

other words, one cannot appeal to the English rendering of Romans 10:18 to determine the English rendering of Psalm 19:4 because the two words in question are from different languages and have different semantics!

Thirdly, Romans 10:18 does not elaborate or 'expound' the meaning of Psalm 19:4. The author, the Apostle Paul, merely quotes it in order to make a point. The point that Paul is making is that 'faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ' which all Israel has heard and therefore has no excuse for rejecting Him (Romans 10:16–17). Note that the antecedent of 'their' in verse 18 is 'the word of Christ' in verse 17. However, the antecedent of 'their' in Psalm 19:4 is 'the heavens' and 'the skies' in Psalm 19:1. Therefore, the citation of the LXX's rendering of Psalm 19:4 in Romans 10:18 adds nothing at all to the actual interpretation of Psalm 19:4. It appears that Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, deliberately chose to cite the divergent LXX rendering to function as a literary device in order to reinforce what he had just stated in the previous two verses: that all Israel had heard the word of Christ.

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The age of the universe

Frank DeRemer's review of my book, *The Age of the Universe*,¹ has 'problems' chiefly on three stated items.

1. The 'cloud of thick darkness' (Job 38:9) remaining megayears over the ocean, leaves the first day with no evening, therefore, only a half day.
2. Rendering *tohu* as deserted, uninhabited or desolate instead of 'formless' twists Genesis 1:2.
3. 'Heavens' (v. 1) refers to space, not stars, and 'earth' refers to water,

not to our planet. God crafted everything from water.

Briefly:

1) *The half-day 'problem' is nonexistent*

Simply allow God to clear the cloud of darkness to translucence at 6.00 pm observer's time for evening on Day 1. But this point applies more sensibly to Frank's view. He has no evening possible; indeed he *cannot* have an evening, for nothing but amorphous water exists when light is created.

God Himself says a 'cloud of thick darkness' ('waters above') surrounded the earth like a garment and diaper when Earth emerged from the 'womb' at its 'foundation', thus explaining many things. Tell me how long darkness prevailed (v. 2) and Earth's age becomes calculable. As long as oceanic darkness endures, a 'first day' is impossible. Genesis 1:1 is dateless. Mr DeRemer charges 'misuse' of Job 38:9.

2) *The 'subtraction method' best determines the meaning of tohu*

At Day 6 we agree everything was perfect. Subtracting each day's activities, determines Earth conditions after the loss of each day. Days 6, 5 and 4 leave the planet intact and complete. Subtracting Day 3 leaves it complete with land submerged. Subtracting Day 2, we lose the expanse 'where birds fly' (v. 20), but the planet remains firm. Subtract Day 1 and the completed planet, fully formed as on Day 6, becomes totally dark. So I insist the translations 'without form', 'formless', 'unformed' misrepresent the contextual meaning. *Tohu* should elicit translations as 'deserted', 'desolate', or 'uninhabited'. Planet Earth was complete, ocean-covered, although without a biosphere.

DeRemer assigns planet Earth creation to Day 3, rejecting this subtraction path. *But on Day 3 God defined the dry ground as earth.* Continents are in view, therefore, the path to a fully formed planet Earth



When God said '... and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky' (Genesis 1:20), was He referring to the sky itself or only the inner atmosphere or 'surface' of the sky?

on Day 1 remains. The subtraction method appears unanswerable unless mental acrobatics are invented, far from Bible text.

3) *An 'amorphous' ball of water, comprising the entire universe is proposed as 'Earth'*

Is molten brass a statue? Even worse, is a bathtub of water a statue? No, it must be transmuted, then melted in refractory vessels, cast into statue shape, cooled and stripped. Then name it 'statue'. Does 'earth' in verse one mean water? Not by a country light-year. No personal offense intended but this is gross eisegesis, reading conjecture into the text. David defines heavens as 'sun, moon and stars' which God created 'in the beginning' before Day 1. But during the six day work, God Himself defines heaven as air, and earth as dry land. Every language attaches multiple meanings to words. Verse one could not use the 'air / land' definitions because those items were not yet created. But the heavens, earth and sea of Exodus 20:11 are defined unmistakably by God Himself during those identified six days *after* the verse one creation of the galaxies and planet Earth. Because He defines these phenomena in the simplest terms, Day, Night, Dry Land, and Sea, it is monstrous to suddenly define the expanse as 'space' or the stretched out universe. The 'expanse' is where birds fly (v. 20), exclusively air; another child-understandable term. The expanse is air, and because these definitions emerge *in the midst of*

the six day record, they must be used in Exodus 20:11 which references the same six days. That is hermeneutics 101 or if there is a grade school version, that would be the first concept to drill. Context determines interpretation. Furthermore, if one does not define 'expanse' as air, then no record exists of atmosphere creation. No air? Even when describing biosphere creation?

