day of creation, God created light, yet the source of light is not created until the fourth day.<sup>17</sup> This may imply that Day 1 and Day 4 describe the same creative activity. On Day 1, the creation of light is briefly described; however, on Day 4, the creation of light is described in detail. According to the framework view, the creation of light on Day 4 serves as an example of temporal recapitulation.<sup>18</sup> This type of inconsistency, an example of dischronologization, indicates that the creation week is topically arranged.

<sup>13</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 224.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 224–25.

<sup>15</sup>This is a common chart used by many framework defenders. The above chart is taken from Throntveit, “Chronological Order,” p. 46.

<sup>16</sup>Ridderbos, *Genesis 1 and Natural Science*, p. 32.

<sup>17</sup>Ross, “Framework Hypothesis,” p. 120; and Godfrey, *God’s Pattern*, pp. 40–41.

<sup>18</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 229–30.

### **An Artistic Narrative**

The symmetrical structure and topical arrangement of the creation narrative implies that it is not a normal historical narrative, but one that involves a highly artistic style,<sup>19</sup> or a “semi-poetic style.”<sup>20</sup> In keeping with its supposed semi-poetic texture, framework defenders interpret the temporal markers, the days and the “evening and morning” expressions, as metaphors to describe heavenly time, and not earthly literal time.<sup>21</sup> Framework advocates agree that this type of rhetorical feature is supportive of a topical account of creation, rather than a chronological one. In addition, the symmetrical nature of the creation “week” is reflected by its arrangement into six units of days, “panels,”<sup>22</sup> with each panel following a typical progression, such as “God saw,” “there was,” and God’s evaluation of the cited creative activity as “good.” Each panel is concluded with a chronological refrain: “And there was evening and there was morning, one day,” etc.<sup>23</sup> The precise use of numbers, rather than showing a sequence of days, “attests to God’s logical and timely shaping of creation.”<sup>24</sup> When the creation account’s topical arrangement and its symmetrical nature are linked with the use of metaphors or anthropomorphisms for heavenly time, framework proponents conclude that the creation narrative is not normal historical narrative, but reflects a highly stylized use of narrative.<sup>25</sup> The framework view’s interpretation of the symmetrical nature and topical arrangement of the creation account results in minimizing the substance of this account as genuine history. In sum, this thesis of the framework view argues that an inherent fabric of Genesis 1:1–2:3 is something of a hymnic use of narrative, a semi-poetic account, that, in its design of presenting a theology of the Sabbath, uses the figurative framework of a “week” to topically arrange certain creation motifs.<sup>26</sup>

### **EVALUATION**

In evaluating these three features of the framework that reputedly support interpreting the creation account as using the structure of a week as only a literary device, my critique will start by demonstrating that the creation account is a genuine historical narrative as opposed to an artistic account that undermines a sequential understanding of Genesis 1:1–2:3.<sup>27</sup>

#### **Genuine Sequential Narrative**

While there may be some debate about the extent of the creation account’s artistic nature, it is an incontrovertible fact that it is not a poetic text.<sup>28</sup> In addition to Genesis 1:1–2:3 not

<sup>19</sup>Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 50.

<sup>20</sup>Kline, “Because It Had Not Rained,” p. 156.

<sup>21</sup>Some framework advocates refer to the time markers of the creation narrative as metaphors (so Irons and Kline [“Framework View,” p. 240]; and Ross [“Framework Hypothesis,” p. 120]). Others refer to them as anthropomorphic expressions (so Ridderbos [*Genesis 1 and Natural Science*, p. 30]; Blocher [*In the Beginning*, p. 57]; and Waltke [*Genesis*, p. 77]).

<sup>22</sup>Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 56.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 57; Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

<sup>24</sup>Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 57.

<sup>25</sup>Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 52.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>27</sup>For an insightful statistical and literary defense of the genre of Gen 1:1–2:3 as genuine historical narrative, see Steven W. Boyd, “The Genre of Genesis 1:1–2:3: What Means This Text?” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), pp. 163–92.

<sup>28</sup>Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., “The Literary Form in Genesis 1–11,” in *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, ed. J. Barton Payne (Waco, TX: Word, 1970), pp. 59–60; and Gerhard F. Hasel, “The ‘Days’ of Creation in Genesis 1,” *Origins* 21 (1994): 19–21. Framework advocates also recognize this point. For example, see Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 32, and Hughes, *Genesis*, p. 26.

exhibiting linear parallelism as would be the case in a poetic text, it is permeated with a grammatical device that sets it apart as an unambiguous narrative account: the *waw* consecutive. Though the *waw* consecutive may appear in poetic literature, it is not a defining characteristic of Hebrew poetry.<sup>29</sup> However, it is a significant component of Hebrew historical narrative and generally provides an element of sequence to past time narrative.<sup>30</sup> *Waw* consecutives, according to Pratico and Van Pelt, “are used primarily in narrative sequence to denote consecutive actions, that is, actions occurring in sequence.”<sup>31</sup> For example, in the book of Genesis the *waw* consecutive is used 2,107 times, with an average distribution of approximately 42 uses per chapter. In Genesis 2:4–25 the *waw* consecutive is used 21 times in 22 verses; and in 3:1–24 it is used 34 times. However, in a chapter that is poetic, Genesis 49:2–33, the *waw* consecutive appears only 15 times in 31 verses. But, in the chapter preceding Genesis 49, 48:1–18, the *waw* consecutive is used 36 times, and, in the chapter that follows it, 50:1–23, the *waw* consecutive appears 41 times.<sup>32</sup>

The use of *waw* consecutive to communicate sequential, past tense material is the expected style for a historical book like Genesis. If the author of Genesis wanted to preserve past tense, sequential material, we would expect his literary style to include a consistent use of the *waw* consecutive. What is germane to this argument is that the *waw* consecutive appears 55 times in the thirty-four verses found in Genesis 1:1–2:3. Thus, the use of the *waw* consecutive in the prologue to the historical narrative of Genesis, Genesis 1:1–2:3, is consistent with the narrative material found in the remainder of Genesis. If Moses did not intend the creation account to be taken sequentially, then why did he so frequently use a grammatical form that is regularly used for sequence?<sup>33</sup> My argument is not that *waw* consecutive always denotes sequence, for, within a narrative sequence, it may occasionally represent non-sequential action, such as a pluperfect (action that is anterior to the mainline narrative) or a consequence; however, it is evident that *waw* consecutive is predominantly used sequentially with a preterite in narrative literature.<sup>34</sup> Such is the case in Genesis 1:1–2:3. After vv. 1–2,<sup>35</sup> the mainline narrative of the creation

---

<sup>29</sup>Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 2 vols., trans. and rev. T. Muraoka (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1993), 2:390, sec. 118c.

<sup>30</sup>Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 84, sec. 3.5.1.

<sup>31</sup>*Basics of Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), p. 192. In this paper I use the expression *waw* consecutive as a simplified expression to refer to a specialized form of the Hebrew conjunction *waw* that is prefixed to an imperfect form, a derivative of the archaic preterite. As far as actual Biblical Hebrew grammar is concerned, there are actually two types of *waw* consecutives: *waw* consecutive prefixed to an imperfect/preterite form and *waw* consecutive prefixed to a perfect form. The most common of these two forms is the first kind, *waw* consecutive plus the imperfect/preterite (this is also referred to as *waw* conversive, *waw* inversive, relative *waw*). This type of *waw* consecutive is generally used in narration connected with past time. The second type of *waw* consecutive is joined to the perfect aspect. This may be used in reference to future time (for a brief discussion of these two forms, see Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* [New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971], pp. 107–9). In addition, *waw* consecutive plus the perfect also commonly carries over a temporal situation presented in a preceding verb (see Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990], pp. 502–4).

<sup>32</sup>I have derived these statistics about the uses of *waw* consecutive from Accordance 7.03 (OakTree Software, 2006), available at [www.oaksoft.com](http://www.oaksoft.com).

<sup>33</sup>John D. Currid, *A Study Commentary on Genesis, Volume 1: Genesis 1:1–25:18* (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2003), p. 39.

<sup>34</sup>See Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, pp. 84–85, sec. 3.5.1.

<sup>35</sup>When Gen 1:1 states that God created “the heavens and the earth,” this refers to God’s first creative act that initiates the space and time continuum in the created realm. Both the heavens and earth were created in totality, but incomplete. The heavens were dark and void of any heavenly objects and the earth was an unformed and empty, water-covered sphere surrounded by the darkness of the heavens (v. 2). The narrative sequence of Gen 1:3–31

account is carried along by the *waw* consecutive, just as the *waw* consecutive is consistently used in the book of Genesis.

However, if the *waw* consecutive may also be translated as a pluperfect, does this not imply that a few of the 55 the *waw* consecutives in Genesis 1:1–2:3 may involve temporal recapitulation, just as framework supporters contend occurred on the fourth day (Gen 1:14–19)?<sup>36</sup> Though *waw* consecutive in some contexts may allow for temporal recapitulation, its use as the mainline sequence advances the divine creative activities of Genesis 1:1–2:3, and more specifically, this sequential advancement calls into question the framework’s interpretation of Day 4 as an example of temporal recapitulation.<sup>37</sup> To demonstrate that the mainline narrative is advanced by the sequential use of the majority of the 55 *waw* consecutives, I have provided the following chart to illustrate the sequential nature of Genesis 1:1–2:3. To portray this point, I have taken the liberty of modifying the NASB’s translation of the *waw* consecutives. While the *waw* consecutive is unmistakably identifiable in a Hebrew text, the same is not true in an English version. Rather than providing a functional translation, the purpose of my chart is to illustrate some basic information about the *waw* consecutive and how each of the 55 uses fits into three subcategories. In identifying the 55 uses of *waw* consecutive, I have supplied an italicized “then” with the 46 constructions containing a sequentially arranged *waw* consecutive (abbreviated in the chart as Sequential WC), an em dash (“—”) for the 8 epexegetical uses (abbreviated Epexegetical WC) and an italicized “thus” for the only example of a consequential use (abbreviated Consequential WC).

Day	Verse	Sequential WC	Epexegetical WC	Consequential WC
1	1:3	<i>then</i> God said		
		<i>then</i> there was light		
	4	<i>then</i> God saw		
		<i>then</i> God separated		
	5	<i>then</i> God called		
2		<i>then</i> there was evening		
		<i>then</i> there was morning,		
		the first day		
	6	<i>then</i> God said		
	7	<i>then</i> God made		
3		<i>then</i> [God] separated the waters		
		<i>then</i> it was so		
	8	<i>then</i> God called		
		<i>then</i> there was evening		
		<i>then</i> there was morning,		
	the second day			
4	9	<i>then</i> God said		
		<i>then</i> it was so		
	10	<i>then</i> God called		
	11	<i>then</i> God saw		
	12	<i>then</i> God said		
			—the earth brought forth	
4	13	<i>then</i> God saw		
		<i>then</i> there was evening		
		<i>then</i> there was morning,		
		the third day		
	14	<i>then</i> God said		
15	<i>then</i> it was so			
16			—God made	
17			—God placed	
18	<i>then</i> God saw			

describes how God formed and filled the heavens and earth of vv. 1–2.

<sup>36</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 221–24, 228–30.

