

# An Understanding of Genesis 2:5

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## ABSTRACT

*Genesis 2:5 is often cited by critics to claim that there is a contradiction between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, that the order of events is different, and so these are two accounts of creation. Some critics even claim this verse as evidence that ‘normal’ divine providence only was in operation during the Creation Week. To refute these claims the Hebrew words and word order are examined, as well as the context. It is concluded that all critical arguments are invalid, the context being the Garden of Eden and only particular plants are described.*

As one defends the early chapters of Genesis from their critics, it seems attacks generally come from two different angles. One is an **external** attack from unbelievers who challenge the Christian to abandon the authority of Genesis due to the various irreconcilable ‘contradictions’ within the Genesis account. The other is an **internal** attack from believers within the church who, while maintaining the Bible’s authority (*contra* the unbeliever above), suggest interpretations of Genesis which simply do not comport with sound exegesis.<sup>1</sup>

Our task as Christians, and as theologians, is to defend the text of Genesis (and the Bible) from **both** brands of attack. One says God’s Word is untrue (the external attack), and the other says something untrue of God’s Word (the internal attack), but both are nevertheless genuine attacks on Scriptural authority. So, whether coming from inside or outside the church, we must resist all error with firmness, but also with humility, patience, and gentleness.

The purpose of this paper is to examine and refute two such attacks that have been elicited from the text of Genesis 2:5,

‘Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth; and there was no man to cultivate the ground.’

The first attack (external) claims that Genesis 2:5 reveals a chronological contradiction between the order of the creation of plants and man in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2. Genesis 1:11–13 tells us that on the third day God created the vegetation which dwells upon the Earth, and Genesis 1:26–27 tells us that man was created on Day Six. The problem arises because Genesis 2:5 seems to teach that plants did not come about until there was rain to water the Earth and man to till the ground. Is there a contradiction

here? We shall examine this problem in greater detail below in section one.

The second attack (internal) based on Genesis 2:5 suggests that God’s mode of operation within the Creation Week was one of ordinary divine providence. Meredith Kline and others have suggested that the reason for no plants was a perfectly natural one — there was no rain. Kline states,

*‘The unargued presupposition of Genesis 2:5 is clearly that divine providence was operating during the creation period through processes which any reader would recognise as normal in the natural world of his day.’<sup>2,3</sup>*

He goes on to say,

*‘Embedded in Genesis 2:5ff. is the principle that the **modus operandi** of the divine providence was the same during the creation period as that of ordinary providence at the present time.’<sup>4</sup>*

What significance does his suggestion hold for Genesis 1? Kline maintains that ordinary providence is completely foreign to a literal six-day Creation Week. Why should God be hesitant to make plants simply because there was no rain? Could not the plants have survived a couple of days without water? Or could God not have miraculously sustained them as he did other parts of His creation? In other words, the lack of rain should not have constituted a reason for not creating plants if God was using extraordinary providence during the Creation Week. Kline states,

*‘Hence the twenty-four-hour day theorist must think of the Almighty as hesitant to put in the plants on “Tuesday” morning because it would not rain until later in the day!’<sup>5</sup>*

The cogency of Kline’s argument will be evaluated below under section two.

## 1. DOES GENESIS 2:5 CONTRADICT THE CHRONOLOGY OF GENESIS 1?

The problem of reconciling Genesis 1 and 2 is not a new one. Many critical scholars (such as the Graf-Wellhausen school) have suggested that the two chapters are two distinct creation accounts which flatly contradict one another and therefore must have been written by two different authors and pieced together.<sup>6</sup> They then appeal to the supposed chronological disagreements between the chapters to support their contention.