DeRemer urges to allow the text itself to define those terms. But that is precisely what I have done throughout, rigorously and faithfully, whereas he violates his own exhortation. 'For six days Yahweh worked on the air, the land and the sea and everything in them and rested the seventh day.'

DeRemer objects to 'presuppositions' and 'misuse' but, ironically, (and again, no offense personally), presuppositions and misuse is my complaint against his version of things.

He closes, 'Why can't we just accept the creation account as it is?' With that I agree, why can't we?

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References

1. DeRemer, F., Young biosphere, old universe, a review of, *The Age of the Universe: What are the Biblical Limits*, by Gorman Gray, *Journal of Creation* 19(2):51-57, 2005.

Frank DeReemer replies:

Thanks, Mr Gray, for addressing my ideas, not my person. I intended my review in that spirit. Now this:

- a) 'God called the *darkness* "night"'. The only prior reference is '*darkness* was over the surface of the deep'. Hence that *darkness* constituted the first night. According to Gray's letter, that first night was up to megayears long.
- b) Introducing a little twilight at 6.00 pm preceding the first morning creates another problem. According to Gray, 'let there *be* light', allowed light to reach the planet's surface for the first time. But if light became visible at

6.00 pm, it had to do so without command, then it had to reappear upon command.

- c) The verb is '*be*' meaning to *exist*, not 'become visible'.
- d) This modification is contrary to the book, in which statements are repeated that Day1 began at v. 3.
- e) 'Tell me how long darkness prevailed (v. 2) and Earth's age becomes calculable.' We agree. According to the CA text (Creation Account text in Genesis 1:1-2:4a), it prevailed one night of Day 1. Hence, the planet is about 6,000 years old.
- f) If Night 1 was caused by a cloud, then the waters were already separated. But the CA text says God separated them on Day 2.
- g) V. 20 does *not* say the birds fly in the expanse but 'in the *surface* of the expanse of the heavens'. The same word '*surface*' appears twice in v. 2. of earth, not heavens. So the expanse is not the atmosphere, but the atmosphere is only the surface of the expanse.
- h) Rather, the luminaries are placed *in* the expanse. Hence, the expanse is outer space.
- i) In Psalm 19:4 David says 'In them He has placed a tent for the sun.' The sun is in the tent; the tent is in the heavens, hence drawing a distinction between the sun and the heavens, not an identity. Similarly, v. 6 distinguishes the sun from the volume its circuit is contained in, the heavens.
- j) In Psalm 8:3 is a list of three things to consider: (1) 'the heavens', (2) 'the work of thy fingers', and (3) 'the moon and stars'. This is not a Hebrew parallelism, equating heavens with moon and stars; and if it were, 'heavens' would not include the sun.
- k) I know of no passage that defines 'heavens' as the luminaries. Possibly it can be argued that some reference to 'heavens' is intended also to include the hosts thereof, but even that is weak.
- l) Of course the subtraction method works when you make the same assumptions in reverse order, thus

'proving' anyone's theory. The traditional understanding also works in reverse, based on its assumptions. Look: Subtracting Day 3 returns the planet to a liquid, amorphous form called 'the waters (liquid, fluid, not H₂O) below the expanse'. Now I have 'proved' my view, which fits v. 2.

- m) Every Bible I can find translates *tohu* in v. 2 as 'formless', 'unformed', or 'without form'. It seems the translation experts disagree with Mr Gray.
- n) 'Earth' (dry land) and 'Seas' were not defined until Day 3. Prior to that we need the context to describe the status. V. 2 is that definitive context.
- o) V. 2 is straightforward: the initial Earth resulting from v1 creation, was unformed, empty, huge (deep), and fluid-like, with a surface that was dark and being hovered over by God's Spirit.

Gray affirms tradition: there were six workdays described in the CA, followed by a Sabbath rest. Gray departs from tradition, and the text, by excluding from the story the first of three creative acts described therein—the creation of the raw material (v. 1) to be worked on during those six days and finished by Day 7. He has the luminaries created before his day 1, contrary to the clear statement that they were '*made*' on Day 4; hence he must twist that '*made*' into '*became visible*'. He has light in the universe before his day 1, so he must twist v. 3 to say 'let light become visible on the planet's surface due to cloud thinning', rather than 'let there *be* light' for the first time ever. Such major departures from the text disqualify Gray's interpretation as surely as they have the classical gap theory of Thomas Chalmers since 1830.

