

A CRITIQUE OF THE FRAMEWORK INTERPRETATION OF THE CREATION ACCOUNT (PART 1 OF 2)[†]

by
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Beginning with the development of modern geology in the nineteenth century along with its demands for an old earth,² various novel explanations of Genesis 1:1–2:3 have arisen in the evangelical world attempting to harmonize the days of the creation week with an old earth. With these various explanations, a common element is a figurative interpretation of the days of the creation week, rather than the traditional literal understanding.³ One of these approaches, which has become increasingly popular over the last forty years, is the framework interpretation.⁴ For those who are committed to biblical inerrancy, this view has had a certain level of appeal for at least two reasons. First, framework advocates claim their view of creation is based on a consistent use of exegesis. As Meredith G. Kline has averred: “Purely exegetical considerations, therefore, compel the conclusion that the divine author has employed the imagery of an ordinary week to provide a figurative chronological framework for the

[†]I made minor revisions to this article in December 2006.

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²See Terry Mortenson, *The Great Turning Point* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2004), pp. 27–40.

³In this paper, I am using the expression “literal” day to refer to a normal, 24-hour day and “figurative” day to refer to a non-literal day.

⁴Both opponents and advocates have summarily referred to this interpretative scheme as “the framework hypothesis.” However, the term *hypothesis* may have pejorative connotations and suggest that its advocates are not convinced of its biblical certainty (for a note to this effect, see 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. 254, n. 1). In this paper, I will use a more neutral title, such as “framework interpretation.”

account of his creative acts.”⁵ Second, the framework view does not restrict a Christian’s conscience about the age of the earth, a subject that the Bible supposedly does not address. With the argumentation used to support the framework view, the claim is made that the age of the earth is not a necessary component with their depiction of the framework. “In fact, one may hold to the framework interpretation and affirm a more recent date for creation, should one be so convinced.... Teachers of God’s word cannot say, ‘As a Bible-believing Christian, you *must* believe that the earth is young (or old).’”⁶ What are the “exegetical considerations” that make this view so compelling? Is it true that this interpretation has no implications for the age of the earth? More essentially, what is the framework interpretation? Over the course of two articles, my goal is to examine the framework interpretation and to evaluate its biblical consistency. This first article will present four major theses of the framework argument and will critique one of these theses. The second article will evaluate the remaining three theses.

SUMMARY OF THE FRAMEWORK INTERPRETATION

Rather than interpreting the days of Genesis 1 as a sequential account of God’s creative activity in six days, the framework view affirms that the creation “week” itself is a figurative structure. This understanding of the creation account was initially set forth in 1924 by Professor Arie Noordzij of the University of Utrecht.⁷ 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?*⁸ However, the current popularity of this interpretation is largely a result of the work of Reformed scholar Meredith G. Kline.⁹ His initial entry was an article in 1958, “Because It Had Not Rained.”¹⁰ Since Kline’s initial article, some other reputable Christian scholars have provided

⁵“Because It Had Not Rained,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 20 (May 1958): 157.

⁶Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 218.

⁷For 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.

⁸Trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957).

⁹“Space and Time in the Genesis Cosmogony,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 48 (March 1996): 2.

¹⁰Pp. 145–57. See also his subsequent article, “Space and Time,” pp. 2–15.

academic defenses of the framework interpretation.¹¹

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 four theses. First, the figurative 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. Fourth, a two-register cosmology provides a rationale that explains why the time indicators in Genesis 1:1–2:3 are non-sequential.

THE FIGURATIVE NATURE OF THE CREATION ACCOUNT

As was previously noted, an asserted strength of the framework interpretation is its exegetical basis. This claim provides the first argument supporting this interpretation: the creation “week” itself is a figurative frame comprised of six pictures of workdays, and the actual arrangement of the “days” of the creation “week,” in keeping with its figurative nature, reflects a symmetrically arranged topical account of creation. 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

¹¹ These subsequent defenses have been written by the following: Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning*, trans. David G. Preston (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984); 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): 1–21; 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. 113–30; Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 217–56; W. Robert Godfrey, *God’s Pattern for Creation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2003); and 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 Youngblood (Nashville: Nelson, 1986), pp. 36–55. While not attempting to provide a full defense of the framework view, there are some evangelical commentators who provide support for this interpretation: Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), pp. 53–56; R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, Preach the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), pp. 24–27; Bruce K. Waltke with Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), pp. 56–58, 73–78; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), pp. 19, 39–40; and Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), pp. 24–33.

chronologically but topically.”¹² To gain an accurate understanding of Kline’s assertion, a brief explanation about the “six work-day frames,” the topical arrangement of the creation account, and its poetic nature are apropos.

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, “God said,” *וַיֹּאמֶר* (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24). The use of *וַיֹּאמֶר* provides a frame for each day of the creation account.¹³ In addition, *וַיֹּאמֶר* is used twice on two different days: the third day (Gen 1:9, 11) and the sixth (1:24, 26). It is from the use of *וַיֹּאמֶר* that framework supporters derive that there are eight creative events.¹⁴ Within each frame, the author of Genesis either gives one snapshot of God’s creative work, such as is 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 evenly divided into two parallel units of three days, with Day 1 corresponding to Day 4, Day 2 to 5, and 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).¹⁵ 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.”¹⁶ The following chart reflects this

¹²Meredith G. Kline, “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.

¹³Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 56.

¹⁴John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1910), pp. 5–6; Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” pp. 227–28; Hamilton, *Genesis*, p. 119; Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 56; Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, pp. 6–7.

¹⁵Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 224.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 224–25.

symmetrical design of the creation “week.”

Creation kingdoms		Creature kings	
Day 1	Light	Day 4	Luminaries
Day 2	Sky Sea	Day 5	Sea creatures Winged creatures
Day 3	Dry land Vegetation	Day 6	Land animals Man
The Creator King			
Day 7		Sabbath ¹⁷	

As this chart reflects, the six workday frames of creation appear to demonstrate a symmetrical arrangement of two triads and this implies that the days of creation may have been arranged in such a way to communicate something other than a sequential arrangement. In addition, the framework view suggests that the literal six days of the creation week are irrelevant because these days are supportive of the non-literal, continuous, seventh day and thus “provide a theology of the sabbath.”¹⁸ According to the framework interpretation, 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.”¹⁹ From this “theology of the sabbath,” it follows that if the seventh day was a non-literal day, then each day that is part of the two parallel units of three days is also a non-literal day.²⁰

A Topical Arrangement

As the preceding chart also reflects, the creation account was not written chronologically but topically. The author of Genesis has apparently placed a couple of obvious inconsistencies into the early chapters of Genesis to reflect a dischronologization of the creation “week.” These obvious inconsistencies inform the reader that the creation account is a topical account, rather than a sequential one. The

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 224. For other examples of this type of chart, with slight variation, see Godfrey, *God's Pattern*, p. 51; Throntveit, “Chronological Order,” p. 46; Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 57; and Youngblood, *Genesis*, p. 25.

¹⁸ Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 50.

¹⁹ Ridderbos, *Genesis 1 and Natural Science*, p. 32.

²⁰ Kline, “Because It Had Not Rained,” p. 156.

initial inconsistency is with 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.²¹ This suggests 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.²² The additional inconsistency relates to the creation of plants. According to the creation account, vegetation was created on Day 3 and the sun on Day 4; however, vegetation needs the sun for photosynthesis. Against this, Genesis 2:5 indicates that an environment can sustain vegetation in normal providence was created prior to vegetation.²³ Since these types of inconsistencies undermine God's normal use of providence, a defense of a literal interpretation of the creation account calls into question God's wisdom.²⁴ Since Scripture uses dischronologization in other places, the framework's recognition of dischronologization in the creation account provides an interpretative scheme that does not call into question God's wisdom.²⁵

An Artistic Narrative

The symmetrical structure and topical arrangement of the creation narrative suggest that it is not a normal historical narrative, but one that involves a highly artistic style,²⁶ or a "semi-poetic style."²⁷ In keeping with its 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. While some framework proponents refer to the time markers of the creation narrative as metaphors,²⁸ others refer to them as anthropomorphic expressions.²⁹ In either case, framework advocates

²¹ Ross, "Framework Hypothesis," p. 120; and Godfrey, *God's Pattern*, pp. 40–41.

²² Irons and Kline, "Framework View," pp. 229–30.

²³ Ibid., p. 223; Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," p. 153.

²⁴ Irons and Kline, "Framework View," p. 229.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 50.

²⁷ Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," p. 156.

²⁸ Irons and Kline, "Framework View," p. 240; Ross, "Framework Hypothesis," p. 120.

²⁹ Ridderbos, *Genesis 1 and Natural Science*, p. 30; Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 57; Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 77.

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,”³⁰ 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.³¹ The precise use of numbers, rather than showing a sequence of days, “attests to God’s logical and timely shaping of creation.”³² When the symmetrical structure of Genesis 1:1–2:3 and its topical arrangement are linked with the use of metaphors or anthropomorphisms for heavenly time, the “mature reader” can only conclude that the creation narrative is not normal historical narrative, but reflects a highly stylized use of narrative. Henri Blocher has commented on the clarity of this literary interpretation: “The structure of our hymn-narrative leaves nothing to chance; it is the fruit of mature meditations.”³³ In sum, this brief explanation of this thesis of the framework view demonstrates that an inherent fabric of this interpretation of Genesis 1:1–2:3 is something of a hymnic use of narrative, a semi-poetic account,³⁴ that, in its design of presenting a theology of the Sabbath, used the figurative framework of a week to topically arrange certain creation motifs.³⁵

THE CREATION ACCOUNT CONTROLLED BY ORDINARY PROVIDENCE

The second argument of the framework theory is that the creation account was controlled by ordinary providence. This tenet is based upon the exegesis of Genesis 2:5 by framework proponents and the analogy of Scripture. Since this argument is predicated on Kline’s 1958 article (“Because It Had Not Rained”), it has been referred to as the “because it had not rained” argument.³⁶ According to this

³⁰ Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 56.

³¹ Ibid., p. 57; Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

³² Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 57.

³³ Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 52.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 50. After acknowledging his agreement with Blocher about the genre of Gen 1:1–2:3, Waltke describes the “creation account as an artistic, literary representation of creation intended to fortify God’s covenant with creation. It represents truths about origins in anthropomorphic language so that the covenant community may have a proper worldview and be wise unto salvation” (*Genesis*, p. 78).

³⁵ Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 50.

³⁶ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 230.

argument, Genesis 2:5 teaches that vegetation was not created until after God provided a water supply for the vegetation and a man to cultivate it: "Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground."³⁷ God created, in v. 6, the water supply and, in v. 7, the man. While Genesis 2:5 may indicate that God created a water supply before vegetation, its underlying assumption, according to Kline, is that "divine providence was operating during the creation period through processes which any reader would recognize as normal in the natural world of his day."³⁸ As such, Genesis 2:5 "takes it for granted that providential operations were not of a supernatural kind, but that God ordered the sequence of creation acts so that the continuance and development of the earth and its creatures could proceed by natural means."³⁹

In addition to the "because it had not rained" argument, the analogy of Scripture dictates that the resultant interpretation of Genesis 2:5 be applied to Genesis 1:11–12, which has vegetation being created on Day 3 followed by man on the sixth day. The apparent problem for a recent creationist's view of the third day is that, prior to vegetation being created on this day, the waters were gathered together and dry land appeared on the same day. But, if the land formed out of water immediately dried up, as vegetation would require, this of necessity would require an extraordinary evaporation process, in conflict with the *modus operandi* of Genesis 2:5. In the words of Kline, "But continents just emerged from under the seas do not become thirsty land as fast as that by the ordinary process of evaporation."⁴⁰ If, then, the sequential understanding of Genesis 1 is correct, this interpretation "directly contradicts the revelation of Genesis 2:5–6, which shows that the mode of divine providence between such supernatural acts of creation was the ordinary mode currently in effect today.... The analogy of Scripture, as applied in this context, forces

³⁷ All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the 1995 edition of NASB.

