

**How to Read Early Genesis:
A criticism of the views of Dr Henry M Morris**
by Lawrie Lyons, FAA

1. Introduction	2
2. Metaphorical and other figurative language	4
What is a metaphor?	
Analogy	
3. Language about God	6
General considerations	
Brown	
Caird	
McFague	
Soskice	
Macquarrie	
4. Metaphor and Dr Morris	7
General considerations	
Particular words	
day and week	
called; said; speaking	
finished; rested	
create; made; formed	
5. Virtual history	13
Definition and underlying assumptions	
Objection to virtual history	
6. Adam and the antiquity of Man	14
7. Death and Adam	17
8. The Meaning of death and life in the Bible	18
Physical and spiritual death	
Death and life in the words of Jesus	
Death and life in the Epistles and Revelation	
Appendix A: The starting point of Whitcomb and Morris	25
Appendix B: Further passages from Dr Morris that include the word 'literal'	27

1. Introduction

All language about God is necessarily and automatically figurative and mostly metaphorical, and this idea is as applicable to the language of the Biblical revelation as it is to any other report. The present article takes this assertion as its starting point, and centres attention on metaphor which is the most common type of figurative language (ie trope). Other tropes include simile, hyperbole, model, synecdoche, metonymy, paradigm, myth, fable, parable, allegory and typology.

Language about God must be figurative because we can not see God directly with our earthly eyes, hear his voice with our human ears or experience him directly with any other sense, yet our language and indeed our culture in large part derive from what humans have sensed. Because the direct sense-perception of God is impossible, it must be true that literal descriptions of the actions of God are equally impossible. Talking about God can be done only in metaphor or other figurative speech.

God's eternity, his time if you like, differs from ours because our time is a function of the creation — it is bound up with the material universe — and none of us can think in time that is other than what is familiar to us. Since God is not material, nor detectable by human senses, he, although vastly greater, is different from us; and to communicate with us only he can bridge the gap between us (a metaphor); and to communicate through language he must use the only type of language we speak, and to do that in the world He created he must use metaphor or other figurative language. Because the direct sense-perception of God is impossible, literal descriptions of the actions of God are equally impossible.

Some cautions are necessary: (i) The phrase 'language about God' refers only to direct references to God, and so most of the Bible, for example, is excluded from our present considerations. Furthermore, (ii) the phrase 'language about God' excludes language about Jesus on earth. This is not to downplay the full deity of Jesus, but solely to keep remarks about events on earth separate from those of the other world of heaven. (iii) The word metaphor requires definition and this question is addressed in what follows.

Support for our basic assertion can be found. Thus Colin Brown:

... the truth of language about God is not a strict, literal truth. When we speak about God, we have to use words that apply first to finite things and people that exist in space and time. But God is not an object in space and time. Thus, when we call God our father, we are using the word in a rather special sense. The word father normally denotes a man who has brought one or more children into the world by natural procreation. He can be seen and touched. But not so, God. God is not a father in the same physical sense. All the language we use about God presents difficulties. When we talk about him loving, speaking or doing this or that, we are using language in a special sense. For when we look more closely at these different activities, in none of them do we actually see God as an individual performing an action. What we see are

human beings and events which for some reason or another we have chosen to describe in this rather odd way...¹

Thomas Aquinas, quoted by Brown² says:

When we speak about God, we are not speaking the literal truth. Our language cannot be other than figurative and analogical.

Also,

... we are using language in rather a special way. Our words have neither a univocal nor an equivocal sense. In the former case our words would mean exactly the same thing whenever we used them. But when Christians speak of Christ as the Lamb of God, they are not thinking of a four-legged woolly animal. On the other hand, Christians believe that they are not using language in an equivocal manner, so that their words mean something on a human level, but that they mean something entirely different on a religious level Aquinas pointed out that valid statements about God were analogical. In other words, when we call God our Father, he is neither wholly like nor wholly unlike what is best in human fathers, but there are genuine points of similarity³.

The Swiss evangelical scholar Henri Blocher⁴ says:

Especially when one prepares to read Genesis, one point of philosophy must be underlined, the importance of figurative language, or tropes in the broad sense. Human speech rarely remains at the zero point of plain prose, which communicates in the simplest and most direct manner, using words in their ordinary sense. ...There are ...turns of phrase which distort language to a degree — the listener must take this into account, if he is not to mistake the meaning in a comic or tragic way. Herod is a fox only metaphorically (Lk 13:32), and the troops of the kings of Canaan equal in number the sand on the seashore only by obvious hyperbole (Jos. 11:4)... The adoption of a literary genre allows a step away from ordinary expression. ... indications of the literary genre of a text affect its overall reading by showing that the laws of genre have affected its writing.

Our fundamental assertion has been made also by Caird⁵ who says:

All, or almost all, the language of the Bible to refer to God is metaphor (the one possible exception is the word "holy").

And, further,

1 Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* (Downer's Grove: IVP,1968), p.176.

2 *ibid.* p.32

3 *ibid.* p.31.

4 Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning* (Leicester UK: Intervarsity Press,1984), pp. 18–19.

5 George B Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1980) p. 18.

Comparison is one of our most valuable sources of knowledge, the main road leading from the known to the unknown. It comprises a large part of our daily speech and almost all the language of theology. God speaks to man in similitudes ("I have spoken by the prophets, .. multiplied visions, and used similitudes, ... " Hos. 12:10), and man has no language but analogy for speaking about God, however inadequate it may be ("To whom then will you liken God?" Is. 40:18,25; 46:5).⁶

Theologian Sallie McFague⁷ has placed emphasis on metaphorical language about God. She sees that most theology is elaboration of key metaphors and models and warns that we should not camouflage our ignorance by either petrifying our metaphors or forgetting that our concepts derive from metaphors.

2. Metaphorical and other Figurative Language

Metaphor

What is a metaphor? The Concise Oxford Dictionary⁸ says. a metaphor is the application of a name or descriptive term to an object to which it is not literally applicable, and gives the example, 'a glaring error', where errors taken literally do not glare. Were the error to be say a mistake in a written page, the only thing in common between the error and the light which is the glare is that both stand out from their surroundings. Considering the written page and the light, there well may be nothing else in common but the standing out. This exemplifies what we call the central point of the metaphor. One cannot argue for further resemblances in the things brought together in the metaphor simply because they have one thing in common. This fact is important in the interpretation of biblical metaphors, as in others, and therefore it becomes important in a metaphor to discover which is the central point, for it is here that cognitive content is carried.

Webster's Dictionary⁹ points out that metaphor involves transferring to one word the sense of another. A metaphor is a figure of speech founded on the resemblance which one object is supposed to bear, in some respect or other, to another, and by which a word is transferred from an object to which it properly belongs to another, in such a manner that a comparison is implied though not formally expressed; a simile without any word expressing comparison; a short simile. Thus that man is a fox is a metaphor.

Thousands of years ago Aristotle said that metaphor consists in giving a thing a name that belongs to something else. In Preminger's standard reference book on poetry, a metaphor is said to be

6 *ibid.* p. 144

7 Sallie McFague, *Models of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press,1987) xii.

8 E W Fowler and FG Fowler (eds), *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (5th Edition, London: Book Clubs Associates, 1974).

