

night" (Psa. 90:4). And centuries later, the Apostle Peter observed that, "with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. 3:8). In the fifth century Saint Augustine reached the conclusion that the Earth was very old. He came to this opinion solely from studying the text of Scripture.² This was long before modern geologists found evidence of the ancient history of the Earth.

There are other plausible reasons for suggesting that the six days may be interpreted as six ages or eras of creation.

1. The poetic nature of ancient writing. The ancient Hebrews wrote much of what they had to say in poetic language. If we assume that the writer of Genesis is praising God for His creation as well as teaching, what more poetic and beautiful language could he have used to separate the significant steps of creation than: "And there was evening and there was morning, one day" (Gen. 1:5)?
2. The literary framework of ancient writing. Dr. Ronald Youngblood, specialist in Semitic languages writes, "Ancient Near Eastern literature, particularly from Mesopotamia and Canaan, provides numerous examples of the use of seven days as a literary framework to circumscribe the completion of a significant or catastrophic event. The pattern in these works runs uniformly as follows: 'One day, a second day, so and so happens; a third day, a fourth day, such and such occurs; a fifth day, a sixth day, so and so takes place, then, on the seventh day, the story comes to its exciting conclusion.'"³

It should be noted that some translations of the Bible read "The first day," "The second day," and so on, which would seem to imply that one continuous seven-day week is being described. However, the original Hebrew meaning is "One day," "a second day," "a third day," and so on. The use of the definite article *the* is not used until the sixth day when God created man. Thus, the days (or periods of time) in Genesis 1 may be separated by vast and indefinite time periods. As Youngblood points out, "The omission of the definite article *the* from all but the sixth day allows for the possibility of random or literary order as well as rigidly chronological order."⁴

3. The six days of Genesis 1 could well have been six days of revelation. This explanation would indicate that God told the