A Critique of the Literary Framework View of the Days of Creation

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the last one hundred years, the question of how Genesis 1 and the days of creation should be interpreted in the light of modern science, has sparked much discussion and debate. The most recent trend among evangelicals is to interpret the days as a literary device. Most commentators have identified an apparent parallelism between days 1-3 and days 4-6, but Henri Blocher and Meredith Kline have taken this a step further by devising a Literary Framework interpretation, which denies the chronological sequence of the days.[1] This paper will offer a critique of that view, focussing particularly on Kline's "Two Register Cosmology." A defence of the chronological interpretation will also be presented.[2]

II. STYLE AND GENRE OF THE CREATION ACCOUNT

Advocates of the Literary Framework view consider the *Gap Theory* and the *Day-Age Theory* inadequate, yet they are still convinced that the claims of modern biology, geology and astronomy are true. Therefore, a *non-concordist* view is taken; Genesis 1 is not meant to be harmonised with science. Rather, it is a literary arrangement used to communicate a *theology of the Sabbath*,[3] not a literal historical account.[4] Although the days should be understood as ordinary 24-hour days, they form part of a larger figurative whole.[5] The advantage of such an approach is that it escapes the exegetical and scientific problems of interpreting the days as ages, and avoids chronological

[1] H. Blocher, *In the Beginning* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 1984). M. G. Kline, "Space and Time in the Genesis Cosmogony", *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 48 (1996) 2-15.
[2] Questions of source and authorship will not be considered. It is assumed that other near-eastern creation accounts are perversions of a common source of Genesis 1 (see I. M. Price, *The Monuments and the Old Testament* [Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1925] 129-130). It is also assumed that Moses was at least the redactor, if not the author, of all the content in Genesis.
[3] Blocher, 50.
[4] Blocher does, however, affirm that the events of creation (i.e. the creation of seas, land, plants, animals and man) were historical.
[5] Ibid.

difficulties in the text such as the occurrence of an "evening" and a "morning" before the creation of the sun, moon and stars on day four. Blocher believes the form of Genesis 1-2 is exactly what would be expected if the author wanted to communicate such a view.[6] However, it is presumptuous to assume that a particular author living in a vastly different culture and at a time far removed from the present, would write according to 20th century expectations.[7] In addition, if this is all Genesis 1 intends to communicate, it leaves an abundance of "spare" data. Why is there so much excess detail? Blocher is also inconsistent in viewing the creation account as merely a vehicle for communicating a theology of the Sabbath, since he later states that the absence of any reference to the days of creation in Deuteronomy 5:12-15, suggests the days referred to in the Sabbath commandments of Exodus 20:11 and 31:17, should not be taken as too close a link to creation.[8]

Blocher considers Genesis 1 a "mixed" genre – a mix of history and allegory – and he cites Matthew 21:33-41 for support, claiming that this parable summarises centuries of history.[9] But this Matthean passage is clearly identified as a parable (21:45-46) and communication of history was not its purpose. Therefore, this parable adds no support at all for his view. In addition, Blocher admits elsewhere: "The style of the prologue is amazing for its deliberate simplicity, its ascetic style. It shows not the slightest trace of rhetoric."[10] He also notes that Genesis 1 contains no rhythms of Hebrew poetry or synonymous parallelism.[11] It should also be understood that while Genesis 1 clearly contains some non-narrative and figurative elements, this does not at all imply the whole passage is non-narrative.

Similarly, Bruce Waltke also suggests the days are anthropomorphic.[12] But again, although the account does contain anthropomorphic language,[13] this does not mean or imply that the entire account is anthropomorphic. In any case, as E. J. Young pointed

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[6] Ibid. 51.
[7] Blocher does not even consider what one would expect to read if the creation week was, in fact, a literal chronological record.
[8] Ibid. 48.
[9] Ibid. 37.
[10] Ibid. 31.
[11] Ibid. 32.
[12] B. K. Waltke, "The First Seven Days", *Christianity Today* 32 (1988) 42-46.
[13] e.g. God "breathed" in Genesis 2:7.

out, anthropomorphisms generally take the form of a body part or body movement in order to describe God's actions. They never take the form of a temporal concept such as a day.[14]

Ronald Youngblood suggests the occasional literary device appears to indicate the account is literary instead of chronological. But this conclusion does not follow: the presence of clearly defined literary devices in no way implies that the days are literary devices or that they are non-chronological.[15]

Note also that the creation account contains all the usual characteristics one would expect to find in historical narrative. Gesenius' Hebrew grammar states: "One of the most striking peculiarities in the Hebrew *consecution* of tenses is the phenomenon that, in representing a series of past events, only the first verb stands in the perfect, and the narration is continued in the imperfect."[16] Indeed, this is exactly what we find in Genesis 1: The first verb, בראׁ (*bara*), is a perfect, which is then followed by a series of imperfects, including ויאמר (*wayyomer*), and ויהי (*wayehi*).