9 *Webster's Twentieth-Century Dictionary of the English Language* (New York, USA: Publishers Guild Inc., 1936).

a condensed verbal relation in which an idea, an image or symbol may, by the presence of one or more other ideas, images or symbols be enhanced in vividness, complexity or breadth of implication¹⁰.

According to Preminger, traditionally, metaphor has been represented as a trope of transference in which an unknown or imperfectly known is clarified, defined, or described in terms of a known.

Some critics maintain that metaphor marks off the poetic mode of vision and utterance from the logical or discursive mode. Caird uses the term analogy to describe the way to speak about God, so that there is at least one point of similarity that is expressible in metaphor or simile. The thought here recalls the central point of a metaphor:

When two things are compared, they are not to be considered like in all respects. There is an intended point of comparison on which we are asked to concentrate to the exclusion of all irrelevant fact; and communication breaks down, with ludicrous or even disastrous effect, if we wrongly identify it. The Kingdom of God does not look like mustard seed or taste like yeast, but it acts like both¹¹.

Sallie McFague¹² says that a metaphor is a word or phrase used inappropriately. It belongs properly in one context but is being used in another: the arm of the chair, war as a chess game, God the father. The word inappropriate would apply if there were no metaphorical implication: McFague does not mean of course that the metaphor itself is inappropriate.

Janet Martin Soskice¹³ produced a useful book on metaphor and religious language. Her working definition of metaphor is 'that figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another'. Her book, we are told¹⁴, defends the assumption that figures and tropes and, in particular, metaphors somehow give us a means of speaking about God

When she asks the question, 'Is all religious language metaphorical?' she answers by saying that it all depends on what we mean by religious language and by metaphor.

If one takes the bible as a body of religious language, then it is clear that it contains much that is non-metaphorical. Along with many other tropes, the bible includes language of narrative, chronology, and description, which is not figurative at all¹⁵. Soskice points out that people, who ask whether all religious language is metaphorical, usually mean religious language that specifically is talk about God, and such indeed is the assumption

10 A Preminger et al. (eds), *The Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics*, (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1974).

11 Caird, op. cit. p. 145.

12 McFague op. cit., p.33. A listing of twelve books showing the growing interest in metaphor is given by McFague.

13 Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987)

14 *ibid.*, p. 63.

15 *ibid.*

of our basic assertion; not all religious language, nor all the content of the Bible, is metaphorical.

When Soskice apparently denies our basic assertion by saying that not all talk about God is metaphorical¹⁶, this is because she says some such talk is analogical, and this she distinguishes from metaphorical. We, therefore, now turn our attention to analogy.

Analogy.

There is analogy of structure between a model train and a real one, and we have here one use of the word analogy. There also is linguistic analogy where a word is used with a meaning that is stretched to fit a new application. To distinguish this use from metaphor, Soskice says that such a stretched use causes no imaginative strain like that found in a metaphor. In the stretched use, an old word has been taught a new trick: for example, riding a bicycle stretches the old use seen in riding a horse. Soskice says that her idea of stretched use is an innovation, and that no philosophic account of metaphor makes use of the idea. In our basic assertion, the notion of stretched use is not separately present but is included under metaphor.

Analogy has featured in the history of language for a very long time. The ancients employed it in the study of rhetoric. Thomas Aquinas used it extensively in his *Summa Theologica*¹⁷, and theologians generally for centuries saw its value in the discussion of religious language. Aquinas's use of analogy in linguistic theory was linked inextricably with ontological or epistemological ideas, and, Soskice claims, Aquinas was not concerned with relations that were only linguistic; his linguistic relations were also ontological.

3. Language about God.

Although all language is part and parcel of a culture, and, although languages differ to some extent in the concepts they employ, much experience is common to all: birth, death, sex and thought, are everywhere. If there were not some commonality, then a revelation from God such as that Christians find in the Bible would not apply to all. As things are, the translation of the bible into their own language has brought deep responses from people in hundreds if not thousands of different cultures.

When he wished to make a revelation of heavenly things to humans, God put his thoughts into human language which was, as it has to be in the world he made, metaphorical, figurative, imaginative and suggestive, but never literal.

In order to see the range of biblical language about God, the number of verbs used in the *KJV* that have God as the subject comes to 217, covering many aspects of human life. In accord with our initial assertion, all utterances using these verbs involve metaphor, and therefore, we say, all the utterances involve an implied assertion.

¹⁶ *ibid.* p. 64.

¹⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, Q.13.

Perhaps the most familiar examples of the use of metaphor to talk of God are the words Jesus used to describe himself to his followers: 'I am from above'; 'I am the vine'; 'the way; the truth; the life'; 'the bread of life'; 'the door'; 'the good shepherd'; and 'the gate'.

Recurring in Jesus's words is the reflection of his awareness of a world other than that we see, but all the time his language to describe this other world is that of the observable ordinary world that we do see. Thus he says

You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world (John 8:23).

I am going away and you will look for me. (John 8:21).

...unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you (John 6:53).

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life (John 8:12).

I am the gate for the sheep (John 10:7).

If anyone should doubt that Jesus used figurative language deliberately, let him first note how Jesus regards his own words:

.. the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father told me to say. (John 12:49–50)

And then let him consider further these words of the Lord:

Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I shall no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father (John 16:25).

The plain talk was to take place after the resurrection, certainly not within the period of Jesus's earthly ministry.

4. Metaphor and Dr Morris

4.1 General Considerations

Because Dr Morris fails to appreciate sufficiently the nature of language about God he comes up often with interpretations of the Biblical text which are inappropriate. His insistence upon literalism flies in the face of the realisation that language about God must be metaphorical. Examples of Dr Morris's use of the word literal are in Appendix B.

The definition of literal¹⁸ is 'according to the letter of verbal expression'; 'primitive'; 'real'; 'not figurative or metaphorical'. An expression by this definition cannot at the same time be both literal and metaphoric. The literal sense of a word can be given apart from its usage, and so the dictionary becomes possible. A word by itself does not have a metaphorical sense, for the locus of a metaphor is a complete utterance rather than a

¹⁸ See the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

single word. Non-literal speech need not be metaphorical, it can be some other trope or can be a prose form like satire, irony or allegory. Soskice¹⁹ points out that a complete utterance, in the complete context of a speech, can itself be literal, but if the utterance is literal, it cannot be metaphoric.

Literal language has been contrasted with metaphorical by some empiricists and others, so that literal language is held to be sensible, and metaphorical language held to be nonsense. Thus AJ Ayer²⁰ claimed that no sentence which purports to describe the nature of a transcendent god can possess any literal significance. This was to make the error of attributing to metaphor no cognitive sense at all.