<sup>37</sup>See Charles V. Taylor, “Syntax and Semantics in Genesis One,” *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 11 (1997): 183–86.

Day	Verse	Sequential WC	Epexegetical WC	Consequential WC
	19	<i>then</i> there was evening <i>then</i> there was morning, the fourth day		
5	20	<i>then</i> God said		
	21	<i>then</i> God created		
	22	<i>then</i> God saw		
	23	<i>then</i> God blessed <i>then</i> there was evening <i>then</i> there was morning, the fifth day		
6	24	<i>then</i> God said <i>then</i> it was so		
	25		—God made	
	26	<i>then</i> God saw		
	27	<i>then</i> God said		
	28	<i>then</i> God created <i>then</i> God blessed		
	29	<i>then</i> God said	—God said	
	30	<i>then</i> it was so		
	31	<i>then</i> God saw <i>then</i> there was evening <i>then</i> there was morning, the sixth day		
7	2:1			<i>thus</i> the heavens & the earth were completed
	2		—God completed —He rested	
	3	<i>then</i> God blessed	—God sanctified	

### Observations About *Waw* Consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3

As related to Genesis 1:1–2:3, some observations about the various uses of *waw* consecutive are necessary. First, the mainline narrative does not begin until v. 3. This indicates that the first creative activity of vv. 1–2 which initiates the space and time continuum provide an informing background for the development of the narrative line in Genesis 1:3–2:3. What this further suggests for an exegetical treatment of this text is that the historical narrative in the remainder of the account explains how an unformed and empty earth, as well as the heavens in v. 1, was purposefully and progressively formed and filled.<sup>38</sup> Second, since the seventh day does not advance the sequence of creative activities, the *waw* consecutive that begins 2:1 summarizes and draws a consequence from Genesis 1. Third, we should not be surprised that there is only one sequential use of *waw* consecutive on the seventh day. After the text’s announcement that God ceased from his creative work, the sequence that follows is the pronouncement of God’s blessing on the seventh day. Fourth, the mainline narrative of the creation account is advanced by the 46 sequential uses of *waw* consecutive. Whatever else the many uses of this type of *waw* consecutive may reflect, we are dealing with historical narrative that is sequentially advanced. Thus, *waw* consecutive advances the mainline narrative of this account. Fifth, while the 8 epexegetical uses of *waw* consecutive may seemingly create a problem for a sequential understanding of the creation account, my understanding of the epexegetical use shows how this kind of *waw* consecutive is in harmony with a literal interpretation. This less commonly used subcategory of *waw* consecutive does not follow a preceding *waw* consecutive in either temporal or logical sequence; rather it provides an explanation of the preceding *waw* consecutive. With the epexegetical use of *waw* consecutive, “the major fact or situation is stated first, and then the

<sup>38</sup>See Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., “From Chaos to Cosmos: A Critique of the Non-Literal Interpretations of Genesis 1:1–2:3,” in *Did God Create in Six Days?* ed. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., and David W. Hall (Taylors, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999), pp. 188–89; and Duncan and Hall, “24-Hour View,” p. 28.

particulars or details, component or concomitant situations are filled in.”<sup>39</sup> For example, the first exegetical use of *waw* consecutive is found on Day 3 in v. 12: “The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind.” What should be noted is that the preceding verse contains 2 *waw* consecutives used sequentially: “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’; then it was so.” Initially we see in v. 11 the divine speech (“then God said”). This is followed by a divine fiat (“Let the earth sprout vegetation”) and the fulfillment of that fiat (“then it was so”). Verse 12 gives the particulars of that fulfillment, “then it was so,” and in so doing reiterates, with slight variation, what was indicated in the fiat of v. 11. The exegetical *waw* consecutives follow this pattern throughout the creation week. Because of the way framework advocates use the *waw* consecutives in vv. 16–17 and other *waw* consecutives on Day 4, we will look at these in greater detail.

### The Use of *Waw* Consecutive on Day 4

Seven *waw* consecutives are used to describe the activities of Day 4 in Genesis 1:14–19. More specifically, Irons and Kline use the two *waw* consecutives in vv. 16–17 to undermine a sequential understanding of any *waw* consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3.<sup>40</sup> Using these two exegetical *waw* consecutives in Genesis 1 to bolster the framework position, they argue that the activities of Day 4, represented by the seven uses of *waw* consecutive in vv. 14–19, are an example of dischronologization.<sup>41</sup> This implies that the first use of *waw* consecutive on Day 4, “then God said” (v. 14), is an example of temporal recapitulation, a pluperfect, that describes the same events as Day 1, but from a different perspective, as we have previously observed. This would also be true for the second use of *waw* consecutive on Day 4, “then it was so” (v. 15).<sup>42</sup> In answer to the framework, however else v. 14, as well as v. 15, may be understood, the *waw* consecutive that begins this verse, *wayyō’mer ’ēlōhîm* (“then God said”), is not an example of temporal recapitulation of Day 1.<sup>43</sup> If there is any consistency to the mainline narrative sequence, as reflected by *waw* consecutive, and especially with the number of consistent uses of *wayyō’mer ’ēlōhîm* (“then God said”), a pluperfect understanding of *wayyō’mer ’ēlōhîm*, “God had said” (in recapitulation of the first day), in v. 14 has no warrant in the mainline narrative sequence of this account. Verses 14–15 are part of the general structure that Moses uses for each day of creative activity: divine speech (“then God said,” v. 14), fiat (“Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth,” vv. 14–15), and fulfillment (“then it was so,” v. 15). Therefore, the *waw* consecutive in v. 14 is not an example of temporal recapitulation but is a normal, sequential use of *waw* consecutive.

In actuality, the two exegetical uses of *waw* consecutive in vv. 16–17 appear after two sequential *waw* consecutives in vv. 14–15 and make the most exegetical sense when taken as having a supportive role for the preceding sequential *waw* consecutives in vv. 14–15. In reference to the first *waw* consecutive used at the beginning of v. 16 (“—God made the two great

<sup>39</sup>Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 551, sec. 32.2.2a.

<sup>40</sup>Lee Irons with Meredith G. Kline, “The Framework Reply,” in *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian (Mission Viejo, CA: Crux Press, 2001), p. 283.

<sup>41</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 222; see also Futato, “Because It Had Rained,” p. 14.

<sup>42</sup>See Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 221.

<sup>43</sup>For a more complete discussion of the textual differences between Days 1 and 4, see my “Critique of the Framework Interpretation of the Creation Account (Part 1),” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 10 (2005): 37–47.



lights”), Irons and Kline insist that this *waw* consecutive cannot be used chronologically: “The *waw*-consecutive occurs in the very next verse: ‘And God made the two great lights’ (v. 16). If the *waw*-consecutive always denotes sequence, this statement would have to refer to an event chronologically subsequent to verses 14–15.”<sup>44</sup> On the one hand, I can agree with Irons and Kline’s point that *waw* consecutive is not always used sequentially and that there are several examples in the creation narrative that are clearly nonsequential. As reflected by the preceding chart, not all the *waw* consecutives in the creation account are used sequentially. My chart indicates that 46 of the 55 *waw* consecutives are used sequentially, 8 epexegetically, and 1 consequentially.

On the other hand, I disagree with Irons and Kline’s conclusion: “Therefore, students of the Bible cannot appeal to the presence of the *waw*-consecutive in Genesis 1 as evidence for a strictly sequential reading.”<sup>45</sup> Their conclusion is overstated. Why cannot students of the Bible appeal to the *waw* consecutive to defend a sequential reading? The 46 sequential uses of *waw* consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3 indicate that the mainline narrative is advanced by this sequential construction. While there are 9 exceptions to the general sequential pattern of *waw* consecutive, these exceptions do not negate the general function of this grammatical construction. In fact, the predominant sequential use of the *waw* consecutive in 46 examples suggests a chronological reading of the text.

Because the two *waw* consecutives in vv. 16–17 are epexegetical, vv. 16–17 give detail to the fulfillment in v. 15 (“*then* it was so”) by providing more specific data and suggesting the immediacy of the fulfillment of the fiat. In keeping with the fiat of vv. 14–15, the epexegetical uses of *waw* consecutive at the beginning of v. 16 (“God said”) and the beginning of v. 17 (“God placed them”) specify the content of vv. 14–15. Verse 16 identifies the “lights” of v. 14 as the sun, moon, and stars, and vv. 17–18 specifies that these luminaries are placed in “the expanse of the heaven” and reiterates their threefold function stated in vv. 14–15.<sup>46</sup> Rather than interpreting vv. 14–19 as a temporal recapitulation of Day 1, the general structural pattern of this creation day and the uses of *waw* consecutive reflect that Day 4 is a progression after Day 3, including two epexegetical uses of *waw* consecutive in vv. 16–17 that provide greater detail to the fiat and fulfillment sequence of vv. 14–15. While the many uses of *waw* consecutive demonstrate that the creation week is a literal account, do the repetitive elements work against a literal interpretation of Genesis 1:1–2:3, as the framework position argues?

### **Repetitive Elements and Narrative**

While the framework’s two triads of days do not convincingly treat the exegetical details of the narrative in Genesis 1:1–2:3, this does not mean that the creation narrative is not a stylized use of narrative. The author of Genesis used repetitive elements, such as “God said” (vv. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, 29), “let there be” or an equivalent jussive (vv. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26), “and there was” or “and it was so” (vv. 3, 7, 9, 11, 15, 24, 30) “and there was evening and there was morning” (vv. 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31),<sup>47</sup> to reflect a stylized use of Hebrew narrative. Framework supporters and recent creationists have some level of agreement that the text has a number of repetitive elements that demonstrate a stylized narrative.

---

<sup>44</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework Reply,” p. 283.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>The threefold function attributed to the luminaries appears to reflect a chiasmic arrangement between vv. 14–15 and vv. 17–18 (Currid, *Genesis*, p. 76).

<sup>47</sup>See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, p. 6.

Where framework proponents and their opponents diverge is how they interpret this stylized use of narrative. Kline qualifies his description of the creation account's literary style with this: "The semi-poetic style, however, should lead the exegete to anticipate the figurative strand in this genuinely historical record of the origins of the universe."<sup>48</sup> While calling the account a "genuinely historical record," Kline uses a "semi-poetic style" to find more "figurative" elements in this account than what are normally found in narrative material. In contrast, Duncan and Hall, while also recognizing that the creation account has a stylized nature, resolutely claim that it "is written with many other markers typical of literal historical accounts. Moreover, it is consistently taken as historical throughout Scripture."<sup>49</sup> Pipa qualifies his use of "exalted prose" by his insistence that Genesis 1 is written in the same historical style as the remainder of the book of Genesis.<sup>50</sup> From a hermeneutical perspective, the framework's "semi-poetic style," or whatever similar descriptive category one of its proponents uses, apparently provides framework interpreters a license to interpret key aspects of the text as literary features while at the same time undermining literal aspects of the text that are literally understood in other historical narratives. This approach by framework proponents, consequently, allows for an accommodation to an old earth model. From an opposite hermeneutical standpoint, young earth creationists interpret the text literally, just as they do the remainder of the historical material in the book of Genesis, while they recognize that this passage, by the use of repetitive textual details, is stylized.