³⁸ Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," pp. 149–50. See also Futato, who provides more detail to Kline's original argument on Gen 2:5–6 ("Because It Had Rained," pp. 2–10). Because Futato's article is predicated upon Kline's original treatment, 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 (*ibid.*, pp. 10–21).

³⁹ Kline, "Space and Time," p. 13.

⁴⁰ Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," p. 152.

the Bible-believing interpreter to abandon a literalist reading of the creation narrative.⁴¹

UNENDING NATURE OF THE SEVENTH DAY

The third tenet of the framework interpretation relates to the unending nature of the seventh day. If the seventh day is an unending day, it is not an earthly literal day, but rather is a metaphor, a nonliteral day, and reflective of heavenly time. And, if the seventh day is a metaphor, then those days that are subservient to the seventh day, the first six days of the creation account, are metaphorical.⁴² According to Irons and Kline, “this seventh day is not an earthly day of rest for man, but the heavenly rest of God Himself. Because it is synonymous with God’s heavenly enthronement, the seventh day argues for the upper register nature of the creation week, and as an eternal day, it argues for the nonliteral nature of the creation days.”⁴³

Two items are employed to support the unending nature of the seventh day. To begin with, the description of the seventh day in Genesis 2:1–3 omits the “evening-morning” conclusion. This omission of the “evening-morning” formula “is deliberate. There can be no doubt about that in a text that has been composed with exact calculation.”⁴⁴ Additionally, the unending nature of the seventh day “is confirmed by the treatment of the theme of God’s rest in Hebrews 4.”⁴⁵ In concluding his discussion of the impact that this understanding of the seventh day has for taking the first six days of the creation account figuratively, Kline has forcefully stated: “The creation ‘week’ is to be understood figuratively, not literally—that is the conclusion demanded by the biblical evidence.”⁴⁶

TWO-REGISTER COSMOLOGY

The fourth thesis focuses on another argument that Kline set forth in 1996 to further offset the literal interpretation of the creation account.⁴⁷ This more recent support focuses on a two-register cosmology. This argument demonstrates that there are two

⁴¹ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 234.

⁴² Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

⁴³ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 245.

⁴⁴ Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 56.

⁴⁵ Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 2.

distinguishable registers in the created cosmos, an upper and a lower register, and that this “two-register cosmology explains the significance of the nonliteral nature of the time indicators in Genesis 1 within the overall cosmological teaching of Scripture.”⁴⁸ In this scheme, the upper register, an invisible dimension, is not co-eternal with God, but is the heavenly place that God initially created for his dwelling and for his angels. The lower register, a visible dimension, is earth, and “includes the whole visible cosmos from the planet Earth to the star-studded sky.”⁴⁹ The relationship between the lower and upper register is such that the lower register replicates the archetypical upper register. In keeping with the lower register’s imaging the upper register, the days of the creation narrative evidently reflect the time associated with the upper register. As such, the objective reality behind the chronological material in the creation narrative, such as the days of the creation “week” with their attendant evening-morning refrain, is the time associated with the upper register.⁵⁰ To see how this two-register cosmology is correlated with the creation account, two aspects associated with the framework view’s two-register cosmology need additional development.

Lower Register Metaphors

The initial aspect pertains to the analogical relationship between the two registers. Because of this relationship, features of the lower register can be used as metaphors to picture features of the upper register. This is to say, realities associated with the earthly register, such as clouds and stars, are used metaphorically⁵¹ to represent realities of the heavenly register, such as the clouds picturing the Son of Man coming with the clouds and the stars of the sky representing angels.⁵² As this relates to the creation account, the argument of the framework view “is that the language of the *days* and the ‘evenings and mornings’ is not literal but an instance of lower-register terms being used metaphorically to describe the upper-register.”⁵³ To demonstrate that there is a connection between this two-register cosmology and

⁴⁸ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 236.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 237.

⁵⁰ Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

⁵¹ The language of the text representing God’s creative activity that is beyond man’s comprehension has been referred to as anthropomorphic language, so Ridderbos, *Genesis 1 and Natural Science*, p. 30, and Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 77.

⁵² Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 239.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 240.

Genesis 1:1–2:3, framework supporters note a number of connections with this text. We will briefly summarize four of these links.

First, Genesis 1:1 describes the absolute beginning of all created reality:⁵⁴ “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” The “heavens” of this verse refer to God’s creation of the upper register and the “earth” the lower register. This upper register does not refer to the visible sky above the earth but to the invisible heavens that are the created dwelling place for God and his angels. Likewise, the lower register refers to the earth and the visible heavens above it.⁵⁵ Second, the two-register cosmology is continued in Genesis 1:2: “The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.” Verse 2 specifically focuses on the lower register, the unformed and empty earth; however, the presence of the Spirit “moving over the surface of the waters” provides a connection with the upper register. The visible manifestation of the Spirit in later revelation is identified as the Glory-cloud that led Israel out of Egypt and the Shekinah glory that uniquely permeated the Tabernacle and Temple. In the words of Kline, “the ‘Spirit’ here refers to the heavenly epiphany which is known in its manifestation within the visible world as the Shekinah, the theophanic cloud of glory. Including as it does then the Spirit-Glory of the temple in heaven along with the earth below, Gen 1:2 carries forward the two-register cosmology contained in verse 1.”⁵⁶

Third, the connection between the two registers is continued in Genesis 1:3–31 with the fiat-fulfillment expressions. Each of God’s eight creative fiats, “let there be,” is spoken in the upper register and each one’s fulfillment (“and it was so”) is accomplished in the lower register. Kline concludes this point: “The fiat of the Logos-Word above is executed by the Spirit in the earth below.”⁵⁷ Fourth, the imprint of the two-register cosmology is also found in Genesis 2:1–3. While God’s royal rest⁵⁸ is in the upper register, the Creator

⁵⁴Not all advocates of the framework interpretation agree that Gen 1:1 refers to the absolute beginning of the heavens and earth. For example, Bruce Waltke takes Gen 1:1 as a summary statement (*Genesis*, pp. 58–59). However, Waltke’s defense of Gen 1:1 as a summary statement was not developed as an integral part of his defense of the framework view. He had earlier articulated this understanding of Gen 1:1 when he adhered to the “precreation chaos theory” (see his “The Creation Account in Genesis 1:1–3, Part III: The Initial Chaos Theory and the Precreation Chaos Theory,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 132 [July–September 1975]: 216–28).

⁵⁵Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 241.

⁵⁶Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 5.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵⁸When framework advocates maintain that the seventh day is God’s heavenly time of rest, they understand God’s rest as an example of him accommodating his revelation to serve as a model for finite man. To imply from this that God needed

prescribes “the Sabbath ordinance for human observance on earth below.”⁵⁹ The following chart reflects the connection between the two registers.⁶⁰

	<i>Verse 1</i>	<i>Verse 2</i>	<i>Days 1–6</i>	<i>Day 7</i>
Upper Register:	heaven	Spirit	fiats	God’s Sabbath
Lower Register:	earth	deep	fulfillments	Sabbath Ordinance

As this chart exhibits, from the beginning to the end of the creation narrative, the two-register cosmology permeates the creation “week.” At each juncture, the lower register analogously replicates the upper register. The imprint of this two-register cosmology on Genesis 1:1–2:3 asserts, according to Irons and Kline, “that the days and the evenings and mornings are to be explained as further examples of lower register language being used metaphorically in descriptions of the upper register. The temporal framework of the creation narrative belongs to the upper register, though it is linguistically clothed in the humble garb of lower-register, chronological terminology.”⁶¹

Creation Days and the Upper Register

The final aspect is an outgrowth of the initial one, the analogical relationship between the two registers. The preceding data along with the figurative elements of Genesis 1:1–2:3 are drawn together to show that the seven days of the creation account are inextricably connected to upper register time. This connection is drawn from a few items. To begin with, any data within the creation narrative that is nonliteral provides evidence that the days belong to upper-register time. According to the framework theory, the fourth day is a clear example of temporal recapitulation of the first day, and this demonstrates that the first and fourth days are nonsequential. Though the creation narrative establishes that the creation days are solar days, these days occur within a literary framework of the creation “week.” The

rest would be blasphemous (Godfrey, *God’s Pattern*, pp. 61–62). In keeping with the Creator-creation distinction, young earth creationists recognize that God of necessity is fundamentally distinct from any created object. Because of this fundamental distinction, God necessarily accommodated himself in his work of creation over six, normal days. In agreement with framework proponents, young earth creationists argue that it is blasphemous to think that God needed a rest from his creative work. However, young earth creationists insist that God’s rest must include his cessation from creative activity on the final, twenty-four hour day of the first week of creation’s history.

⁵⁹ Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 6.
⁶⁰ The chart is taken from *ibid.*
⁶¹ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 243.

placement of solar days within a literary device “demands that the framework of the seven days itself belong to the upper register.”⁶²

Additionally, the creation narrative begins with the creation of the upper register in Genesis 1:1. Since the creation narrative begins with upper-register time, “it clearly marks the whole creation week as a framework of days in the upper-register time frame.”⁶³ Furthermore, the creation frame concludes with God’s rest in the upper register. The unending nature of the seventh day indicates that it is upper-register time. “If the seventh day were not an unending Sabbath-rest for God but a literal day, would the next day be another week of work and rest for him, to be followed by an indefinite repetition of this pattern?”⁶⁴ Finally, if Genesis 1:1–2:3 starts and concludes with upper-register time, the intervening six days also operate on upper-register time. This “bracket” argument does not allow the intervening six days to operate according to earthly time, but according to heavenly time.⁶⁵ As Kline has summarized: “The six evening-morning days then do not mark the passage of time in the lower register sphere. They are not identifiable in terms of solar days, but relate to the history of creation at the upper register of the cosmos. The creation ‘week’ is to be understood figuratively, not literally—this is the conclusion demanded by the biblical evidence.”⁶⁶

In summation, we have presented four theses that support the framework theory. We must now turn our attention to evaluate this interpretation to determine if it is “demanded by the biblical evidence.” In the remainder of this article, we begin our critique of the framework by evaluating its first thesis.

EVALUATION OF THE FIGURATIVE NATURE OF THE CREATION WEEK

Anyone who has done serious research on the framework theory must be impressed with a number of strengths exhibited by its advocates. One such strength is their desire for an exegetical defense of the framework view. As an example, Ross has touted the supposed exegetical basis of the framework view: “The Framework Hypothesis argues, *on exegetical grounds*, that the organizing principle of the creation account is topical rather than chronological. It denies, *on exegetical grounds*, that the seven-day week is intended as a

⁶² Ibid., p. 244.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 245.

⁶⁴ Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

⁶⁵ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 246.

⁶⁶ Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

chronological unfolding of the separate acts of creation limited in duration to one calendar week.”⁶⁷ Other proponents, such as Kline and Waltke, are renowned for their exegetical contributions to Old Testament studies. While the subject of the framework’s exegetical substance will be evaluated in the remainder of this paper and the next one, the desire of framework advocates for an exegetical foundation is admirable. Additionally, their zealous commitment to defending what they are convinced is a biblical position is praiseworthy. As some of the quotations in the preceding section noted, framework advocates are inexorable in their defense of the framework interpretation. Furthermore, backers of the framework view have overtly affirmed a commitment to the historical and theological truth associated with God’s creation of Adam, Adam’s role as representative head of the human race, and the Fall.⁶⁸

Finally, while framework adherents unambiguously argue for a figurative interpretation of Genesis 1:1–2:3, they clearly distinguish between a figurative understanding of the creation account and “a nonhistorical interpretation of the text. The framework interpretation does *not* teach that creation was a nonhistorical event.”⁶⁹ Their defense of the historical substance of some portions of Genesis 1:1–2:3 is commendable. However, I am persuaded that this figurative approach distorts the basic historical fabric of Genesis 1:1–2:3 and promotes an interpretative model that, if fully developed, undermines the historicity of Adam’s federal headship over the created realm that God had entrusted to him. Furthermore, though professing a form of exegetical substance, the exegetical selectivity reflected by the framework position undermines its value as a consistent biblical cosmogony. In the remainder of this paper, I will evaluate the first major thesis of the framework: the figurative nature of the creation account. The second part of this series will critique the remaining three theses.