Let there be no doubt about Dr Morris's position: he says:

‘... let it be emphasized that the biblical record of origins was written to be understood and therefore is to be taken literally rather than mystically or parabolically’.²¹

Dr Morris's clause, ‘therefore is to be taken literally’, is plainly inconsistent with the basic assertion of the present article. We can accept that the biblical record of origins was written to be understood, but the fact that it is to be understood tells us nothing about the appropriate mode of understanding. The words can be understood literally or understood metaphorically. Dr Morris in effect is denying validity to metaphoric speech and so he is left with nothing, since it is impossible to use literal human language about God.

The cognitive content of a metaphorical utterance is seen when the central point has been exposed. It, therefore, is wrong to deny cognitive content to a metaphorical utterance, as has been done by those who regard metaphors as having only emotional content. Soskice quotes Hobbes as opposing metaphor to words proper, and says this distinction is common in our tradition and in our habits of speech. Locke and other empiricists held a low view of metaphor, as did the logical positivists of the 20th century. After logical positivism was discredited, linguistic philosophers like JL Austin distinguished between the normal use of language and parasitic uses like metaphor. Relatively recent studies too treat metaphor as examples of semantic deviance. Despite all these, metaphor, we submit, does have cognitive content, and that content can be true or false.

4.2 Particular Words.

Day and week

Dr Morris says²²:

¹⁹ Soskice op. cit.

²⁰ AJ Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), p.152; quoted by Soskice, op. cit.

²¹ Henry M Morris, *Evolution and the Modern Christian* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1967) p. 55; and Henry M. Morris, *Science and the Bible* (Amersham, UK: Scripture Press, 1988) p. 38.

²² Henry M Morris, *The Bible and Modern Science* (Chicago: Moody Press. 1951), p. 32.

The fact that He used the words day and days without any hint in the context of a non-literal meaning, makes it evident that He intended the literal meaning.

Here Dr Morris labours under the illusion that a word can have a literal meaning (which it can) and also a non-literal meaning. If a word occurs in a metaphor it helps convey a non-literal meaning, but the word itself, considered by itself, does not have a non-literal meaning.

In considering the passage on the creation week, two different approaches are possible. In the first, with Henri Blocher²³, the author is seen as using a story-telling device. There is no need to say that the word day in the mind of the author is other than our ordinary day; the spacing of the description over the seven days is done as an artistic and deliberate imposing of structure on the account. Blocher summons up considerable evidence that the craftsmanship of the passage is intricate indeed.

The first tablet (Gen. 1:1–2:3) resembles a panoramic prologue, the inspiration of the prologue of John's gospel, a solemn overture, a majestic gateway. It puts everything in place in the construction of the heavens and the earth.

Here Dr Morris's conclusion is in error. If indeed we are bold enough to say that the word day has any meaning in heaven, then perhaps we could replace it with heavenly day or divine day. But in any case an utterance containing the word day is to be understood only metaphorically. Even a divine day is not an earthly day.

Look at the metaphor of the creation week. It occurs in a broader metaphor than that involving the word day just considered, but similar comment can be made about week as about day. In the account of the creation week the days serve as spacers and give the account an order. Previous commentators have found in the arrangement of the first six days a type of parallelism where the first three days have their counterparts in days four to six., one corresponding to four, etc. On day 1, light is created, whilst on day 4 lights are made. On day 2 the firmament with sea and sky is created, whilst on day 5 inhabitants, fish and birds, arrive. And on day 3 dry land and vegetation appear, whilst on day 6, land animals and human beings are made.

All in all, the description of what is created is what we might call rudimentary science — the items mentioned are what any straightforward observer would have deemed present in the world around him.

The word day is part of the structure of the week that gives shape to Genesis 1:1 – 2:3, and so if it can be thought to have a divine analogue, the analogue refers to the heavenly place where time is not like ours. The word day, Dr Morris says, is just the usual period of twenty-four hours associated with the rotation of the earth on its axis. Even although, in the mind of the inspired author of Genesis 1, the word day usually may have borne its common meaning, when he uses the word metaphorically as part of the wider metaphor of the week, it becomes necessary to ask, what is the point of the overall message being conveyed? This is in line with always seeking the central point of a metaphor. Is it,

²³ Henry Blocher, *op. cit.*

however, important to solve the riddle of heavenly time and to know exactly what is a heavenly week? Clearly not, for the obvious purpose of the whole account is to say that we and the whole creation owe everything to God, for we are his creatures. The time sequence and the time period are of no significance to this overall message.

The framework of a week used in Genesis to tell the world that God created it all : day and night, seas and land, objects in the sky, plants and animals, and man himself, is perhaps not the only framework that the author — God himself to the believer — could have adopted, but it certainly is effective to tell us about God and about our place in things, creatures who receive their all from the Creator himself.

Possibly unnecessarily, we point out that metaphorical language is not an error. What is conveyed by the language is true. To say, however, that language about God is literal is an error.

Dr Morris draws attention to the fact that in the passages listing the ten commandments (Deuteronomy 5 and Exodus 20), there is again mention of creation in six days, followed by a rest on the seventh, for this is the way that men were led to think of creation in primordial times. And with this mention of creation goes the command to keep the sabbath, part of the seven day week — an ancient and widespread human custom. Whenever the book of Genesis took its present form, it must have been preceded by a period rising out of primordial time when some men at least had the belief that God was the creator of the whole world, and amongst them it is possible that the stories of the creation and the garden were told from generation to generation in terms of the creation week and the temptation and fall. When it all was first written down and when it came to its present form has occasioned much debate, but for our purposes at the moment it matters little. Tradition has it that Moses was the author and here we are not concerned to question that. The nature of the original documents from which our Genesis came would be wonderful to know, but is still a mystery. The metaphor of the creation week, however, is strengthened rather than disturbed by its underlying of the sabbath.

Called; said; speaking

Look now at the early chapters of Genesis and consider the metaphorical significance of the verbs called and said / speaking. For called in the context of Genesis 1:10 perhaps we could substitute named. In any case we cannot imagine that God has a larynx or other vocal organs, and if at creation there had been a human observer present he would have heard nothing with his ears, whether the call was loud or the naming in a whisper. Similar remarks can be made about the words said and speaking. In Genesis 1, for God to speak is for him to utter a word of command into existence. Here we find ourselves in more metaphor.

Finished; rested

Genesis 2:2 states that God by the seventh day finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Here is a metaphor with features familiar for centuries in our culture amongst others. We can easily imagine the factory-worker downing tools or the farmer coming home to a well-earned rest. But who was the worker?

None other than the Lord himself. In whose time-frame does he work? Why, in his own time-frame, of course. Is then the Lord's time-frame different from ours? It must be different, for our time-frame is so intimately associated with the space and time of our universe, and God is not limited to our space-time. Certainly Christians believe that he came into our space-time in the person of Jesus the Christ, but that is not relevant directly to Genesis 1. We can ask, how is time measured in God's space-time, if indeed such terms are able to be used? And as soon as we ask this question we know we cannot answer it.

Look now at the verbs finished and rested. Did God use a couch on which to rest, or was it a chair, or perhaps a bed? Had he become tired by the work? Was it his back, or possibly his arms that most needed rest? Did events to him follow one another in a sequence like that of happenings in our lives? Probably not, for can he not see everything from all directions at once? What then is meant by the time when he finished work? Even on earth we know since Einstein that events need not appear in the same sequence for all observers.