More expressly, it seems clear that the attempt by framework advocates to find more elements that are simply literary devices in the creation account provides their justification for jettisoning a literal interpretation of the temporal markers in favor of a nonliteral understanding. The framework view argues that if one takes a literal interpretation of the creation account, meaning there is no sun for the first three days of creation, then each "day," along with its subordinate parts of "evening" and "morning," cannot be literal.<sup>51</sup> Against a nonliteral interpretation of the creation week, God himself, on the first day of creation after creating light and darkness, "separated the light from the darkness" (Gen 1:4). From v. 5 a definition for day may be gleaned: "God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day." In short, each day of the creation week is defined as "the period of light-separated-from-darkness,"<sup>52</sup> and not a "solar" day as framework advocates caricaturize the traditional literal interpretation of the creation week.<sup>53</sup>

Nevertheless, we must still explain how the repetitive elements of the creation account can legitimately be harmonized with a literal interpretation of Genesis 1:1–2:3. As Moses sought to represent in written form the events from the creation account, the literary shape of his material was controlled by two necessary elements: the actual events that took place during the creation week and his divinely-given interpretation of the material. In the case of the creation account, God obviously gave direct revelation concerning the details of Genesis 1:1–2:3 to someone as early as Adam but no later than Moses, and Moses accurately preserved this in written form. That which actually happened during the creation week placed certain limitations

---

<sup>48</sup>"Because It Had Not Rained," p. 156.

<sup>49</sup>"24-Hour View," p. 35.

<sup>50</sup>"Genesis 1:1–2:3," p. 166.

<sup>51</sup>Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," p. 156.

<sup>52</sup>Robert E. Grossmann, "The Light He Called 'Day,'" *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 3 (1987): 9.

<sup>53</sup>For example, Irons and Kline, "Framework View," p. 247.

on Moses' use of this material, and his theological message controlled how he selected and arranged this material. Repetition was part of his style of writing the creation narrative; however, he did not use repetitious elements either in a rigid manner or to undermine the historical substance of the creation week.<sup>54</sup> The repetitious elements of the text relate to a general pattern that provides an outline for each day of divine creative activity.

This structural pattern has a few common elements. For each day, God's creative activity and its cessation are summarized by a fivefold structure: divine speech ("God said"), fiat ("let there be," or an equivalent, such as "let the waters teem," v. 20),<sup>55</sup> fulfillment ("there was," "it was so," "God created," etc.), evaluation ("God saw that it was good"),<sup>56</sup> and twofold conclusion ("there was evening and there was morning," the first day, etc.).<sup>57</sup> With this structural arrangement, excluding the first day where vv. 1–2 provides God's creative backdrop that initiates his first two creative activities that begin Day 1, each day of creative activity is begun with a *waw* consecutive, "God said" (*wayyō'mer 'ēlōhîm*), and is concluded with two *waw* consecutives, "and there was evening [*way<sup>e</sup>hî 'ereb*] and there was morning [*way<sup>e</sup>hî bōqer*]," followed by a sequentially numbered day.

While this structural scheme highlights key activities for each day, the *waw* consecutive advances the events of each day sequence by sequence, and, after a concluding appositional phrase for each day containing a sequentially numbered day, it advances to the next day by introducing it with another *waw* consecutive, "God said" (*wayyō'mer 'ēlōhîm*). With a literal interpretation of the creation narrative, the fivefold structural scheme is integrated with the use of *waw* consecutive. As we have previously noted, the mainline narrative in Genesis 1:1–2:3 is advanced by *waw* consecutive. Though 16% of the *waw* consecutives are not sequential, the 84% that are sequential provide solid evidence for a literal interpretation as opposed to a topical interpretation of the creation week.

### A Chronological Account

Not only is the creation account sequentially arranged, but it is also a chronological account. The chronological nature of Genesis 1:1–2:3 is tied to the historic literal day interpretation of the "days" of the creation week. Because a number of authors have provided defenses for a literal interpretation of "day" in this account,<sup>58</sup> we will briefly summarize this evidence.

---

<sup>54</sup>Inerrancy allows for literary shaping but never at the expense of the historical accuracy of the actual events, and it requires that the historical account sets parameters on literary shaping.

<sup>55</sup>The verbs used in the fiat segment of this fivefold structure are usually jussives, with the exception of v. 26, where a cohortative is found, "let us."

<sup>56</sup>For an explanation of the omission of the divine evaluation on Day 2, see Pipa, "Genesis 1:1–2:3," p. 176. Whatever the reason for this omission by Moses, this fivefold structure was intended only as a general arrangement.

<sup>57</sup>With some qualification, Young follows this fivefold pattern (*Studies in Genesis One*, p. 84). This fivefold pattern can also be adequately explained as a sixfold structural pattern (so Duncan and Hall, "24-Hour View," p. 32) or sevenfold (so Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, pp. 17–19).

<sup>58</sup>For a few examples, see John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *The Early Earth*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker), pp. 28–37; Duncan and Hall, "24-Hour View," pp. 21–119; Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., "The Traditional Interpretation of Genesis 1," in *Yea, Hath God Said: The Framework Hypothesis/Six-Day Creation Debate*, by Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., and Michael R. Butler (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002), pp. 33–66; Hasel, "Days' of Creation in Genesis 1," pp. 5–38; James B. Jordan, *Creation in Six Days* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 1999); Douglas F. Kelly, *Creation and Change* (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Mentor, 1997), pp. 107–35; Pipa, "Genesis 1:1–2:3," pp. 153–98; James Stambaugh, "The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach," *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 5 (1991): 70–78; and my "Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 5 (Fall 2000): 97–123.

Initially, we should note that the noun *yôm* (“day”) always refers to a normal literal day when it is used as a singular noun and is not found in a compound grammatical construction.<sup>59</sup> *Yôm* is used in the Hebrew Old Testament 2,304 times. Of these it is used in the singular 1,452 times.<sup>60</sup> In Genesis 1:1–2:3 *yôm* is used 14 times, 13 times in the singular and once in the plural (v. 14).<sup>61</sup> The lone plural use of “days” does not contradict our understanding of “day” as a normal day. Its use in 1:14 is consistent with our argument. While the use of the plural “days,” is clearly not a reference to any of the specific days of the creation week, its use in 1:14 has specific reference to the movement of the heavenly bodies, which do enable people to measure the passage of literal days and literal years and recognize literal signs and seasons, according to their God-declared purpose. These are regular 24-hour days! Returning to our point about the 13 uses of “day” in Genesis 1, this type of singular use of “day” with a non-extended meaning is used consistently in this manner throughout Genesis, the Pentateuch, and the entire Old Testament to denote literal 24-hour days.<sup>62</sup>

Additionally, because the word “day” in the creation account is qualified by “evening” and “morning,” each day is to be taken literally. The clauses in which these two nouns are found, “and there was evening and there was morning,” stand in juxtaposition with each enumerated day of the creation week (1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31). Whether “evening” and “morning” are used together in a context with “day” (19 times beyond the 6 uses in Genesis 1) or they are used without “day” (38 times), they are used consistently in reference to literal days. “Evening” and “morning” are best understood as references to the beginning and conclusion of the nighttime period that concludes each of the creation days, after God had ceased from that day’s creative activity. The night cycle of evening to morning is reflected in the description of the Passover ritual in Deuteronomy 16:4: “For seven days no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory, and none of the flesh which you sacrifice on the *evening* of the first day shall remain overnight until *morning*.” With this interpretation, each day of the creation week has an “evening-morning” conclusion. The use of *waw* consecutive with each clause containing evening (“and there was evening”) and morning (“and there was morning”) indicates that at the conclusion of a creation day, the next sequence was evening and this was followed by the next significant sequence, morning.<sup>63</sup>

Furthermore, Exodus 20:8–11 and 31:14–17 support the historic literal day interpretation. For example, the context of Exodus 20:8–11 is that of God giving Israel the Decalogue and, in particular, the third commandment about Israel keeping the Sabbath holy. God’s motive for this command (v. 11) was based on the pattern that He had set in the creation week, “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.” If we follow the

---

<sup>59</sup>By compound grammatical construction, I am referring to the following types of items: the noun *yôm* being used with a preposition immediately attached to it, *yôm* being a part of a longer prepositional construction which has a verbal immediately following it, *yôm* being a part of the multi-word construction known as the construct-genitive relationship, *yôm* being used in a compound construction (*yôm yôm*). See Hasel, “‘Days’ of Creation in Genesis 1,” 23–24.

<sup>60</sup>*Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, s.v. “יֹמַי,” by J. E. Jenni, 2:526–272. *Yôm* is used in the Pentateuch 668 times. Of these the singular form is used 425 times. It is used in Genesis 152 times, with 83 of these in the singular.

<sup>61</sup>*Yôm* is used in Genesis 1:5 (twice), 8, 13, 14 (twice), 16, 18, 19, 23, 31; 2:2 (twice) and 2:3.

<sup>62</sup>Hasel, “‘Days’ of Creation in Genesis 1,” 23–26.

<sup>63</sup>For support of this interpretation of “evening” and “morning,” see Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 168; and Gentry, “Traditional Interpretation of Genesis 1,” pp. 36–39.

metaphorical use of day, this verse could be translated: “For in six geological ages of a million years or so the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh geological age of a million years or so: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath geological age of a million years or so and hallowed it.” Obviously, Moses had six literal days in mind with the seventh day also being a twenty-four hour period.

Finally, since “day” is often qualified in Genesis 1:1–2:3 by a number, each day must be a literal day. In each case where Moses summarizes God’s creative work for that day, the word “day” is qualified by a number—“one day” (v. 5),<sup>64</sup> “second day” (v. 8), etc. Excluding Genesis 1:1–2:3, when *yôm* is used with a numerical qualifier in the Old Testament, it is not used in a nonliteral sense. The use of “day” with a number is clearly demonstrated in Numbers 7. In this context, leaders from each tribe of Israel brought various gifts to the Lord on 12, sequential, literal days. Each use of the word “day” is qualified by a numerical adjective. Numbers 7:12 illustrates this point, “Now the one who presented his offering on the *first day* was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah” (for the remainder of the days along with their numerical qualifiers, see vv. 18, 24, 30, 36, 42, 48, 54, 60, 66, 72, 78). The sequential numbering of days is also found in Numbers 29:17–35. Thus, the use of “day” with a number is a clear reference to a literal day. Hasel has made this same point, “When the word *yôm*, ‘day,’ is employed together with a numeral, which happens 150 times in the Old Testament, it refers in the Old Testament invariably to a literal day of 24 hours.”<sup>65</sup> What should not be missed with this point is that the use of numbers with days communicates that the first week in the space and time continuum was a week of seven literal, sequentially numbered days.

In reviewing this evaluation of the first major thesis of the framework, the creation week should be interpreted literally because it is permeated with a sequential use of *waw* consecutive. I have also stated that a stylized use of narrative is compatible with a literal view of the creation week. In contrast to the framework’s rhetorical six workday frames, it was finally argued that a consistent interpretation of the theological and exegetical details associated with the creation account supports taking this pericope as a sequential and chronological account. In short, these three arguments indicate that the first premise of the framework is not supported by consistent exegesis. How substantive are the other arguments used to support the framework?