III. THE LITERARY FRAMEWORK VIEW

Most commentators on Genesis have pointed out that in the creation account there appear to be parallels between the first three days and the second three days. For example, Youngblood proposes the outline presented in Table 1.[17]

[14] E. J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1964) 58.
[15] Young (65) states that even if Genesis 1 is schematic, it does not necessarily follow that it is figurative or not a record of what actually happened. It does not prove that the days are non-chronological.
[16] GKC § 49.a.1. Original emphasis.
[17] R. F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 2nd edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1991) 25. Blocher (51-52) presents a similar view.

Day 1	Let there be light (1:3).	Let there be lights (1:14).	**Day 4**
Day 2	Let there be an expanse to separate water from water (1:6).	Let the water teem with creatures and let birds fly above the earth (1:20).	**Day 5**
Day 3	Let dry land appear (1:9). Let the land produce vegetation (1:11).	Let the land produce living creatures (1:24). Let us make man (1:26). I give you every seed bearing plant… and every tree that has fruit with seed in it…for food (1:29).	**Day 6**

Table 1: Proposed parallels between creation days.

Kline, on the other hand, goes even further. His "Two Register Cosmology" (see Table 2) envisions a heavenly level (upper register) and an earthly level (lower register), where the lower register relates to the upper register as replica to archetype.[18] It is not entirely clear what these two registers or levels are, but it appears they refer to the visible and invisible realms respectively.[19]

	v. 1	**v. 2**	**Days 1-6**	**Day 7**
upper register	heaven	Spirit	fiats	God's Sabbath
lower register	earth	deep	fulfilments	Sabbath ordinance

Table 2: Correspondences between Upper Register and Lower Register (reproduced from Kline).

Kline claims that the use of "the heavens and the earth" is the first indication of the two register cosmology: heaven is the invisible realm and earth is the visible realm. Yet he earlier claims that the term is not just a merism[20] but two *concrete* components that form the physical world. But if "the heavens" are upper register how can they also be concrete?

[18] See Table 1 in Kline "Space and Time." He also sees the same kind of two register cosmology in Job and Revelation. However, these books are completely different in both form and function to the Genesis prologue. Revelation is apocalyptic and Job is wisdom literature. They are completely different genres and not at all comparable.
[19] Ibid. 5.
[20] Ibid. 4. A merism (or merismus) is a pair of antonyms, which together, signify a totality.

These two registers are said to be re-emphasised by the Spirit hovering over the deep, the fiats and fulfilments of the six days, and God's rest on the seventh day. Table 3 shows how Kline also divides the days into two triads:[21]

First Triad	Level	Second Triad
day one	upper	day four
day two	upper { } lower	day five
day three	lower	day six

Table 3: Triads of creation days (reproduced from Kline).

The creative acts of the first three days supposedly mirror characteristics of the invisible heaven. For example, the day light created on day one was a replica of the "Glory-light."[22] The expanse of day two was so much like its archetype, they both share the name "heaven." Kline claims the trees and fruit of day three are used in scripture as a figure for the cosmos. Their high spreading branches are a realm for the birds of heaven, and are comparable to the expanse in which the birds fly (Gen 1:20) – a towering image pointing to the overarching Spirit-heaven above. Daniel 4:10-12 is cited as support, but this is actually part of a prophetic vision concerning King Nebuchadnezzar, which does not speak at all about the cosmos.

The first members of each triad are meant to relate to the heaven (upper level): light on day one, and light sources on day four. However, Kline is again inconsistent. The upper level is supposed to represent the invisible realm, but both light and light sources are physical and very visible! The third members are meant to relate to the earth (lower level): land and vegetation on day three, and the land animals and man on day six. The second members are meant to serve as links between the first and third members. These middle units combine both upper and lower levels: the sky and sea on day two, and

[21] See Table 2 in Kline "Space and Time."
[22] Kline never actually defines what he means by "Glory-light."

birds of the air and fish of the sea on day five. Here again, Kline is inconsistent, since both sky and birds are physical and visible.[23]

An even closer analysis of the text shows the so-called parallels and literary devices are far from what is claimed, if they exist at all.

