אֵשׁ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם

the heavenly fire

בראשית

Genesis

David Colo

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INTRODUCTION

NAMES AND TERMINOLOGY

1. Of The Translation

"Isn't it true [that] my word [is] like fire," proclaims YHWH,
"and like hammer, shatters stone?"
—Jer 23:29

אשׁ מן־השׁמים (*'ēš min-haššāmayim*) translates as "the fire from heaven" or, more simply, "**the heavenly fire**" (**THF**). Such language is drawn from theophanic imagery, which likens the presence of YHWH to various manifestations of fire, and from an ancient Jewish conception of YHWH's word as fire. Early Rabbinic tradition equated the fire that descended from heaven on Sinai with scripture itself. This can be seen, for instance, in the following midrash, which uses a word-play to phonetically link "Torah" (תורה) with "its flame" (אורה): "*Because* YHWH *descended upon it in fire* (Exod 19:18). This shows that the Torah [is] fire, was given from fire, and is comparable to fire. . . . One can do nothing but warm himself [with] its flame" (*Mek. Bahodesh* 4).

2. Of The Israelite Deity

By way of piety and tradition, the scribes who placed vowel points in the Hebrew manuscripts obscured the name of God by placing under its consonants the vowels of words like Elohim (God), Adonai (My Sovereign/Lord), and Ha-Shem (The Name). Some translations create the hybrid "Jehovah" out of this heterogeneous mix, while others translate the vowels. Still others trace the name back to a hypothetical form of the verb "to be" (Yahweh). Like translations of other religious texts, THF replicates the deity's name when that name is used. Since, however, its full pronunciation was lost, we render the name as we have it and how scribes have written it for the last three millennia: YHWH (a font quite different than the rest of the text is used to indicate the name's sacred status—much like how ancient Jews might use the Paleo-Hebrew script). Likewise, "**Elohim**," "**El**," and "**Eloah**" are often used instead of "God," but "**The One God**" when a definite article precedes it. Where the text intends to communicate something other than the deity's name, we follow intently.

SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

The eclectic text of von Gall, which showed a tremendous bias towards the Masoretic Text in its presentation, is not used by this translation. Instead, we use Samaritan manuscripts published by Blayney (*Pentateuchus Hebraeo-Samaritanus*), Kennicott (*Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum*), and Shoulson (The Torah: Jewish and Samaritan versions compared), with comparison against Tsedaka (The Israelite Samaritan Version of the Torah), which claims to represent the traditional text used by present-day Samaritans. For an English translation, see שׁבט אפרים, *staff of Ephraim*.

Sigla and Abbreviations

√	Verbal root
𐤔	Samaritan Pentateuch
𝔊	Septuagint: Old Greek
$\mathfrak{M}^{C}$	Masoretic Text: Cairo Codex of the Pentateuch
$\mathfrak{M}^{L}$	Masoretic Text: Leningrad Codex
$\mathfrak{M}^{O}$	Masoretic Text: Oriental 4445
𝔖	Syriac Peshitta
$\mathfrak{T}^{O}$	Targum: Onkelos
$\mathfrak{T}^{N}$	Targum: Neofiti
$\mathfrak{T}^{P}$	Fragment Targum: Paris Manuscript
𝔙	Vulgate (Stuttgart)
b.	Babylonian Talmud tractate
ANE	Ancient Near East(ern)
AB	Anchor Bible commentary
Alter	Robert Alter's The Five Books of Moses
DSS	Dead Sea Scroll(s)
Fox	Everett Fox's The Five Books of Moses
GW	GOD'S WORD translation
HB	Hebrew Bible
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
ICC	International Critical Commentary
ISV	International Standard Version
JM	Joüon and Muraoka's Grammar of Biblical Hebrew
KJV	King James Version
KTU	*Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit einschliesslich der keilalphabetischen Texte ausserhalb Ugarits, 1: Transkription*
LEB	Lexham English Bible
MS(S)	Manuscript(s)
NIV	New International Version
NJPST	New Jerusalem Publication Society Tanakh
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
Parker	Simon Parker's Ugaritic Narrative Poetry
Rotherham	Rotherham's The Emphasized Bible
SET	Stone Edition Tanach
SOE	*staff of Ephraim*
YLT	Young's Literal Translation

Message

Historical Stuff

Form and Genre

The Primeval History

אֵשׁ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם

Chapter 1 א

[1] At first,
Elohim brought
the sky and the earth into being.
[2] Though the earth was helter-skelter
and darkness over the surface of the deep,
yet Elohim's spirit was circling
over the surface of the water.
[3] Then Elohim said,
"Let light appear!"
So light appeared.
[4] And he saw the light—
how wonderful [it was].
Elohim separated
the light and the darkness.
[5] Elohim named the light "day,"
and the darkness, he named "night."
So came evening.
So came morning.
Day one.