### ***THE CREATION ACCOUNT CONTROLLED BY ORDINARY PROVIDENCE***

Although a number of framework interpreters do not use this as an essential thesis, those who follow Kline promote this as such.<sup>66</sup> With this second major argument, some framework

<sup>64</sup>The phrase *yôm ’ekhad* in Gen 1:5 has been translated as either “one day” or “the first day.” The semantic range of *’ekhad* allows for either rendering under certain conditions, though it is primarily used as an cardinal (see Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 2 vols., rev. W. Baumgartner and J. J. Stamm, study ed. [Leiden: Brill, 2001], 1:30, [hereafter cited as *HALOT*]; and Francis Brown, Samuel R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1972, reprint ed.], 25, [hereafter cited as *BDB*]). The use of the cardinal number *’ekhad* (“one”) in Gen 1:5, rather than the ordinal *ri’shon* (“first”), as in Num 7:12 (*yôm ri’shon*, “the first day”), allows for a complexity in that a cardinal number is used in a clear numbering context. It may be that Moses used the cardinal *’ekhad* because, with Day 1 of the creation week, he is defining a day. The terms “day,” “night,” “evening” and “morning” are used in Gen 1:5 as an initial explanation of what constitutes the initial day cycle. “Gen 1:5,” according to Andrew E. Steinmann, “begins the cycle of the day. With the creation of light it is now possible to have a cycle of light and darkness, which God labels ‘day’ and ‘night.’ Evening is the transition from light/day to darkness/night. Morning is the transition from darkness/night to light/day. Having an evening and a morning amounts to having one full day. Hence the following equation is what Gen 1:5 expresses: Evening + morning = one day” (“ $\text{יָוֵם}$  as an Ordinal Number and the Meaning of Genesis 1:5,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 45 [December 2002]: 583).

<sup>65</sup>Hasel, “‘Days’ of Creation in Genesis 1,” p. 26.

<sup>66</sup>For examples of some who use this argument or do not use it, see above, n. 7.

interpreters present the case that God used ordinary providence<sup>67</sup> to control the creation “week.”

### EXPLANATION

God’s exclusive use of ordinary providence during the creation period is based on an argument that Genesis 2:5 presupposes this thesis. The chief advocate of this position is Meredith G. Kline.<sup>68</sup> Since this second major argument is tied to his 1958 article, it is called the “because it had not rained” argument.<sup>69</sup>

“The Creator,” in the words of Kline, “did not originate plant life on earth before he had prepared an environment in which he might preserve it without by-passing secondary means and without having recourse to extraordinary means such as marvelous methods of fertilization. The unargued presupposition of Gen. 2:5 is clearly that the divine providence was operating during the creation period through processes which any reader would recognize as normal in the natural world of his day.”<sup>70</sup> This means that there was “a principle of continuity between the mode of providence during and after the creation period.”<sup>71</sup> Since a literal interpretation of Genesis 1 requires God’s use of extraordinary providence<sup>72</sup> in the creation week, the literal interpretation is in conflict with the “because it had not rained” argument. If this argument is correct, “Genesis 2:5 forbids the conclusion that the order of narration [in Genesis 1] is exclusively chronological.”<sup>73</sup>

### EVALUATION

Rather than presupposing that the “unargued presupposition” of Genesis 2:5 is that normal providence governed the creation period, the context of this verse is not intended to describe how the entire creation week was controlled but what the state of the created order actually was on Day 6 of the creation week when God formed his image bearer to rule on earth as his vice-regent. Kline’s presupposition about Genesis 2:5 is unacceptable because of the incompatibility of this interpretation of Genesis 2:5 with two contexts: its immediate context and the surrounding context of Genesis 2:4–25.

#### The Immediate Context of Genesis 2:5

After providing a summarized overview of the seven days of the creation week in Genesis 1:1–2:3, Moses’ use of the first of eleven *tôlê dôt* headings in the book of Genesis returns

---

<sup>67</sup>Ordinary providence, which is normally referred to as providence, is God’s non-miraculous operations in sustaining and directing all of creation. For a discussion of providence, see John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2002), pp. 274–88.

<sup>68</sup>“Because It Had Not Rained,” pp. 145–57.

<sup>69</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 230–36.

<sup>70</sup>“Because It Had Not Rained,” pp. 149–50. Because Futato’s article is predicated upon Kline’s 1958 article, his article is intended to complement Kline’s. After providing more exegetical details to Gen 2:5–7, Futato uses these details to show their implications for reading Gen 2:4–25 and 1:1–2:3 and for their theological implications in Gen 1–2 (“Because It Had Rained,” pp. 10–21). While a full discussion of Futato’s article is not necessary for the argument of this paper, a fuller interaction with this article may be found in the following: Michael R. Butler, “The Question of Genesis 2:5,” in *Yea, Hath God Said: The Framework Hypothesis/Six-Day Creation Debate*, by Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., and Michael R. Butler (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002), pp. 102–22; Jordan, *Creation in Six Days*, pp. 235–45; Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” pp. 154–60; and McCabe, “Critique of the Framework Interpretation (Part 2),” pp. 65–66, 79–81.

<sup>71</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 230.

<sup>72</sup>Extraordinary providence, generally referred to as miracle, is God’s miraculous intervention in the created order. For a discussion of miracle, see Frame, *The Doctrine of God*, pp. 241–73.

<sup>73</sup>Kline, “Because It Had Not Rained,” p. 154; so also Godfrey, *God’s Pattern*, pp. 52–53.

to Day 6 in order to provide a more detailed explanation of man's formation and placement in the Garden of Eden. The first of 35 uses of the compound divine names, *Yahweh 'Elōhîm*, "the LORD God," in 2:4–3:23 demonstrate the tight contextual unity of Genesis 2–3. Both the *tôlê dôt* heading and *Yahweh 'Elōhîm* reflect a clear change of contextual emphasis that focuses on what became of God's perfect creation.<sup>74</sup> What works against Kline's assertion about 2:5 is the context of this verse, as Butler has incisively noted: "The most compelling reason to reject Kline's understanding of Genesis 2:5 is that his interpretation is out of accord with the context of Genesis 2:4–3:24—the context which the *toledoth*-formula of Genesis 2:4 places it. Genesis 2:5 does not have reference to the creation-in-process described in Genesis 1 (Kline's reading), but to the completed creation ready for man to inhabit and subdue."<sup>75</sup>

Interpreters have seen a number of difficulties in Genesis 2:5–6.<sup>76</sup> While the purpose of this paper does not allow for an examination of all the difficulties in these verses, it is necessary to demonstrate that the syntactic nature of vv. 5–6 provide a setting for the primary proposition in v. 7: the formation of man.<sup>77</sup>

Genesis 2:5–6 contains six clauses with four of them being circumstantial clauses, with one in v. 5 being an explicit causal clause,<sup>78</sup> and with a final one in v. 6 a clause introduced by *waw* consecutive plus a perfective verb form.<sup>79</sup> The circumstantial clauses are readily identified since each is introduced by a simple conjunctive *waw* attached to a non-verbal form.<sup>80</sup> To illustrate the circumstantial use of *waw*, I have inserted *waw* in brackets in this arrangement:

<sup>5</sup>Now [*waw*] no shrub of the field was yet in the earth,  
and [*waw*] no plant of the field had yet sprouted,  
for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth,  
and [*waw*] there was no man to cultivate the ground.  
<sup>6</sup>But [*waw*] a mist used to rise from the earth,  
and water the whole surface of the ground.

Not all commentators view the four circumstantial clauses as being equally coordinate. The specific issue relates to the last clause in v. 5, "and [*waw*] there was no man to cultivate the ground." Is this last clause outside of the preceding causal clause and coordinate with the other three circumstantial clauses, as our preceding textual arrangement reflects? Or, is this clause coordinate with the previous causal clause, "for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth"?<sup>81</sup> Because the *waw* conjunction at the head of the fourth clause implies a close syntactic relationship with the preceding causal clause, my preference is to follow this later understanding

<sup>74</sup>For a fuller development of Gen 2:4 and its significance for the traditional, literal interpretation of Genesis 2, see my "Critique of the Framework Interpretation (Part 2)," pp. 69–76.

<sup>75</sup>Butler, "Question of Genesis 2:5," p. 101.

<sup>76</sup>See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, p. 57.

<sup>77</sup>For discussions of the actual interpretation of Gen 2:5, see Butler, "Question of Genesis 2:5," pp. 101–31.

<sup>78</sup>This clause is introduced by the causal conjunction *kî*.

<sup>79</sup>As noted above, n. 30, *waw* consecutive plus the perfect may carry over a temporal nuance from a preceding verb. The last clause in Gen 2:6 is an example of this. In this case, the *waw* consecutive plus the perfect (*w<sup>e</sup>hišqah*, "and [used to] water") carries over an iterative sense from the preceding imperfect form (*ya 'älēh*, "[a mist] used to rise") (see Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, pp. 502–4).

<sup>80</sup>For a description of a simple conjunctive *waw* used circumstantially, see Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 147.

<sup>81</sup>For example, Allen P. Ross sees three circumstantial clauses, with the last clause of v. 5 serving as an addition to the preceding causal clause (*Creation and Blessing* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988], p. 119), as does Kenneth A. Mathews (*Genesis 1–11:26*, New American Commentary [Nashville: Broadman, 1996], p. 193).

and take the fourth clause as coordinate with the causal third clause. This would indicate that the last two clauses provide two reasons for the vegetation deficiencies specified in the first half of v. 5: no rain and no man. Verses 6–7, then, explain how the two shortages were corrected: God provided a water supply (v. 6) and created man (v. 7), who becomes the focus of the narrative sequence in vv. 7–25. God’s taking care of both deficiencies indicates that he had not finished his week of creation. Nevertheless, I recognize that commentators are divided about the clausal arrangement and that a reasonable case may be marshaled to support either view.<sup>82</sup>

What is unmistakable in this text is that whichever view a commentator follows about the arrangement of the clauses in v. 5, most maintain that vv. 5–6 provide a setting for v. 7 and not a statement about God’s mode of operation in the creation week. For example, Westermann has stated it like this: “The structure of this first part is quite clear and easy to explain: vv. 4b–6 comprise the antecedent, v. 7 is the main statement.”<sup>83</sup> Hamilton provides another example and explains vv. 4b–7 as having a protasis followed by an apodosis: “Verses 4b–7 are one long sentence in Hebrew, containing a protasis (v. 4b), a series of circumstantial clauses (vv. 5–6), and an apodosis.”<sup>84</sup> While both explanations about the relationship between vv. 4–7 are nuanced differently, each has the formation of man in v. 7 as the primary proposition in vv. 5–7. To state this another way, the six clauses of vv. 5–6, which, in contrast to the 21 *waw* consecutives initiated in v. 7, are grammatically nonsequential and provide certain conditions associated with the occurrence of the action in the main clause of v. 7 (“Then the LORD God formed [*wayyîšer*] man of the dust from the ground”).<sup>85</sup> As the case is in biblical Hebrew, the *waw* consecutive stands at the head of the clause it governs. Not only does *wayyîšer* begin the first clause in v. 7, but it also initiates the mainline narrative sequence followed by a series of *waw* consecutives in vv. 7–9.<sup>86</sup> The relationship that the six nonsequential clauses in vv. 5–6 have with the introductory clause in v. 7 begun by the *waw* consecutive can be viewed in this manner:

↓  
<sup>5</sup>Now [*waw*] no shrub of the field was yet in the earth,  
and [*waw*] no plant of the field had yet sprouted,  
for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth,  
and [*waw*] there was no man to cultivate the ground.  
<sup>6</sup>But [*waw*] a mist used to rise from the earth,  
and water the whole surface of the ground.  
<sup>7</sup>Then the LORD God formed [*wayyîšer*] man of dust from the ground,

While the formation of man from dust of the ground in v. 7 undoubtedly provides a semantic link with vv. 5–6, *wayyîšer* initiates the mainline narrative thread that is sequentially followed by 5 *waw* consecutives in vv. 7b–9. The paragraph in vv. 10–14 interrupts the string of *waw* consecutives with a series of circumstantial clauses that explain the resplendent nature of the eastern area of Eden where God had planted the garden and placed man in v. 8. This paragraph, focusing on the four rivers that flowed from Eden, is anticipatory of the next *waw* consecutive in v. 15<sup>87</sup> that resumes the narrative sequence with a series of 15 *waw* consecutives in vv. 15–25. Unmistakably, vv. 5–6 provide the setting for the continuation of the narrative rather than supporting Kline’s “unargued presupposition.”