However, it is important to realise that Genesis 2 was never intended to be **another** creation account, as the Graf-Wellhausen school would allege. All ancient near-Eastern creation accounts make substantial reference to the formation of the Sun, Moon, stars, oceans or seas, whereas these factors are entirely absent in Genesis 2.<sup>7</sup> Gleason Archer notes that,

*'The structure of Genesis 2 stands in clear contrast to every creation account known to comparative literature.*

*It was never intended to be a creation account at all.'*<sup>8</sup>

What then is Genesis 2? It seems that it is simply a close-up examination of the events of Day Six. R. K. Harrison comments,

*'The first (chapter) presents a general description of the creative situation as a whole, the second (chapter) discusses one specific aspect of it.'*<sup>9</sup>

In order to meet the objections of critical scholars, many evangelicals have suggested that chapter two is simply a topical or thematic treatment of some particular events in Genesis 1.<sup>10</sup> Although this is a plausible theory and possibly the correct answer, it is not a **necessary** solution.<sup>11</sup> Besides, even if one assumes Genesis 2 to be **topically** arranged, this does not alleviate the problem. Genesis 2:5 employs the use of the preposition ׀ (for) which draws a **causal** connection between the lack of plants and the lack of rain and man. This causal relationship requires rain and man to **chronologically** precede the 'shrub of the field' and the 'plant of the field'.<sup>12</sup>

It must be noted here that Meredith Kline would not acknowledge such a dilemma because he sees lack of rain (and not man) as the essential reason for why there were no plants. Although he acknowledges that man plays a part in the growth of these plants, he still maintains that the sending of rain (הַמַּטֵּר *him'atir*) in verse 5 will bring plants without man, 'once God caused it to rain, the Eden-garden could be planted without man being present'.<sup>13</sup>

But, Kline's proposal makes the mention of man in Genesis 2:5 entirely irrelevant. Would it make logical and coherent sense for the text to first assure the reader in verse 5 that man is a prerequisite for these plants to grow and then turn around in the very next verse and say that man after all is not really required? This is simply not what the Hebrew text tells us. Kline fails to account for the fact that Genesis 2:5 clearly offers **two** reasons for why there were no plants: rain **and** man. The semicolon (;) offered in the NASB text is without warrant in the Hebrew. The

connection between the last two clauses in Genesis 2:5 employs the very natural and common conjunction ׀ which simply means 'and'. Thus, there is nothing in the text which would make us think that both rain and man are not necessary for this plant life to grow.

Furthermore, the very structure and word order of Genesis 2:5 places the focus on the two-fold problem (no shrubs or plants) and the two-fold reason for the problem (no rain and no man). Genesis 2:5 is divided into four main clauses. Normal Hebrew word order is that each clause would normally begin with its respective verb,<sup>14</sup> however three of these four clauses in Genesis 2:5 begin not with their verbs but with the noun the author wishes to bring to the reader's attention: shrub, plant, man. (The third clause begins with a verb only because it happens to be the verb for 'rain' which is the first of the two-fold reason for why there is no plant life.) The following structure displays the four clauses and the general Hebrew word order:

(1) **no shrub** of the field was yet on the Earth

(2) **no plant** of the field had yet sprouted

**for**

(3) **no rain** sent by the Lord God on the Earth

(4) **no man** to work the ground

This structure and word order make it clear that there are definitely **two** things needed (rain and man) to solve the two-fold problem (no shrub and no plant).

So, are we then simply left with an irreconcilable contradiction? Does Genesis 2:5 teach that man came before plants and Genesis 1 teach that plants came before man? Not at all. The answer lies in two considerations:—

(1) that Genesis 2:5 is only dealing with specific types of plants ('shrub of the field' and 'plant of the field'), and

(2) that Genesis 2:5 is only dealing with a specific location (the Garden of Eden).

Let us establish each of these in order.

First, how are these plants unique? The text of Genesis 2:5 speaks of two types of plants that were not mentioned during Day Three of Genesis 1: הַשֵּׁדֶה *ha-sadeh* שִׁיחַ *siyach* ('shrub of the field') and הַשֵּׁדֶה עֵשֶׂב *ha-sadeh 'eseb* ('plant/herb of the field'). Although the definitions of these plants are somewhat ambiguous, it is clear from our above discussion that these two plants require both rain and human cultivation. Thus, it is safe to assume these two kinds of plants are those which man will raise for his own sustenance: that is, farm plants. Although both הַשֵּׁדֶה ('shrub') and עֵשֶׂב ('plant') independent of the construct הַשֵּׁדֶה ('of the field') do not necessarily refer to cultivated plants,<sup>15</sup> it is the addition of the הַשֵּׁדֶה which constitutes these plants as the type which require the attention of man in order to grow. Brown, Driver and Briggs in their Hebrew-English Lexicon describe הַשֵּׁדֶה as a specific plot of land 'yielding plants and trees' and also as 'cultivated ground'.<sup>16</sup> H. C. Leupold comments that this word means 'tillable ground, arable fields'.<sup>17</sup> Keil and Delitzsch sum up our understanding of these plants,