Leaving that point aside, is it not biblical to note that ever since the world began, God is at work in it still? Thus Jesus said, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work' (John 4:34). There is certainly no thought here of God reaching an absolute end when the initial creation act was done. Furthermore Jesus said also, 'My Father is always at work to this very day, and I, too, am working' (John 5:17). When we recall that Jesus is seen in the Bible as the agent of creation, the fact that he is still working may in itself be an indication that creation is a continuing process. Even if this were not so, the first part of the quoted verse makes it as plain as words can that Jesus's Father is still at work to this very day.

Dr Morris is explicit that when the six days' work was done, creation was complete, and no more would be done henceforth. He says

The Bible, of course, teaches that the work of creation was all accomplished and completed in the six days of the creation week, as outlined in Genesis 1, whereas evolutionists contend that the process of 'creation' (meaning evolution) has been going on for billions of years in the past and is still going on.

Create; made; formed

All the words create, made and formed are used in the early chapters of Genesis. Create derives in the Bible from the Hebrew bara, a verb that always has God as its subject. A list of the occurrences in the Bible of parts of the verb to create, as derived from bara, shows that in the Bible the meaning of create is not limited to something done in the past and now over for ever, and so it is not proper to do as Dr Morris does and consider the Biblical doctrine of creation solely as referring to a distant past. Dr Morris claims that the word bara implies creation from nothing; thus in *Biblical Creationism*²⁴ he says:

The particular events of the six days involved three specific events of ex nihilo creation, marked by the use of the Hebrew word bara ('create'), a verb never used to

²⁴ Henry M Morris, *Biblical Creationism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1993) p. 20.

describe the work of anyone other than God the Creator. These three events were the creation of the physical universe, the creation of the entity of conscious life, and the creation of the spiritual nature ('the image of God') in man: Gen. 1:1; 1:21; 1:27. From these three basic created entities, comprising the physical, biological and spiritual components of the creation, God 'made' and 'formed' (Hebrew *asah* and *yatsar*) the many systems of the cosmos...

Dr Morris does not mention that the word *bara* in the Bible is used many times, and not just in Gen.1. When a complete study of its use is made, we find that the Bible presents creation as going on now, and, what is more, sees it also as occurring in the future. In the Bible, the dissociation of creation from past time, noted by Botterweck and Ringgren²⁵, enables all men to be seen as created beings even if they are born in the 20th century. It enables us to think of ourselves as created by God Himself. And other things, living and non-living, as well. For by him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him (Colossians 1:16). Generations of men, powers and authorities come and go whilst others appear: Creation is going on all the time, and on a number of occasions it is the same Hebrew verb *bara* that is used to refer to creation.

By saying that *bara* refers to creation from nothing and that it never refers to creation by a natural process, Dr Morris is unbiblical and led to reject creation by natural process, but the Bible speaks clearly of creation as taking place by a natural process at least in some cases even when the use of the word *create* is from the Hebrew word *bara*.

Psalm 102:18 refers to creation (from the verb *bara*) in the future in the phrase 'people not yet created' which is in parallel with 'a future generation'. Created here refers to a natural process, that of birth: We all are born by a natural process, and we all are created, as Christians confess frequently. In the bible we see that God created the smith that bloweth the coals, the King of Tyre, all things, the waster to destroy, evil, the north and south, the heavens and the earth, the new man, the wind, the ends of the earth, all men, all God's riches on earth and sea. . Hidden things are created now and not in the beginning (Is. 48:6–7). All these cases involve the Hebrew word *bara*.

For Dr Morris, if something was created, it did not arise by a natural process. He refers to the special creation of all things by an omnipotent personal God (ref. 12, p.56). It is Dr Morris's use of the adjective 'special' that implies that he considers that no natural process was involved in creation. Yet, as we have just seen, the Bible sometimes uses the word *create* to refer to a natural process. Dr Morris ignores verses with such a meaning, and as a result his conclusion is unsound. For Dr Morris, creation is always from nothing, *ex nihilo*, although *ex nihilo* is not a phrase that occurs in the Bible.

A consequence of Dr Morris believing in special creation is seen in his view of the creation of man. The first man, Dr Morris tells us, appeared as an adult, as though he had growth through his childhood. His age was only apparent, and so we may refer to the man's growing-up as virtual history (see next section). In Dr Morris's own words:

²⁵ G J Botterweck and H Ringgren, trans. J T Willis; ed. G Johannes, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977-)

Since creation actually was accomplished by processes entirely different from those now existing, it is clear that the 'apparent age' of the world has no necessary correlation with its 'true age'. Real creation obviously requires creation with an 'appearance of age'. Thus Adam was made as a full-grown man, the newly formed trees had fruit on them, the light from the stars could be seen on earth at the moment of their creation, and so on. If anything is ever truly created, it must look initially as though it had a prior existence, and therefore it has an appearance of some 'age', if that age is conceived in terms of present processes²⁶.

In a book published in 1993, Dr Morris puts the same thought in the words:

The world was created in a fully functional state from the beginning. The fruit trees already were bearing fruit, the grasses and shrubs were already blanketing the earth, the soils filled with needed nutrients to maintain this growth, the rocks laced with deposits of gold, iron, and other metals, as well as special stones (Gen.2:12; 4:22). The light from the stars could already be seen on the earth, and Adam and Eve were created as full-grown man and woman. Animals also were made full-grown, able immediately to begin "to multiply in the earth".²⁷

The problem facing Dr Morris has been encapsulated in the question, Did Adam have a navel? Dr Morris as we have just seen would answer 'yes', and as a consequence he is involved with 'virtual history'.

5. Virtual History

5.1 Definition and underlying assumptions.

By virtual history we refer to the process in the mind of God which brought a product of fiat, ie special, creation to the state it had upon its first appearance on earth or elsewhere in the universe. The term virtual history is needed only when discussing fiat/special creation, and is not needed when as in scientific evolution nothing but natural process is considered. For example, if the first man appeared by natural selection, then he did not appear by fiat/special creation, and the events preceding his birth constituted real history, not virtual. If we entertain the idea of virtual history to satisfy the requirement needed by Dr Morris that for example the first man on his first occurrence on earth had the appearance of age, then Dr Morris seems to be accepting all knowledge of the past derived from science or history, and the only difference between Dr Morris and the usual science and history is then that the results tell us only about processes in the mind of God in the case of virtual history, whereas in the absence of fiat/special creation the results tell us of real history.

Supposing now that fiat/special creationists and evolutionary scientists or historians all agree on say the apparent age of the universe as it appears from the work of scientists or

²⁶ H M Morris, *Evolution and the Modern Christian*, pp. 62–63

²⁷ H M Morris, *Biblical Creationism*, p. 24.

historians, then the evolutionists attribute the results to a real age of the universe whereas the fiat/special creationists should (but frequently do not) attribute the age to virtual history: The universe looks as though it was (say) 15 billion years old but the real universe was created only (say) 10,000 years ago. For the fiat creationists, events further back than 10,000 years never really took place: God made things to look as though they had 15 billion years of history, but they really had only 10,000 years of real history; the rest was virtual.