<sup>82</sup>David Tsumura presents some of the difficulties with Gen 2:5–6, while supporting the option that there are four coordinate circumstantial clauses (*Creation and Chaos* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005], pp. 78–80).

<sup>83</sup>*Genesis 1–11: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Augsburg 1984), p. 197. So also Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), pp. 74–75.

<sup>84</sup>*Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, p. 156. Other interpreters who essentially follow this view include C. John Collins, *Genesis 1–4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2006), p. 133; Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, p. 193; Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 157; William D. Reyburn and Euan McG. Fry, *A Handbook on Genesis* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1997), p. 60; and Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, p. 119.

<sup>85</sup>So also Francis I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1974), p. 86; Tsumura, *Creation and Chaos*, p. 80; and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, p. 57.

<sup>86</sup>So Alviero Niccacci, “Analysis of Biblical Narrative,” in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas, TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), p. 187.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 187–88.



### The Surrounding Context of Genesis 2:4–25

Genesis 2:5 is part of a series of six nonsequential clauses in vv. 5–6 that provide circumstances associated with the formation of man in v. 7: “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.” This creative activity in v. 7 is summarized by a series of 3 *waw* consecutive verbs (“formed [*wayyîtsēr*],” “breathed” [*wayyippakh*], “became” [*wayhî*]). In the Hebrew text, each of these *waw* consecutives, as previously noted, advances a narrative sequence. In this verse, we should note the logic of the sequential verbs: the LORD God first formed the man from “the dust of the ground,” he next breathed into man’s “nostrils the breath of life,” and finally “man became a living being.” While this grammatical device has uses other than a strict sequential verb form, it nevertheless has a primary function of representing sequential movement. Minimizing the sequential force of the *waw* consecutives in Genesis 2:4–25 would support the argument of some framework advocates that this pericope is a topical account. Though a few *waw* consecutives in this passage are not strictly sequential, the majority of them are used sequentially and they establish a sequence of activities that took place on Day 6 of the creation week.

As was previously noted in reference to the use of *waw* consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3, this verbal form provides the basic framework that advances the narrative sequence. Although *waw* consecutive has different uses in Genesis 2:4–25, the sequential use of 17 of the 21 *waw* consecutives is the backbone of this narrative section. To communicate this, I have again taken the liberty of adapting the NASB’s translation of the 21 *waw* consecutives. These *waw* consecutives are used in four ways: 17 are sequential, 2 are resumptive, 1 is a pluperfect, and 1 a consequential use. In the following chart, I have supplied an italicized “*then*” with the 17 examples of sequentially arranged *waw* consecutives (listed in the chart as Sequential WC), an italicized *and* for the 2 resumptive uses (Resumptive WC), an italicized “*now*” for the lone pluperfect (Pluperfect WC), and an italicized “*thus*” for the final example of a consequential use (Consequential WC).

Verse	Sequential WC	Resumptive WC	Pluperfect WC	Consequential WC
7	<i>then</i> the LORD God formed man			
	<i>then</i> breathed			
	<i>then</i> man became			
8	<i>then</i> the LORD God planted a garden			
9	<i>then</i> there he placed			
	<i>then</i> the LORD God caused to grow			
15		<i>and</i> the LORD God took the man		
		<i>and</i> put him into the Garden of Eden		
16	<i>then</i> the LORD God commanded			
18	<i>then</i> the LORD God			
19			<i>now</i> the LORD God had formed	
	<i>then</i> brought them			
20	<i>then</i> the man gave names			
21	<i>then</i> the LORD God caused a deep sleep			
	<i>then</i> he slept			
	<i>then</i> he took one of his ribs			
	<i>then</i> he closed up the flesh			
22	<i>then</i> the LORD God fashioned			
	<i>then</i> he brought her			
23	<i>then</i> the man said			
25				<i>thus</i> the man and his wife were both naked

### Observations About *Waw* Consecutive in Genesis 2:4–25

A few items should be observed. First, as previously mentioned, the mainline narrative is started in v. 7a, continued by a tight sequence of 5 *waw* consecutives in vv. 7b–9, briefly interrupted by five verses (vv. 10–14), resumed with two *waw* consecutives in v. 15, and advanced to completion with 13 *waw* consecutives in vv. 16–25. Second, since the mainline narrative sequence begins in v. 7, this suggests that vv. 4–6, as we have noted, is an informing background for v. 7 with its inception of the narrative unit that continues through v. 25. Third, the mainline sequence of events in this passage is advanced by 17 sequential uses of *waw* consecutive. The 17 uses of *waw* consecutive show that this passage is a historical narrative that is incrementally moved along. Fourth, the two *waw* consecutives in v. 15 have a resumptive function. While the two *waw* consecutives in this verse form a sequence with the event represented by the fifth *waw* consecutive in v. 8 (“placed,” *wayyitta* ’), they do not form a strict sequence with the sixth *waw* consecutive in v. 9 (“caused to grow,” *wayyasmakh*). Fifth, the final *waw* consecutive in v. 25 (“Thus [the man and his wife] were,” *wayyihyû*) brings this unit to a conclusion.<sup>88</sup> The preceding *waw* consecutive in v. 23a (“then [the man] said,” *wayyô’mer*) communicates Adam’s delighted response to the formation of the woman from his “rib.” As opposed to the animals that Adam had just assigned names, the woman was of the same substance as he; she was a genuine complement for him.<sup>89</sup> The storyline is advanced to v. 23 with the twentieth example of a *waw* consecutive; however, the editorial interruption in v. 24 applies the creation ordinance of marriage to Adam and Eve’s posterity. As an outgrowth of the whole narrative, especially vv. 23a–24, the account is completed with the final *waw* consecutive in v. 25. A *waw* consecutive that concludes a storyline, as in v. 25, provides an example of its consequential use.<sup>90</sup> Sixth, while the 2 resumptive uses of *waw* consecutive in v. 15 and the 1 use of a pluperfect in v. 19 may seemingly create a problem for my interpretation of the creation account, they are readily harmonized with the sequential material. Since the reputed difficulty with the *waw* consecutive revolves around these 3 uses of *waw* consecutive, these need more explanation.

### Resumptive Uses of *Waw* Consecutive in Genesis 2:15

Most commentators recognize that the two *waw* consecutives in Genesis 2:15 resume the narrative thread of v. 8.<sup>91</sup> However, framework advocates try to demonstrate the presence of nonsequential *waw* consecutives as implying that other *waw* consecutives should be taken topically rather than sequentially.<sup>92</sup> Drawing from v. 15 and a few other examples, Irons and Kline conclude, “Thus, temporal recapitulation for the purpose of topical arrangement appears to be a key structural device in Genesis.”<sup>93</sup> Though *waw* consecutive may at times reflect temporal recapitulation, their conclusion is overstated and undermines the normal sequential substance of the *waw* consecutive in Genesis 2.

---

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>89</sup>See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, pp. 218–19.

<sup>90</sup>Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, pp. 85–86.

<sup>91</sup>For example, see U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: Part One—From Adam to Noah*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), p. 121; Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, p. 171; and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, p. 67.

<sup>92</sup>So Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 219–24.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 223.

Since the context of Genesis 2 clearly indicates that v. 15 resumes the narrative thread of v. 8, both sequential verbs reflect some level of temporal recapitulation. Nevertheless, this recapitulation is restricted by its context. What Irons and Kline do not point out is that both *waw* consecutives are bound to a context that is advanced by a series of 17 *waw* consecutives used sequentially. This is to say, the actual sequential chain to which the two *waw* consecutives in v. 15 belong controls the recapitulation. To review, the narrative line in this pericope begins with the first *waw* consecutive in v. 7 and is advanced by a tight chain of 5 other *waw* consecutives in vv. 7b–9. After the three *waw* consecutives describing the creation of man in v. 7, the next three *waw* consecutives in vv. 8–9 picture God’s planting a garden in Eden, placing man in the garden, and adorning this garden with various kinds of beautiful trees that had nutritious fruit, as well as including, in the middle of the garden, the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. After this brief excursus about the splendor of the Garden of Eden, two *waw* consecutives in v. 15 resume the narrative chain by repeating, as well as expanding on, the *waw* consecutive in v. 8 (“[there he] placed,” *wayyāśem*). Consequently, it is preferable to take these two verbs as examples of resumptive repetition.

Genesis 2:15 provides a good context to explain the literary technique of resumptive repetition. In this regard, we should note that both verbs in v. 15 (“took” [*wayyiqqakh*] and “put” [*wayyannikhēhū*]) have some semantic overlap with the second *waw* consecutive in v. 8 (“placed” [*wayyāśem*]).<sup>94</sup> The semantic overlap in the vocabulary reflects some form of repetition. Because the two verbs in v. 15 pick up the sequence from v. 8, this is a resumption of the sequential line. Resumptive repetition takes place with a *waw* consecutive when, after a significant event is initially represented by a *waw* consecutive and the narrative line is temporarily diverted, a subsequent *waw* consecutive that semantically overlaps with the initial *waw* consecutive continues the sequential line.<sup>95</sup> By using resumptive repetition, Moses shows how the sequence of v. 15 relates to the overall sequential chain in this account.<sup>96</sup>

Though the description of the *waw* consecutives in v. 15 as examples of resumptive repetition indicates that they do not reflect a strict chronology, this does not mean that chronological constraints have been abandoned by the narrative sequence.<sup>97</sup> Both *waw* consecutives in v. 15 sequentially resume the narrative line. In addition, though the *waw* consecutives in v. 15 are not sequential, the 17 sequential *waw* consecutives in 2:7–25 establish the chronological advancement of this passage. In the final analysis, the two resumptive *waw* consecutives are a non-issue since they practically function like the 17 sequential *waw* consecutives.

### Pluperfect Use of *Waw* Consecutive in Genesis 2:19

The third *waw* consecutive used to support a topical interpretation of Genesis 2:4–25 is found in the first part of v. 19 (“[the LORD God] formed,” *wayyîṣer*). If the narrative line is

<sup>94</sup>For a discussion of the resumption of the narrative sequence in Gen 2:15, see Collins, *Genesis 1–4*, p. 133. Niccacci also takes Gen 2:15 as an example of resumptive repetition, though he restricts its use to the first sequential verb “took” (*wayyiqqakh*) (“Analysis of Biblical Narrative,” p. 187).