[6] Then Elohim said,
"Let a vault appear amidst the water.
Let it keep separate
[some] water from others."
[7] Elohim made the vault
and separated the water
from the depth of the vault
and the water
from the height of the vault.
It was so.
[8] Elohim named the vault "sky."
So came evening.
So came morning.
Day two.

[9] Then Elohim said, "Let the waters amass
from the depth of the sky to one place
so dry ground may appear."
It was so.
[10] Elohim named the dry ground "earth"
and the watery mass, he named "ocean."
Elohim saw how wonderful [it was].
[11] Then Elohim said,
"Let the earth produce produce—
the plant seeding seed,
the fruit-tree making fruit of its kind,
wherein it has seed—
on the earth."
It was so.
[12] The earth brought forth produce—
the plant seeding seed of its kind,
and tree making fruit,
wherein it has seed of its kind.
Elohim saw how wonderful [it was].
[13] So came evening.
So came morning.
Day three.

[14] Then Elohim said,
"Let there be luminaries in the sky-vault
to separate the day and the night.
Let them serve as signs of sacred times,
and for days and years.
[15] Let them serve as luminaries
in the sky-vault
to illumine the earth."
It was so.
[16] Elohim made the two primary luminaries—
the greater luminary
for the dominion of day
and the lesser luminary
for the dominion of night—
as well as the stars.
[17] Elohim placed them in the sky-vault
to illumine the earth,
[18] to dominate the day and the night,
and to separate the light and the dark.
Elohim saw how wonderful [it was].
[19] So came evening.
So came morning.
Day four.

[20] Then Elohim said,
"Let the waters swarm

[with] the swarmer [and] living creature,
and the flier fly about over the earth
along the surface of the sky-vault."
21 Elohim brought into being
the giant sea creatures
and every living creature that swims—
[with] which the waters swarm—
of their kind,
and every bird of wing,
of its kind.
Elohim saw how wonderful [it was].
22 Elohim blessed them, saying,
"Be fertile and proliferate
and fill the water in the ocean,
and let the flier proliferate in the earth."
23 So came evening.
So came morning.
Day five.

24 Then Elohim said,
"Let the earth bring forth
[every] living creature, of its kind—
the quadruped and the crawler
and the earthly creature, of its kind."
It was so.
25 So Elohim made
[every] earthly creature, of its kind—
both the quadruped, of its kind,
and every ground-crawler, of its kind.
Elohim saw how wonderful [it was].
26 Then Elohim said,
"Let us make humanity with our image,
after our likeness,
so they may rule the fish of the sea,
and the bird of the sky,
and the quadruped, and the whole earth,
and every crawler
that crawls on the earth."
27 Elohim brought humanity into being
with his image.
With Elohim's image,
he brought it into being.
Male and female,
he brought them into being.
28 Elohim blessed them.
Elohim said to them,
"Be fertile and proliferate
and fill the earth and subjugate it.
Rule the fish of the sea,
and the birds of the sky,
and every living [thing]
that crawls on the earth."
29 (Elohim said, "Look, I [hereby] give you all the seed-sowing produce that [is] over the whole earth's surface, and every single seed-sowing tree that has fruit on it. Yours is it for food. 30 And to every earthly creature, and to every bird of the sky, and to every [thing] crawling on the earth—whatever has the breath of life, [I hereby give] all green produce for food.")
It was so.
31 Elohim saw all that he had done
and, yes, extremely wonderful [it was]!
So came evening.
So came morning.
The sixth day.

Chapter 2 ב

Chapter 3 ג

(old translation)

1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any living creature of the field that YHWH Elohim had made. It said to the woman, "Has Elohim really said 'You must not eat from every tree of the garden'?