5.2 Objection to Virtual History

A trouble with the idea of virtual history is that it is just too flexible. Suppose that I claim that in the first moment in 1995 AD all things were created by God. Certainly then they all look as though they have had a past stretching back 15 billion years. Virtual history in this case encompasses everything that happened in 1994 or earlier. It follows that the life of Christ, the writing of the biblical books, and all else of which we may have heard, never really happened, except in the mind of God. There seems no way in strict logic of overthrowing this idea, but we reject it on grounds of what we might call common sense. Would the fiat/special creationist consider a virtual Christ's virtual death effective for salvation?

Even the first man would be part of virtual history, as would almost all science and not only all the doings of our ancestors but most of our own as well. And the Bible account of the first man would be part of virtual history. In this scenario there is no need at all for fiat/special creationists to argue against scientific evolution in order to come up with 10,000 years as the date of creation because special creation results in the appearance of age, even as much as 15 billion years, and the date of creation can be attributed at Dr Morris's will. Why a fiat/special creationist like Dr Morris argues against scientific evolution, one must assume, is because he has not thought through his point of view. He thinks the Bible tells him, approximately perhaps, when the world appeared. So for him virtual history would be all that happened before the date of creation and it could contain any amount of evolution, virtual evolution, if you wish, without changing his date of creation as 10,000 years.

In addition to the above considerations, the idea of virtual history faces the objection that there is no scientific or historical method to distinguish virtual from real history. This is true provided only that God constructed virtual history along the same lines as those discoverable by scientists and historians as having operated in the real past.

Dr Morris, although not himself using the idea of virtual history, does use the notion of apparent age and this as we have seen necessarily implies virtual history. Our 'common-sense' conclusion is that Dr Morris is on the wrong track.

6. Adam and the Antiquity of Man.

The word adam in Hebrew means man or mankind. It is commonly thought of as the name of the first man because of the popular understanding of Genesis 1–3.

In the *King James version (AV)* the name Adam of the first man appears in the account of the Garden in Gen. 2:19, where it says that ...the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them; Significantly enough, Adam as a name of a man does not appear in the account of the Creation week in Gen.1 (*AV*); instead the writer speaks of the man.

When we look at the *Revised Version* of 1880, the name Adam is absent from the *text* of Gen. 2, although it appears in the margin at Gen. 2:20 , and does not appear in the text until Gen. 3:17 where we read ... unto Adam he said Then in Gen. 3:21 we have And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them. Where in Gen.2:19 the *AV* had Adam, the *RV* has the man.

The *New International Version* in Gen. 2:19 has the man and, unlike the *RV*, in Gen.2:20 introduces the name Adam for the first time, but the *NIV* margin gives the man as an alternative.

The scholar Claus Westermann²⁸, who spent many years studying Genesis, gives his own translation of Gen 2:20 and 3:21, and in each place he uses the man instead of Adam. It therefore is a possible conclusion that in the first two accounts in Genesis namely (i) that of the creation week in Ch.1:1 to 2:4a, and (ii) that of the Garden in 2:4b–3:24, there is no reference to the man who was the father of Cain, Abel and Seth.

Looking further ahead, however, in Gen. 4:1, although the *NIV* uses the name Adam, the margin notes the alternative translation 'the man'. In 4:1 also the wording (*NIV*) 'Adam lay with his wife Eve', makes it look as though Eve was the personal name of the woman, and also appears to identify the woman with the woman in 3:20, so that chapters three and four seem continuous and therefore our present suggestion of a period of time between the events of Chapter 3 and those of Chapter 4 finds no support. The *NIV* margin says that 'Eve', as in verse 4:1, probably means 'living'; Dummelow says it means 'life'; whilst the *New Bible Dictionary*²⁹ says of hawwah (translated as Eve):

Many theories have been put forward as to the name hawwah. Some would see it as an archaic form of hayya, 'living thing' (the Septuagint takes this view, translating it in 3:20 by zoe, 'life'), others note a similarity with Aramaic hiwya, 'serpent', The name 'hawwah' occurs only twice in the Old Testament (Gen. 3:20 and 4:1), the word 'woman' being more commonly used. In the Septuagint and New Testament it appears as Heua (Eua in some MSS), which passes to Heva in the Vulgate, and thence to Eve in English versions.

Once 4:1 is translated as 'The man lay with his wife, and she became pregnant ...', the identification of the women in 3:20 and 4:1 disappears, and our suggestion of a time period is not gainsaid. Whether or not this was in the mind of the redactor is another question.

²⁸ C Westermann, *Creation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974) [translated into English by J J Scullion SJ] p. 70.

²⁹ *The New Bible Dictionary* (ed. J D Douglas; Eerdmans, 1975).

Gen. 5: 1–3 perhaps indicate that at least the redactor considered the first man was also the father of Seth, but this is not certain. The text (*NIV*) reads:

- (1a) This is the whole account of Adam's line.
- (1b) When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.
- (2) He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "man".
- (3) When Adam had lived 130 years , he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

The use of the term adam here is interesting, for while it means the man in v. 3, at the end of v. 2 it refers to both the man and the woman. Had the English in v. 3 been rendered 'When the man had lived 130 years' and in v. 1 'This is the whole account of man's line', we might be a little more inclined to look for a time period between verses 2 and 3, but on the whole these verses appear to support the view that the redactor considered that the first man was the father of Seth.

Two further points, on the other hand, are consistent with a time period between chapters three and four: First, Gen. 4:14 and 4:17 indicate that there was a race of men existing in the time of Cain. Then, secondly, the setting of the two accounts (i) and (ii) is clearly in primordial time, in marked contrast to the relatively modern setting of Chapter 4, which has the appearance of history, in contrast with the earlier chapters.

To pursue historical enquiries into the events of Chapters 3 and 4, however, even those as broad as our suggestion of a time period between Chapters 3 and 4, may be to fly in the face of the very nature of the first two accounts, whose genre is that of myth or saga with a core of truth, and not chronological history.

To reiterate, if we wish to retain the name Adam for the first man and wish also to use the same name for the father of Seth, then we may be talking of two different men. To identify the two, although commonly done, may be wrong. The reference by Paul the Apostle to the first sinners is left undisturbed by this reflection: he is talking of the first Adam. Other New Testament references (*NIV*) that refer to Adam include the following:

Luke 3:38 '... the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God'

Rom. 5:14 '...death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.'

1Cor.15:22 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.'

1Cor.15:45 'So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam a life-giving spirit".'

1Tim. 2:13,14 'For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.'

Jude 14 'Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone...".'

In these quotations, all except those from Luke and Jude refer certainly to the first man. In the Greek there is no word translated son, but phrasing like Seth of Adam implies that

Seth was at least a descendant of Adam and possibly also his direct son. If the father of Seth, as is here suggested, was not the first man then either the father of Seth is not directly mentioned in Luke 3:38 and the word adam there denotes the first man, or else the first man is not mentioned in the verse and adam denotes the natural father of Seth. In Jude 14, Enoch is the seventh from adam in a list like that of Luke 3, and similar comments apply.