1. Day One and Day Four.

Kline holds that in terms of chronology, day four is contemporaneous with day one, and describes the astral apparatus that accounts for the day and night. He claims the luminaries (kings) of day four rule over the light and dark (kingdoms) of day one, thus regulating the cycle of light and darkness. He thus concludes the narrative sequence is not chronological.[24]

However, Kline is very selective in his treatment of the text. On day one, God Himself separates light from darkness, and calls the light "day" and the darkness "night." On day four, God creates light sources[25] to separate "day" from "night" (as opposed to "light" and "darkness") and to give "light" to the earth. This implies that "light" pre-existed. The light sources were to govern the "day" and "night," which implies that "day" and "night" also pre-existed. Therefore, day one must have preceded day four.

According to J. P. Lewis, the Rabbinic interpreters held that God created a primeval light not dependent on the sun, which came into existence at God's command but was later withdrawn and stored up for the righteous in the messianic future.[26] This is certainly a possibility. Although Gleason Archer claims there is no reference anywhere else in scripture to light that is not connected with the sun, moon and stars or as a result

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[23] Although the boundaries of the sky are indertiminate, it is certainly visible in a phenomenological sense.
[24] Kline, "Space and Time", 7-8.
[25] I.e. in the expanse, which did not exist yet!
[26] J. P. Lewis, "The Days of Creation: An Historical Survey", *JETS* 32 (1989) 449. V. P. Hamilton (*The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, NICOT [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1990] 121) holds a similar view.

of combustion,[27] Revelation 21:23 and 22:5 clearly indicate there will be no sun or moon illuminating the New Jerusalem.[28]

However, Kline objects to this line of reasoning:

> Why would God create such a vast cosmic order only to discard it three days (or ages) later? Why create a replacement cosmos to perform the very same functions already being performed perfectly well by the original system?[29]

But this dismissal is arbitrary. Nothing at all, not even the basic force framework of the universe, existed prior to creation, so the phenomenon of light would need to be created prior to light-producing bodies. Indeed, creating light sources before creating light would be like making a musical instrument in a universe which has no notion of sound!

Note also that when light was created on day one, God Himself divided it from the darkness. But on day four God created the sun and moon for this purpose, which again suggests that a temporary (possibly supernatural) light source was in use for the first three days. Indeed, this seems to be the most satisfactory explanation and best represents what the text actually says. Young affirms:

> That the heavenly bodies are made on the fourth day and that the earth had received light from a source other than the sun is not a naïve conception, but is a plain and sober statement of the truth.[30]

Indeed, believing the earth was created before the sun is no more unreasonable than believing Christ rose from the dead, since modern science regards both as impossible.

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[27] G. L. Archer, "A Response to The Trustworthiness of Scripture in Areas Relating to Natural Science" in E. D. Radmacher & R. D. Preus (eds) *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy & the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1984) 322-323. Archer also states "there is no scientific evidence for photosynthesis resulting from cosmic light" but this is a moot point, since it is a question of the light *source* not the *kind* of light. The temporary light source would have radiated the same kind of light as the sun does today.
[28] See also Ps 104:2, Hab 3:4 and 1 John 1:5.
[29] Kline, "Space and Time " 9.
[30] Young, Studies in Genesis One, 95.

2. Day Two and Day Five.

Following the principle of "kings" ruling over "kingdoms", the birds and fish of day five are said to rule over the sky and sea of day two, respectively.[31] But Kline erroneously identifies the "expanse" and "waters below the expanse" of day three, with the habitats of birds and sea creatures, respectively. This critical error causes his whole framework to collapse. On day two, God creates the expanse and calls it "sky" (שׁמים). The expanse cannot be equated with the atmosphere, since verse 14 states that the sun, moon and stars are set *in the expanse* (ברקיע). The preposition בְּ (*be*) has a similar semantic range to the English preposition "in," which implies the expanse is where the sun, moon and stars are located – in other words, *interstellar space*.[32] D. R. Humphreys has pointed out that "above the earth across the expanse of the sky" (Gen 1:20, NIV) is an inaccurate translation of על־פני רקיע השׁמים.[33] "Across" is not a possible rendering of the preposition על ("on", "over") and פני ("face") appears to remain untranslated. In verse 2, the same phrase is translated "over the surface," so verse 20 would be better translated "over the surface of the expanse of the heavens." This appears to be phenomenological language. An observer on earth looking up at the sky, watching birds fly past, can easily determine the approximate distance to the bird since it is an objective and well defined entity. Yet, the same observer could not determine the distance to the beginning of interstellar space (the expanse) because its beginning is not so well defined. The observer would, however, perceive that its beginning is much further away than the bird. Thus, to the observer looking up at the sky, the bird flies *over the surface* of the expanse (i.e. in Earth's atmosphere), not *in* the expanse.