<sup>95</sup>For a discussion of resumptive repetition, see Philip A. Quick, “Resumptive Repetition: A Two-Edged Sword,” *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 6 (1993): 301–4; and Randall Buth, “Methodological Collision Between Source Criticism and Discourse Analysis,” in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), pp. 147–48.

<sup>96</sup>For a discussion of the resumption of the narrative sequence in Gen 2:15, see Collins, *Genesis 1–4*, p. 133.

<sup>97</sup>Young provides a helpful discussion of the chronology of Gen 2:4–25 as it relates to Gen 1 (*Studies in Genesis One*, pp. 73–76).

followed in many English translations, Genesis 2:19a is part of a chronological sequence. The sequential development in vv. 18–19 is exhibited in the NASB:

Then the LORD God said [*waw* consecutive], “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”<sup>19</sup> Out of the ground the LORD God formed [*waw* consecutive] every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought [*waw* consecutive] *them* to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.

I have placed in brackets the *waw* consecutive after the appropriate three verbs in vv. 18–19. We should observe that the initial *waw* consecutive in v. 19 is translated as a past tense, just like the other two *waw* consecutives in v. 18 and v. 19b. The past tense rendering of *wayyîtser*, “formed,” is also followed in the KJV, NKJV, ESV, NRSV, NLT, and NET BIBLE. These translations reflect a narrative sequence in these two verses that looks like this:

- 1) The LORD God said it is not good for man to be alone.
- 2) The LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky from the dust of the ground.
- 3) The LORD God brought every beast of the field and every bird of the sky to man so that man could name them.

Before the sequence in vv. 18–19, the narrative chain was initiated by the creation of man, v. 7, then the formation of the Garden of Eden, vv. 8–9. Following the sequence in vv. 18–19, woman was formed from man, v. 22. According to the apparent sequence in Genesis 2, the beasts and birds were formed after the creation of man in v. 7 but before the formation of woman in v. 22. With this reading, the sequential understanding is in conflict with the creation account. On Day 5 God created birds (Gen 1:21–22). On Day 6, God initially created wild animals, livestock, and creeping things (vv. 24–25), and he finally created man and woman (vv. 26–28). If *wayyîtser* is rendered as a past tense, the sequence in Genesis 2:4–25 seemingly contradicts the arrangement in 1:1–2:3. Two solutions to this reputed contradiction will be examined.

One solution that some framework advocates offer is to claim that a topical interpretation of Genesis 2:4–25 resolves this contradiction. This position states that man was created before beasts and birds if *wayyîtser* is used as *waw* consecutives normally function to show chronological sequence.<sup>98</sup> However, since the formation of man before beasts and birds conflicts with a chronological reading of Genesis 1:1–2:3 that has birds and beasts created before man, the past tense translation of *wayyîtser* indicates that the account should be read topically rather than chronologically. According to Kline’s framework position, a chronological reading of the sequential verb in 2:19, as well as the two *waw* consecutives in v. 15, is inconsistent with a literal sequence in 1:1–2:3.<sup>99</sup> As such, the account in Genesis 2:4–25 has examples of sequential verbs that indicate a temporal recapitulation, and this indicates, according to Irons and Kline, that the narrative events of Genesis 1:1–2:3 do not correspond to the actual sequence that a literal reading of this text portrays.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>98</sup>Support for taking *wayyîtser* as a past tense, “formed,” has been drawn from S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1892), pp. 84–89. Buth has provided further support for this past tense rendering (“Methodological Collision,” pp. 148–49). For more information about Buth’s approach along with a corrective, see C. John Collins, “*Wayyiqtol* as ‘Pluperfect’: When and Why,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (May 1995): 128.

<sup>99</sup>So Irons and Kline, “Framework Reply,” pp. 282–83; Ross, “Framework Hypothesis,” pp. 123–26; and Futato, “Because It Had Rained,” pp. 10–11.

<sup>100</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 222–23.

A second and preferable solution is to take the first sequential verb in Genesis 2:19a, *wayyîts̄er*, as a pluperfect, “had formed.” With this pluperfect understanding, a sequential, chronological reading of 2:4–25 is preserved as well as the account maintaining a continuity with a literal interpretation of 1:1–2:3.<sup>101</sup> This view says that *wayyîts̄er*, in the midst of a chain of sequential *waw* consecutives, may be translated as a past perfect, “has formed,” reflecting a temporal activity that preceded the mainline sequence in 2:4–25.<sup>102</sup> While the NASB, like many other English versions, translates v. 19a with a past tense: “Out of the ground the LORD God *formed* every beast of the field and every bird of the sky” (emphasis added), the NIV translates v. 19a with a pluperfect: “Now the LORD God *had formed* out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air” (emphasis added). In this context, the NIV best preserves the continuity of 1:1–2:3 and 2:4–25.

Like the two *waw* consecutives in Genesis 2:15, *wayyîts̄er* in v. 19 is an example of temporal recapitulation. But the verses reflect two different types of temporal recapitulation. The sequential verbs in v. 15 are restricted by the immediate narrative sequence in vv. 4–25 and are best taken as examples of resumptive repetition. The temporal recapitulation in v. 19 transcends the immediate pericope of 2:4–25 and looks back to the previous pericope in 1:1–2:3. Therefore, it is better to view this as an example of a pluperfect.<sup>103</sup> Various criteria are used to indicate that a *waw* consecutive is used as pluperfect, such as a sequential verb starting a new pericope or paragraph.<sup>104</sup> The context of Genesis 1–2 reflects another criteria for determining if a verb is used as a past perfect. This technique is what Collins calls the “logic of the referent.”<sup>105</sup> With this technique, the literary context establishes that the event represented by a *waw* consecutive verb occurred before the situation represented by a prior verb.<sup>106</sup>

From the perspective of some framework supporters, the *waw* consecutive as a pluperfect is not a clear syntactic option in Genesis 2:19. However, what is overlooked by this reasoning is that pluperfect may be used within a sequence of *waw* consecutive verbs to denote an action prior to an immediate narrative sequence. A good example is found in Genesis 12:1. According to the sequential verbs in 11:31, Abram had left Ur of the Chaldeans with his father Terah, set out for Canaan, and had settled in Haran. However, the *waw* consecutive that initiates 12:1 does not incrementally advance the timeline, but provides a flashback when the LORD had spoken to Abram about initially leaving his father’s country in Mesopotamia before moving to Haran (Gen 15:7, Acts 7:2). The mainline sequence is further interrupted by a series of clauses, vv. 1b–3, that contain God’s promises to Abram with the narrative sequence being resumed in v. 4. In keeping with this pluperfect use, the NIV translates v. 1a: “The LORD *had said* to Abram...” (emphasis added).<sup>107</sup> Although Moses had other syntactic options to convey a pluperfect, his syntactic preference, with this example, was to use a *waw* consecutive for this anterior action.

In closing this discussion of the *waw* consecutives in 2:4–25, the three *waw* consecutives in vv. 15 and 19 reflecting temporal recapitulation do not provide a justification for

<sup>101</sup>For an alternative that is consistent with a complementary view of Gen 1:1–2:3 and 2:4–25, see Cassuto, *Genesis*, p. 129.

<sup>102</sup>Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 156.

<sup>103</sup>See Collins, *Genesis 1–4*, pp. 133–35.

<sup>104</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 127–28.

<sup>105</sup>Collins, “*Wayyiqtol* as ‘Pluperfect,’” p. 128.

<sup>106</sup>*Ibid.*, n. 40.

<sup>107</sup>See Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” pp. 156–57. For more information on the pluperfect use of the *waw* consecutive, see Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, pp. 552–53.

reinterpreting the overall narrative sequence as a dischronologized account. Should these three exceptional uses of *waw* consecutive define the nature of the narrative sequence? Or, should not the 17 normal uses define the mainline narrative? Since the *waw* consecutives in vv. 15 and 19 are connected to 17 other *waw* consecutives that demonstrate a normal sequential use of *waw* consecutive, Genesis 2:4–25 should be taken as a sequential, chronological account that has three examples of temporal recapitulation. What defines this pericope is the mainline sequence of 17 sequential *waw* consecutives. In the final analysis, this certainly does not sound like a use of 21 *waw* consecutives that are dischronologized.

To summarize this assessment of the framework’s argument that the creation account is controlled by ordinary providence, I have demonstrated that the framework’s use of the immediate context of Genesis 2:5 and the surrounding context of 2:4–25 cannot consistently be used to support this argument. To briefly extend my evaluation, there are two other areas of biblical revelation that indicate the tenuous nature of this argument: Genesis 1:1–2:3 and the wider context of Scripture. First, the creation account of Genesis 1:1–2:3 provides no evidence that God worked exclusively in this week through ordinary providence; and, in fact, the specific contextual evidence demonstrates just the opposite: the creation week was dominated by extraordinary providence.<sup>108</sup> Second, the wider scope of Scripture also opposes this thesis since God has not limited himself in biblical history to work exclusively through ordinary providence. For example, when framework defenders deny a literal interpretation of the creation week by maintaining that Genesis 2:5 denies God had miraculously dried up the ground on Day 3,<sup>109</sup> this clearly conflicts with God miraculously drying up the wet ground of the Red Sea when he divided it so that the Israelites, in ordinary providence, could cross it on dry ground (Exod 14:21–22).<sup>110</sup> Hypothetically speaking, the only way that the creation week could be controlled by ordinary providence is for God to have created everything in a nanosecond.<sup>111</sup> However, the point of the framework position is just the opposite of God creating in a nanosecond. If ordinary providence controlled the creation week, as Kline argues, this strongly implies that the creation “week” involved an extended period of time and not a literal week.<sup>112</sup> A closer reading of the creation account in Genesis 1:1–2:3 reveals that it is more accurate to say that the creation week is governed by extraordinary providence while God is concomitantly establishing the conditions in the created order so that it could begin to operate according to normal providence.<sup>113</sup>

In concluding this evaluation of the framework’s second thesis, the “unargued presupposition” in Genesis 2:5 that demands the creation week was exclusively controlled by ordinary providence is neither exegetically nor theologically convincing. In contrast to the framework view, Genesis 2:5 explicitly provides the setting for the creation of man on Day 6 of

---

<sup>108</sup>For example, the Spirit of God, while hovering over the water-covered earth, supernaturally preserved the earth in Gen 1:2 and God directly intervened to create Adam and Eve in His image in 1:26–28. For additional support of this point, see Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” 164; and Butler, “Question of Genesis 2:5,” 123.

<sup>109</sup>So Kline, “Because It Had Not Rained,” p. 152.

<sup>110</sup>Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 163. To use another example, while God used extraordinary providence in the Flood, such as sending rain upon the earth 40 days and nights and breaking open the fountains of the great deep, Noah and his family in ordinary providence built the ark and took care of the animals in the ark for about a year. Again, in the New Testament, Christ performed many miracles, while, in normal providence, he grew up and lived a life of perfect obedience fulfilling the demands of the Law (for a further discussion on this point, see my “Critique of the Framework Interpretation (Part 2),” 101–8.