*'In the same way the "shrub of the field" consists of*

*such shrubs and tree-like productions of the cultivated land as man raises for the sake of their fruit, and the “herb of the field”, all seed-producing plants, both corn and vegetables, which serve as food for man and beast.*<sup>18</sup>

Thus, we can be assured that there is no contradiction between Genesis 2:5 and Genesis 1, because Genesis 2:5 is speaking of entirely different types of plants. It is only these particular plants — plants designed for mankind — that will spring up **after** man.

Now, we must address the second consideration which is that Genesis 2:5 is not dealing with the entire globe but only with the Garden of Eden. This is established by the following observations:

- (1) The heading of chapter 2, ‘the earth and the heavens’ (Genesis 2:4b), has reversed the more common phrase ‘the heavens and the earth’ (Genesis 1:1, 2:1, 2:4a). This reversal by Moses is quite significant and immediately draws the attention of the reader off the creation as a whole and onto a specific situation on the Earth — namely the Garden of Eden.<sup>19</sup>
- (2) Beginning in Genesis 2:4b the combined name אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) יְהוָה (*YHVH*) (‘Lord God’) appears for the first time. The change in God’s name in Genesis 2 is often touted as evidence for the multiple authorship and fragmentary nature of the early chapters of Genesis. However, the addition of ‘Jehovah’ *YHVH* (יְהוָה) is especially relevant because it is God’s intimate covenant name as he deals with His people. Thus, rather than evidence of multiple authorship, the addition of the name actually calls our attention to the fact that the account is narrowing in upon the man which God has made in His image and also upon the specific locale He has made for man, the Garden of Eden. If the perspective of chapter 2 were still universal we would expect Moses to have simply continued to use אֱלֹהִים (God).
- (3) Mark Futato has identified two ‘strands’ in chapter 2 which are both spoken of in verse 8. *‘And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there he placed the man whom he had formed.’* Strand one in verse 8a deals with the forming of the Garden and is developed in verses 9–15. Strand two in verse 8b deals with the forming of the man and is developed in verses 15–25.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the very subject matter of chapter 2 deals not with the entire globe but with specific events (the forming of man and cultivated plants) in a specific location (the Garden of Eden).
- (4) The transition in usage from הָאָרֶץ *ha-eretz* (‘the earth’) in Day Three of chapter 1 to the usage of הָאָדָמָה *ha-’adamah* (‘the ground’) in Genesis 2:5 most likely draws our attention to the specific location of the Garden. The specific plants ‘shrub of the field’ and ‘plant of the field’ were not able to come about because man was not around to till the הָאָדָמָה (‘ground’). So, after examining the nature of these plants and the

location of these plants it seems safe to conclude that Genesis 2:5 is only speaking of unique kinds of vegetation — that which is cultivated by man — in a unique location, the Garden of Eden. Thus, we can confidently conclude that there is no chronological contradiction between the accounts in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2:5.

Let us now proceed to the second section of this paper which deals with the implications of this text upon the *modus operandi* used by God in the Creation Week.

## 2. DOES GENESIS 2:5 CONTRADICT A LITERAL SIX-DAY CREATION?

Kline makes it clear that the primary purpose of his article ‘Space and time in the Genesis cosmogony’ is ‘to rebut the literalist interpretation of the Genesis creation “week” propounded by the young earth theorists.’<sup>21</sup> He uses Genesis 2:5 as one of the major pins in an argument that concludes that

*‘as far as the time frame is concerned, with respect to both the duration and sequence of events, the scientist is left free of biblical constraints in hypothesizing about cosmic origins.’<sup>22</sup>*

Thus, Kline holds an ancient view of Earth history and even at one point calls the young Earth view a ‘deplorable disservice to the cause of biblical truth.’<sup>23</sup>

However, can Genesis 2:5 bear the burden of such a harsh conclusion? It is my purpose in this section to show that the Kline’s argument from Genesis 2:5 that God’s *modus operandi* during Creation Week was ordinary providence is untenable.