In addition, the "waters" (מים) of day two are the same as those of day one. However, on day five the sea creatures were to fill the "water in the seas" (המים בימים), which were created on day three (Gen 1:10). But according to Kline's schema, day three is contemporaneous with day six, not day five! Furthermore, the sea creatures were

[31] Kline, "Space and Time", 6.
[32] D. R. Humphreys, *Starlight and Time* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 1994) 58-59.
[33] Ibid. 60.

commanded to "be fruitful" (פרו), "increase in number" (ורבו) and "fill" (ומלאו) the seas, and the birds were commanded to "increase on the land" (ירב בארץ). Yet there is no philological or contextual evidence to indicate that God intended them to rule or govern anything, despite Kline's claim to the contrary.

It should also be noted that the focus of day two is the creation of the *expanse* between the waters, *not the waters themselves*, which were already in existence at the beginning of day two. It should also be asked why the waters *below* the expanse are singled out? Kline makes no mention of the waters *above* the expanse, presumably because they do not fit into his pattern. Indeed, the lack of correspondence between day two and day five completely undermines the entire schema.

3. Day Three and Day Six.

Continuing the "kings" and "kingdoms" theme, Kline notes that humanity has been commissioned by God to rule over the creation.[34] But Kline is again highly selective in his presentation of the relationship between the two days. Humanity was not commissioned to rule over the land, the seas and the vegetation created on day three, but over the land animals created that same day, and over the fish and birds created the previous day! Humanity was told to "fill the earth and subdue it" but never to "rule" it. Specific vegetation was given for food to humanity and animals with "the breath of life", yet this also contains no notion of "ruling." Kline also fails to integrate the many details of both days: Why does God specifically call dry ground "land" and gathered waters "seas"? What is the significance of the commission to increase, fill the earth and subdue it? Why is there no parallel on day three? Why the repetition concerning Man created in the image of God and our task of ruling over the animal world?

4. Does parallelism disprove chronology?

Even if the so-called parallelism is accepted, Young points out that there is still an implicit chronology in the account: day one/day four →day two/day five →day three/day

[34] Kline, "Space and Time ", 6.

six.[35] The sun and moon are placed in the expanse on day four, which (according to the framework) occurs at the same time as day one. Young notes that this implies the expanse existed before day one/day four, yet this clearly contradicts verses 6-8 which state that the expanse was created on day two!

In regard to the "…evening and morning – day *N*" pattern, Kline writes:

> …when we find that God's upper level activity of issuing creative fiats from his heavenly throne is pictured as transpiring in a week of earthly days, we readily recognise that, in keeping with the pervasive contextual pattern, this is a literary figure, an earthly, lower register time metaphor for an upper register, heavenly reality.[36]

But this is inconsistent with the rest of his interpretation, where lower register elements such as the "earth" (Gen 1:1), the "deep" (Gen 1:2), and the fulfilments of the six days, are all concrete, not figurative. If Kline views the creation days as figurative, why does he not view the creation of land (day three) and the creation of animals and man (day six) as figurative, since these are all part of the lower register? Kline's belief that the pattern of days is simply a detail in the creation-week picture[37] is far too simplistic and all too convenient.

5. Day Seven

Kline believes that the seventh day exclusively relates to God and the upper register:

> It is precisely the (temporary) exclusion of man from this heavenly Sabbath of God that gives rise to the two-register cosmology. At the Consummation, God's people will enter his royal rest, the seventh day of creation (Heb. 4:4, 9, 10), but until then, the seventh creation day does not belong to the lower register world of human solar day experience. It is heaven time, not earth time.[38]

The unending nature of day seven differentiates it from solar days, which Kline claims is confirmed by the treatment of God's rest in Hebrews 4. He argues:

> If the seventh day were not an unending Sabbath-rest for God but a literal day, would the next day be another work day, introducing another week of work and rest for him, to be

[35] Young, Studies in Genesis One, 69.
[36] Kline, "Space and Time", 7.
[37] Ibid. 10.
[38] Ibid.