<sup>111</sup>See also Michael J. Kruger, “An Understanding of Genesis 2:5,” *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 11 (1997): 109.

<sup>112</sup>Kline, “Space and Time,” 13.

<sup>113</sup>So also Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” 163; and Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Compromise* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2004), 99–100

the creation week. Therefore, Genesis 2:5 provides no reasonable evidence to abandon the traditional, literal interpretation of Genesis 1:1–2:3.

### ***THE UNENDING NATURE OF THE SEVENTH DAY***

The third key premise of the framework position is that the seventh day of the creation week is an unending period. Kline mentions this argument in his 1958 article,<sup>114</sup> as has Irons in his paper “The Framework Interpretation: An Exegetical Summary.”<sup>115</sup> Irons states the case like this: “The final exegetical observation that ultimately clinches the case [for the framework interpretation] is the unending nature of the seventh day.”<sup>116</sup> Other framework advocates also use this argument.<sup>117</sup> Since 1996, this argument has become a key plank in Kline’s more complex two-register cosmology argument.<sup>118</sup> Regardless of whether the extended nature of the seventh day is treated as a major thesis or as a supporting thesis for Kline’s latter argument,<sup>119</sup> this provides significant support for all forms of the framework position.

### **EXPLANATION**

If Day 7 is an unending day, it is not a literal, earthly day, but rather a figure that reflects a heavenly time of divine rest. Additionally, if Day 7 is a metaphor, then the first six days that are subsidiary to this day are also metaphorical days.<sup>120</sup> The seventh day, according to Kline, “had a temporal beginning but it has no end (note the absence of the concluding evening-morning formula). Yet it is called a ‘day,’ so advising us that these days of the creation account are meant figuratively.”<sup>121</sup> Two items support the unending nature of Day 7. First, while each of the six days of the creation week are concluded by the evening-morning formula, the description of Day 7 in Genesis 2:1–3 omits the evening-morning formula. As Lee Irons states the case, “The seventh day is unique in that it alone lacks the concluding evening-morning formula, suggesting that it is not finite but eternal.”<sup>122</sup> According to Blocher, this omission “is deliberate. There can be no doubt about that in a text that has been composed with exact calculation.”<sup>123</sup> Second, Hebrews 4 confirms this understanding of Day 7 with the motif of an eternal Sabbath rest.<sup>124</sup>

### **EVALUATION**

Does the deliberate omission of the evening-morning formula in Genesis 2:1–3 unequivocally indicate that the seventh day of the creation week is an unending heavenly “day”?

<sup>114</sup>“Because It Had Not Rained,” p. 156.

<sup>115</sup>*Ordained Servant* 9 (January 2000): 9–10.

<sup>116</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>117</sup>So Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 56; Hughes, *Genesis*, p. 26; Ross, “Framework Hypothesis,” pp. 121–22.

<sup>118</sup>Kline, “Space and Time,” pp. 10–11.

<sup>119</sup>Since Kline’s two-register cosmology is not so much an argument supporting the framework view but an explanation that integrates the framework’s three major premises with Kline’s overall understanding of biblical cosmology as a justification for taking the temporal elements of Genesis 1:1–2:3 as heavenly time, I have not presented this as an argument in this paper. For a discussion of Kline’s two register cosmology, see my “Critique of the Framework Interpretation (Part 2),” pp. 116–30.

<sup>120</sup>Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10; Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 245–47.

<sup>121</sup>Kline, “Genesis,” p. 83.

<sup>122</sup>“Framework Interpretation,” p. 9.

<sup>123</sup>*In the Beginning*, p. 50.

<sup>124</sup>Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

And, is it biblically legitimate to equate the eternal Sabbath rest of Hebrews 4 with the seventh day of the creation week? Both of these issues must now be addressed.

### The Omission of the Evening-Morning Formula on Day 7

Blocher asserts that the open-ended nature of Day 7 is the “most simple and natural conclusion” that can be drawn from this deliberate omission.<sup>125</sup> There are five reasons why an open-ended interpretation of Day 7 cannot be the “most simple and natural conclusion.”

First, as previously noted, the evening-morning conclusion is one part of a fivefold structure that Moses employed in shaping the literary fabric for each of the days of the creation week. None of the other parts of this fivefold arrangement are mentioned on the seventh day. Moses used this fivefold pattern to represent, in a brief yet accurate manner, God’s creation of the heavens, the earth, and all things therein in the space of six, sequentially numbered, literal days. By excluding the fivefold pattern, Moses’ theological emphasis was to demonstrate in literary form that Day 7 was a day of cessation from divine creative activity,<sup>126</sup> as the two uses of *šābat*, “ceased” (NET BIBLE), in Genesis 2:2–3 clearly indicate.<sup>127</sup> This is to say the omission of the evening-morning conclusion is related to the omission of the other four parts of this fivefold pattern. Since the other four parts are not needed in that God’s creative activity is finished, this concluding formula was not needed either. This overall structuring device was not utilized for the apparent reason that God is no longer creating after Day 6. Because Day 7 is a historic literal day, it is numbered like the previous six days.

Second, the evening and morning conclusion has another rhetorical function that marks a transition from a concluding day to the following day. If the first week was completed, there was no need to use the evening-morning conclusion for transitional purposes. Pipa has precisely summarized this argument: “The phrase ‘evening and morning’ links the day that is concluding with the next day. For example the morning that marks the end of day one also marks the beginning of day two. Thus, we do not find the formula at the end of the seventh day, since the week of creation is complete.”<sup>128</sup>

Third, the omission of the evening-morning conclusion as a support for seventh day being eternal is an argument from silence.<sup>129</sup> Genesis 2:1–3 neither explicitly state nor necessarily imply that Day 7 was eternal. God’s work of creation is explicitly stated in Genesis 2:2 as being completed “by the seventh day [*bayyôm haššēbī’î*].”<sup>130</sup> In other words, God’s creative work is finished before and not on the seventh day.

<sup>125</sup>*In the Beginning*, p. 56.

<sup>126</sup>Gentry, “Traditional Interpretation of Genesis 1,” p. 62.

<sup>127</sup>For further discussion, see my “Critique of the Framework Interpretation (Part 2),” pp. 112–13.

<sup>128</sup>“Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 168.

<sup>129</sup>Gentry, “Traditional Interpretation of Genesis 1,” p. 62.

<sup>130</sup>The prepositional phrase *bayyôm haššēbī’î* is rendered in some versions as “on the seventh day” (so KJV, NKJV, ESV, NRSV, NLT). Since the semantic range for the preposition *bē* includes uses such as “in,” “at,” “within,” “on,” “by” (*HALOT*, 1:103–5), this translation has lexical support. However, the translation is not without its difficulties, for it reflects a level of ambiguity in that it implies that God continued His creative work to some point on the seventh day and at that time God finished His creative work. The rendering of the NKJV illustrates this uncertainty: “And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done.” A preferable way to translate this prepositional phrase is “by the seventh day” (so NASB, NIV, TNIV, HCSB, NET BIBLE). What makes this rendering preferable is v. 1: “Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.” In this context, this verse indicates that God’s creative work was completed before the seventh day; and v. 2a continues the thought, “by the seventh day God completed His work.” Translating *bē* with “by” is coordinate with the sense of its governing verb *kalah*, “to finish, complete” (BDB, 477–78). However, in the next clause of v. 2, the same prepositional phrase *bayyôm haššēbī’î* is used again and should be preferably translated as “on the seventh day” because its governing



Fourth, two narrative texts in Exodus dealing with the Sabbath ordinance does not support an open-ended interpretation of the Day 7. The first text is 20:11: “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” The second is 31:17: “for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased *from labor*, and was refreshed.” Based upon God’s week of creative activity, Israel was commanded, in both passages, to imitate his pattern by working six days and resting on the Sabbath (20:9–10; 31:15–16). Because both passages have been clearly understood as references to man imitating the divine pattern established in the first week of temporal history by working on six consecutive, normal days and resting on a literal seventh day,<sup>131</sup> framework advocates attempt to dodge the force of 20:11 by asserting that even literalists have to take God being “refreshed” in 31:17 as an analogy, rather than a literal statement of God being refreshed.<sup>132</sup> However, God’s response of delight, “refreshed,” to his cessation from creative activity does not indicate that the days of creation were nonliteral. Does something that relates to God’s being, which in Exodus 31:17 is certainly analogical since it pictures God as “refreshed,” indicate that the creation days were also anthropomorphic? To say that the anthropomorphism of divine refreshment precludes a literal interpretation of the days of creation is a comparison of apples and oranges.<sup>133</sup> Since there is no inherent connection between God’s nature and the duration of his creative activity, the real issue focuses on whether Scripture affirms that God created on heavenly or earthly time. With the analogy of Scripture as our guide, Exodus 20:11 and 31:17 indicate that God did not create on heavenly time, but on earthly time. He created the universe in six, sequentially arranged, normal days. Both passages use an adverbial accusative of time (“in six days”). This grammatical construction indicates the duration of God’s creative activity by stating how long it occurred, “*during* six days.”<sup>134</sup> This construction, as Benjamin Shaw has correctly noted, “implies both that the days were normal days, and that the days were contiguous. Thus, the ‘dayness’ of the six days, as well as the seventh, is essential to the meaning of the Sabbath commandment. It is not simply analogy—God rested one period after six periods, so in a similar way we rest one day after six of work. Rather, because God made the six days and the seventh, we work the six days and rest the seventh.”<sup>135</sup> Therefore, the biblical evidence suggests that Day 7 of the creation week was a literal day.

Fifth, the seventh day must be a literal day because God blessed and sanctified it. If the seventh day is “unending,” this means that not only did God bless and sanctify it, but he also, on the same unending day, cursed the earth with the Fall of Genesis 3. From a theological

---

verb *shabat*, to “cease” or “rest” (*HALOT*, 2:1407–9), stresses God’s cessation or rest from work during a specific time, the seventh day. NASB appropriately translates this part of v. 2 as “He rested *on the seventh day* from all His work which He had done.” For a helpful discussion of this verse, see Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 177.

<sup>131</sup>See Hasel, “‘Days’ of Creation in Genesis 1,” pp. 28–30.

<sup>132</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 249–50.

<sup>133</sup>For a refutation against taking the creation days as an analogy, see Hasel, “‘Days’ of Creation in Genesis 1,” p. 29; and Terence E. Fretheim, “Were the Days of Creation Twenty-Four Hours Long? ‘Yes,’” in *The Genesis Debate: Persistent Questions About Creation and the Flood*, ed. Ronald Youngblood (Nashville: Nelson, 1986), p. 20.

<sup>134</sup>See Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 2:458–59; Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 171; Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 19.