There is no compulsion on us to identify the father of Seth with the first man. In support of this view, it is well-known that some genealogies omit generations mentioned in others; thus, from David to Jesus, Matthew's gospel lists twenty-eight generations (Matt. 1:1–17) whereas Luke 3 lists forty.

Dr Morris sees the two Adams as identical, and by so doing estimates the date of creation as having occurred in the order of 10,000 years ago. He does more or less what Archbishop Ussher did, working from the genealogies in Genesis. But his conclusion depends on his assumption that the father of Seth was the first man.

Assuming that there is a long period of time and an unknown number of generations between the two primordial settings of Gen. 1–3 on the one hand and the time of Cain, Abel and Seth in Gen. 4 on the other, it follows that using the genealogies to estimate the time of the first man is impossible, for such a calculation gives an estimate only of the time of Seth's parents, so that, on this assumption, Dr Morris and his sympathizers cannot date creation from the Scriptures in the way they do.

7. Death and Adam

Dr Morris finds himself in difficulties with evolutionary science in the matter of death. Because he regards the first man as relatively recent (c. 10,000 years ago), and because he takes the death that Paul speaks of in Romans 5:12 and 1 Corinthians 15:21 to refer to or at least to include physical death, he finds no place for physical death before the first man. The first Adam introduced death to this planet, so he holds, and the effect of that death penetrates all creation; and before the sin of Adam there was no death at all. No animal ate another, all were vegetarians. There was no death at all, at least on the assumption that the death of plants need not be counted in these considerations.

Is Dr Morris's understanding of death correctly Biblical? Does the Bible really support his position? We, accordingly, turn to that question, but first we look at Dr Morris's own words. He says:

...If God is a God of love and wisdom and power ..., then how could He ever be guilty of devising such a scheme as evolution? What possible reason could there have been for such flesh-eating monsters as Tyrannosaurus Rex..to rule the earth for 100 000 000 years, only to die out about seventy million years before man evolved? If the geological ages really took place and if man was not merely the end but in fact the goal of the evolutionary process as "theistic evolutionists" believe, then multiplied billions of animals have suffered and died for no apparent reason. The account of creation in Genesis ends with the conclusion that everything God had made was, in

His judgment, 'very good' (Gen.1:31). Surely God could not possibly have viewed the fossilized remains of billions of billions of His creatures in the rocks of the earth's crust as 'very good', if such fossils really marked the end of His creation period. The Bible says that death only entered the world as the result of man's sin (Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21) and will be removed once sin is removed (Revelation 21: 4 & 27), but evolution requires suffering and death as an integral part of the very process that brought man into the world. Thus theistic evolution is a contradiction in terms.³⁰

And again, talking about the theory held by some (but not the present writer) that the Genesis days correspond with geological ages, Dr Morris says:

...identification of the geological ages with the days of creation necessarily requires that disorder, decay, suffering and death must have existed in the world long before Adam's sin and God's Curse upon the earth. This, in effect, makes God the author of confusion and calls evil 'good' and is .. explicitly contradicted by Scripture (Gen.1:31; 3:17; Rom. 5:12; 8:20–22; 1 Cor.15:21).³¹

The evolutionary account certainly involves the death of animals before the first man appeared. Dr Morris uses three separate arguments for saying that such events are contradicted by the Bible.

(i) He claims that such death could not have been pronounced 'good' by God. In reply, we note that it is not just death that is the subject of the summing up, it is all that has been created. Who amongst us is able to judge the Creator, and pronounce on His work? (ii) Dr Morris, secondly, feels a moral repugnance to the death of animals. For him, so much death is evil, and declares that a loving God could not have done, before Adam sinned, what the fossils reveal. In reply we say that the death of some is necessary for the life of others. Can we call all such death bad? (iii) Dr Morris bases his view, that Adam's sin led to all the physical death that has occurred in the world, on an interpretation of the word death that either identifies it with physical death or else considers that it always includes physical death. This argument is examined in the next section, and the starting point of Whitcomb and Morris³² is examined further in an Appendix.

8. The Meaning of Death and Life in the Bible

8.1 Physical & Spiritual death

It is altogether unsuitable not to use the word death for what is the earthly experience of every man and every animal, but for clarity when we talk also of spiritual death, we use the phrase physical death for the ordinary meaning.

In the New Testament (*KJV*), the word death occurs at least 130 times. Mostly, it means physical death, but, especially in John and Paul, death sometimes carries another

³⁰ H. M. Morris, *Science and the Bible*, p. 39

³¹ H. M. Morris, *Evolution & the Modern Christian*, p. 61.

³² JC Whitcomb and HM Morris, *The Genesis Flood* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House. 1963)

meaning. Synonyms are sometimes used; as in John 3:16, '...whosoever believes in Him should not perish...' Perish must refer to a death that is not physical, for all believers undergo physical death. Similarly, in 'passing from death unto life' (Jn 5:24), the life that is entered upon does not exclude physical death, and so the death that is avoided is not physical death; we call it spiritual death.

The term spiritual death is used sometimes also by Dr Morris. He says, in connection with the first sinners, Adam and Eve, They first died spiritually, in the sense that their fellowship with God was instantly broken. They also began to die physically, the law of decay starting to work in their bodies, and this process would finally take them back to the dust from which their bodies had been formed. Here, Dr Morris introduces the idea of 'beginning to die physically'. He does this to make things fit in with a particular mental construct of biblical history, but the idea, we suggest, is not biblical.

There are other biblical cases where spiritual death is a necessary interpretation of death. Does the Bible require physical death to be a necessary accompaniment of spiritual death?. Look at John 5:24 (NIV): '...whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life, and has crossed over from death to life'. This eternal life delivered no-one from physical death. Just as eternal life itself was spiritual, the death it delivered from was spiritual. Here there is no accompaniment of physical death with spiritual death: the one remained, the other was ended.

The Jews of his day said to Jesus: '...you say that if anyone keeps your word, he will never taste death. Are you greater than our father Abraham?' (John 8:52). Which type of death did Jesus mean, physical or spiritual? Certainly not physical. Nor is there here the possibility of physical and spiritual going together. If it be observed that the spiritual body is part of spiritual life after death, so it is, but physical death is an earthly thing and marks an end to earthly life.

Jesus himself was put to physical death by nailing on a cross; he suffered the agony of death until he was raised and freed from the agony (Acts 2:24). Even his spiritual life did not remove him from physical death, no matter how great and important for us all was his physical death.

Romans 5:12 tells us that '...sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin...', and, in Romans 5:17 (NIV), we read:

For if, by the trespass of one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

This verse appears important to Dr Morris's view that there was no physical death of man or animal before the first sin. Dr Morris accepts that the death referred to in the verse was spiritual in part, but claims that it involved also the beginning of physical death. What evidence does Dr Morris have for the 'beginning' of physical death being included?