Let us review Kline’s argument. His main contention is that Genesis 2:5 offers a perfectly natural reason why there were no plants: there was no rain. But, asks Kline, why would this constitute a reason for why God would not create plants when he could so easily miraculously sustain them? Thus, Kline concludes that God must have been working during the Creation ‘Week’ by ordinary providence, thus requiring long periods of time for natural processes to take place.<sup>24</sup>

However, Kline’s reasoning here contains a fundamental logical fallacy. Even if ordinary providence was at work at particular points in the Creation Week, by no means does this necessitate that it be the **only** means by which God operated.<sup>25</sup> Kline assumes that this ordinary providence was God’s *modus operandi* everywhere in the creation. But, the text tells us the exact opposite: at most the text tells us that this was the *modus operandi* for these unique plants only in the Garden of Eden. As was demonstrated above, it is the Garden which is in view in Genesis 2:5, and thus this text provides no difficulty to an ordinary chronological six-day Creation Week.

God most certainly was using a **mixture** of both extraordinary and ordinary providence during the Creation Week. Extraordinary providence would only be unnecessary if God created everything at one time. It is only when every component of the complex universe is in place that it

functions without the help of God's extraordinary intervention.<sup>26</sup> Whether it is the balance of gravity in our intricate solar system or the complex interdependence of the Earth's ecosystems, it is essential that all parts be in place in order for them to operate effectively. But, even Kline does not suggest in his 'framework hypothesis' that all things were created simultaneously, thus he too must posit certain acts of extraordinary providence intermingled with ordinary providence during the creation process.

The only way in which Kline can maintain a **purely** naturalistic and ordinary creation process is to suggest that God used some evolutionary mechanism. This would entail a Deistic view of God which says that God simply got the proverbial 'ball' rolling and does not intervene in **any** sort of extraordinary manner. But, the Scriptures clearly reject such a Deistic view of God. Does Genesis 1:2 not show that God was intimately overseeing every act of His creation, 'and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters'? God's Spirit, sustaining and upholding the creation, demonstrates that extraordinary providence (not just ordinary) was clearly at work during the Creation Week.

Is it really that difficult for Kline to imagine ordinary and extraordinary providence co-existing? Do we not see this elsewhere in Scripture? Robert Grossman comments, '*Every miracle in the Bible occurs in the midst of ordinary providence and gives lie to the idea that the two cannot coexist.*'<sup>27</sup> A good example of this is the day the Sun stood still in Joshua 10. Although God used extraordinary providence to stop the Sun's relative motion, He allowed other ordinary acts of providence to continue: men still breathed oxygen in order to live, light waves still travelled the same speed, the Amorites died from the Israelite army in a perfectly natural way (most likely sword wounds), etc. Instead of simply striking down the Amorites directly, God used a mixture of ordinary and extraordinary providence to accomplish His purposes. So, we should not be surprised that God would also use a mixture of the two during the actual Creation Week. In fact, **every** creative act of God within the Creation Week would constitute an example of extraordinary providence.<sup>28</sup>

The only reason Kline sees ordinary providence as the only *modus operandi* is because he thinks Genesis 2:5 is referring to Day Three (Tuesday) in the creative process and thus applicable to all the Earth. Recall Kline's comment: '*Hence the twenty-four-hour day theorist must think of the almighty as hesitant to put in the plants on 'Tuesday' morning because it would not rain until later in the day!*'<sup>29</sup>

However, Kline simply fails to realise that Genesis 2:5 is not speaking of Day Three (Tuesday) at all. As we have demonstrated above, Genesis 2:5 is only concerned with specific plants in the Garden of Eden and does not impact the plants spoken of in Day Three. Kline's accusation misses the point entirely due to his faulty exegesis of the text.

Now, if Kline wishes to insist that Genesis 2:5 does apply to **all** plant life on the Earth, then he would have to

also suggest that all the plants on the Earth require the cultivation of man (for we have already established above that man is just as much required as the rain). But, this faces two problems. First, this is contrary to the plain facts of nature because there are many plants that can exist without the help of man to cultivate the ground. Second, Kline would have to affirm that all plant life came upon the Earth after man. However, to any version of ancient Earth history this suggestion is absurd in the highest degree — particularly on their scheme man came millions of years **after** plants.