> followed by an indefinite repetition of this pattern? Are we to replace the Sabbath-Consummation doctrine of biblical eschatology with a mythological concept of cyclic time? In the Genesis prologue the unending nature of God's Sabbath is signalised by the absence of the evening-morning formula from the account of the seventh day.[39]

But arguing for a long Sabbath based on the missing "and there was evening and there was morning – the *X*th day" is an argument from silence, which is a logical fallacy. Its absence does not necessarily imply that it did not happen.

Kline's appeal to Hebrews 4:3-4 is also misguided, since the "rest" mentioned in this passage is first mentioned in Hebrews 3:11, in a quotation from Psalm 95, which describes the unbelief of the Israelites after they fled Egypt (cf. Heb 3:18). Because of their unbelief, God punished the people by not allowing them to enter His "rest," which was the Land of Canaan, the Promised Land. In Hebrews 4:1, the author states that the promise of entering God's rest still stands. However, in verses 2-3a he makes it clear that he is now talking about entering the kingdom of God, rather than possessing the land. Because of this, the "Promised Land" is set up as a *type* of the kingdom, and both may be referred to as "God's rest." In Hebrews 4:4, the author quotes Genesis 2:2 in order to point out that the invitation to enter God's "rest" has not just been open since the time of the exodus, but has been open ever since the creation of the world, because that is when God ceased His creative work and began resting. Thus Paul Ellingworth suggests the rest is a long period of time *beginning* with the seventh day of creation, not that the Sabbath *is* the seventh day.[40]

People who believe will enter God's rest and cease to do their own work just as God ceased to do His (Heb 4:9-10). This does not mean that God has been idle, since Jesus Himself stated that His Father is working (John 5:17). Rather, the completion of creation marks the end of a magnificent whole. Leon Morris writes:

> There was nothing to add to what God had done, and he entered a rest from creating, a rest marked by the knowledge that everything that he had made was very good (Gen 1:31). So we

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[39] Ibid.
[40] P. Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1993) 249.

> should think of the rest as something like the satisfaction that comes from accomplishment, from the completion of a task, from the exercise of creativity.[41]

There is also a sense in which entering the kingdom of God implies a ceasing from one's own work and resting securely on what Christ has done.[42] Indeed, Jesus Himself spoke about rest for the souls of men (Matt 11:28-30). Therefore, contra Kline, the "rest" of Hebrews 4 refers to entering the kingdom of God, not to the seventh day of creation.[43]

Blocher also argues for a non-literal Sabbath. Based on Jesus' statement in John 5:19 concerning the Son doing "what He sees the Father doing", Blocher argues that Jesus' reasoning is only sound if the Father acts during the Sabbath – only then, would the Son also have the right to act on the Sabbath.[44] Therefore, he concludes the Sabbath must be more than a literal day. But Blocher's argument fails because the sense of שׁבת on day seven is the ceasing of *creative* work, not the ceasing of all work, so there is no reason why day seven should be understood as anything other than a literal day.

IV. GENESIS AS CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

1. The structure of Genesis

Traditionally, the book of Genesis has been divided into two sections: Primeval History (Gen 1-11) and Patriarchal History (Gen 12-50).[45] However, D. J. A. Clines has noted:

> …it is most significant that there is no clear-cut break at the end of the Babel story. Clearly, Abrahamic material begins a new section of the Pentateuch, but the precise beginning of the Abrahamic material - and therewith the conclusion of the pre-Abrahamic material - cannot be determined. In the final form of Genesis, there is at no point a break between primeval and patriarchal history.[46]

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[41] L. Morris & D. W. Burdick, *Hebrews and James*, Expositors Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1996) 41.
[42] Ibid. 43.
[43] For a fuller discussion of how Hebrews 4 relates to the Sabbath rest, see A. S. Kulikovsky, "God's Rest in Hebrews 4:1-11" *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 13 (2):61-62.
[44] Blocher, 57.
[45] See for example W. S. La Sor, D. A. Hubbard & F. W. Bush, *Old Testament Survey* 2nd edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1996); A. Edersheim, *Bible History: Old Testament* (Peabody, Massachussets: Hendrickson, 1995).