If Adam had not sinned, would he have put out his hand and eaten of the tree of life, of which apparently he had no knowledge before he sinned? The commentator E F Kevan says

...Whatever may be the explanation of the tree of life, there is no doubt about the meaning of God's action in removing Adam from the garden: man was now cut off from God, and therefore in the truest sense cut off from 'life'.³³

Being cut off from life is spiritual death. When Adam sinned, he died spiritually. Had he not sinned he would have lived spiritually but died physically. In agreement with this, Dummelow³⁴ says Genesis 3 does not assume that man was created immortal. But the inevitable certainty of death is now seen to increase the sadness of his earthly lot. It is sin that gives death its sting, ...Calvin³⁵ also remarked As Adam's spiritual life would have consisted in remaining united and bound to his Maker, so estrangement from him was the death of his soul. Henri Blocher, a modern, says the New Testament, in agreement with Judaism, refutes the idea of death as annihilation: 'The rich man also died. In hell, when he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side'. (Lk. 16:23). In the Bible, death is the reverse of life, not of existence. Blocher refers to Job 30:23: 'I know you will bring me down to death, to the house appointed for all living'; to Is. 14:15: '... (the King of Babylon) you are brought down to the grave'; and to Ez. 32:18: '...wail for the hordes of Egypt and consign to the earth below both her and the daughters of mighty nations, with those who go down to the pit'.³⁶

Physical death is thus described as going down to the pit, but so long as this is not confused with spiritual life, it is no concern of ours at the moment. David Atkinson³⁷ notes that Genesis 1 says that Heaven is God's 'place', and earth is our 'place'³⁸. Human life is of a piece with other animal life, ... (it is) of the dust. It cannot itself break into immortality³⁹.

Atkinson continues:

Human life is embodied life. ... Even at death the 'soul' does not 'leave the body' (so that) we become less than we were before ... the whole of us is re clothed with a 'spiritual body' appropriate for the life of heaven⁴⁰.

In Gen.2:7, the *NIV* reads '... the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being', where the *AV* says 'living soul'. Human life is not only 'of the dust of the ground', but has also the higher level of the living organism: 'breath of life', says Atkinson. There is an important distinction ... between living beings and spiritual life,

³³ In *The New Bible Commentary* (London, Intersociety Fellowship, 1954).

³⁴ JR Dummelow (ed.), *A Commentary on the Holy Bible* (London: Macmillan, 1910)

³⁵ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by H Beveridge (London: James Clark, 1962) p. 214

³⁶ Henry Blocher, op. cit., pp. 171, 172 (f.n.)

³⁷ D Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1-11* (Leicester: IVP,1990).

³⁸ *ibid.* p. 55.

³⁹ *ibid.* p. 56.

⁴⁰ *ibid.* p. 57.

(cf. 1 Cor. 15:45: The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit). We are made alive to God in the Spirit⁴¹. Of the state of Adam after the death sentence, on the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die, Atkinson says: physically he clearly kept going. Atkinson accepts that the first man was the father of Seth, who was born when Adam was 130 years old, so that Adam had 800 years more to live on earth.

Atkinson does not equate the death resulting from the eating of the fruit with physical death, however, but says that (death) means more than the physical cessation of life. Atkinson to some extent at least agrees with Henry Morris: There is but one meaning to the term death, and it includes both physical and spiritual aspects. This conclusion, none the less, is in conflict with the apparent similarity of the deaths of humans and animals, a fact which surely must have been known to the author and/or redactor of the early chapters of Genesis. There is agreement between Atkinson's view of the spiritual life and our notions of it. Probably Henry Morris would agree here too. It begins at the time when, in Jesus' words, we are born again. It survives our earthly pilgrimage, and then continues in the heavenly realm.

8.2 Death and Life in the Words of Jesus

Coming again to the point that figurative language is essential in describing the activities of God, look at the words of Jesus in connection with life and death. Jesus used all the words born, life and death with a meaning other than that of ordinary speech. He was using metaphor. Consider the following:

...no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again. ...Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.... I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak to you of heavenly things? ... the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. ...whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3: 3,6,10,16)

The use of the word water is a further use of metaphor:

If you knew the gift of God and who it is asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.(John 4:13–14; see also 7:38).

For humans whose very bodies are 75% water there is no difficulty in accepting the importance of water to life. When Jesus used metaphor, the woman at the well understood him. We, too, understand him, despite the fact that it would be nonsense to take the word water literally where it refers to eternal life. These ideas are typical of Jesus who said

‘... whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life’. (John 5:24).

The words that I say unto you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. (John 14:10)

⁴¹ *ibid.* p. 58.

...this is eternal life, that they may know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. (John 17:3)

8.3 Death and Life in the Epistles and Revelation

Sentences where death means other than physical death include the following:

(i) Rom. 5:12–14 ‘Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.’

As discussed above, there is a linkage between sin and death which requires the death associated with sin to mean spiritual death, for otherwise the eternal life would deliver from physical death, which it does not .

(ii) Rom. 5:21–22 ‘But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign .. to bring eternal life.’

(iii) Rom. 6:3–5 ‘ ..don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ were baptised into his death? ...in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead ...we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him... in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.’

Baptised into Christ, we die to sin and start to live spiritually, but the spiritual life does not free us from dying physically.

(iv) Rom. 6:9–10 ‘...we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again:... he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.’

Christ's death was a sacrifice for sin, and lets him start a new life apart from sin.

(v) Rom. 6:16 ‘...you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?’

Again there is a link between sin and spiritual death, but physical death is another thing altogether.

Passages (vi) to (xi) also affirm that the believer's eternal life comes after his death to sin, but none of the quotes envisages the disappearance of physical death from the believer's experience.

- (vi) Rom. 6:21–3;
- (vii) Rom. 7: 5;
- (viii) Rom. 7:9 –13;
- (ix) Rom. 7:24;
- (x) Rom. 8:2;
- (xi) Rom.8:6;
- (xii) Rom. 8:38

[Death here may well mean physical death, but the claim that the experience of God's love in the believer's spiritual life is not affected by physical death makes the verse relevant.];

(xiii) 1 Cor. 3:22

[The thought here is so broad that physical death may be included.];

(xiv) 1 Cor.11:26

[The Lord's death with its high spiritual significance certainly included physical death.];

(xv) 1 Cor. 15:21;

[If what was restored in Christ was what was lost in Adam then spiritual death is the meaning of death here.];

(xvi) 1 Cor. 15:26

[In the resurrection spiritual death is conquered and has no place. Nor has physical death.];

(xvii) 1 Cor. 15:54–5 [See the comment on (xvi).];

(xviii) 2 Cor.2:16

[To those who refuse the word of salvation it savours of death.];

(xix) 2 Cor. 3:7

[Man's failure to keep the law of Moses brought spiritual death.];

(xx) 2 Cor. 4:10–12

[Paul carried in his body the marks of the afflictions he endured for the sake of the Gospel. They gave him to feel a sharing in the lot of his Lord.];

(xxi) 2 Cor.7:10

[Worldly sorrow without repentance brings regret, and sadness, and despair — death];

(xxii) Philip. 3:10

[The apostle wants to rise again in resurrected life.];

(xxiii) 2Tim.1:10

[The death from sin has been made inoperative by the saviour, but there still remains for humans death that is physical but from which there is resurrection.];

(xxiv) Heb. 2:9 ...