2 The woman replied to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden, we may eat.
3 However, from the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, Elohim has said, 'You must not eat from it and you must not touch it—otherwise you will die.'"

4 The serpent said to the woman, "You will

certainly not die 5 because Elohim knows that in the day you have eaten from it, your eyes will then open and you will be like Elohim—knowing good and evil."

6 And the woman could see that the tree was good for nourishment, and that it [was] a delight to the eyes, and that the tree [was] desirable to make wise. So she took from its fruit and she ate. And she even gave [some] to her husband [who was] with her and he ate.

7 Then the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that the [were] bare. So they stitched together the leaf of the fig-tree and made themselves wrappings.

8 Then they heard the sound of YHWH Elohim walking about in the garden to a breeze of the day. And the man hid himself and his wife from the presence of YHWH Elohim in the midst of the trees of the garden.

9 YHWH Elohim called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 He replied, "I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I [was] bare, so I hid myself."

11 He said, "Who told you that you [are] bare? You ate from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat, [didn't you?]"

12 The man replied, "The woman who you set with me—she gave to me from the tree and I ate."

13 YHWH Elohim said to the woman, "What [is] this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me and I ate."

14 YHWH Elohim said to the serpent, "Because you did this—more cursed [are] you than any creature of the field. On your belly you will go and you will eat dust all the days of your life."

15

16 To the woman he said,

"I will magnify greatly
your trauma and travail.
Through pain,
you will bear children.
And toward your man,
who will govern you,
[will be] your compulsion."

Chapter 4 ד

Chapter 5 ה

Chapter 6 ו

4 ….they [were] the Mighty Ones who [were] from time immemorial renowned men.

Chapter 7 ז

Chapter 8 ח

Chapter 9 ט

Chapter 10 י

Chapter 11 יא

Message

Historical Stuff

Form and Genre

The Three Patriarchs

Chapter 12 יב

Chapter 13 יג

Chapter 14 יד

Chapter 15 טו

Chapter 16 יו

Chapter 17 יז

(very old translation)
1 … YHWH appeared to Abram and said to him, "I [am] El Shaddai. Journey in my Presence and be blameless
2 so I may establish my covenant between me and you and cause you to proliferate exceedingly.

Chapter 18 יח

Chapter 19 יט

Chapter 20 כ

Chapter 21 כא

Chapter 22 כב

(very old translation)
1 And it was after these things that Elohim tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham."
He replied, "I am here."
2 He said, "Take your son—your only one whom you love—Isaac—and go to the land of Moriah and offer him up there for a burned offering upon one of the mountains that I will say to you."
3 So Abraham got up early in the morning and saddled his male donkey and took two of his attendants with him and Isaac, his son. And he split the wood of the burned offering. And he arose and went to the place that Elohim said to him.
4 On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar.
5 And Abraham said to his attendants, "You stay here with the male donkey, but the boy and I—let us go thither to that place where we will worship. Then we will return to you."
6 So Abraham took the wood of the burned offering and he set it on Isaac, his son. Then he took in his hand the fire and the knife and they went together—both of them.
7 Then Isaac spoke to Abraham, his father. He said, "My father."
He replied, "I am here, my son."
He said, "Look [at] the fire and the wood. But where is the kid for the burned offering?"
8 Abraham replied, "Elohim will look for it—the kid for the burned offering—my son." So they went together—both of them.
9 Then they came to the place that Elohim had mentioned to him so Abraham built an altar there and laid out the wood and trussed Isaac, his son, and placed him on the altar on top of the wood.
10 Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son,
11 but a messenger of YHWH called from the sky to him and said [to] Abraham, "Abraham! Abraham!"
He replied, "I am here."
12 He said, "Do not stretch out your hand to the boy and do not do to him anything because I know now that the fear of Elohim [is] yours because you did not withold your son—your only one—from me."
13 Abraham lifted up his eyes, looked, and right behind, there was a ram, caught among the thicket by its horns. So Abraham went, took the ram, and offered it up as a burned offering in place of his son.
14 And Abraham called the namae of that place "YHWH will see" where it is said today "On the

mountain, YHWH will be seen."
15 The messenger of YHWH calle dto Abraham against from the sky.