We now have about 10 candidates for the meaning of the CA. The 10 differ in material ways, hence are mutually exclusive. At most one can be the meaning intended by the Author. Assuming for simplicity approximately equal support in the marketplace of ideas, we have at best a 10% chance of choosing a book, pastor, seminary

professor, or other ‘expert’, to get the intended meaning. This is a sad state of affairs, and Mr Gray has recently made it worse.

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Scripture and general revelation

Andrew Kulikovsky’s article ‘Scripture and general revelation’ (*Journal of Creation* 19:2, 2005) argued that Scripture alone must inform us what to make of the scientific evidence for the age of the earth. That is to say, apropos origins and dating, the Scriptures are the filtering backdrop that scientific discoveries must be cast through. Although Andrew doesn’t say as such, his is an address of the philosophical chestnut of presuppositionalism versus evidentialism, with Andrew firmly squaring off against the latter.

Andrew’s case for presuppositionalism makes four points:

1. the epistemological priority of special revelation over general revelation
2. the mind has lost sufficient ability to reason from the facts of the world and comprehend something of the world’s past
3. general revelation is unspecific, providing only a vague set of knowledge that God exists and is Creator, and
4. scientific data do not fall under the rubric of general revelation.

Andrew writes that ‘[t]he revelation of Scripture is the filter through which all else should be interpreted’. Is Andrew implying that the young-earth data lie hidden from the heathen; that these data can only be ‘seen’ when a believer reads the evidence through a scriptural screen? Such an epistemology automatically excludes all non-believers because they are not going to accept this presuppositional epistemic. And if the

data are mute, as Andrew contends, then the unbeliever’s mind will remain unaffected by the tangible, objective scientific evidence for a young world. Indeed, is the unbeliever’s understanding impenetrable until he or she is first ‘born again’?

Andrew’s own pessimistic view of the intellect (‘... our fallen nature also inhibits our ability to perceive, to reason and to assess’) draws support from R.L. Thomas. Thomas, with a suggestion of circularity, believes that in order for knowledge to qualify as revelation it must first be rejected by the non-Christian world. As I read Thomas, unless a person is Christian, he or she will never understand that the world is young or that God created. I know of no scriptural warrant for this claim.

Andrew’s case, and Thomas’, partly relies on a misunderstanding of Romans 1. Andrew conflates the knowledge people are *able* to infer from the creation with what *some* people *decide* to do with it. The apostle Paul makes this distinction quite clear when he says that there are men who ‘withhold in their memory’ the evidence of God’s existence and his work, despite their intellectually obtaining true information from the creation. Paul never claims that all men suppress the truth, but that God’s displeasure is against *all* the unrighteous suppression. If Paul had meant all men suppress the truth, then all non-believers would be homosexual (vv 26–27), which is obviously false.

Paul explains that the exercise of the intellect (νοούμενα) upon the things that make up the world (ποιήματα) delivers a mental apprehension (καθοραται) of God’s miraculous power (δυναμεις) and his Godhead or divinity (θειοτης). I would suggest that modern scientific endeavour, being a higher order and more precise investigative evaluation of the natural world *vis-à-vis* the prescientific enterprise of Paul’s time, is just another type of application of the intellect upon the bits and bobs that make up the world. In other words, the scientific data will reveal the miraculous essence and history of the natural world. These are not only

reliable pointers to a created world but are the residual evidence of a unique history the world has undergone. God made the world in one way, and one way only, and this will be signated through the entire created order because it *has* happened this way. These indelible vestigia inform us of this unique history and, in this sense, scientific data are revelatory.

Paul and the writer of Hebrews astutely argued the contingency of the material world, the creation *in toto*, requires explanation. Christian thinkers—in a line that stretches from Lane Craig, through Leibniz, right back to Philoponus—have argued that the existence of contingent beings requires a necessary being. Materialist cosmogony, with partial deference to the principle of Sufficient Reason (why is there something and not nothing?), either has head-in-the-sand claimed that the universe is a ‘brute fact’ and requires no further explanation, or, disingenuously, proffered ‘time’ as the ontological catalyst by which everything came from nothing. However, as a myriad of empirical and theoretical observations attest (*inter alia*, Haldane’s Dilemma, the excessive deleterious mutation rate, the rapidity of racemisation of organic matter, DNA decay), time is not the claimed panacea because an inefficacious short time period has elapsed that gives no succour to a philosophical naturalism. Consequently, scientific data have revealed that contingency and the brevity of existence are miraculous and thus data are revelatory.

Philosophical presuppositionalism that asserts data are mute—that meaning is derivative only after these data have been fed through a worldview, either an old-earth scenario or a young one—is belied by the following proposition: two worlds, brought into existence through two entirely different means, cannot rationally or in terms of vestigial evidence be indistinguishable from each other. An ancient world and a young world can never be identical because they neither share the same history nor were created through the same means. If the world is ancient, then all, or the vast