The first major tenet of the framework interpretation is that the creation “week” itself is a figure that presents six pictures, “days,” of divine creation that are topically arranged, as opposed to a sequential arrangement of six days in a literal week. Framework advocates support this position as an outgrowth of their exegetical analyses of select creation texts that have a poetic type texture and use metaphorical language, both of which indicate that the creation

⁶⁷ Ross, “Framework Hypothesis,” p. 114.

⁶⁸ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 220; Ross, “Framework Hypothesis,” pp. 117–18; Godfrey, *God’s Pattern*, pp. 76–78, 111–24; Waltke, *Genesis*, pp. 69–71, 101–4.

⁶⁹ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 220.

narrative is not a sequential account but a topical one. However, we must examine more precisely the exegetical nature of Genesis 1:1–2:3 to evaluate this thesis of the framework. Does it reflect some sort of poetic style? Also, how much of the language is metaphorical? More importantly, if it reflects something of a poetic style, does this mean that there is a dichotomy between a chronological account and an artistic arrangement? This is to say, if the creation account is a well-organized and symmetrical structure, as apparently reflected by the framework's two parallel triads,⁷⁰ does this annul the evidence within the account that demonstrates a sequential understanding?

GENUINE 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.⁷¹ Two items demonstrate this fact.

Absence of a Key Poetic Device

A comparison with three poetic accounts presenting some details from the creation week, Job 38:8–11, Psalm 33:6–9, and 104:5–9, demonstrates a difference between poetry and stylized narrative. An unmistakable distinction is that these three poetic texts exhibit a consistent use of linear parallelism, as Psalm 33:9 illustrates:

A	B
For He spoke, and it was done;	
A ¹	B ¹
He commanded, and it stood fast.	

With this example, the second line, while using different words, communicates essentially the same concepts as the first line. This type of linear parallelism is not found in Genesis 1:1–2:3.⁷² "Genesis one," according to Edward J. Young, "is written in exalted, semi-poetical language; nevertheless, it is not poetry. For one thing the characteristics of Hebrew poetry are lacking, and in particular there is

⁷⁰ See Kline, "Because It Had Not Rained," p. 154; Futato, "Because It Had Rained," p. 14; Irons and Kline, "Framework View," p. 224.

⁷¹ 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.

⁷² So also Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Compromise: A Biblical and Scientific Refutation of 'Progressive Creationism' (Billions of Years)*, as Popularized by Astronomer Hugh Ross (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2004), pp. 94–95.

an absence of parallelism.”⁷³

Presence of a Key Narrative Device

In addition to the omission of linear parallelism, Genesis 1:1–2:3 is permeated with a grammatical device that sets it apart as an unambiguous narrative account: the *waw* consecutive.⁷⁴ While the *waw* consecutive may appear in poetic literature, it is not a defining characteristic of Hebrew poetry.⁷⁵ However, it is a significant component of Hebrew historical narrative in that it generally adds to past time narration an element of sequence.⁷⁶ 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,

⁷³Young, *Genesis One*, pp. 82–83.

⁷⁴Unique to Hebrew are two narrative sequences: the *waw* consecutive attached to the imperfect form, a derivative of the archaic preterite (other titles are used in place of *waw* consecutive, such as *waw* conversive, *waw* inersive, relative *waw*), and the *waw* consecutive attached to the perfect aspect. The former is primarily used in narration associated with past time, as in Gen 1:1–2:3, and the latter in narration connected with future time (Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* [New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971], pp. 107–9). The *waw* consecutive verbal forms “are used primarily in narrative sequence to denote consecutive actions, that is, actions occurring in sequence” (Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001], p. 192). For current discussions of this form, see Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), pp. 543–63; Robert B. Chisholm, Jr., *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids; Baker, 1998), pp. 94–99; Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 83–87.

⁷⁵Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 2 vols., trans. and rev. T. Muraoka (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1993), 2:390, sec. 118c. See also Mark S. Smith, *The Origins and Development of the Waw-Consecutive: Northwest Semitic Evidence from Ugarit to Qumran*, Harvard Semitic Studies 39 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), pp. 17–33; and Alviero Niccacci, *The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew Prose*, trans. W. G. E. Watson, JSOTSup 86 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1990), pp. 47–72.

⁷⁶Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 84, sec. 3.5.1. For pedagogical purposes, Pratico and Van Pelt describe the *waw* consecutive when prefixed to an imperfect/preterite form as a “past tense narrative sequence” (*Basics of Biblical Hebrew*, p. 195, n. 3). From a text-linguistic perspective, Longacre describes the *waw* consecutive as “the backbone or storyline tense of Biblical Hebrew narrative discourse” (“Discourse Perspective on the Hebrew Verb: Affirmation and Restatement,” in *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew*, ed. Walter R. Bodine [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992], p. 178).

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.⁷⁷

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 expect his literary style to include a consistent use of the *waw* consecutive. What is significant for this point 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?⁷⁸ My argument is not that *waw* consecutive always denotes sequence, for, within a narrative sequence, it may occasionally represent non-sequential action that is anterior to the mainline narrative and consequently be rendered as a pluperfect (past perfect),⁷⁹ but that *waw* consecutive is generally used

⁷⁷I have derived these statistics about the uses of *waw* consecutive from Accordance 6.7 (OakTree Software, 2005), available at www.oaksoft.com.

⁷⁸John D. Currid, *A Study Commentary on Genesis, Volume 1: Genesis 1:1–25:18* (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2003), p. 39; so also 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), p. 156.

⁷⁹The NIV translates the *waw* consecutive verb *וַיֵּצֵר*, in Gen 2:19, as a pluperfect, “had formed.” In contrast to the NIV’s translation, most versions, NASB, KJV, NKJV, ESV, NRSV, NLT, *NET Bible*, render *וַיֵּצֵר* as a past tense, “formed” (also followed by 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], pp. 282–83). Since successive *waw* consecutives generally advance a narrative sequence, the translation of most versions may be understandable. Support for the past tense has been drawn from S. R. Driver (*A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1892], pp. 84–89) 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. 138–54). Written from a textlinguistic perspective, Buth argues that *waw* consecutive should be translated as a pluperfect when two conditions appear in a given context. First, lexical repetition or a specific reference may look back to a preceding event. Second, based “upon common cultural experience an event can be interpreted as giving a reason or otherwise commenting on the immediately previous event” (ibid., p. 147). From Gen 2, Buth uses *וַיִּטֵּעַ* (“planted”) in v. 8 and *וַיֵּצֵר* (“formed”) in v. 19 as a test case and argues that, since neither condition is present, both verbs should be summarily translated as past tense verbs (ibid., pp. 148–49). Building upon Buth’s textlinguistic analysis, C. John Collins provides a necessary corrective

sequentially as a preterite in narrative literature.⁸⁰ Such is the case in Genesis 1:1–2:3. After vv. 1–2, the mainline narrative of the creation account is carried along by the *waw* consecutive, just as the *waw* consecutive is consistently used in the book of Genesis.

However, if, as I have previously noted, the *waw* consecutive may also be translated as a pluperfect, does this not imply that a few of the 55 uses of the *waw* consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3 may involve temporal recapitulation, just as framework supporters contend occurred on the fourth day (Gen 1:14–19)?⁸¹ While *waw* consecutive in some contexts may allow for temporal recapitulation, its use as the mainline sequence of the fourth day does not allow for temporal recapitulation that looks back to Day 1,⁸² as is also true for the other days in the creation week where the mainline narrative is advanced by the use of *waw* consecutive.⁸³ Not only are the creative activities of this

to Buth's second condition, "common cultural experience." Drawing from W. J. Martin ("Dischronologized' Narrative in the Old Testament," in *Congress Volume, Rome 1968*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, vol. 17 [Leiden: Brill, 1969], pp. 179–86) and David W. Baker ("The Consecutive non-Perfective in the Historical Books of the Hebrew Old Testament (Genesis–Kings)" [M.C.S. thesis, Regent College, 1973]), Collins demonstrates that Buth's "common cultural experience" should be replaced with what Collins calls "the logic of the referent" ("The *Wayyiqtol* as 'Pluperfect': When and Why," *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 [May 1995]: 128, especially n. 40). With "the logic of the referent," the literary context establishes that the event represented by a *waw* consecutive verb "took place prior to the event presented by a previous verb" (*ibid.*). Collins effectively shows that the logic of the referent for the event summarized by וַיֵּצֵר in Gen 2:19 is the literary environment of Gen 1:3–2:3 that has been clearly linked to Gen 2:4–25 by the chiasmic arrangement of Gen 2:4 (*ibid.*, pp. 138–39). If the author of Genesis intended 1:1–2:3 and 2:4–25 be read as complementary accounts, this suggests that וַיֵּצֵר in 2:19 be translated as a pluperfect, "had formed," with the NIV (*ibid.*, pp. 135–40). The translation of וַיֵּצֵר as a pluperfect is consistent with a traditional reading of Genesis 1:1–2:3 as an overview of each day in the creation week and 2:4–25 is an expansion of the sixth day of the creation week (so also Pipa, "Genesis 1:1–2:3," pp. 156–57; C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (*Pentateuch*, 3 vols. in 1, trans. James Martin, in *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, 10 vols. [reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973], 1:87–88; and H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, 2 vols., reprint ed. [reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974], 1:130).

⁸⁰ See Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, pp. 84–85, sec. 3.5.1.

⁸¹ See Irons and Kline, "Framework View," pp. 221–24, 228–30.

⁸² See Charles V. Taylor, "Syntax and Semantics in Genesis One," *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 11 (1997): 183–86.

⁸³ For a discourse analysis that has a level of consistency with this argument, though allowing for variation, see Alviero Niccacci, "Analysis of Biblical Narrative," in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas, TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), pp. 181–84. There are two items of Niccacci's discourse analysis that allow for ambiguity. First, the background information of Gen 1:1–2 allows for either an old earth model or a young earth model. In my understanding, vv. 1–2 provide an informing

day advanced by the sequential use of *waw* consecutive, but Moses also indicated that these creative activities took place on a sequentially numbered day, the “fourth day” (Gen 1:19), and that the details of the first day and the fourth argue against temporal recapitulation.

To demonstrate that the fourth day is not an example of temporal recapitulation, our discussion must expand beyond the use of *waw* consecutive to include the seven enumerated days of Genesis 1:1–2:3 and a comparison of the particulars of the first and fourth days.

SEQUENTIALLY NUMBERED, LITERAL DAYS

To show that Days 1 and 4 are two distinct days, four items associated with the sequentially numbered, literal days need to be addressed.

The Singular Use of “Day,” יום

The first item that should be noted is that Hebrew word translated as “day” in Genesis 1:19 is the singular noun יום. When the singular יום is not part of a compound grammatical construction,⁸⁴ it invariably refers to literal days or to the daytime

background, the first two creative works of God on Day 1, from which God does the remainder of his creative work in the space of six, consecutive, literal days. However, in contrast to my use of Niccacci’s work, C. John Collins uses it to support his anthropomorphic days. According to Collins, the informing background represents an “unspecified length of time prior to the beginning of the first ‘day’” (“Reading Genesis 1:1–2:3 as an Act of Communication: Discourse Analysis and Literal Interpretation,” in *Did God Create in Six Days?* ed. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. and David W. Hall [Taylors, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999], p. 144; see also his comments on Niccacci’s discourse analysis on p. 134, n. 6). Collins’s interpretative remarks about the background information in Gen 1:1–2 certainly allow for an old earth model. Second, in contrast to Niccacci, who takes Gen 2:4 as a conclusion to Gen 1:1–2:3 (ibid., pp. 183–84), I am persuaded that Gen 2:4 serves as an introduction for the new “generation” that follows immediately after Gen 2:4. Since Gen 2:4 is introduced by אֵלֶּה הַדּוֹרוֹת (“this is the account of”) and this same expression is consistently used 10 other times in Genesis (with each of these 10 uses NASB has varied from its translation of 2:4 and translated אֵלֶּה הַדּוֹרוֹת as “these are the records of the generations of”) to introduce a new section of material, אֵלֶּה הַדּוֹרוֹת should not be taken as a conclusion for preceding material of Gen 1:1–2:3 but as a heading for an account about the next generation that follows in Gen 2:5–4:26 (Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 158, and Young, *Genesis One*, pp. 59–61). While these two items reflect some subjectivity, discourse analysis is the use of Hebrew grammar as applied beyond a clausal level to a discourse. However, as far as hermeneutics are concerned, discourse analysis cannot bear the same weight in theological discussions as propositional revelation. In the history of orthodox theology, the perspicuity of Scripture has consistently been correlated with propositional revelation and the analogy of Scripture, and not discourse analysis.

