

# Examining the Cosmos

## Session 6 *How Life Began*

### Reference Document 7.

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## CREATION DAY 3 The Land and Plants Appear

### **Genesis 1:9-13**

*And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.*

*Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.*

*And there was evening, and there was morning— the third day.*

### **God reveals the land by separating the water.**

- The text does not say that “dry ground” was created for the first time on Creation Day 3. The text literally reads, “let dry ground become visible” from the verb *ra’ ha*, which means *to become visible, appear, show oneself*.
- The meaning of this verb allows for the possibility that God could have used natural forces, at least in part, to bring about the formation of land masses.

- Related Scriptures:

***Psalm 104:5-9*** “He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved. You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. But *at your rebuke the waters fled*, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight; *they flowed over the mountains*, they went down into the valleys, to the place you

assigned for them. *You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth.*"

**Proverbs 8:29** "when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth."

○ **Scientific Predictions:**

1. Land masses were formed by the land being raised from under the sea.
2. Land masses may have been formed, at least in part, through natural processes.
3. Land masses formed with relative rapidity.
4. Earth has not been completely covered with water since its primordial state.

**Plants appeared on the land.**

- The text does not say that plants were created for the first time on Creation Day 3. The text literally reads, "let the land become green [*dasha'*]"
- The meaning of this verb allows the possibility that God could have used natural forces, at least in part, to bring about the appearance of plants.
- Related Scriptures:

**Psalm 104:14-17** "He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate—bringing forth food from the earth: wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart. *The trees of the LORD* are well watered, *the cedars of Lebanon that he planted*. There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the *pine trees*."

**Genesis 1:29-30** "Then God said, "I give you every *seed-bearing plant* on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has *fruit with seed* in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every *green plant for food*." And it was so."

○ **Scientific Predictions:**

1. Plants appeared on the land at the time of or before the transformation of Earth's atmosphere (Creation Day 4).

2. Plants appeared on the land at the time of or before the appearance of fish and sea mammals (Creation Day 5).
  3. Plants formed the basis of the food chain.
  4. The appearance of land plants may have resulted, at least in part, from natural processes.
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## CREATION DAY 4

### The Transformation of the Earth's Atmosphere

#### **Genesis 1:14-19**

*And God said, "Let there be [haya] lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so.*

*God made [asa] two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.*

*And there was evening, and there was morning — the fourth day.*

#### **The sun, moon, and stars begin to mark Earth's days, years, and seasons.**

- The text does not say that "light" was *created* for the first time on Creation Day 4. The text literally reads, "Let the lights be [haya]. . . ." In other words, "Let the lights in the sky be seen."
- The verb *haya* is defined as follows: *to be, to become, to exist, to happen*; the common verb of being, referring to state of being, *change of state*, existence, and the occurring of events, or even possession.
- Related Scriptures:

***Psalm 104:19-23:*** "The *moon marks off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down*. You bring darkness, it becomes *night*, and all the beasts of the forest prowl. The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God. The *sun rises*, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens. Then man goes out to his work, to his labor until *evening*."

**Psalm 148:3-6:** “Praise [the LORD], *sun* and *moon*, praise him, all you shining *stars*. Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created. He set them in place forever and ever; he gave a decree that will never pass away.

**Psalm 136:7-9:** “[God] who made the great lights—His love endures forever. the sun to govern the day, His love endures forever. the moon and stars to govern the night; His love endures forever.”

○ **Scientific Predictions:**

1. Earth’s atmosphere became transparent, so that the sun, moon and stars are easily visible.
2. The transformation of Earth’s atmosphere occurred after the land formation and the appearance of plants (Creation Day 3).
3. Natural processes may have played a role in the transformation of Earth’s atmosphere.
4. The visibility of the sun and moon is needed in order to regulate the activity of advanced animal life.

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## CREATION DAY 5

### The Creation of Sea Animals and Birds

#### **Genesis 1:20-23**

*And God said, “Let the water teem [sheres] with living creatures [nephesh], and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” So God created [bara] the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.*

*God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”*

*And there was evening, and there was morning— the fifth day.*

#### **God created three new types of animals on Creation Day 5.**

- The text uses the word *bara* to alert the reader that God’s creation of these animals are special, direct and miraculous creations of God.

○ *bara* means to create; emphasizes the initiation of the object and implies no previous existence; used in Genesis 1 to refer to an act that only God can do, one that is outside of human ability; creation by divine fiat. [Robert Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), #278.]

1. God created the small “swarming” sea animals (*sheres*).
2. God created the “soulish” sea mammals (*nephesh*).
  - The word *nephesh* in this context refers to animals who have a soul, which can include limited intelligence, emotions and a will.
3. God created birds.

○ Related Scripture:

**Genesis 2:19-20a** “Now the *LORD God had formed* [*yatsar*] out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all *the birds of the air*. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, *the birds of the air* and all the beasts of the field.”

*yatsar*: to be forged, usually from existing material (this could point to biochemical or morphological similarities to previous creations); when God is seen as the Creator or Maker, the focus is on His planning and forming the creation as a skilled craftsman.

**Psalms 104:24-25** “How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is *the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—* living things both large and small.”

○ **Scientific Predictions:**

1. Fish and sea mammals (e.g. whales, dolphins) made a sudden appearance in the fossil record.
2. Sea mammals (e.g. whales, dolphins) were introduced in the fossil record after the fish.
3. Sea mammals express a degree of intelligence, will, and emotions.
4. Birds make a sudden appearance in the fossil record.
5. Birds show design for their purpose and habitat.
6. Birds express a degree of intelligence, will, and emotions.