

The Story of Covenant Creation

Timothy P. Martin

“I am also painfully aware of just how many proposals related to Genesis have been born in the last two hundred years with high expectations only to be buried later in unmarked graves in the cul-de-sacs of history. Their numbers are great. That sobering historical reality should foster care, temperance, balance, objectivity, and most of all, humility, among all those who have an interest in this controversy...”

Timothy P. Martin, *Beyond Creation Science*, 2nd Edition, 2005, p. 5.

What if the missing key to Genesis is Preterism?

Genesis Creation as Covenant Creation

“It is as truly a sevenfold revelation of a beginning as the Apocalypse of John is a mystic revelation of an end.”

Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalyptic*, p. 44.

What is Covenant Creation?

Genesis \Leftrightarrow Revelation

“beginning” \Leftrightarrow the “end”

Covenant \Leftrightarrow Covenant

Covenant Creation: The Bible tells **one** over-arching story from Genesis to Revelation...

Traditional Creation & Eschatology

Genesis \Leftrightarrow Revelation

“beginnings” \Leftrightarrow “end*ings*”

Physical Universe & Covenant \Leftrightarrow Covenant & Physical Universe
Gen. 1 *then* Gen 2 or 12 \Leftrightarrow Matthew 24 *then* Rev. 21-22

Traditional Views: The Bible tells **two** separate stories from Genesis to Revelation... **two** beginnings, **two** endings, etc... physical universe & covenant.

Covenant Creation & Eschatology

Genesis \Leftrightarrow Revelation

“beginning” \Leftrightarrow the “end”

Covenant \Leftrightarrow Covenant

Covenant Creation: The Bible tells **one** over-arching story from Genesis to Revelation...

The Question is one of *Nature*

- The **nature** of the “beginning” and “end” must match.
- The **nature** of the curse and redemption must match.
- The **nature** of original creation and new creation must match.

To identify the **nature** of the end is to identify the **nature** of the beginning!

“Jesus’ resurrection was a private vindication of who He was and what he did, but no one saw it took place, and Jesus only appeared to a few disciples. The destruction of the enemy city, Jerusalem, was His public vindication. Fulfilling Jesus’ prophecies, it confirmed Him as a true Prophet, and as the last and greatest Prophet. It was proof the that he had indeed ascended to heaven and become King of kings and Lord of lords. Thus, the destruction of the Old Creation is of incalculable importance to Biblical theology”

James B. Jordan, *The Handwriting on the Wall*, p. 341-342.

“Gabriel explains that this vision pertains to the time of the end. The end of what? The end of the first creation, which came to a full close in AD 70.”

James B. Jordan, *The Handwriting on the Wall*, p. 417.