⁸⁴A compound grammatical construction refers to the following items: the noun יום as a part of a complex prepositional construction, יום as a part of a longer

portion of a normal day.⁸⁵ The singular יום is used 1,452 times in the Old Testament.⁸⁶ In Genesis 1:1–2:3, the noun יום is used 14 times, 13 times in the singular, with none in a compound grammatical relationship, and once in the plural.⁸⁷ Of the 13 uses of “day,” 4 refer to “day” as opposed to “night” (1:5, 14, 16, 17).⁸⁸ As such, each day involving divine creative activity is divided according to the natural phenomena of “daytime” and “nighttime.” It is this day and night cycle that constitutes each full day of the creation week,⁸⁹ as Genesis 1:5 specifies: “God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day”⁹⁰ (see also in 1:16, where the greater light governs the daytime and the lesser light the nighttime). The remaining 9 uses of יום are distributed in such a way that 6 make up the enumerated days of the

prepositional construction which has a verbal immediately following it, יום being a part of the multi-word construction known as the construct-genitive relationship, יום as part of a formula, and יום in a reduplicated construction (יום יום). For a more complete development of these types of grammatical constructions, see *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, s.v. “יום,” by M. Sæbø, 6:14–20 (hereafter cited as *TDOT*).

⁸⁵ See my article, “A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week,” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 5 (Fall 2000): 102.

⁸⁶ These statistics are derived from *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, s.v. “יום,” by E. Jenni, 2:526–27 (hereafter cited as *TLOT*).

⁸⁷ In Gen 1:1–2:3 the lone use of the plural noun ימים, “days,” does not provide any support for a figurative use of יום. While this only example of “days,” in 1:14, clearly does not refer to any of the creation days, it explicitly refers to calendrical “days and years.”

⁸⁸ Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 5 vols., rev. W. Baumgartner and J. J. Stamm (Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000), 2:401 (hereafter cited as *HALOT*).

⁸⁹ *TDOT*, s.v. “יום,” 6:22–23. Robert E. Grossmann has correctly argued that days of the creation week are defined by Gen 1:5, rather than as solar days based on Gen 1:14–19. According to the Mosaic definition, a day is “the period of light-separated-from-darkness” and this “can only be taken in the sense of an ordinary ‘earthly day’; and it must apply throughout the days of creation” (“The Light He Called ‘Day,’” *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 3 [1987]: 9).

⁹⁰ I have changed NASB’s translation of “one day” in 1:5 to “the first day.” The difference between these two options for translation relates to how יום is rendered. While יום is often translated as a cardinal number, it may also be translated as an ordinal, “first”; see *HALOT*, 1:30. The very nature of the progression of “second” through “seventh” supports יום being taken as an ordinal. The grammatical significance of this has been stated: “The indefinite noun plus יום has a definite sense in the opening chapter of Genesis: יום יום ‘the first day’ (Gen 1:5)” (Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 274); so also Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), p. 8, and see his discussion of this in his endnote 14, p. 353.

creation week, the “first day” through the “sixth day” (1:5, 8, 13, 19, 24, 31), and 3 uses are enumerated forms of the “seventh day” (2:2 [twice], 3). If the singular use of “day,” when it is not part of a compound grammatical construction, is always used throughout the Old Testament as a literal day, then this provides solid evidence that the “fourth day” was a literal day.

יָדִי Qualified by Ordinal Numbers

We should additionally note that singular noun יָדִי is qualified by the ordinal number “fourth,” רְבִיעִי (Gen 1:19). A number is used to qualify both the singular and plural forms of “day” more than 350 times in the Old Testament.⁹¹ As a singular noun, a number modifies יָדִי approximately 150 times.⁹² When a number qualifies יָדִי, it is used time after time in a literal sense.⁹³ An example of this is found in Exodus 12:15: “Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.” Anything other than literal days would make a mockery of the penalty for this covenant violation.⁹⁴

Another example of a number modifying יָדִי is Exodus 24:16: “The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud.” Though this text is not used by framework defenders, it provides a good comparison with Genesis 1:2, since it also points to the alleged two-register cosmology.⁹⁵ In addition, since

⁹¹ See James Stambaugh, “The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach,” *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 5 (1991): 73.

⁹² *TLOT*, s.v. “יָדִי,” 2:528.

⁹³ See Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr. “Reformed Theology and Six-Day Creation,” in *Creation According to the Scriptures*, ed. P. Andrew Sandlin (Vallecito, CA: Chalcedon Foundation, 2001), p. 53.

⁹⁴ See Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), p. 58.

⁹⁵ From a theological vantage point, the “two-register cosmology” of Irons and Kline has some level of merit in that it upholds the Creator-creation distinction. All of reality has two realms: the realm of the Creator and the realm of creation. This distinction is apparent in Gen 1:1, as Morton H. Smith has accurately observed: “The opening words of the Bible declare the fact that there is a two-layered view of reality. God is set forth as the self-existent, self-contained and self-sufficient Being who eternally existed prior to the creation of all else that exists. The phrase ‘heavens and earth’ is an all-encompassing phrase of all that exists besides God. Everything that exists outside of God is created. It is, therefore, created and dependent reality, while God is uncreated, self-contained Being” (“The Theological Significance of the Doctrine of Creation,” in *Did God Create in Six Days?* ed. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. and David W. Hall [Taylors, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press,

Exodus 24:16 uses numbers with days,⁹⁶ it provides a further point of comparison with Genesis 1:1–2:3. In Exodus 24:16, the “Glory-presence of God,” to use Irons and Kline’s expression,⁹⁷ may represent the upper register, while the earthly cloud the lower register. In Genesis 1:2, “the Spirit of God” represents the upper register, while “the deep” over which the Spirit moves represents the lower register.⁹⁸ In light of the framework’s two-register cosmology, the appearance of the LORD in this cloud is an example of an “earthly thing” that is “used as a metaphor for upper-register realities.”⁹⁹ As such, lower register terms, such as “cloud” and “days,” are metaphors used “to describe the upper register. Just as the heavens where God dwells does not have literal clouds or a rainbow, so heavenly time is not literally measured by solar days or earthly evenings and mornings.”¹⁰⁰ In addition, Exodus 24:16 provides an example of the use of the simple,¹⁰¹ singular $\square$, with numbers. Commentators do not contest the literal significance of “six days” and “the seventh day.”¹⁰² However, this text is a problem for the framework position, because it combines their two-register cosmology with earthly literal days, and not heavenly days. Let us assume for argument’s sake that the days of Exodus 24:16 do refer to heavenly time, then are the “forty days and forty nights” in v. 18 also examples of heavenly time

1999], p. 244). In contrast to the two-temporal aspect of their two-register cosmology, time begins with the creation of the “heavens and earth” in Gen 1:1 (see *ibid.*, p. 245).

⁹⁶This type of syntagmatic relationship with $\square$ and numbers is consistently used for the numbers 1 through 1000 (so Hasel, “Days’ of Creation,” p. 26). An exception to this literal understanding is found in Zech 14:7, where $\square$ $\square$, “a unique day,” is apparently used with a non-literal sense of a “unique day” or a “continuous day.” While Zech 14:7 is problematic and presents some translation difficulties, as a comparison of different English translations indicates, it certainly cannot be used to undermine the great number of clear examples reflecting that a “day” when qualified by a number is a literal day (see Stambaugh, “The Days of Creation,” p. 75). While Zech 14:7 reflects that the use of a number with “day” is not absolute, the amount of clear examples supporting our argument is enormously lucid.

⁹⁷Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 242.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 241–42.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 240.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ When I describe $\square$ as a “simple” noun, what I mean is that it is not part of a compound grammatical construction. For a more complete description of a compound grammatical construction, see above, n. 83.

¹⁰² See Sarna, *Exodus*, p. 154, and John D. Currid, *A Study Commentary on Exodus, Volume 2: Exodus 19–40* (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2001), p. 143.

(“Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights”)?

While Sarna allows for a symbolic use of “forty days and forty nights,”¹⁰³ this is improbable.¹⁰⁴ Because Moses’ communion with the Lord and fasting without food or water for “forty days and forty nights,” as v. 18 states, is connected to the giving of the Law, the numerous repetitions of this passage, Exodus 34:28, Deuteronomy 9:9, 11, 18, 10:10, confirm its literal substance.¹⁰⁵ If the examples of “six days” and “the seventh day” in v. 16 and “the forty days and forty nights” in v. 18 refer to heavenly time, this would violate the clear sense of the passage. The obvious reading of Exodus 24 suggests that God works according to normal earthly time, “six days,” “the seventh day,” and “forty days and forty nights.” When the theophanic cloud appears, “it is the heavenly realm,” according to Jordan, “inserting into the earthly. But this means that God marches in earthly time along with his people.”¹⁰⁶

Whatever substance there may be with Irons and Kline’s two-register cosmology, Exodus 24:16 indicates that it requires only one kind of time, earthly literal time, rather than two temporal systems of heavenly and earthly time. The use of a literal “day” with a numeric qualifier, in Exodus 24:16, is consistent with the other 150 Old Testament uses of the same type of construction reflecting the same pattern of literal days. Consequently, this suggests that the use of “day,” יום, in Genesis 1:19, with a numerical qualifier, is also a reference to an earthly literal day, rather than a heavenly day.

יום in an Uninterrupted Sequence of Days

Not only is “day” qualified by the ordinal number “fourth,” but “fourth” is also part of a link in an uninterrupted sequence of seven days, “the first day” through “the seventh day.” Besides Genesis 1:1–2:3, there are two other extended lists of sequentially arranged numbers that qualify the singular יום, Numbers 7:12–83 and 29:17–35.¹⁰⁷ The historical narrative in Numbers 7, like Genesis

¹⁰³ Sarna, *Exodus*, p. 155.

¹⁰⁴ See Peter Enns, *Exodus*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), p. 494.

¹⁰⁵ Currid, *Exodus*, p. 144.

¹⁰⁶ James B. Jordan, *Creation in Six Days* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 1999), p. 62.

¹⁰⁷ *TLOT*, s.v. “יום,” 2:528.

1:1–2:3, reflects a stylized use of narrative, including rhetorical features such as inclusio and repetition.¹⁰⁸ In this narrative, leaders from each tribe of Israel brought various gifts to the Lord on 12 consecutive and uninterrupted days. A sequentially arranged ordinal qualifies each use of the word “day.” 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). In this passage, the use of the singular יוֹם plus a numeric adjective can be nothing other than a sequentially enumerated, literal day.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, the offering presented by “Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah” (v. 12), on the “first day,” is distinct from the offering presented by “Nethanel the son of Zuar, leader of Issachar” (v. 18), on the “second day”; and the offerings of both are sequentially linked on two consecutive, literal days. What is significant in Numbers 7:12–83 is that literal days (the singular יוֹם) involve a consecutive sequence, without any breaks, through the use of ordinals, from the “first day” through the “twelfth day.”¹¹⁰

In another historical narrative, Numbers 29:17–35, the successively arranged days are also literal days. In the 7th month of an Israelite year, the Feast of Tabernacles began on the 15th day of this month and continued for seven successive days until the 21st day, followed by a sacred assembly on the 22nd day. In this account, offerings were prescribed for each day of the feast. Beginning with the second day and continuing through the eighth, God prescribed the offerings for each day. For the offerings of each day, the prescription is begun with a *waw* conjunction attached to a prepositional phrase that uses the simple, singular noun “day,” יוֹם, followed by a sequential number. For example, the offering for the second day is begun with “then on the second day,” וּבַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי, in v. 17. The third day is started with “then on the third day,” וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, in v. 20, and this pattern of description continues for the remaining five days of the Feast of Tabernacles (vv. 23, 26, 29, 32, 35). Consequently, the

¹⁰⁸ R. Dennis Cole, *Numbers*, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman, 2000), p. 141.