Suppose for a moment we concede that these plants only require rain and not man, as Kline has suggested.<sup>30</sup> Does this really solve the problem? Not quite. Kline's exegetical motivation for maintaining that these plants only require rain is so that he can hold to an ancient view of Earth history,<sup>31</sup> which says that man came long after plants. But, this leads him into a substantial exegetical difficulty, because now he must be willing to insert vast amounts of time between verse 6 and verse 7 of Genesis 2. Verse 6 states, 'But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground'. Kline correctly notes that the word 'mist' (מִטָּה) is better rendered 'rain cloud'.<sup>32</sup> Verse 7 states, 'Then the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life'. If God sent rain in verse 6 and man came in verse 7, then according to popular reconstructions of the age of the Earth there would have to be a 4.5 billion year gap between these verses.<sup>33</sup> In a historical narrative like Genesis 2, which seems to flow naturally without significant interruption,<sup>34</sup> this seems to be a highly improbable (if not absurd) gap of time.<sup>35</sup>

## CONCLUSION

All of these considerations lead us to the conclusion that Kline has simply failed to establish that ordinary providence is the only *modus operandi* of God during the Creation Week. In addition, Kline's insistence that Genesis 2:5 refers to all the plant life on the Earth leads him into some scientific and exegetical quandaries. Thus, Genesis 2:5 offers no warrant for dislodging the standard view that Genesis 1 is speaking of six ordinary days.

## REFERENCES

1. Although these suggestions may be well-intended and stem from a heart that loves God, they nevertheless are an attack if they prove to be contrary to His Word.
2. Kline, M. G., 1957–1958. Because it had not rained. *Westminster Theological Journal*, 20:149–150.
3. Blocher, H., 1984. *In the Beginning*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois.  
Blocher is another proponent of Kline's view (known as the 'framework hypothesis' or the 'literary framework' view).
4. Kline, Ref. 2, p. 151.
5. Kline, Ref. 2, p. 152.
6. Harrison, R. K., 1969. *Introduction to the Old Testament*, William B.

- Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pp. 19–61.  
This contains an evangelical rebuttal of the Graf-Wellhausen school.
7. Archer, G. L., 1982. **Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties**, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 69.
  8. Archer, Ref. 7, p. 69.
  9. Harrison, Ref. 6, p. 554.
  10. The primary motivation behind such a suggestion is found in Genesis 2:19, ‘And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky and brought them to the man to see what he would call them.’  
In this verse it appears that the land animals were created **after** man, whereas in chapter 1, on Day Six, it is clear that the land animals were created before man.
  11. This problem can be easily remedied if one understands the *vav* consecutive וַיִּבְרָא in Genesis 2:19 as the pluperfect ‘had formed’.  
Jouon, P., 1993. **A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew**, Vol. 2, 118d-k, Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, Rome, pp. 391–393.  
Waltke, B. K. and O’Connor, M., 1990. **An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax**, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Indiana, p. 552.  
The NIV has chosen to use the pluperfect in Genesis 2:19. This would place the action of forming the land animals prior to the main narrative which discusses the creation of man and God placing him in the Garden. Those who defend the thematic structure of Genesis 2 may object at this point that although the pluperfect is a possibility it is not the *prima facie* or natural reading of the text. However, this seems to ignore two factors.  
First, Genesis 2 is to be read in light of Genesis 1.  
H. C. Leupold comments on the creation of the land animals: ‘*That in reality they had been made prior to the creation of man is so entirely apparent from chapter one as not to require explanation.*’  
Leupold, H. C., 1942. **Exposition of Genesis**, Vol. 1, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 130.  
Second, Joseph Pipa recognises that the *vav* consecutive is often used by Moses throughout the historical narratives of the Pentateuch in the pluperfect. He gives the following as examples: Genesis 6:9–13, 45:6–7; Exodus 4:27, 11:1, 14:5; Numbers 1:47–49.  
Pipa, J. A., Jr., 1996. **From Chaos to Cosmos: A Critique of the Framework Hypothesis**, presented at the West Coast meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, April 26, 1996.
  12. Now, at this point, one might suggest that if chapter 1 were **also** topically arranged then perhaps there would be no chronological contradiction. However, even in Kline’s ‘framework hypothesis’ which suggests that Genesis 1 is not chronologically arranged, he still has plants **preceding** the creation of man because he generally accepts an ancient universe and its proposed order of events.
  13. Kline, M. G., 1996. Space and time in the Genesis cosmogeny, **Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith**, 48(1):12.
  14. Jouon, P., 1993. **A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew**, Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, Rome, p. 579.
  15. פֶּתַח appears in Genesis 21:15, Job 30:4,7 without the construct ‘of the field’ and does not necessarily refer to cultivated plants. חֲפָצִים appears in Deuteronomy 11:15, 32:2; Psalm 92:7, 102:4,11, 106:20; Proverbs 19:12; Jeremiah 14:6 without the construct ‘of the field’, and it too does not necessarily refer to cultivated plants.
  16. Brown, F., Driver, S. R. and Briggs, C. A. (eds), 1979. **Hebrew-English Lexicon**, Hendrickson, Peabody, Massachusetts, p. 961.
  17. Leupold, H. C., 1942. **Exposition of Genesis**, Vol. 1, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 113.
  18. Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch, F., 1986. **Commentary on the Old Testament: The Pentateuch**, Vol. 1, William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pp. 77–78.
  19. Keil and Delitzsch, Ref. 18, p. 72.
  20. Futato, M. D., 1996. Cassette recording of lecture at New Life Presbyterian Church, Escondido, California, January 28, 1996.
  21. Kline, Ref. 13, p. 2.
  22. Kline, Ref. 13, p. 2.
  23. Kline, Ref. 13, footnote 47, p. 15.
  24. For example, on Day Three God gathers the water, exposes the land, and plants vegetation. However, if the normal rate of evaporation were at work, as Genesis 2:5 supposedly implies, then there is no way that all these events could take place in one day.
  25. Grossman, R. E., 1987. The light He called day. **Mid-America Journal of Theology**, 3(1):28.
  26. Pipa, J. A., Jr., 1996. **From Chaos to Cosmos: A Critique of the Framework Hypothesis**, presented at the West Coast meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, April 26, 1996, pp. 13–14.
  27. Grossman, Ref. 25, p. 29.
  28. Although never done explicitly, Kline seems to implicitly deny the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). Would not God’s creative fiat be considered extraordinary providence? Did these acts not happen all throughout the Creation Week? Can Kline’s insistence on **only** ordinary providence be reconciled with Psalm 33:9, ‘For He spoke and it came to be; He commanded and it stood firm’?
  29. Kline, Ref. 2, p. 152.
  30. Kline, Ref. 13, p. 12.
  31. Kline, Ref. 13, footnote 47, p. 15.  
Recall that he here refers to the young Earth view of Earth history as a ‘deplorable disservice to biblical truth’.
  32. Kline, Ref. 13, p. 12.
  33. Cowen, R., 1990. **History of Life**, Blackwell Scientific Publications, Boston, Massachusetts, pp. 401–422.  
The latest consensus (and the ‘consensus’ is always changing) on the age of the Earth is 4.6 billion years. Rain was on the Earth almost immediately from its beginning and man appeared on the Earth approximately 1 million years ago.
  34. Jouon, Ref. 14, 118c, p. 390.  
Genesis 2, like Genesis 1, is characterised by the abundant use of the *vav* consecutive verb form. The *vav* consecutive is common to straightforward historical narratives and is generally absent in poetic texts. According to Paul Jouon it is ‘very common in narratives’. Thus, we would have no textual reason for supposing such an enormous gap of time between two consecutive verses.
  35. Furthermore, if the plants in the Garden of Eden require only rain (and not man), then the Garden of Eden would have been in existence millions of years before man ever walked upon the Earth. However, it seems quite unlikely that God would craft a garden, carefully and purposefully suited for man, simply so that it could sit empty for millions of years, waiting to fulfil its role. The Garden contained the Tree of Life, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and seemed to be the idyllic paradise for **man’s** existence.

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