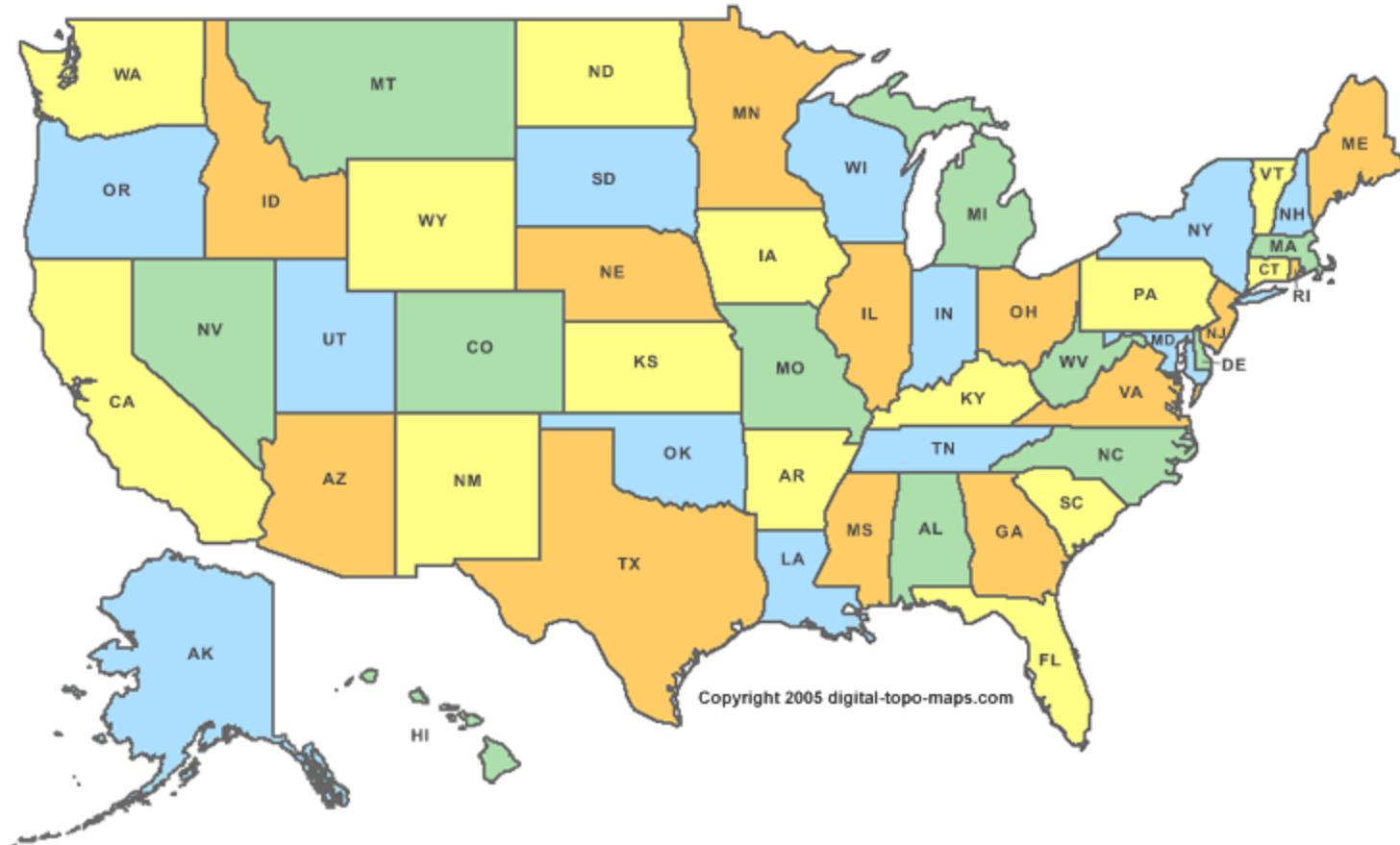
“Notice now that in Revelation 21, the heavens and the earth pass away at the end of the millennium... [T]he Great Day of the Lord was to occur at the time of the *destruction of creation*, at the judgment of Babylon, and since *creation was to be destroyed* at the end of the millennium, then the vindication of the martyrs, in the judgment on Babylon, was to occur at the end of the millennium.” (emphasis mine)

Don K. Preston, *Who is This Babylon?*, p. 268-269.