Since the Patriarchal History is generally regarded as an accurate literal historical record, there is no reason why the Primeval History should not also be viewed in the same way.

The only clear divisions in the book are the various "accounts" beginning with תולדות אלה ("this is the account of"). There are eleven accounts in total,[47] but the creation account (Gen 1) does not have the said starting formula. Each account builds on the previous one, and several of them cause the story to focus on a particular individual and his family.[48] This pattern is shown in figure 1:

[46] D. J. A. Clines, "Theme in Genesis 1-11" in R. S. Hess & D. T. Tsumura (eds), *I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood*, 305.
[47] Gen 2:4, 5:1, 6:9, 10:1, 11:10, 11:27, 25:12, 25:19, 36:1, 37:2.
[48] Shem (11:10), Isaac (25:19), Jacob (37:2).

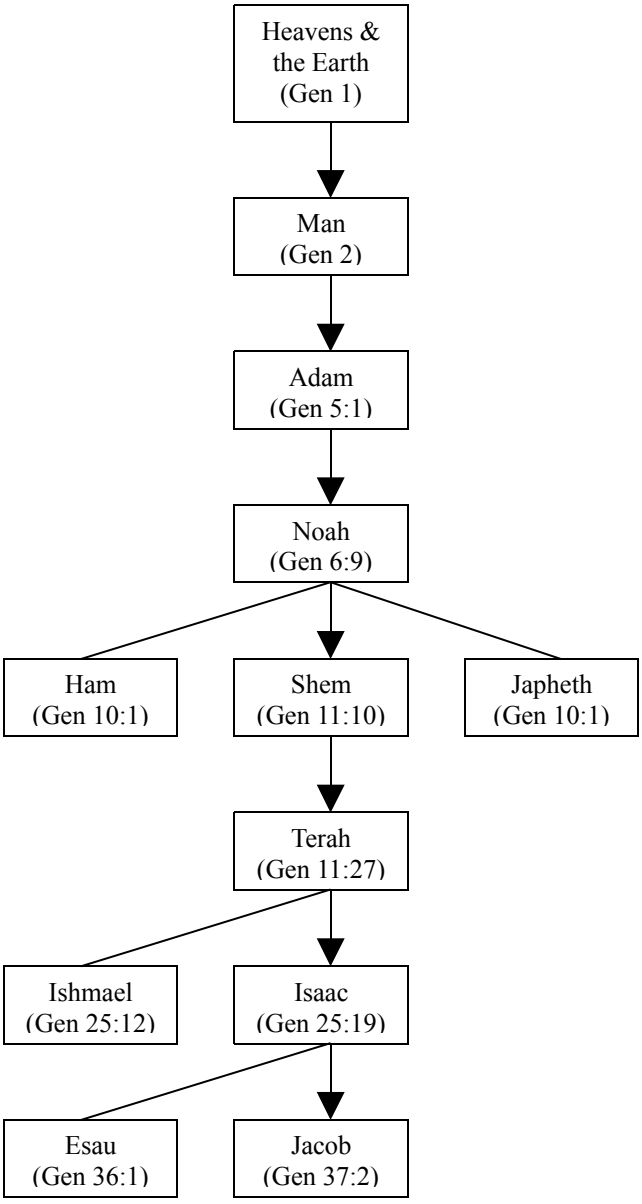

Figure 1: The progression of the Genesis "accounts"

Because Genesis 1 does not begin with the usual starting formula, Gordon Wenham considers it separate from the main historical outline of Genesis and that it, therefore, should be interpreted differently.[49] But Wenham has apparently failed to notice that each account carries on the story of a subject mentioned in the *preceding* account. Therefore,

[49] G. H. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, WBC (Dallas: Word Books, 1987) 40.

since Genesis 1 is the first account, we would not expect to find the same starting formula.