Chapter 23 כג

Elohim said to him, "I am El Shaddai. Be fertile and proliferate. A nation—that is, a body of nations—will come from you. Yes, kings will emerge out of your loins!
—Genesis 35:11

Message

Historical Stuff

Form and Genre

The Joseph Story

Chapter 37 יב

Chapter 38 יג

Chapter 39 יד

Chapter 40 טו

Chapter 41 יו

Chapter 42 יז

...because of your ancestral deity who aids you,
because of Shaddai, who blesses you—
blessings of the sky above,
blessings of the underlying deep,
blessings of breasts (shadayim) and womb.
—Genesis 49:25

TRANSLATION NOTES

1:1-31 Though virtually all translations treat this chapter as narrative, much of it is indistinguishable from poetry elsewhere in the HB. It has strong structural parallelism, short, clipped phrases, root-play or word-play, verbal alternation, and dramatic alliteration. Susan Niditch (*Oral World and Written Word*) notes two types of repetition woven throughout the chapter, which are characteristic of something that either originates in or is highly influenced by oral tradition: 1. the repetition of a framing device (the phrases *Then Elohim said, "Let* X *appear,"* and *Elohim named the* X Y. *So came evening. So came morning. Day* Z.) and 2. the use of a refrain (*how wonderful [it was]*). This high oral register may also be an indicator of poetry. In any case, it is clear that this chapter stands out from the prose of Genesis in a way that is noteworthy and unique. Thus, it should stand out in English translation.

1:1 **At first** — Typically, ראשׁית refers to the first part of a process or series (Hos 9:10; Deut 11:12; Job 8:7; Isa 46:10). Here, it does not refer to the beginning of time, necessarily, but to the beginning of all things. It is fundamentally material in outlook. It may be taken in a construct state (JM §129). So SET (In the beginning of God's creating) and Fox (At the beginning of God's creating). ראשׁית often functions in the construct state (Is 29:1; Jer 26:1 Hos 1:2). The Masoretic pointing is conflicting. Although the disjunctive accent takes the word as an absolute, the vowel under *resh* takes it as construct. To be absolute, the vowel should be *qamets*. We believe, however, that the point of emphasis is not on *what* Elohim did at the beginning, but *who* did it. It was *Elohim* who created. Not Marduk. Not Baal. Not any foreign deity or deities. Since the construct state places the emphasis on the act and not the actor, we opt for the absolute. Though the Babylonian Creation Epic, *Enuma Elish*, commences "When...", we see no reason to consider its opening normative as many scholars of the past century were apt to do.

Elohim — אלהים (Elohim) is the plural form of the singular אלוה (Eloah). Although the plural form is used to refer to a multitude of "gods," the number of the subject is always determined by the number of the verb. Since ברא is singular, its subject must be singular.

brought . . . into being — ברא is only used to indicate the creative actions of Israel's deity. We have, likewise, used a unique expression (to bring into being) only in those places. YLT's "preparing" is inexact.

being. — Since the Masoretes and all the versions treat this as a complete sentence, so do we. Verse 1 stands as a introductory heading to the rest of the chapter. Rashi was the first to view the whole as a temporal protasis: "When Elohim began to create the sky and the earth, . . ." So NRSV (when God created the heavens and the earth, . . .). $\mathfrak{T}^{N}$ has a unique expansion: "From the beginning, through wisdom, the son of YHWH completed the sky and the earth." The phrase "the son of YHWH completed" is ברא דיי. The *dalet*, which is affixed to a triple *yod* (a stand-in for the divine name) places "YHWH" in a genitive sense and turns what might be a verb and noun clause into a construct phrase with the word "son" plus definite article).

1:2 The fact that v. 1 stands apart from v. 2 is authenticated by the construction that begins v. 2. As Cassuto notes, the syntactic function of a subject coming before its predicate, as we have here, "is to give emphasis to the subject and to tell us something new about it" (*From Adam To*

Noah). Though Speiser (AB) takes it as parenthetical, he agrees that this verse does not continue from v. 1. A consecutive statement would begin with the predicate.

helter-skelter — Literally, "waste and empty." An example of hendiadys: the use of two words, often bound with a conjunction, to emphasize a single idea (like "sick and tired"). THF will usually render the intended meaning of the expression. In this case, however, since the two Hebrew words (תהו ובהו) have a unique, almost identical alliteration, we have chosen two words that, in English function the same way, have the same basic meaning, and carry an almost identical alliteration as well. Alternatively, something like Alter's "welter and waste" or Rotherham's "waste and wild" reflect similar artistry.