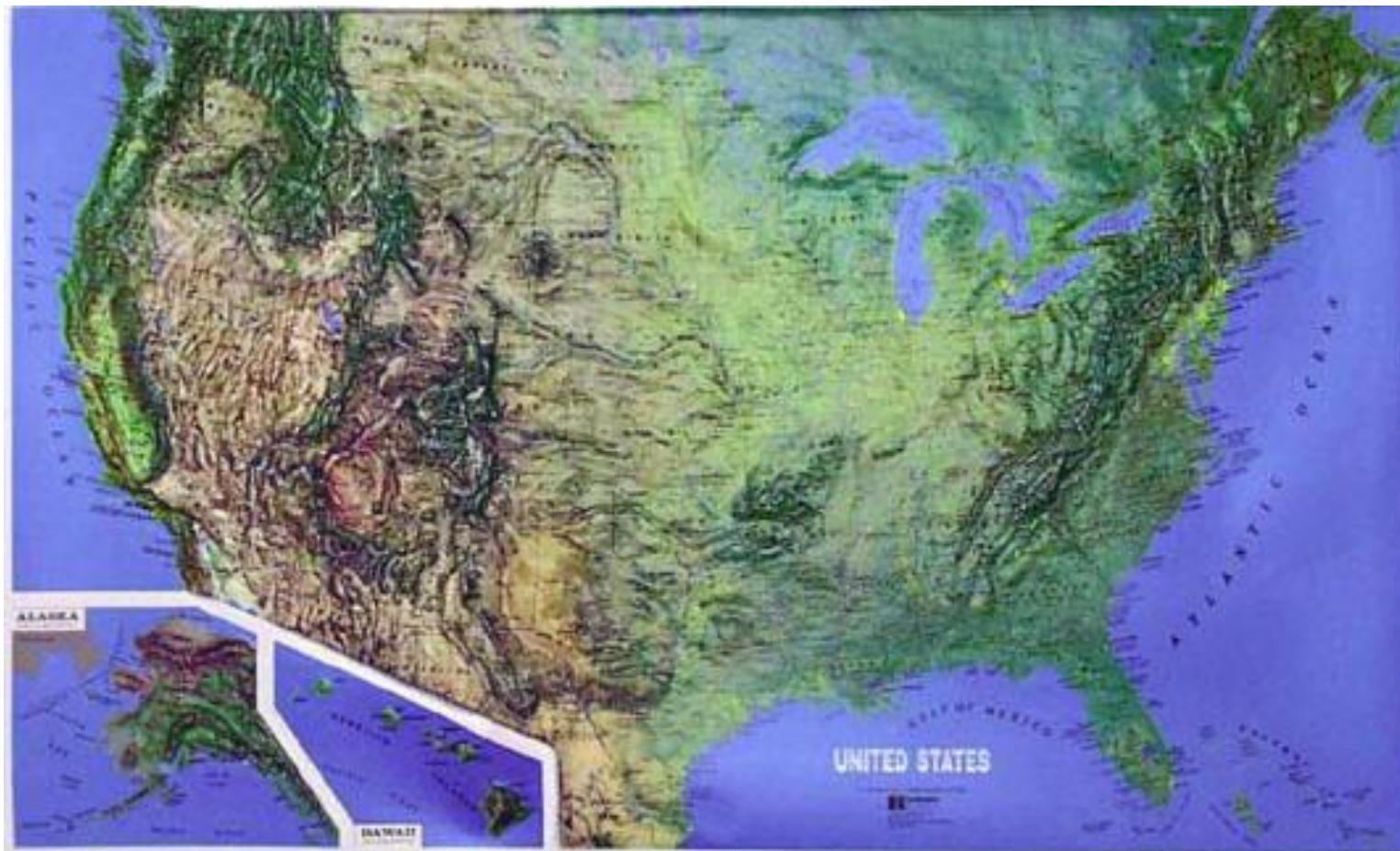
In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands, they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. (Heb. 1:10-11)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. (Rev. 21:1)