¹⁰⁹ John C. Whitcomb, Jr., “The Science of Historical Geology in the Light of the Biblical Doctrine of a Mature Creation,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 36 (Fall 1973): 67.

¹¹⁰ Dave Bush, “Non-Literal Days in Genesis 1:1–2:4: Exegetical or Hypothetical?” in *Creation According to the Scriptures*, ed. P. Andrew Sandlin (Vallecito, CA: Chalcedon Foundation, 2001), pp. 96–97.

offerings of the second day and third day form a unit of two uninterrupted, distinct days.

Based upon the two historical narratives where $\square\text{v}$ is used with sequentially arranged numbers, each day is part of a sequence of successive, uninterrupted, literal days. The use of sequentially numbered, literal days in both passages supports a similar interpretation of Genesis 1:1–2:3. More specifically, the use of sequentially numbered days demonstrates that Day 4 must be a literal day and this day is the fourth day of the creation week, rather than any other day of that week.

To review this point about sequentially numbered, literal days, we have demonstrated that Genesis 1:19 summarizes the “fourth day” with the simple, singular “day,” which is qualified by the numeric adjective “fourth,” and that the “fourth day” is an earthly literal day, as opposed to a heavenly day. Additionally, the “fourth day” cannot, by nature of the sequential use of numbers, be identical with any of the other days of the creation account. The framework’s argument that the first and fourth days are an identical heavenly day, describing the creation of light from two perspectives, is in direct conflict with the biblical evidence we have observed. If the numerous other biblical texts showing that “day” is an earthly literal day have any substance, the “fourth day” must be a distinct, literal day.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, framework proponents minimize the force of this argument by maintaining that first and fourth days describe the same event. Do the textual details for Days 1 and 4 justify negating the force of the sequentially numbered, literal days? To answer this question, we must compare the particulars of each day.

Days 1 and 4

In comparing the first day and fourth day of the creation week, we have previously noted that framework advocates point out that there is an inconsistency for a chronological interpretation of these two days. Since God creates light on the first day and the source of light on the fourth day, the days must be identical.¹¹² According to the framework position, this inconsistency indicates that the creation account should

¹¹¹ By examining Genesis 1–2 and every other biblical text that relates to the days of creation, J. Ligon Duncan III and David W. Hall demonstrate that if there is any substance to the analogy of Scripture, the literal interpretation of the creation account is consistent with Scripture’s overall message on this subject (“24-Hour View,” in *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian [Mission Viejo, CA: Crux Press, 2001], pp. 25–47).

¹¹² Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 8, and Futato, “Because It Had Rained,” pp. 14–17.

be interpreted topically rather than chronologically.¹¹³ According to Irons and Kline, the parallelism of the creation account “is also exhibited in the relation of Days 1 and 4, which not only deal with the same topics of light/darkness and day/night but also employ identical language of separation (Gen. 1:4, 14, 18).”¹¹⁴ In short, “the divine purposes in creating the light on Day 1 and the luminaries on Day 4 are identical.”¹¹⁵ To demonstrate that this is an invalid interpretation, the first day and fourth day will be compared in two ways.

Differences Between Days 1 and 4

First, the text of Genesis 1 does not specifically state that God’s purposes for creating light on Day 1 and the luminaries on Day 4 are identical. While the only overlap in the “light” created on Day 1 and the luminaries on Day 4 is that both involve visible light, God did not assign an explicit function for the light created on Day 1 as he did for the luminaries created on Day 4.¹¹⁶ In addition, Day 4 presupposes Day 1. On the first day, God himself by fiat created the “light,” “separated the light from the darkness,” “called the light day, and the darkness night” (Gen 1:3–5). On the fourth day, the day that the framework promoters argue is identical to the first day, God did not simply create light (“let there be light,” *יְהי אֹר*, v. 3), rather he created the luminaries—the sun, moon and stars—“to separate the day from the night” and “to give light on the earth” (Gen 1:14–15). In contrast to Day 1, God explicitly assigns multiple functions for the luminaries. Furthermore, God’s creative activity on the fourth day presupposes that “light” existed prior to the fourth day. The luminaries were created “to govern the day [יּוֹם] and the night [לַיְלָה],” and this suggests that the “day” and “night” also existed before Day 4. Since there is no genuine functional identity and the creation of light precedes the creation of the luminaries, Days 1 and 4 cannot be identical.¹¹⁷

Second, in Genesis 1:14–19, God created the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth day and placed these luminaries in the “expanse [רָקִיעַ] of the heavens” in order “to separate the day from the night” and to serve as signs “to mark seasons and days and years” (NIV). However, the “expanse” was not created on the first day but on the

¹¹³ Godfrey, *God’s Pattern*, pp. 45–49.

¹¹⁴ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 228.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

¹¹⁶ Young, *Genesis One*, p. 96.

¹¹⁷ Andrew S. Kulikovsky, “A Critique of the Literary Framework View of the Days of Creation,” *Creation Research Society Quarterly* 37 (March 2001): 239.

second day. The word “expanse” (רָקִיעַ) does not appear in the text until the second day, where it is used three times in Genesis 1:6–8, and the fourth day, where it appears five times in Genesis 1:14–19. While Day 4 only overlaps with Day 1 in terms of day and night, and light and darkness, the luminaries of Day 4 fill the “expanse” created on Day 2. However, if Days 1 and 4 are equated, as the framework view asserts, then Day 1/4 must precede Day 2. How can the “expanse” created on Day 2 be filled with the luminaries that are created on Day 1/4?¹¹⁸ Therefore, the connection between Day 1 and Day 4 is not as precise as framework advocates would insist, and the connection between Days 2 and 4 is of such a nature that Day 2 must precede Day 4.¹¹⁹

Third, the details of the creation narrative reflect a chronological movement from Day 1 to Day 4, rather than a merger of the two days as one. At the inception of creation, God created the heavens as empty space and the earth as an unformed and empty, watery sphere, surrounded by darkness, while being nurtured by the Spirit of God (Gen 1:1–2). With the initial creation of the heavens and the earth, God created darkness. By fiat, the next creative act of God was the creation of light: “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light” (v. 3). While light is generally connected to luminaries, it may also exist independently from them, as is the case with the physical phenomena of lightning. According to some rabbinic interpreters, God created a primeval source of light that was independent of the sun.¹²⁰ Since God is light, he certainly could have created a nonsolar source of light, prior to the sun’s creation.¹²¹ As Whitcomb has suggested, “God created a fixed and localized light source in the heaven in reference to which the rotating earth passed through the same kind of day/night cycles as it has since the creation of the sun.”¹²² Another example of this may be drawn from starlight. Once light has been emitted from a star, it passes through space independently of the star, whether or not it remains in existence.¹²³ A

¹¹⁸ These types of issues are not explicitly addressed by framework proponents, as is illustrated by Godfrey, *God’s Pattern*, pp. 31–32.

¹¹⁹ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), p. 302; so also Young, *Genesis One*, p. 67.

¹²⁰ Jack Lewis, “The Days of Creation: An Historical Survey of Interpretation,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32 (December 1989): 449.

¹²¹ Duncan and Hall, “24-Hour View,” p. 52.

¹²² John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *The Early Earth*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), p. 31.

¹²³ Grossmann, “Light He Called ‘Day,’” pp. 10–11.

final example may be drawn from Revelation 21:23: “And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp *is* the Lamb.” The New Jerusalem will not be illuminated by the sun or moon.¹²⁴ As Genesis began with light immediately emanating from God, so the book of Revelation ends in a similar manner.¹²⁵ Though God has not revealed how the light of Day 1 operated, he is more than capable, as the self-existent, self-sufficient, self-contained Creator, of speaking light into existence prior to his creation of the sun. Therefore, there is no biblical justification for equating Days 1 and 4, as the framework does.

Day 4 as a Progression from Day 1

After the creation of light, God himself “separated the light from the darkness” (Gen 1:4). Since God himself explicitly separated the light from darkness, this act of separation is “not an act of providence, but a distinct creative act.”¹²⁶ After separating light from darkness, God assigns the names “day,” יוֹם, to the light and “night,” לַיְלָה, to the darkness. The divine act of naming suggests that the actual quality of the object named is indicated by the divinely assigned name. In this context, God’s assigning names that are consistent with the nature of the object being named is God’s consistent pattern throughout biblical history. What this suggests is that what characterizes the day is visible light and what characterizes the night is physical darkness. With the assignment of names on Day 1, there is no hint of any metaphorical sense to “day,” יוֹם, or “night,” לַיְלָה; rather, this indicates the literal substance of day and night.¹²⁷ These are the divine activities of the first day of creation.

The fourth day advances from the first. The *waw* consecutive at the head of v. 14 suggests sequence and not temporal recapitulation.¹²⁸ On the fourth day, God’s creation of the sun, moon, and stars, along with the necessary transitional light, are direct acts of creation; however, once this creative activity of God is finished, the luminaries operate as they normally would in providence. God specifically states his purposes for the creation of the luminaries. The luminaries are created for the function of separating “the day from the

¹²⁴ Kulikovsky, “A Critique of the Literary Framework,” p. 239.

¹²⁵ Benjamin Shaw, “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. 205; so also Jordan, *Creation in Six-Days*, p. 66. Hamilton, a framework advocate, also recognizes this (*Genesis*, p. 121, n. 7).

¹²⁶ Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 174.

¹²⁷ Grossmann, “Light He Called ‘Day,’” p. 15.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

night,” for “signs and for seasons and for days and years” (Gen 1:14), and as “lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth” (v. 15). More specifically, God created the sun “to govern the day” and the moon “to govern the night” (v. 16). God created the sun and the moon “to separate the light from the darkness” (v. 18).

Whatever else may be said about the creation of the luminaries “to separate the day from the night,” this function clearly assumes the existence of day and night before Day 4, as Cassuto has incisively noted: “This expression enables us to comprehend the existence of the first three days, when there was as yet no sun in the world. To separate one thing from another means to mark the distinction between two things *already in existence*.”¹²⁹ Rather than viewing Day 4 with the framework proponents as a “replacement mechanism,”¹³⁰ it is contextually clear that it should be understood as an advance from Day 1. As Pipa has correctly noted: “We are not to look at day 4 as a replacement act, but rather as an advance. It is significant that God declares the light good and not the separation of light and darkness. When we compare this with the absence of the declaration of goodness on day 2, because the work was incomplete and needed to be advanced, we see that God is signifying more to be done with respect to the separation of light and darkness.”¹³¹

In the final analysis, there is no inconsistency for a chronological interpretation of Days 1 and 4. As Young has stated, “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.”¹³² To affirm that light was created prior to the luminaries is as biblically reasonable as believing that God miraculously separated the Red Sea for the Israelites to march through on dry ground, that Christ was born of a virgin, or that he was raised from the dead.¹³³

STYLIZED NARRATIVE

Our preceding examination of the creation account’s sequentially numbered, literal days and comparison of Days 1 and 4, not only demands that Days 1 and 4 were distinct, but also suggests that the

¹²⁹ *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: Part One—From Adam to Noah*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), p. 43.

¹³⁰ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 229.

¹³¹ Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 176; see also Noel Weeks, *Sufficiency of Scripture* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1988), p. 105.

¹³² Young, *Genesis One*, p. 95.