[The Lord became man in order that for every man he might suffer physical death, and so provide eternal life. The Lord's death was physical but undergone for spiritual purposes.];

(xxv) Heb. 2:14 [See the comment on (xxiv)];

(xxvi) Heb. 9:15

[Christ's death, retrospective in its efficacy, brought eternal life to many.];

(xxvii) Jas. 1:15 [Sin gives spiritual death.];

(xxviii) Jas. 5:20 [Salvation is from spiritual death.];

(xxix) 1 John 3:14 [One who does not love is spiritually dead.];

(xxx) 1 John 5:16

[Spiritual death is meant here, physical death would not make sense of the passage];

(xxxi) Rev. 1:18 [Christ's resurrection conquered death, even the death on the cross.]

Death in Revelation 2–21.

Discussion of topics like the second death would take us too far afield, but for the sake of completeness the following verses refer to the second death:

(xxxii) Rev. 2:11;

(xxxiii) Rev. 6:8;

(xxxiv) Rev. 20:6;

(xxxv) Rev. 20:13–14;

(xxxvi) Rev. 21: 4;

(xxxviii) Rev. 21: 8.

Appendix A: The Starting Point of Whitcomb and Morris

Del Ratzsch⁴² takes Whitcomb and Morris's *The Genesis Flood*⁴³ as giving a good view of what many creationists believe, and so do we.

At the very start of considering the world of reality, Whitcomb and Morris take a theistic philosophical approach: all things ultimately depend on God, a point of view that no Christian could deny. The only other point of view Whitcomb and Morris consider, and this is where we differ from them, is the contrasting atheistic attitude of evolutionism: all processes that occur are purely natural, so that nature and natural causes account for everything — God enters not at all into the picture. (But did God not create all natural laws?) For Whitcomb and Morris, it is either one thing or the other: They assume that any activity of God in which he enters the order of nature is impossible, and so the evolutionist's position by their assumption is impossible.. At least the first creation, however, might be outside the realm of natural causes. Subsequent actions of God for Whitcomb and Morris may well occur if God so pleased and, in these, natural laws may well be supplemented by God's direct intervention. The appearance of life and the coming of the first man are regarded by them as in this class, both being therefore outside the scope of evolving nature. These two things are true for Whitcomb and Morris by their assumption, and so for them any science that purports to explain either must be wrong.

Whitcomb and Morris do not deny evolution altogether, for they see a multitude of evolutionary processes as responsible for a wide variety of natural entities. All that is summed up by the term microevolution is part of God's evolutionary activity. What is strongly denied by Whitcomb and Morris as being brought about by God without any possibility of it coming about by natural means is first the creation of life and secondly the creation of the first humans. Macroevolution is too much for nature to produce; God's action alone can be responsible. This follows from their assumption and at this point evolutionary Christian thought like ours differs from theirs.

If we limit the word evolution to refer to the appearance of life and to the coming of the first humans, then Whitcomb and Morris can be seen to favour creation and oppose evolution, and that is how the debate with them can be characterised. They tolerate nothing of macroevolution. For them macroevolution bespeaks evolutionism, and evolutionism they take to be atheistic. Evolution therefore for them is rampant atheism, and to base one's life on it will distort many things and always be in opposition to the one true God.

Notice however that Whitcomb and Morris assume, at the very beginning of their thinking, that there are some things that demand God for their occurrence. That the creation of man or the first appearance of life can come about by evolutionary means is ruled out by their presupposition. The only way men can know about what others explain by macroevolution is by way of the biblical revelation.

⁴² Del Ratzsch, *The Battle of Beginnings* (Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press 1996) p.68.

⁴³ J C Whitcomb and HM Morris, *The Genesis Flood* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House. 1963)

What is lacking in Whitcomb and Morris's approach is the consideration that God may act through natural causes not only for microevolution, which they grant, but also for macroevolution, especially for the appearance of life and the coming of the first men.

For those who accept the bible as useful in matters such as the creation of the first humans, we point out that the Hebrew verb bara (create) is used in Psalm 102:18 as well as in Genesis 1–3. In the psalm bara refers to the creation of men by natural causes. Your creation and mine are both described by natural causes. This, if it applies also to the first humans, denies the validity of Whitcomb and Morris's approach.

Appendix B: Further Passages from Dr Morris that include the word 'literal'

It is generally assumed nowadays that the Biblical record of origins is not literal and historical.⁴⁴

The Bible is the word of God, absolutely inerrant and verbally inspired,This is not the place to discuss these evidences, and we are here simply assuming that the Bible is truly God's word and that it is therefore completely true and authoritative, no matter what the subject matter may be with which it deals.Let it be emphasized that the Biblical record of origins was written to be understood and therefore is to be taken literally rather than mystically or parabolically.⁴⁵

... the Hebrew plural for days (yamim) is never used in Scripture for any period except literal days.⁴⁶

Conclusive proof that the days of Genesis are to be understood as literal days is found in the Ten Commandments.... For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and rested the seventh day. ...It is clear that the days of God's week are exactly equivalent to the days of man's week. the word translated days elsewhere in the Old Testament .. always means literal days.⁴⁷

As far back as any records go, mankind has been observing every seventh day as a day of rest. This is difficult to explain unless God did actually rest from his work on the seventh literal day of creation.⁴⁸

The Bible taught clearly and explicitly that all things were made by God in a six-day week of natural days. There was no room for evolution or the geologic ages at all....Furthermore, the flood was world-wide This also should be clearly evident from the data of science and history, if true. This literal "interpretation" is the only one that satisfies all the Biblical data...⁴⁹

God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night and the evening and the morning were the first day (Gen. 1:5). The same terminology was used for each of the five days following, so there should be no uncertainty whatever that God intended the account to say that the creation of all things had taken place in six literal days.⁵⁰

The Genesis creation record is real history, not some esoteric allegory. It is an account of real people, real places, real events, at the very dawn of history of God's

⁴⁴ H. M. Morris, *Evolution & the Modern Christian*, p. 13.

⁴⁵ H M Morris, *Science & the Bible*, p. 55.

⁴⁶ *ibid.* p. 60.

⁴⁷ *ibid.* p. 38.

⁴⁸ *ibid.* p. 32.

⁴⁹ H. M. Morris, *Biblical Creationism*, p. 14.

⁵⁰ *ibid.* p. 19.

created universe. This literal understanding of these primeval days is ... completely supported by all later references to them in the Bible...⁵¹

While occasionally the word for day in Genesis (Hebrew yom) can be used to mean time in general, it is never used in the Old Testament ... to mean a definite period of time ... unless that period is either a literal day or the daylight apart of the day/night cycle. Furthermore, it can mean time instead of a literal day only if the context requires it. ... The terminology evening and morning as bounding each day, and the numbering of the successive days as first day, second day, etc, both add further contextual restrictions guarding the literal use of day here, for both usages are applied always in the Old Testament only to literal days.⁵²

⁵¹ *ibid.* p. 29.

⁵² *ibid.* pp. 220–221.