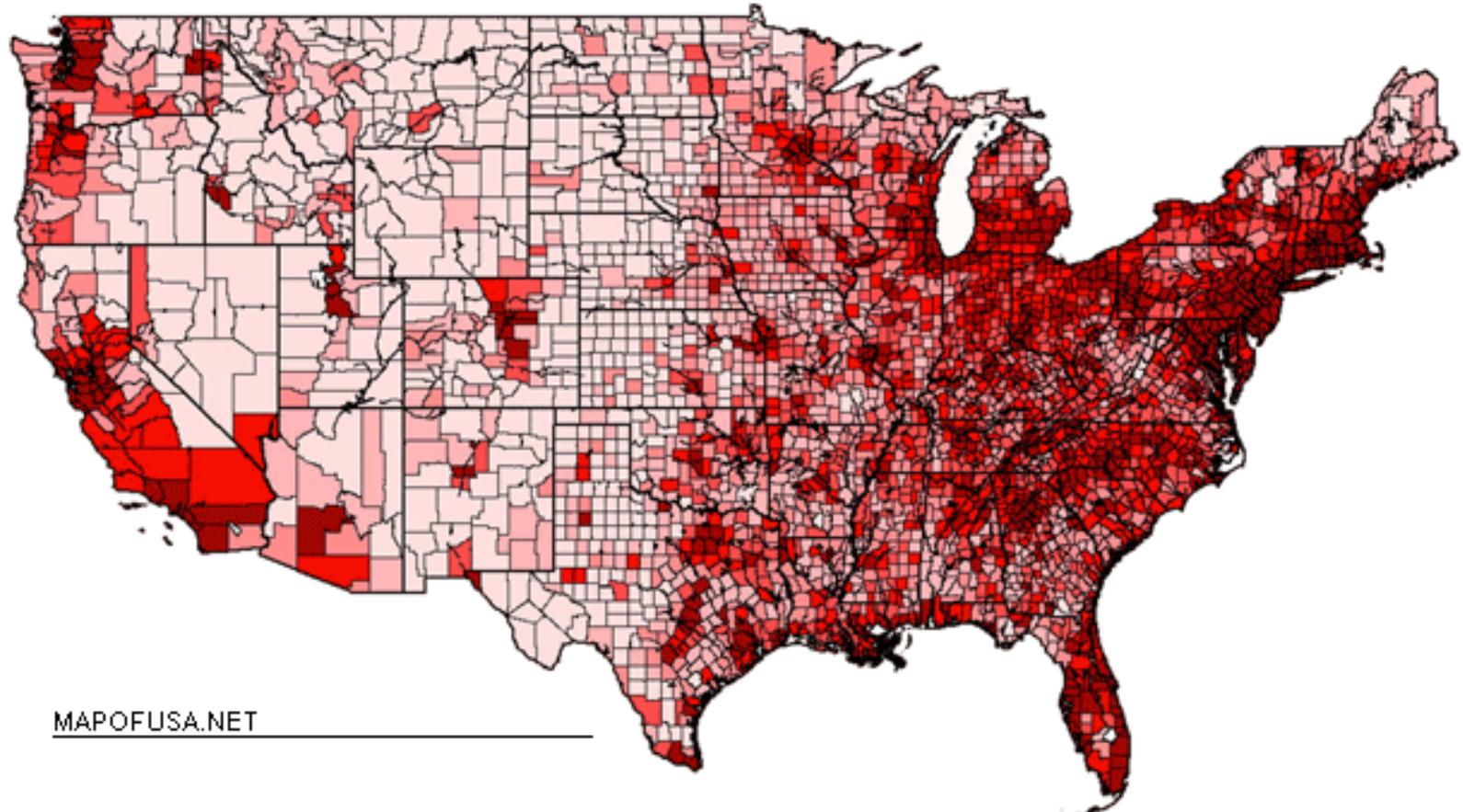
Covenant Map



Topography Map

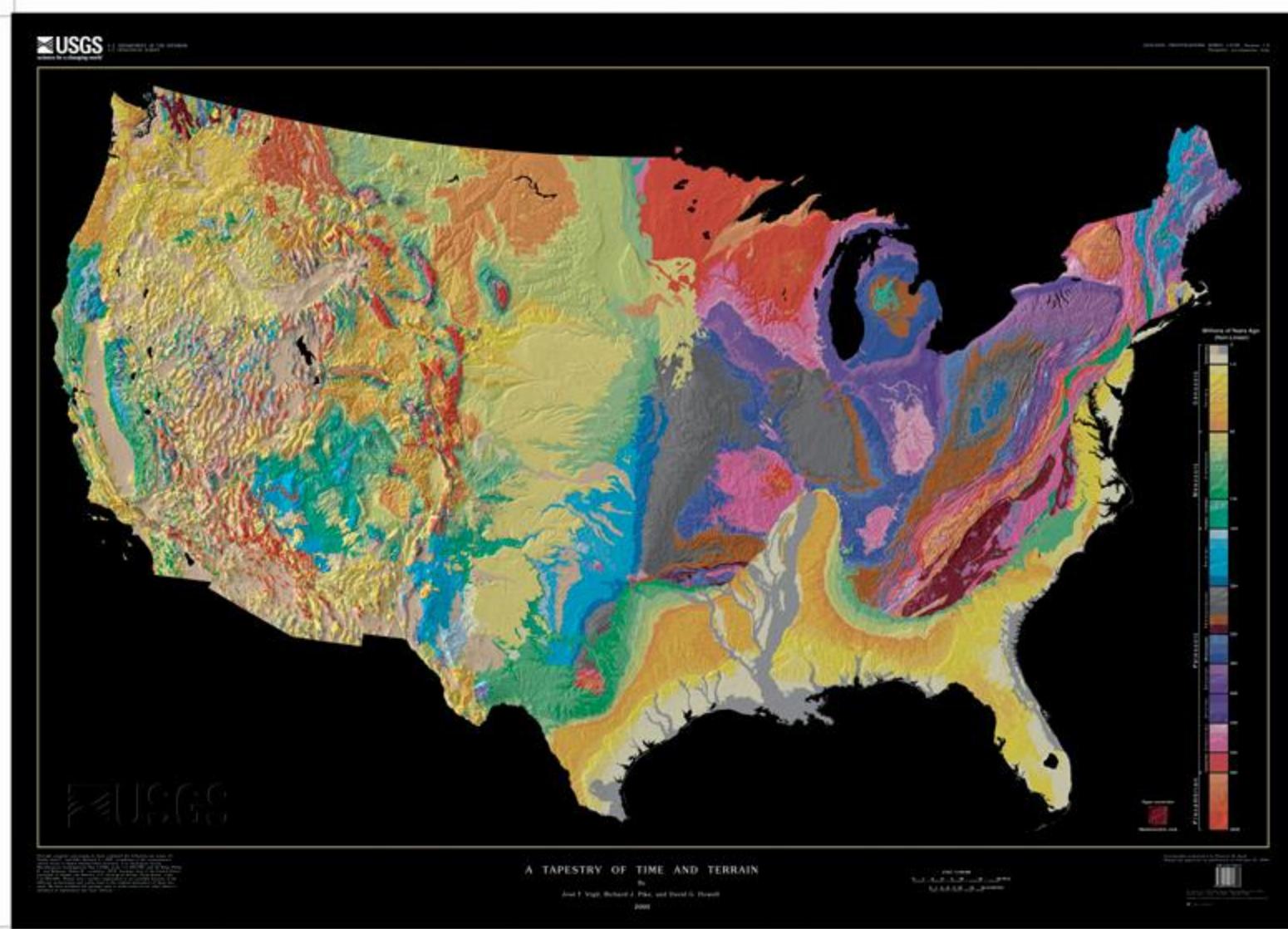


Population Map

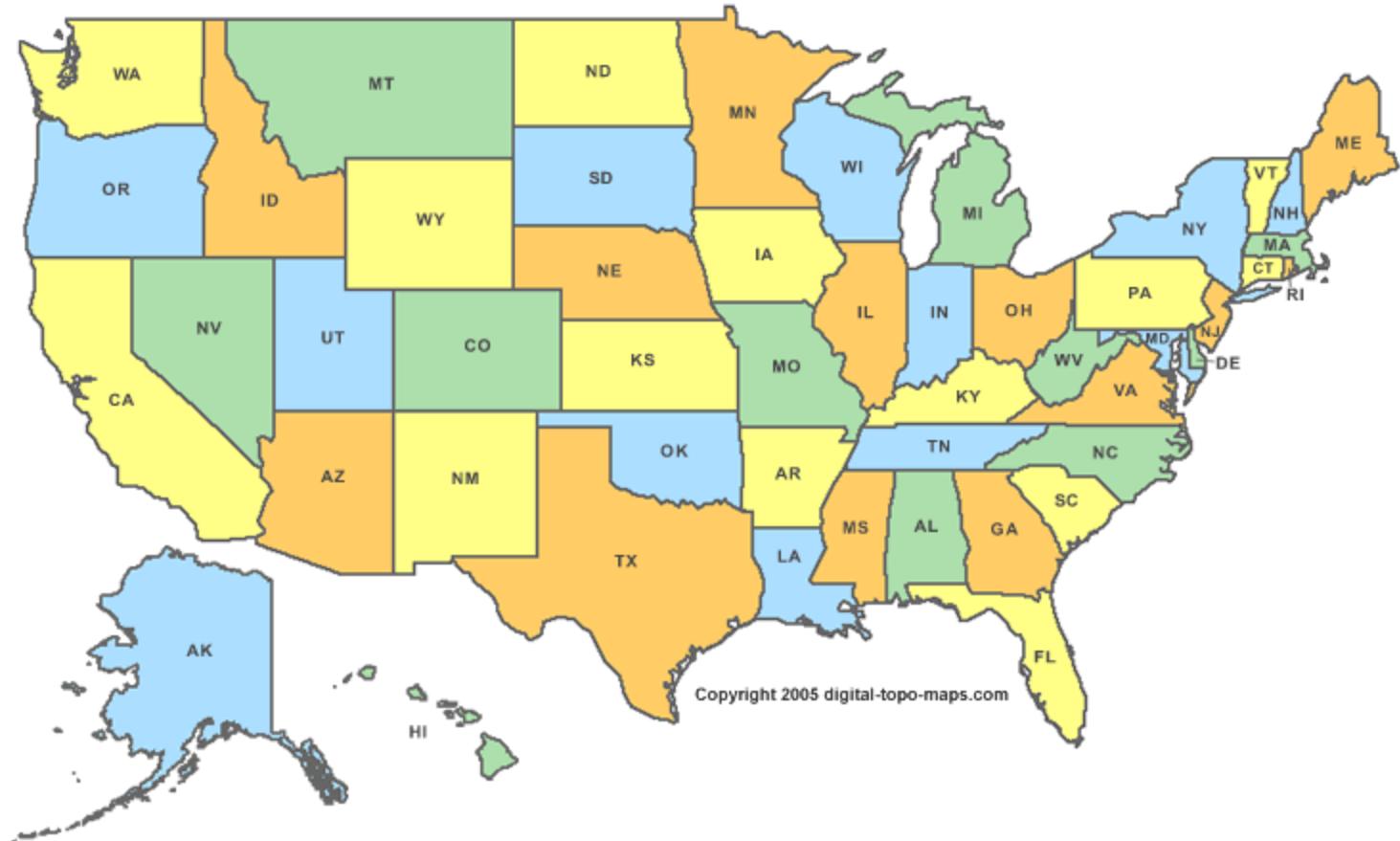


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Geology Map



Covenant Map



Verifying Covenant Context

- Revelation 21-22
 - Gates open; Glory and honor of the nations brought into New Jerusalem. (Rev. 21:25-27)
 - Healing of the nations. (Rev. 22:2)
- Genesis Creation
 - Clear aspects of the Law being presented?
 - Symbolic elements representing human beings?

What is the *subject* of Genesis Creation?

Creation in Hebrew

- *Bara* – used only of God; usually translated as “create” in English.
- *Asah* – forming like a craftsman makes things; usually translated as “made” in English.

“It should be noted that a large percentage of the biblical contexts [of *bara*] require a functional understanding... Incidentally, analysis of ancient Near Eastern creation literature confirms that ancient priorities were focused on the functional rather than the material.”

Dr. John H. Walton, *Hebrew Corner 3: “create (bara)”*

The Structure of Creation

Bara used only 5 times in Genesis 1!

- 1:1 – “In the beginning God *created* the heavens and the earth...”
- 1:21 – “So God *created* great sea creatures... with which the waters abounded...”
 - “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the waters... (1:22)
