the events of these chapters: namely, the question of the chronological meaning of the term "day." We must now consider the second question, which concerns the chronological relationships of the events associated with the seven days to the geologic and paleontologic records.

The Standard Geologic Relative Time Scale divides all geologic time into five eras. They are called the Archeozoic Era (meaning "beginning life"), the Proterozoic Era (meaning "former life"), the Paleozoic Era (meaning "ancient life"), the Mesozoic Era (meaning "middle life"), and the Cenozoic Era (meaning "recent life"). These five eras are divided into periods, and some of the periods are further divided into epochs and ages. The Archeozoic Era and the Proterozoic Era are frequently lumped together under the name "Pre-Cambrian" (the Cambrian Period being the first period of the Paleozoic Era).

Geologists, using radioactive techniques, have computed the age of the earth to be 4.55 billion years. Precambrian time represents almost 87% of this figure, or 3.95 billion years. Thus the beginning of the Paleozoic Era (which is the same as the beginning of the Cambrian Period) is dated 600 million years ago. The beginning of the Mesozoic Era is dated at 225 million years ago. And the beginning of the Cenozoic Era is dated at 70 million years ago.

The word "paleontology" means the study of ancient being. The paleontological record is both fascinating and illuminating. It is made up of literally billions and billions of fossils, which have been found in practically every corner of the earth. These evidences of former living things are found in the various strata of the geologic column, and they tell a very important story which is directly relevant to our understanding of God's creative activity.

In the pre-Cambrian eras of the geologic column, there are very few fossils, and these are of relatively simple living forms. Some algae, some bacteria, a few worm tracks -- these are the only evidences of living things before the Cambrian. However, in the Cambrian Period of the Paleozoic Era, a veritable population explosion unfolds before the eyes of the paleontologist! Almost every major phylum appears in the Cambrian! Algae, Arthropods, Brachiopods. Chordates, Peripheral, Coelenterates, Annelida. Mollusks, Echinoderms, and Protozoans -- all appear in the fossil record quite suddenly!