¹³³ See Kulikovsky, “A Critique of the Literary Framework,” p. 240.

creation week involved seven, earthly literal days that were sequentially arranged without any interruption. If the creation account is a historical narrative, as the preceding discussion indicates, how then are the creation account's stylistic features to be explained? More specifically, how are these stylistic features harmonized with the narrative material of the creation account? Additionally, is a stylized use of narrative inconsistent with a chronological account? While framework supporters agree this passage is a narrative, rather than a strict poetic account, their description of this passage as containing a greater degree of stylistic features than normal narrative literature suggests that this elevated use of narrative is not bound to the same historical constraints as the remainder of Genesis.¹³⁴ Their qualifications of this passage as "highly stylized"¹³⁵ or as not "presenting a strict historical account"¹³⁶ is stated in such ways to undermine any chronological significance. These "highly stylized" features include the two parallel units of three days, the repetitious progression in each of the days, and the metaphorical use of the temporal markers. Our discussion will proceed by examining these items followed by a presentation of the specific textual details that identify the narrative arrangement in Genesis 1:1–2:3.

Textual Differences Within the Days of Creation

At first blush, the parallel triads of days are not as symmetrical as they may seem. With their defense of this parallel arrangement, framework defenders are unified in their agreement that there are eight creative events in the creation account with the first four events distributed over the first three days and the last four over the last three days, with the concluding day in each triad presenting two creative activities. According to Irons and Kline, "there are a total of *eight* distinct creative works distributed over *six* days. The last day within each triad (i.e., Days 3 and 6) contains *two* creative acts."¹³⁷ However, a more precise look at the creation account suggests that this is an artificial interpretation. Three textual observations from the creation account reflect that the two parallel triads, as represented by framework advocates, are a contrived understanding.

First, on the first day of the creation account, framework backers argue that the creation of light was the only creative event. However, apparently because Genesis 1:1 is not governed by the divine creative

¹³⁴ For example, Hughes, *Genesis*, pp. 25–26.

¹³⁵ Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, p. 37.

¹³⁶ Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 76.

¹³⁷ Irons and Kline, "Framework View," p. 227.

proclamation, “God said” (וַיֹּאמֶר), they exclude two other creative acts: the heavens and the earth. While a few framework proponents argue that Genesis 1:1 is a summary statement and, therefore, not part of the creation account,¹³⁸ Irons and Kline understand that Genesis 1:1 is the “absolute beginning” when “God created the heavens (upper register) and the earth (lower register).”¹³⁹ However, if Genesis 1:1 is an expression of the absolute beginning of the heavens and the earth, does this not mean there are three creative events on the first day of creation? In addition to this, should not “careful exegesis”¹⁴⁰ integrate other clearly defined creative activities besides those governed by “God said” (וַיֹּאמֶר)? At least, for those framework advocates who argue that Genesis 1:1 teaches the absolute beginning of the heavens and the earth, this reflects an exegetical discrepancy. Is not good exegesis that which factors in the entire text of the creation account?

Second, as noted earlier, the framework position says that Day 5 corresponds with Day 2. However, this parallel is also strained. On the second day, “God said” (וַיֹּאמֶר) that an “expanse” would be created to “separate the waters from the waters” (1:6). This divine announcement, while having two fiats, reflects one creative activity: “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” However, its supposed parallel day, the fifth day (Gen 1:20), has one divine announcement, “God said” (וַיֹּאמֶר), that reflects two creative activities: “Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures” and “let the birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.”¹⁴¹ In respect to creative events, Day 5 is not genuinely parallel to Day 2.

In addition, assuming the reputed exegetical strength of the framework position, should we conclude that sea creatures made on Day 5 are to fill the “expanse” created on Day 2, especially when God calls them the “fish of the sea” in 1:26, 28? An exegetically based understanding of Genesis 1 supports the sea creatures of Day 5 filling the seas formed on Day 3, and not Day 2.¹⁴² Moreover, the birds that are to fly in the “expanse” formed on second day also live and reproduce on the dry land created on third day (Gen 1:22, 29–30).¹⁴³ As such, the correspondence between the second day and the

¹³⁸ So Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 56, and Hamilton, *Genesis*, p. 117.

¹³⁹ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 240; so also Ross, “Framework Hypothesis,” p. 119; Godfrey, *God’s Pattern*, pp. 22–23.

¹⁴⁰ So Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 238.

¹⁴¹ Young, *Genesis One*, p. 85.

¹⁴² Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 302.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*; Jordan, *Creation in Six Days*, p. 59.

fifth is imprecise.

Third, the parallel between the third day and the sixth is also unconvincing. According to Futato, “the creating of dry land on Day 3a parallels the creating of land animals on Day 6a, and the creating of vegetation on Day 3b parallels the creating of mankind on Day 6b.”¹⁴⁴ Genesis 1:24 reflects a link between the dry land created on the third day and the land animals: “Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind.” The animals are produced from the dry land, “the earth.” The linkage between the dry land and terrestrial animals is an accurate assessment.

However, the second parallel is strained, as Futato admits: “It may seem that the parallelism breaks down at the end, because vegetation and mankind may not seem like much of a parallel.”¹⁴⁵ To circumvent this “breakdown,” Futato maintains that “when one recalls the twofold focus on vegetation and humanity in Gen 2:4-25, the parallelism becomes evident.”¹⁴⁶ Theologically, it is clear that Adam’s probation in Genesis 2 is related to the vegetation of the Garden of Eden, in particular the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Nevertheless, the connection between man and vegetation in Genesis 2 is not the same thing as the connection between land animals and dry land. In order to have a consistent parallel, it should follow that man was formed out of vegetation, as the animals were formed out of dry land. In reality, this example is a comparison of apples and oranges. Furthermore, if there is a consistent parallel between Days 3 and 6, why is there no parallel to the formation of the sea on third day (Gen 1:9)? On the sixth day, nothing is formed to fill the sea.¹⁴⁷ The parallels between the third day and the sixth day are not as clear-cut as the framework proponents have suggested.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, the two triads of days reflect a parallelism that is not textually based but one that framework advocates have superimposed on the text. Grudem’s observation about the framework’s contrived parallelism is applicable: “With all of these points of imprecise correspondence and overlapping between places and things created to fill them, the supposed literary ‘framework,’ while having an initial appearance of neatness, turns out

¹⁴⁴ “Because It Had Rained,” p. 14.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 302.

¹⁴⁸ So also Young, *Genesis One*, pp. 84–86; Hugh Ross and Gleason L. Archer, “Day-Age Response,” in *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian (Mission Viejo, CA: Crux Press, 2001), pp. 272–73; Jordan, *Creation in Six Days*, p. 59.

to be less and less convincing upon closer reading of the text.”¹⁴⁹ Precisely stated, the textual distinctions between the supposedly parallel days do not consistently support the framework’s symmetrical arrangement of two triads of days and, in contrast, is congruent with the traditional, literal interpretation of the creation week.

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),¹⁵⁰ to reflect a stylized use of Hebrew narrative. Framework supporters and their opponents, including recent creationists, have some level of agreement that the text has a number of repetitive elements that demonstrate a stylized narrative. For example, framework advocate, Meredith Kline, describes the style of narrative in this text as “semi-poetic.”¹⁵¹ Likewise, an opponent of the framework position, Edward J. Young,¹⁵² describes this text as having been “written in a semi-poetic language.”¹⁵³ Opponents of the framework view who clearly affirm that Genesis 1:1–2:3 is a recent creation, such as J. Ligon Duncan and David W. Hall, also recognize that this passage is written in a stylized fashion.¹⁵⁴ Likewise, Joseph A. Pipa acknowledges that this is “exalted prose.”¹⁵⁵ Seventh-day Adventist scholar, Gerhard F. Hasel, has described Genesis 1:1–2:3 as “a historical prose-record, written in rhythmic style.”¹⁵⁶ Consequently, both framework advocates and their opponents, including young earth creationists, can describe the literary style of this text as some form of stylized narrative, though each view the same material in two distinct ways.

¹⁴⁹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 302.

¹⁵⁰ See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, p. 6.

¹⁵¹ “Because It Had Not Rained,” p. 156.

¹⁵² While Young was a staunch opponent of the framework position, he did not seem to recognize that the earth was a recent creation (see Collins, “Reading Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 145, n. 33).

¹⁵³ Genesis One, p. 82.

¹⁵⁴ “24-Hour View,” p. 35.

¹⁵⁵ “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 166.

¹⁵⁶ “‘Days’ of Creation,” p. 20.

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."¹⁵⁷ 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, Young understands the stylized narrative differently: "Genesis one is written in exalted, semi-poetic language; nevertheless, it is not poetry."¹⁵⁸ Young's use of "semi-poetic language" may reflect the general use of repetitive elements,¹⁵⁹ but he clearly states that this text is "not poetry." Duncan and Hall, while 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."¹⁶⁰ 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.¹⁶¹ And Hasel's "rhythmic style" was clearly qualified as "a historical prose-record."¹⁶² From a hermeneutical perspective, the framework's "semi-poetic style," or whatever similar descriptive category one of its proponents uses, wishfully provides framework interpreters a license to interpret key aspects of the text figuratively. From an opposite hermeneutical standpoint, an opponent of the framework view, Young, and 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, the framework's tendency to find more elements that are "figurative" in the creation account provides their justification for jettisoning a literal interpretation of the temporal markers in favor of a figurative 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

¹⁵⁷ "Because It Had Not Rained," p. 156.

¹⁵⁸ *Genesis One*, p. 82; so also Whitcomb, *Early Earth*, p. 78.

¹⁵⁹ See Young, *Genesis One*, pp. 84–86.

¹⁶⁰ "24-Hour View," p. 35.

¹⁶¹ "Genesis 1:1–2:3," p. 166.

¹⁶² "'Days' of Creation," p. 20.

its subordinate parts of “evening” and “morning,” cannot be literal.¹⁶³ Against this, we have previously shown that the days of Genesis 1 were not initially defined as solar days. Rather, on the first day of creation, God himself, after creating light and darkness, “separated the light from the darkness” (Gen 1:4). In v. 5, God defined a day: “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.”¹⁶⁴

In reality, this type of argument used by framework supporters misrepresents the traditional literal interpretation of the creation week. What God did on the first three days of creation with the day and night cycle is only a problem if God is confined to normal providence; however, if God worked miraculously in the creation week, then there is no problem for a literal interpretation of the days of the creation account. As Grossmann has noted: “That God created light before the light-bearing or reflecting bodies is clear from the text. That certain people have problems believing this demonstrates not that there is something wrong with the text or with its compatibility with the laws of physics.”¹⁶⁵

Stylized Narrative and Chronology

An additional, more recent argument, the “bracket” argument, sets forth that if the creation “week” began (“in the beginning”) and ended (the seventh day) with heavenly non-literal time, then the days in between, as part of the temporal sequence, must also be heavenly non-literal time.¹⁶⁶ If the creation “week” is a metaphor, then its subsidiary parts comprised of six days, evenings and mornings must also be metaphorical.¹⁶⁷ On the other hand, if “in the beginning”¹⁶⁸ and the seventh day¹⁶⁹ refer to earthly literal time, this argument is emasculated. The simple, singular noun “day,” יום, as well as “evening,” ערב, and “morning,” בקר, are never used metaphorically

¹⁶³ Kline, “Because It Had Not Rained,” p. 156.

¹⁶⁴ Grossmann, “Light He Called ‘Day,’” p. 9.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁶⁶ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 246.

¹⁶⁷ Kline, “Space and Time,” p. 10.

¹⁶⁸ See Young, *Genesis One*, pp. 3–7; Shaw, “Literal Day Interpretation,” pp. 201–3; and Gerhard F. Hasel, “Recent Translations of Genesis 1:1: A Critical Look,” *The Bible Translator* 22 (October 1971): 156–60.

¹⁶⁹ See Bush, “Non-Literal Days in Genesis 1:1–2:4,” pp. 90–91; Duncan and Hall, “24-Hour View,” pp. 33–34; Weeks, *Sufficiency of Scripture*, pp. 114–15; and Whitcomb, “Biblical Doctrine of a Mature Creation,” p. 68.

in Scripture. Since we have already looked at the Hebrew noun for “day,” we will briefly consider the expressions “evening” and “morning.”