- 1:27 (3 times) – So God *created* man in his own image; in the image of God He *created* him; male and female He *created* them...”
 - “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth... (1:28)

Covenant Jurisdiction: Sea and Land

So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply... (Gen. 9:1)

...I [God] will multiply you [Abraham] exceedingly... I will make you exceedingly fruitful... (Gen. 17:2ff)

... Be fruitful and multiply [to Jacob]... (Gen. 35:11)

Why did God give a similar blessing to creatures of the Sea?

“... the great sea represented the gentile world, for land is always Israel, and sea is always the gentiles.”

James B. Jordan, *The Handwriting on the Wall*, p. 359.

Creation as God's People

Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the *host* of them, were finished... (Gen. 2:1)

- “host”: common Hebrew word used often to reference God’s people.
 - Israel came up out of Egypt as a mixed multitude, God’s “host.” (Ex. 12:51)
 - Daniel prophesied the persecution of all of God’s people, the “host.” (Daniel 8:10-13, 19)

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth... (Gen. 2:4)

- “These are the generations...”: used in ***every other case*** in Genesis as a reference to people, to the history of people.
 - Genesis 5:1; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10, etc.

The Focus of Creation

“Thus from the start the author betrays his interest in the covenant by concentrating on the land in the account of creation.”

John H Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, p. 82.

- Genesis 1 (God's name – “Elohim”)
 - Day 1, light, matches Day 4, sun, moon, and stars
 - Day 2, waters, matches Day 5, creatures of the sea
 - Day 3, land, matches Day 6, man on the land
 - 7 Feasts in the Law match 7 Days of Creation
 - Temple built over week of years (1 Kings 6:38)
 - Temple dedicated over week-long feast (2 Chron. 7:9)
 - “evening and morning” timing of daily sacrifice (Dan. 8)
- Genesis 2 (God's name – “Yahweh”)
 - Land
 - Man
 - Garden
 - No Fish/Sea

Light for the Land

Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens ***to give light on the earth***” and it was so... (Gen. 1:14-15)

- Sun, Moon, Stars “made” (*asah*) on Day 4
 - worship background or purpose (c.f. Gal. 4:10)
 - knowledge of God to Israel - land (c.f. Rom. 1:20)
 - days = Sabbath and feast days
 - years = Sabbath and Jubilee years

“The sun and moon were to function for man for ***seasons***. By an analysis of the usage of the word ***seasons*** Maunder indicates that it means religious seasons, not the four seasons of the year. The position of the sun indicated the various times for daily sacrifices, and the position of the moon for monthly sacrifices. Seven was very important in the whole Jewish economy and it figured in their astronomy and religious seasons.”