<sup>135</sup>“The Literal Day Interpretation,” in *Did God Create in Six Days?* ed. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., and David W. Hall (Taylors, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999), p. 217.

perspective, this is questionable. “We must assume,” as John Whitcomb has astutely observed, “that the seventh day was a literal day because Adam and Eve lived through it before God drove them out of the Garden. Surely, he would not have cursed the earth during the seventh day which he blessed and sanctified.”<sup>136</sup>

Therefore, the omission of the evening-morning conclusion on Day 7 does not imply that this day was unending. What Genesis 2:1–3 indicates is that Day 7 was substantially different from the preceding six days characterized by divine creative activity because “by the seventh day” (Gen 2:2–3) God ceased from this work. Further, since Day 7 did not involve a transition to another day of creative activity, there was no need to say “and there was evening and there was morning, the *seventh* day.” Day 8 was not a day of divine creation; it could not have been characterized as a day of extraordinary providence. On Day 8, the created order was fully functioning according to normal providence and Adam and Eve began their divinely given responsibility of cultivating and maintaining the Garden of Eden. Genesis 2:1–3 has no implication that the seventh day is an eternal day. How is this literal interpretation of Day 7 to be harmonized with Hebrews 4 where God’s eternal Sabbath rest is seemingly equated with Genesis 2:2?

#### **The Motif of God’s Rest in Hebrews 4**

Some framework proponents equate God’s eternal Sabbath rest of Hebrews 4 with the seventh day of the creation week.<sup>137</sup> In contrast to the framework view, the eternal rest in Hebrews 4 cannot be equated with Day 7 of the creation week for two reasons.

Initially, this equation of Hebrews 4 with Genesis 2:2 is only legitimate if Genesis 2:1–3 implies that Day 7 was unending. Since, as just argued, Genesis 2:1–3 neither explicitly affirms nor necessarily implies that Day 7 was an unending day, this interpretation is invalid. Hebrews 4 never states that the seventh day of the creation week is an unending day.<sup>138</sup> In actuality, the use of Hebrews 4 to prove that the seventh day in Genesis 2:1–3 is an ongoing day assumes what needs to be demonstrated. In Hebrews 4:3–11, the author cites Genesis 2:2 and Psalm 95:7–11 as a warning against unbelief. The passage is a call to persevere in the faith. If one does not persevere, he will not enter into God’s eternal rest. The eternal rest presented in Hebrews is based on an analogy with God’s creative rest in Genesis 2:1–3. The author of Hebrews uses the Mosaic omission of the evening-morning conclusion as a type patterned after God’s eternal rest.

Additionally, the actual kind of rest in Genesis 2:2–3 is completely different than the rest in Hebrews 4:3–11. The rest of Genesis 2:2–3 is a cessation from divine creative activity. Only the Creator can cease from that activity. It is absolutely impossible for the creature to experience that cessation. However, the Sabbath-rest of Hebrews 4:3–11 is a rest that the people of God actually experience. Therefore, the “rest” in both contexts cannot be identical. The framework position assumes that the “rest” of Genesis 2 is identical with Hebrews 4. However, instead of assuming that the “rest” of Genesis 2 and Hebrews 4 are identical, framework advocates need to demonstrate this identity. Because of the Creator-creation distinction, the only possible relationship between Genesis 2:2–3 and Hebrews 4:3–11 is one of analogy and not identity. Consequently, Hebrews 4:3–11 establishes that God’s eternal rest is an analogy drawn from

---

<sup>136</sup>“The Science of Historical Geology in the Light of the Biblical Doctrine of a Mature Creation,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 36 (Fall 1973): 68.

<sup>137</sup>Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 245.

<sup>138</sup>So Noel Weeks, *The Sufficiency of Scripture* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1988), p. 115.

God's rest on the literal seventh day in Genesis 2:1–3. As such, Hebrews 4 does not preclude Day 7 of the creation week as a historic literal day.

Neither the omission of the evening-morning conclusion for Day 7 nor the use of Genesis 2:2 in Hebrews 4 provide support for the seventh day of the creation week as an unending, nonliteral day. Rather than sustaining the framework's third thesis, the omission of the evening-morning conclusion coupled with explicit references to God's cessation of his work of creation and pronouncement of blessing indicates that the seventh day was a day that was a specific, literal day that concluded a series of six, consecutive literal days.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

In this paper I have critiqued three major arguments of the framework position. First, the framework position's figurative interpretation that argues for a topical arrangement of the days of the creation week into two triads is incongruous with the exegetical details of Genesis 1:1–2:3 and lessens the literary nature of the creation account as a genuine historical narrative. While Genesis 1:1–2:3 involves a stylized use of Hebrew narrative, the fact that the mainline narrative of this account is predominantly advanced by a sequential narrative verbal form, *waw* consecutive, communicates that it is genuine narrative. When this grammatical form is joined to a form of the word "day," *yôm*, which consistently refers to literal days in Scripture, and *yôm* is qualified by sequentially arranged numbers from first to seventh, Moses clearly communicates that Genesis 1:1–2:3 is the first week in the space and time continuum that involves a week of seven literal, sequentially numbered days. Second, rather than Genesis 2:5 assuming some framework advocates' "creation-in-process" description of Genesis 1 and implying that the creation week was controlled by ordinary providence, 2:5 in its grammatical context provides the setting for the creation of man, extraordinary providence, on Day 6 of the creation week. The evidence from Genesis 1–2 and the overall tenor of Scripture demonstrate that the creation week was characterized by extraordinary providence and that during this week God miraculously established and maintained the conditions for the earth so that, at the end of the six days of divine creative activity, the earth would be able to operate in ordinary providence as a fit habitation for the couple created in God's image. Third, the omission of the evening-morning conclusion on Day 7, explicit reference to God's cessation of his work of creation, God's pronouncement of blessing on Day 7, and my interpretation of Hebrews 4 does not provide adequate evidence to sustain the framework's interpretation of the seventh day as an unending period. When this evidence is carefully scrutinized in its biblical context, it indicates that Day 7 was a specific, literal day that concluded a series of six, consecutive literal days of divine creative activity.

In brief, advocates of the framework position minimize the force of the predominant biblical issues associated with Genesis 1–2 by emphasizing a few apparent exegetical and hermeneutical concerns. However, it is not the exegetical data and biblical theology that provide the matrix for rethinking the creation account. The real issue is external to Scripture. Until the last two centuries, the witness of orthodox Christianity has generally supported the literal interpretation of the creation week.<sup>139</sup> What has changed in the last two centuries is that we currently live in a post-Darwinian world.

In reality, doctrine has not changed over the course of Church History. What has primarily changed in approximately 200 years is the way fallen man defines and uses science. In

---

<sup>139</sup>For a concise historical summary of the interpretation of the creation week, see Duncan and Hall, "24-Hour View," pp. 47–52.

this regard, even professing evangelicals have been influenced by our world's insistence that "science" denies a young earth creation that took place in a literal week. For example, Bruce Waltke, a framework advocate, seemingly reflects a common "evangelical" view of modern science: "The days of creation may also pose difficulties for a strict historical account. Contemporary scientists almost unanimously discount the possibility of creation in one week, and we cannot summarily discount the evidence of the earth sciences. General revelation in creation, as well as the special revelation of Scripture is also the voice of God. We live in a 'universe,' and all truth speaks with one voice."<sup>140</sup> Waltke essentially reduces general revelation to what modern man says that revelation discloses.<sup>141</sup> In effect, this type of claim nearly equates the assured results of scientific opinion with a revelation from God. Scientific opinion, therefore, is tacitly placed on the same level of authority as the special revelation of Scripture and is allowed to reinterpret the creation week as a literary device, rather than a literal creation week.<sup>142</sup> While Waltke's assessment does not explicitly address the age of the earth, his position supports an old earth model.

More specifically, Meredith Kline has taken the lead in crafting out a modern exegetical reinterpretation of the creation account that allows for an old earth model. Though Irons and Kline claim that those who accept the framework view need not espouse a particular view about the age of the earth,<sup>143</sup> this claim is unconvincing. Perhaps, the best that can be said about this claim is that the explicit argumentation used to support the framework position does not deal with the precise subject of the earth's age. Nevertheless, in actuality, three items imply that the real "unargued presupposition" of the framework is an old earth model. At the outset, if Genesis 2:5 teaches that ordinary providence operated exclusively during the creation period of 1:1–2:3, this suggests that the creation period involved an extended period of time. This may be inferred from Kline's assertion: "Gen. 2:5 reflects an environmental situation that has obviously lasted for a while; it assumes a far more leisurely pace on the part of the Creator, for whom a thousand years are as one day. The tempo of the literalists' reconstructed cosmogony leaves no room for the era-perspective of Gen. 2:5."<sup>144</sup> This certainly intimates an old earth model.<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, Kline implies a presumed commitment to modern scientific opinion when he states that traditional interpretations of the creation account are guilty of creating a conflict between the Bible and science.<sup>146</sup> From my perspective, a literal interpretation of the creation week is in conflict with Kline's interpretation of Genesis 2:5.<sup>147</sup> Finally, in a context affirming his acceptance of Scripture's authority about Adam's federal headship, Kline states the following: "In this article, I have advocated an interpretation of biblical cosmogony according to which

---

<sup>140</sup>Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 77.

<sup>141</sup>When Waltke states that "contemporary scientists almost unanimously discount the possibility of creation in one week," we should note that this is not a *unanimous* opinion among scientists. See Terry Mortenson, *The Great Turning Point* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2004), pp. 236–37.

<sup>142</sup>See Andrew S. Kulikovsky, "Scripture and General Revelation," *TJ* 19:2 (2005): 27–28; and Noel Weeks, "The Hermeneutical Problem of Genesis 1–11," *Themelios* 4 (1978): 13–14.

<sup>143</sup>"Framework View," p. 217.

<sup>144</sup>"Space and Time," p. 13.

<sup>145</sup>So also Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., "The Framework Hypothesis Debate," in *Yea, Hath God Said: The Framework Hypothesis/Six-Day Creation Debate*, by Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., and Michael R. Butler (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002), p. 17.

<sup>146</sup>"Space and Time," p. 14.

<sup>147</sup>Walter M. Booth, "Days of Genesis 1: Literal or Nonliteral?" *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 14 (Spring 2003): 116.

Scripture is open to the current scientific view of a very old universe and, in that respect, does not discountenance the theory of the evolutionary origin of man.”<sup>148</sup> In the final analysis, an old earth model shaped by our evolutionary age, along with its demand for death and destruction long before the Fall of Adam, provides the matrix in which the framework view has been conceived.<sup>149</sup>

If we did not live in this current age, could framework advocates even have dreamed of using “day,” “evening” and “morning” figuratively?<sup>150</sup> Because there is no scriptural reason to think that the temporal markers of Genesis 1:1–2:3 could be taken in any way other than a literal use, the complex framework interpretation could not have even been imagined before our modern era. The *Zeitgeist* of our age has created a philosophical environment conducive to a reinterpretation of the creation account. The influences that shape such a reinterpretation are clearly external to Scripture because in the overall biblical context, there is no support for the complicated framework view. The only way to conceive of this view is to say that the actual text of Genesis 1:1–2:3 has historically been misinterpreted and a new, enlightened exegetical solution gives the correct interpretation. At the end of the day, there is no consistent biblical reason to adopt the framework interpretation.

Therefore, my conclusions are that the framework view poses more exegetical and theological difficulties than it solves and that the traditional, literal reading provides the most consistent interpretation of the exegetical details associated with the context of the early chapters of Genesis and the overall theological message of Scripture that has a bearing on Genesis 1–2.

---

<sup>148</sup>“Space and Time,” p. 15, n. 47.

<sup>149</sup>See Duncan and Hall, “24-Hour Response,” p. 258.

<sup>150</sup>See Young, *Studies in Genesis One*, pp. 100–103.