The singular “day,” in Genesis 1 is qualified further with the words “evening” and “morning.” 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.¹⁷⁰

“Evening” and “morning” have at times been taken as a reference to the entire 24-hour day.¹⁷¹ With this understanding, “evening” is used to represent the entire nighttime portion of a literal day, and “morning” to stand for the entire daytime segment of a day.¹⁷² Another and more preferable literal interpretation of “evening” and “morning” takes “evening” and “morning” in Genesis 1 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.¹⁷³ This understanding is consistent with other Old Testament uses of “evening” and “morning.” The noun עֶרֶב, “evening,” is related to a rarely used verb עָרַב, to “turn into evening.”¹⁷⁴ In its Qal stem, this verb is used in Judges 19:9 to indicate “the arrival of evening, as indicated by its description as the ending of the day.”¹⁷⁵ While it would be imprecise to define “evening” for the first three creation days as “sunset” since the sun is not actually created until the fourth day,¹⁷⁶ “evening” and “morning” basically refer to the same type of physical phenomenon. This is to say, evening is a transitional period of light between the twilight of day

¹⁷⁰ These statistics are derived from Stambaugh, “Days of Creation,” p. 72; see also Abraham Even-Shoshan, *A New Concordance of the Bible* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1985), pp. 451–59.

¹⁷¹ 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. 19.

¹⁷² Hasel, “‘Days’ of Creation,” p. 28.

¹⁷³ See Grossmann, “Light He Called ‘Day,’” pp. 23–25; and Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 8.

¹⁷⁴ *HALOT*, 2:877.

¹⁷⁵ *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, s.v. “עָרַב,” by A. H. Konkel, 1:715 (hereafter cited as *NIDOTTE*).

¹⁷⁶ Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 8.

and the darkness of night.¹⁷⁷ The noun בֹּקֶר, “morning,”¹⁷⁸ may refer to all the hours of daylight or from midnight until noon.¹⁷⁹ It may also indicate “the arrival of daylight.”¹⁸⁰ This last use is the most consistent with the overall context of Genesis 1. The terms “evening” and “morning” “respectively signify the end of the period of light, when divine creativity was suspended, and the renewal of light, when the creative process was resumed.”¹⁸¹

“Evening” and “morning” are used in similar ways in other passages of the Pentateuch. One example is found in Exodus 27:21. Moses instructed Aaron and his sons to keep the lamps in the Tabernacle burning all night until they were extinguished in the morning: “In the tent of meeting, outside the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from *evening* to *morning* before the LORD; *it shall be* a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel.” The night cycle of evening to morning is also 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*.”¹⁸² These uses suggest that a literal use of “evening” and “morning” refer to the nighttime. As such, the alternation of “evening” and “morning” in Genesis 1 represents the nighttime portion that concludes a literal day and prepares for the next day.¹⁸³ 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.

Historical Narrative and Literary Shaping

From the perspective of a literal interpretation, how are the repetitive elements of the creation account to be explained? As Moses

¹⁷⁷ See Cassuto, *Genesis*, p. 28.

¹⁷⁸ HALOT, 1:151.

¹⁷⁹ David J. A. Clines, ed., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, 5 vols. to date (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994–), 2:252.

¹⁸⁰ NIDOTTE, 1:711; see also TDOT, s.v. “בֹּקֶר,” by Ch. Barth, 2:222.

¹⁸¹ Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 8.

¹⁸² The words *evening* and *morning* in the two verses cited in this paragraph, are italicized for my own emphasis.

¹⁸³ Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 184.

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 on Moses' use of this material, and his theological message controlled how he selected and arranged this material. As he shaped his material, repetition was a key element; however, he did not use repetitious elements either in a rigid manner or to undermine the historical substance of the creation account.¹⁸⁴ The repetitious elements of the text relate to a general pattern that provides an outline for each day of divine creative activity. The focal point in this arrangement is the motifs of fiat and fulfillment.

However, both motifs are part of a structural pattern that includes a few other elements associated with each day of creative activity. 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),¹⁸⁵ fulfillment ("there was," "it was so," "God created," etc.), evaluation ("God saw that it was good"),¹⁸⁶ and twofold conclusion ("there was evening and there was morning," the first day, etc.).¹⁸⁷ With this structural

¹⁸⁴ 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 set parameters on literary shaping.

¹⁸⁵ 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."

¹⁸⁶ The only exception to this evaluation ("God saw that it was good") is the second day. In contrast to the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint contains an additional clause of evaluation in v. 8. This addition was apparently to harmonize all the days of the creation week, but it does not represent the reading of the original Hebrew text. The omission of this clause in the Hebrew text may indicate that the author saw the creation of the expanse on this day as an incomplete stage and would require the expanse to be filled with luminaries, on Day 4, as a finalization of divine activity in separating light from darkness (Pipa, "Genesis 1:1–2:3," p. 176). Whatever the reason for the omission of this by Moses, we understand that this fivefold structure was intended only as a general arrangement.

¹⁸⁷ With some qualification, Young follows this fivefold pattern (*Studies in Genesis One*, p. 84); this structural arrangement is also recognized by critical scholar Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), pp. 84–85. Duncan and Hall take this as sixfold pattern ("24-Hour View," p. 32). Others have seen a sevenfold scheme; see Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, pp. 17–19; see also the discussion in Harold G. Stigers, *A Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), pp. 53–54. While any of these arrangements needs some qualification, the fivefold structure appears to

arrangement, excluding the first day where vv. 1–2 provides God’s creative backdrop that initiates his first two creative activities that begin Day 1,¹⁸⁸ each day of creative activity is begun with a *waw* consecutive, “God said” (וַיֹּאמֶר), and is concluded with two *waw* consecutives, “and there was evening [וַיְהִי עֶרֶב] and there was morning [וַיְהִי בֹקֶר],” 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” (וַיֹּאמֶר). 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. Of the 55 uses of *waw* consecutive in this text, the majority of these move forward the sequences in the creation account. I have identified 46 *waw* consecutives as sequential, 8 as epexegetical, and 1 as consequential.

***Waw* Consecutive and the Creation Account**

The use of *waw* consecutive is readily observable in a Hebrew text. Unfortunately, the same is not true with an English text. The chart on page 58 shows how each *waw* consecutive fits into one of three categories, classifying each of the 55 *waw* consecutives into a more precise subcategory.¹⁸⁹ With this chart, I have adapted NASB’s translation and have focused on illustratively showing some basic information about the *waw* consecutive, rather than providing a functional translation. 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).

General Observations About *Waw* Consecutive

Some observations about the various uses of *waw* consecutive are necessary. First, the mainline narrative does not begin until v. 3. This indicates that vv. 1–2 is 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 the text is that the hist-

require less qualification with the text of Gen 1.

¹⁸⁸See above, footnote 83.

¹⁸⁹For a presentation of all the verbs in Genesis 1:1–31, not just the *waw* consecutives as my chart reflects, see Taylor’s chart in “Syntax and Semantics,” pp. 184–85.

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		
		<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,		
3		the second day		
	9	<i>then</i> God said		
		<i>then</i> it was so		
	10	<i>then</i> God called		
		<i>then</i> God saw		
	11	<i>then</i> God said		
		<i>then</i> it was so		
	12		—the earth brought forth	
		<i>then</i> God saw		
	13	<i>then</i> there was evening		
4		<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		
	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		
		<i>then</i> God saw		
	22	<i>then</i> God blessed		
	23	<i>then</i> there was evening		
		<i>then</i> there was morning,		
6		the fifth day		
	24	<i>then</i> God said		
		<i>then</i> it was so		
	25		—God made	
		<i>then</i> God saw		
	26	<i>then</i> God said		
	27	<i>then</i> God created		
	28	<i>then</i> God blessed		
			—God said	
	29	<i>then</i> 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,		
7		the sixth day		
	2:1			<i>thus</i> the heavens & the earth were completed
	2		—God completed	
			—He rested	
	3	<i>then</i> God blessed	—God sanctified	

orical 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.¹⁹⁰ 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 my interpretation of the creation account, they are readily harmonized with the sequential material. Since most of the difficulty with the *waw* consecutive revolves around the epexegetical category, we need to consider the various epexegetical uses of *waw* consecutive.

As we have earlier noted, *waw* consecutive is primarily used sequentially as a preterite in narrative literature.¹⁹¹ However, there are less common uses of *waw* consecutive.¹⁹² One of these is the epexegetical use of *waw* consecutive. This kind 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 particulars or details, component or concomitant situations are filled in."¹⁹³

Epexegetical Use of *Waw* Consecutive

Since a few of the *waw* consecutives that I have labeled as epexegetical are used by framework advocates to argue for a temporal recapitulation, we need to briefly examine each of these uses. The first epexegetical use of *waw* consecutive is found on Day 3 in v. 12: "The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind,

¹⁹⁰ See Pipa, "Genesis 1:1-2:3," pp. 188-89, and Duncan and Hall, "24-Hour View," p. 28.

¹⁹¹ See my earlier discussion "Presence of a Key Narrative Device" and footnotes 74, 75, 76, and 78.

¹⁹² See Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, pp. 547-54, sec. 33.2; and Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, pp. 84-87, sec. 3.5.1.

¹⁹³ Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 551, sec. 32.2.2a.

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 fiat (“Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, *and* fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them”) and the fulfillment of that fiat (“*then* it was so”). Verse 12 gives the particulars of the *waw* consecutive “*then* it was so,” and in so doing reiterates, with slight variation, what was indicated in the fiat of v. 11. This would seem to emphasize the immediate fulfillment of the fiat. As Currid has stated, “The construction of the account is such that a command is given and then immediately accomplished. A clear sense of the spontaneous and instantaneous cloaks the account. No delay or lingering is sanctioned by the text. In reality, to deny the immediacy of creation’s completion is to reduce or diminish the power of God that is so greatly invested in the account.”¹⁹⁴

The next two exegetical uses of *waw* consecutive appear on Day 4 in vv. 16–17. These two exegetical uses of *waw* consecutive are clearly exegetical and are even used by framework proponents, such as Irons and Kline,¹⁹⁵ to undermine a sequential understanding of any *waw* consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3. Using these two exegetical *waw* consecutives in Genesis 1 to bolster the framework position, Irons and Kline argue that the activities of Day 4, represented by the seven uses of *waw* consecutive in vv. 14–19, are an example of dischronologization.¹⁹⁶ This implies that 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).¹⁹⁷ In answer to the framework, however else v. 14, as well as v. 15, may be understood, the *waw* consecutive that begins this verse, “*then* God said” (וַיֹּאמֶר), cannot be an example of temporal recapitulation of Day 1. If there is any consistency to the mainline narrative sequence, as reflected by *waw* consecutive, and especially with the number of consistent uses of וַיֹּאמֶר (“then God said”), a pluperfect understanding of וַיֹּאמֶר, “God had said” (in

¹⁹⁴ Currid, *Genesis*, p. 72.

¹⁹⁵ Irons and Kline, “Framework Reply,” p. 283.

¹⁹⁶ Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 222; see also Futato, “Because It Had Rained,” p. 14.

¹⁹⁷ See Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 221.

recapitulation of the first day), in v. 14 has absolutely no warrant in the mainline narrative sequence of this account. Verses 14–15 are part of the general structure that we have already noted: 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 reality, the two expegetical 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 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.”¹⁹⁸ 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. I calculated that 46 of the 55 *waw* consecutives (83.64%) are used sequentially, 8 (14.54%), expegetically, and 1 (1.82%) consequentially.

On the other hand, I totally 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.”¹⁹⁹ 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

¹⁹⁸ Irons and Kline, “Framework Reply,” p. 283. The remarks by Irons and Kline were meant to counter the support used by Duncan and Hall for their assertion that “the creation of the sun on Day 4 does not prove the creation days to be nonliteral or nonconsequential” (“The 24-Hour Response,” in *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian [Mission Viejo, CA: Crux Press, 2001], p. 261). Duncan and Hall correctly support this assertion: “You simply cannot get away from sequence and extent of time if you pay attention to the language and grammar of Genesis 1: the numbered days, the refrain ‘evening and morning,’ and the use of the Hebrew *waw*-consecutive are decisive arguments against seeing the creation of the sun on Day 4 as exegetical ‘proof’”(ibid.).