Bernard Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, p. 97.

New Light for New Heavens and Earth

The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it . The Lamb is its light. (Rev. 21:23)

- Sun, Moon, Stars pass away at the end
 - The Knowledge of God comes through Jesus Christ
 - Pattern of Rev. 21 is rooted in the creation of Gen. 1.
 - Old Creation = old covenant order
 - New Creation = new covenant order

Sabbath Law and Creation

- Day 7 - Sabbath
 - God's Rest (Heb. 4)
 - no “evening and morning”
 - no beginning or end
 - ***no old covenant sacrifices!***

What does the Law claim as the basis for the Sabbath Law?

For in six days the LORD made [asah] the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. (Ex. 20:11; c.f., Ex. 30:17)

The Sabbath Day law is rooted in creation – Day 7 of Gen. 1!

Sabbath Law and Creation

- If Gen. 1 describes the creation of the universe,
- If the Law anchors the Sabbath Day observance in creation,
- Then the **basis** of 7th day observance **remains!**
 - Are Christians still called to keep the 7th day Sabbath?
 - Do Christians still live in this creation?
 - External Sabbath observance is obsolete only *if this entire creation has passed away!*
 - If Christians are still called to observe the 7th day Sabbath, then not all of the Law has passed away...

Creation and the Law are United!

Law and Creation Unity in the Prophets

I beheld the earth [land – *erets*], and indeed it was without form, and void; and the heavens, they had no light. (Jer. 4:23)

- Parallels to Gen. 1
 - fruitful land became a wilderness (v. 26 – Day 3)
 - birds had fled (v. 25 – Day 5)
 - no man on the land (v. 25 – Gen. 2:4)
 - exact same language as Gen. 1:2 (“without form and void”)

What is the prophet saying?

“Jeremiah’s vision is of the whole creation returning to its primaeval chaos; in the first line he uses the phrase *tohu wohohu* which is used elsewhere only of the empty turbulence out of which God created heaven and earth.”

G.B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, p. 114.

“When Israel disobeyed God, the land became again ‘uninhabitable’... The way in which later biblical writers reuse the terminology and themes of Genesis 1 suggests that the notion of “land” in this chapter is more circumspect than it is usually taken to be. The common understanding of the term land (*erets*) in Genesis 1:2 is ‘earth,’ or ‘inhabited earth.’ Jeremiah 27:5, however, shows that later biblical writers read Genesis 1 as referring primarily to the ‘land’ promised to the patriarchs and to Israel.”

John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, p. 86.

Law and Creation Unity in the Prophets

For behold, I create [*bara*] new heavens and a new earth. (Isaiah 65:17)

- *bara*: same language (though future tense) as Genesis 1:1
- no mention of the sea, foreshadowing:

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. (Rev. 21:1)

Creation and Law/Temple Detail

- Golden Lampstand – Tree of Life
- Cherubim at Garden – Cherubim in Holy of Holies
- Gemstones on Ephod – Same Gems in Eden
- Linen to avoid sweat – Aspect of the Curse
- Abel’s Sacrifice (Gen. 4) – Sacrifice
- Firstborn of Flock – Firstborn Offerings (Deut. 12)
- Noah’s clean and unclean animals – Lev. 11

The “passing away” of the old heavens and earth and sea takes us all the way back to what God created “in the beginning”!

Covenant Creation & Eschatology

Genesis \Leftrightarrow Revelation

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Covenant Creation & Covenant Eschatology: The Bible tells **one** over-arching story from Genesis to Revelation

Honors the Historic Framework

"The term beginning in biblical Hebrew marks the starting point of a specific duration, as in 'the beginning of the year' (Dt. 11:12). The end of a specific period is marked by its antonym, 'the end,' as in 'the end of the year' (Dt. 11:12). In opening the account of Creation with the phrase 'in the beginning,' the author has marked Creation as the starting point of a period of time. 'Hence will here be the beginning of the history that follows.... The history to be related from this point onwards was heaven and earth for its object, its scenes, its factors. At the head of this history stands the creation of the world as its commencement, or at all events its foundation.' By commencing this history with a 'beginning,' a word often paired with its antonym 'end,' the author has not only commenced a history of God and his people but also prepared the way for the consummation of that history at 'the end of time.'

