

understand the seven Creation *yom*'s? Are they periods of light, 24-hour periods, relatively determinate periods, or relatively indeterminate periods of time?

There are at least five important considerations which bear upon the question of how we are to understand the time value of the seven Creation *yom*'s:

- (1) The light-darkness separation, and the calling of light "Day" and of darkness "Night";
- (2) The evening-morning pattern ("and it was evening, and it was morning") which is associated with *yom*'s 1-6;
- (3) The appointment of the sun to rule over the "Day" and of the moon and stars to rule over the "Night";
- (4) The time-period occupied by each *yom*. This could be:
 - (a) the period during which God spoke His creative command
 - (b) the period during which God's creative activity was exercised
 - (c) the period during which God's creative command began to achieve fulfillment
 - (d) the period when a particular aspect of God's creation was completed
 - (e) the period during which God spoke His creative command, and saw it completely fulfilled.
- (5) The question of the time consumed in the fulfillment of God's creative commands. How shall we interpret the Biblical record? Were the creative commands of God fulfilled in a moment, or in a twelve-hour period, or in a twenty-four hour period, or in a relatively short period of time, or during a moderately long period of time, or throughout a vast period of time? Could some of these commands have been fulfilled in an instantaneous event, and others by a long process? Notice: there is no question here of whether God could have created all things instantaneously, if He had so chosen. The question here is simply, How did He create all things?

With these five considerations in mind, and attempting to keep the Biblical data in view, I should like to propose a chronological-aspect meaning of