Note also, that the narrative style of Genesis 1 suggests a positive record of things as they actually happened, not a record of mythical suppositions or vague suggestions.[50] Derek Kidner also notes the inescapable impression that the characters of Genesis "are people of flesh and blood" and "the events actual and the book itself a unity."[51] In addition, many other scriptures make allusions to the historicity of the Genesis account.[52]

Waltke, citing Charles Hummel, posits that the Genesis account is prescriptive rather than descriptive – it answers the "who," "why" and "what ought to be," not the "what," "how" and "what is."[53] But Walter Kaiser rightly objects to this idea:

> It is often wrongly stated that Genesis 1 tells us who created the universe but not how it was done – an obvious slighting of the phrase repeated ten times, 'and God said…'[54]

There is no doubt that Genesis makes a theological contribution – its mere presence in the Bible confirms this. But to say that Genesis is primarily theological rather than historical is to set up a false dichotomy: history and theology are *not* mutually exclusive. Given the structure and unity of Genesis, and the clearly historical nature of the later chapters, there would have to be substantial evidence in the text in order to conclude that the early chapters are not equally historical, yet no such evidence can be found. H. C. Leupold contends that the creation account is complete and satisfactory from every point of view, although it does not answer every curiosity.[55] Indeed, if all Genesis 1-2 communicates is that God is creator of all, then the first verse would be enough.[56] In any case, one would expect history to precede theology, since God typically works in history through real people and real events.

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[50] H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis* vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1949) 25.
[51] D. Kidner, *Genesis*, TOTC (Leicester: IVP, 1967) 22.
[52] Cf. Exod 20:9-11, 31:17, Ps 8, 104, Matt 19:4-6, Luke 3:38, 2 Pet 3:5 and Heb 4:4.
[53] Waltke, "The First Seven Days", 45.
[54] W. C. Kaiser, "Legitimate Hermeneutics" in *Inerrancy*, N. L. Geisler, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1979) 147.
[55] Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis* vol. 1, 35.
[56] J. J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1975) 75.

2. The sequence of the days

Based on the absence of the article before each "day" and before the numericals "one" through "fifth," David Sterchi argues that the syntax does not necessarily imply or require a chronological sequence, although it is not excluded.[57] He also argues that this allows for the possibility of a random or literary order. However, he fails to consider the presence of the *waw*-consecutive imperfect **ויאמר** ("And God said…") introducing each new day, which clearly indicates chronological sequence.[58] He also fails to take into account the implicit progression in the creative acts themselves. The initial "deep" is divided by an expanse, and then the waters below are gathered together to form seas so that dry land can appear. Vegetation and animals are then created, and finally, Man. It would make no sense for God to create in any other order. As R. S. Hess states:

> Each day accomplishes something new, bringing about a greater completion of the work of creation. Each day begets the next. ...Indeed, it points to a perspective in which each day of creation, as each generation of humanity, progresses in the unfolding of a divine plan.[59]

Leupold suggests Genesis 1 should be viewed as a record of successive creative acts that remove four deficiencies or instances of incompleteness. The account clearly progresses from providing basic essentials for existence to a climax, which is the creation of humanity.[60] It is a narrative with sequence,[61] a progressive revelation which becomes fuller and clearer.[62]

It must also be asked why the author of the creation account would choose a clearly chronological framework (a week) to communicate something that is supposedly non-chronological? In fact, it is difficult to imagine language that would more clearly communicate that the universe was made in six literal, chronological days.

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[57] D. A. Sterchi, "Does Genesis 1 Provide a Chronological Sequence?", *JETS* 39 (1996) 533. Also Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis* 26. Sterchi suggests the article before "sixth" and "seventh" is emphatic.
[58] *waw*-consecutives also terminate each day: ויהי־ערב ויהי־בקר ("…and then there was evening and then there was morning").
[59] R. S. Hess, "Genesis 1-2 in its Literary Context", *Tyndale Bulletin* 41 (1990) 152.
[60] Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis* vol. 1, 38.
[61] Kidner, *Genesis*, 55.
[62] Ibid. 25.

V. CONCLUSION

The Literary Framework view appears to be based more on imagination than on the Biblical text. The parallels and relationships are either artificial, stretched or non-existent, and the syntactical relationship between the days are not taken into account. The whole approach appears to be arbitrary and inconsistent, and it completely disregards the historical narrative nature of the account.

In addition, Young notes that the Framework interpretation of Genesis 1 originated with Arie Noordtzij as late as 1924,[63] so the question must be asked how this rather eccentric interpretation managed to escape thousands of commentators (including the Talmudic writers) over the centuries?

Despite Kline's and Blocher's claims to the contrary, the literary structure of Genesis and the placement of the creation account at the head of the book points to an historical, chronological revelation, which narrows in scope as it progresses. The language, syntax, narrative style and progression of thought, all indicate chronological history.

[63] Young, Studies in Genesis One, 44.