¹⁹⁹ Irons and Kline, “Framework Reply,” p. 283.

Genesis 1:1–2:3 indicate that the mainline of the narrative is advanced by this sequential construction. While there are 9 exceptions (16.36%) to the general sequential pattern of *waw* consecutive, these exceptions do not negate the general function of this grammatical construction. In fact, the general sequential use of the *waw* consecutive in 46 examples undoubtedly suggests a chronological reading of the text.

How, then, are the two epexegetical uses of the *waw* consecutive on Day 4 to be understood? In a similar way to v. 12, vv. 16–18 give detail to the fulfillment (“*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. 14–15.²⁰⁰ 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 it 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.

Two epexegetical uses are found on Day 6. The first one is in v. 25: “God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind.” Like the epexegetical uses in vv. 12, 16, and 17, v. 25 explains the fulfillment motif (“*then* it was so”) of v. 24. With this explanation, v. 25 reiterates the fiat of v. 24 (“Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind”). While the “earth” of v. 24 is the secondary source used in creating animal life, v. 25 places an emphasis on God as the ultimate source. The second epexegetical use of *waw* consecutive is found in v. 28: “God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” This divine speech gives detail to the sequential *waw* consecutive that appears at the head of v. 28: “God blessed them.” The divine command for mankind to reproduce and to rule over the earthly kingdom explains the divine blessing on mankind.

Three final epexegetical uses of *waw* consecutive are found on Day 7 in 2:2, 3. In v. 2, the two epexegetical uses of *waw* consecutive are

²⁰⁰ The threefold function attributed to the luminaries appears to reflect a chiastic arrangement between vv. 14–15 and vv. 17–18 (Currid, *Genesis*, p. 76).

parallel (“By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done” and “He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done”) and thus the second clause reiterates the preceding clause with *waw* consecutive. The parallel nature of the two clauses with *waw* consecutive emphasizes “the fact that God had indeed ceased from his creative labours on the seventh day.”²⁰¹ Both of these exegetical *waw* consecutives expand on the consequential *waw* consecutive in v. 1: “Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.” The final exegetical use in v. 3 (“He sanctified it”) explains the preceding sequential *waw* consecutive: “Then God blessed the seventh day.”

Conclusions About Stylized Narrative

Our examination of the 55 uses of *waw* consecutive has demonstrated that the mainline narrative of Genesis 1:1–2:3 is advanced by the 46 sequential uses of *waw* consecutive. With the cessation of God’s creative work at the conclusion of the sixth day, the lone use of a consequential *waw* consecutive is appropriately used as an introduction to Day 7 in 2:1. Each of the 5 exegetical *waw* consecutives found on Days 3, 4, and 6 explain the divine fiat and fulfillment for each respective day. The final 3 *waw* consecutives used exegetically on Day 7 explain either God’s cessation from creative work or his blessing on this day of rest. This analysis of the *waw* consecutive has an impact on interpreting Day 4 as an example of temporal recapitulation for Day 1. If there is any consistency to the uses of the *waw* consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3, the sequential *waw* consecutive that begins the fourth day in 1:14, “God said,” cannot be construed as some form of pluperfect *waw* consecutive, temporal recapitulation—a retrospective identification of Day 4 with Day 1. Furthermore, the exegetical *waw* consecutive in 1:16 (“God made”) does not support Day 4 being construed as an example of temporal recapitulation with Day 1; rather, like the other exegetical *waw* consecutives in Genesis 1:3–31, it explains the activities associated with the fiat and fulfillment of that specific day.

This discussion of Genesis 1:1–2:3 also demonstrates that there is no necessary dichotomy between stylized narrative and chronological history. Not only does the framework’s interpretation of stylized narrative provide a license to find elements that are more figurative in the creation account, but it also implies that there is a dichotomy between stylized narrative and sequential history. In effect, literary form and literal meaning are mutually exclusive. In the case of

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 93.

the creation account, the literary form, “hymn-narrative” in Blocher’s words, excludes the literal, chronological substance of Genesis 1:1–2:3.²⁰²

However, against Blocher’s type of hermeneutic, Scripture has other examples that combine literary form and literal meaning. We have previously noted one example of a stylized use of narrative in Numbers 7 that clearly included a chronological arrangement. Another example is Exodus 7–12 where the ten plagues are sequentially numbered and placed “into three groups of three leading to the climax of the tenth.”²⁰³ If the framework’s hermeneutical dualism prevails, how long will it be before Adam’s federal headship and the Fall are also abandoned because of literary form? What about other historical events in Genesis 1–11, such as the universal flood in Noah’s day?²⁰⁴ As Douglas Kelly has noted: “It is naive to suppose that such a far-reaching hermeneutical dualism could be stopped at the end of the second chapter of Genesis, and would not be employed in other texts that run contrary to naturalistic assumptions.”²⁰⁵

In concluding this discussion of Genesis 1:1–2:3 as stylized narrative, we have seen that the fivefold structure used with each day of the creation week is not in conflict with this text as an example of genuine historical narrative. While framework proponents have viewed the creation account’s stylized features as a license to find more figurative elements in this text than is normal for historical material—which most noticeably surfaces with their figurative interpretation of the temporal markers—recent creationists have argued that genuine historical narrative may be used with stylistic features that do not undermine its integrity as historical literature.²⁰⁶ In keeping with its historic substance, the use of the simple, singular noun “day,” יום, coupled with the fact a number of the uses of “day” are qualified by a sequentially linked numeric qualifier and juxtaposed with an

²⁰² Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 52.

²⁰³ Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” p. 187.

²⁰⁴ Though there is not necessarily an immediate cause and effect relationship between the framework position and a denial of a universal flood in Noah’s day, it would seem that a nonliteral hermeneutic that undermines the creation account opens a door for other accommodations such as a local flood in Noah’s day, as recently seen in Paul H. Seely (“Noah’s Flood: Its Date, Extent, and Divine Accommodation,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 66 [Fall 2004]: 291–311, especially note pp. 303–11).

²⁰⁵ *Creation and Change* (Fearn, Great Britain: Mentor, 1997), p. 115; so also Young, *Genesis One*, pp. 65–66; Weeks, *Sufficiency of Scripture*, pp. 107–8; and Bush, “Non-Literal Days in Genesis 1:1–2:4,” pp. 97–99.

²⁰⁶ So Duncan and Hall, “24-Hour View,” p. 35; and Pipa, “Genesis 1:1–2:3,” pp. 182–86.

“evening-morning” conclusion, strongly suggests that the days of Genesis 1 are literal days that are sequentially linked, allowing for no interruption between them, to form the first literal week in the temporal history of “the heavens and the earth,” just as the history of orthodox theology clearly affirms.²⁰⁷ Of the numerous uses of the simple, singular noun “day,” as well as the many uses of “evening” and “morning,” there are no exceptions in Scripture to a literal interpretation,²⁰⁸ unless, of course, either Genesis 1 is inconsistent with the analogy of Scripture, as the framework interpretation implies, or the framework’s questionable interpretation of Genesis 2:5 somehow trumps the contrary Scriptural evidence.²⁰⁹

Therefore, my argument is that when the singular “day” is qualified by a sequential use of numbers, such as “first” through the “seventh,” and it is tethered to a clear context that has its mainline sequence advanced by the *waw* consecutive, this provides solid evidence that the context of Genesis 1:1–2:3 is a sequential, literal narrative rather than a figurative framework. In short, the use of *waw* consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3 is an unambiguous example of sequential narrative literature supporting a literal creation week,²¹⁰ in contrast to a figurative framework of a week that topically recounts select creation motifs.

²⁰⁷ See Duncan and Hall, “24-Hour View,” pp. 29, 47–52.

²⁰⁸ Hasel, “‘Days’ of Creation,” pp. 21–31; so also Whitcomb, *Early Earth*, pp. 28–32; and Duncan and Hall, “24-Hour View,” p. 31.

²⁰⁹ While Irons and Kline do not explicitly deny the analogy of Scripture with their figurative interpretation of the temporal markers in the creation account, their dismissal of all the relevant Scripture supporting a literal interpretation may imply this: “Lexical research on the word *yôm*—giving statistics about the frequency of its literal usage, showing that when it occurs with a series of ordinals it always means a normal day, etc.—is irrelevant. It misses the basic point that the critical question is not the meaning of *yôm* but the nature (literal or metaphorical) of the total image of the week of days” (Irons and Kline, “Framework View,” p. 252). Can a word that is used as often as *yôm* in Scripture mean anything other than what it means elsewhere in Scripture? Furthermore, since the literal understanding of *yôm* as attested in the rest of Scripture can be coherently defended with a literal interpretation of the creation week, one must wonder whether the issue is “careful exegesis” or a worldview, at least in the area of cosmology, that has been unwittingly or wittingly influenced by the current culture of our age that is antithetical toward a literal interpretation of the creation account as well as minimizing the significance of this doctrine in the history of Protestant theology.

²¹⁰ The essence of this argument is made by Duncan and Hall, “24-Hour Response,” p. 261. Cavalierly, Irons and Kline gloss over this argument (“Framework Reply,” p. 282).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This article is the first of two that are intended to provide a critique of the framework interpretation of the creation account. This article has summarized the framework position by developing four major propositions of the framework position followed by an evaluation of its first major proposition. In summarizing the framework view, this paper has presented these four theses along with supporting arguments: the figurative nature of the creation account, the creation account controlled by ordinary providence, the unending nature of the seventh day, and the two-register cosmology.

In evaluating the first thesis of the framework, I have demonstrated that a figurative interpretation arguing for a topical arrangement of the “days” of the creation “week” is incongruous with the exegetical details of Genesis 1:1–2:3 and undermines the literary nature of the creation account as a genuine historical narrative serving as a prologue for remainder of the Genesis narrative. In supporting our counter thesis, I have used three arguments. First, the fifty-five uses of *waw* consecutive in Genesis 1:1–2:3 identify this passage as an unequivocal narrative account.

Second, the use of sequentially numbered days in Scripture is regularly used to reference literal and distinct days. The Scriptural use of numeric qualifiers with the singular “day,” יום, unequivocally testifies to the literal nature of each day in the creation narrative. In addition, the uses of “day” with numeric qualifiers that are sequentially arranged appear in two other Old Testament contexts. In both contexts, the days are sequentially arranged, allowing for no interruption between the numbered days. Not only do these contexts support a literal understanding of “day,” but they also demonstrate that each day is set apart from the other days in the numbered sequence. This also suggests that the days of Genesis 1:1–2:3 are sequentially arranged literal days and that each day of the creation week is distinct from the other days of the creation week. As such, Days 1 and 4 cannot be equated, and, furthermore, Day 4 of necessity must follow Day 1, with Days 2 and 3 separating both days. To buttress this distinction between Days 1 and 4, the textual differences between Days 1 and 4 indicated that the two days were distinct and that Day 4 presupposed Day 1.

Third, the stylized nature of Genesis 1:1–2:3 is congruent with a chronological understanding of a literal creation week. The stylized narrative of the creation account uses a literal week with six days of divine creative activity followed by the seventh day reflecting God’s delight in his work of creation along with his divine blessing on this literal day that concluded the first week in temporal history. As the author of Genesis shaped his historical material, two items controlled his shaping of the material: the actual events of the creation week and

his God-given understanding of these events. With the arrangement of the material, the author used repetition, such as a fivefold structure that summarized each day of creative activity. Furthermore, with this structural scheme highlighting key activities for each day, the *waw* consecutive was used to sequentially advance the events of each day, and, after a closing appositional phrase with a sequentially enumerated day, it advanced to the next day by commencing it with another *waw* consecutive, "God said." Therefore, when sequentially numbered, literal days are integrated with numerous sequential uses of *waw* consecutive that serve as the mainline sequence in a historical narrative, this provides reasonable evidence that Genesis 1:1–2:3 is a literal week.

These three arguments reasonably show that the first thesis of the framework interpretation is, at best, tenuous. However, the objective of this series will not be complete until we evaluate the final three theses in the subsequent article.