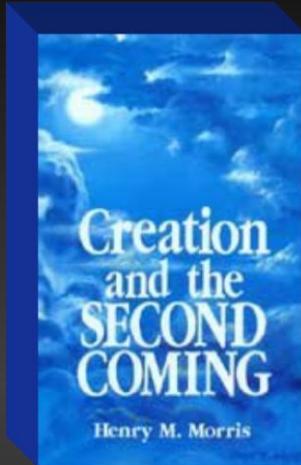
The growing focus within the biblical canon on the times of the 'end' is an appropriate extension of the 'end' already anticipated in the 'beginning' of Genesis 1:1. The fundamental principle reflected in 1:1 and the prophetic vision of the end times in the rest of Scripture is that the 'last things' will be like the 'first things': 'Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth' (Isa 65:17); 'Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth' (Rev 21:1). The allusions to Genesis 1 and 2 in Revelation 22 illustrate the role that these early chapters of Genesis played in shaping the form and content of the scriptural vision of the future... ***Already in Genesis 1:1 the concept of 'the last days' fills the mind of the reader.***"

John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, pp. 83-84..

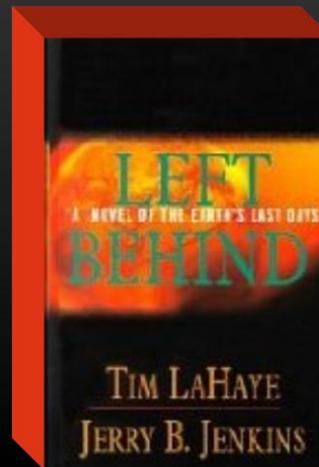
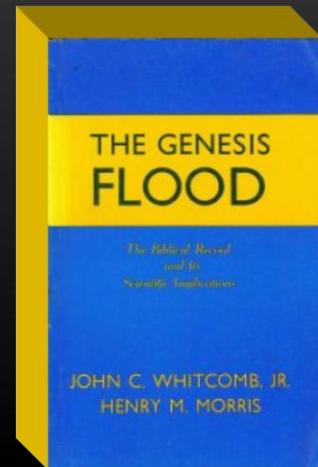


Is there a relationship between YEC and our view of the end times?

Have we been misled
about Genesis?

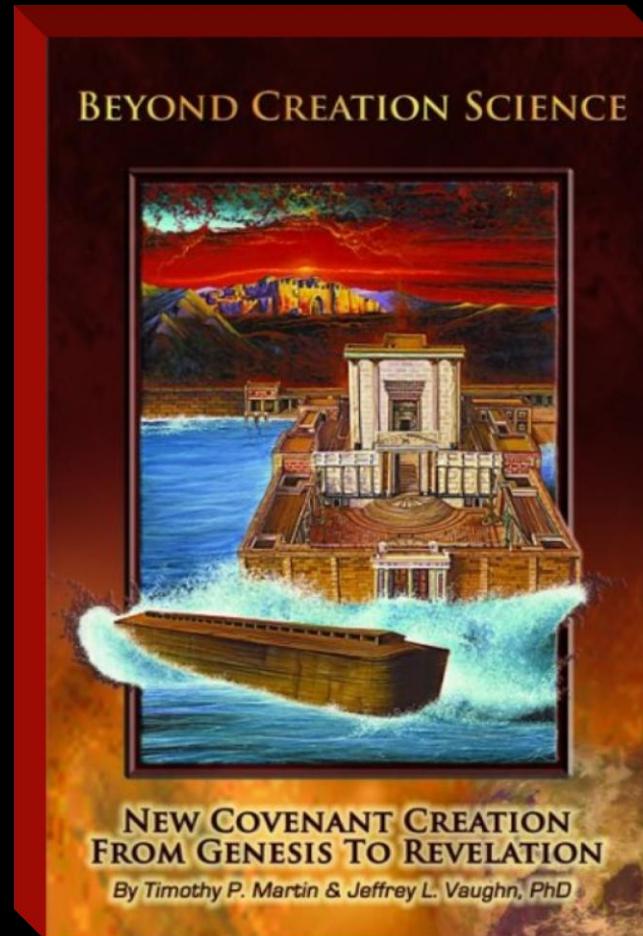


Have we been misled
about Revelation?



Is there a relationship between YEC and our view of the end times?

You may not agree
with all of this book...



But it makes a lot of
good points.