Though . . . yet — The second *waw* has an adversative sense. It creates a contrast between the state of the earth and the deity's action. For this reason, we paired it with the first *waw* thusly: "though...yet."

Elohim's spirit — Literally, "the spirit of Elohim." רוח also means "wind" or "breath." So 𝔗^{O} (a wind from before YHWH was blowing). In Rabbinic tradition, the created order is described in pairs: "Ten things were created the first day, and they are as follows: heaven and earth, Tohu and Bohu, light and darkness, wind and water, the measure of day and the measure of night (*b. Ḥagiga* 12a, Soncino). When רוח is paired with the Israelite deity, however, it seems to always mean "spirit." See, for instance, Gen 41:38; Exod 31:3; Judg 3:10; Job 33:4. This is not an element, but an encounter between primordial earth and the divine, which will result in an ordered and purposed creation. So SET's "Divine Presence."

was circling — This Piel participle appears here and in Deut 32:11. In Deuteronomy, it refers to an eagle that "flies about" over its young. So NJPST's "sweeping" or HCSB's "hovering." The verb also appears in Ugaritic, where it often refers to birds that circle overhead. So *KTU* 1.18.iv:21: "the birds will circle [above him]" (Parker). KJV's "moving" is so imprecise as to be laughable. Of course it is moving—it's an active participle!

over the surface of the water — Wonderful parallelism here. The concluding phrase in the second half of the verse corresponds to the concluding phrase in the first half (over the surface of the deep).

1:3 **Let light appear** — Literally, "Let light be/become/happen/come about," which means, in English, "to appear."

1:4 **how wonderful [it was]** — Literally, "that wonderful [it was]."

the light and — Contrary to most translations, there is no "from."

1:5 **named** — In the ANE concept of creation, a name was inseparable from being or existence. That which had no name did not exist. Thus, like Genesis, *Enuma Elish* begins with naming: "When in the height heaven was not named, and the earth beneath did not yet bear a name, . . . when of the gods none had been called into being, and none bore a name, . . ." (L.W. King, *The Seven Tablets of Creation*). That is also why Adam, a little later, names his "wife" and the animals.

day — 4QGen^{g} has יומם (daytime) instead of יומ (day). This is probably an instance of dittography. It is, however, supported by 𝔗^{O}, 𝔗^{N}, and 𝔖.

1:6 **vault** — Traditionally "firmament," from 𝔙 (*firmamentum*). The Hebrew refers to something *solid* like a metal plate or sheet of ice. From √רקע (to hammer/beat out). So NRSV's "dome."

Let it keep separate — Literally, "Let it be separating." The participle functions to indicate durative aspect or permanence (JM §121e). Thus our rendering "keep separate."

[some] water from others — Literally, "between water and water." 𝔊 places "It was so" here instead of at the end of v. 7.

1:7 **and separated** — Since there is no change in speaker, the *waw*-consecutive verb indicates that Elohim is the one who did the separating, not the vault (NJPST, ISV, Rotherham, and YLT are in error). 𝔊 makes this explicit by repeating "Elohim" (θεος). It is not the vault that separates the waters, but it is the vault that *keeps* the waters separate. The vault maintains the order established by Elohim, it does not create that order.

from the depth of the vault — מתחת לרקיע means, literally, "from under in regard to the vault." It begins with a prepositional *min* (from/out of) affixed to the word "under/beneath," followed by prepositional *lamed*, which specifies the particular person or object of reference, and is, itself, affixed to the thing referenced (vault).

and the water — There is no "from" here as many translations render it. It is a conjunction (and). There are two "froms," but they are not here.

from the height of the vault — מעל לרקיע means, literally, "from above in regard to the vault." See above.

1:8 **Elohim named the vault "sky."** — 𝔊 adds at this point what would be, in Hebrew, וירא אלהים כי־טוב (Elohim saw how wonderful [it was]).

1:9 **amass** — Since the text purposely uses a verb יקוו with the same root (קוה) as the noun that is later used to describe what has happened (מקוה), we have replicated that poetic word-play by using the same basic English word with each (a mass/to amass).

place — Instead of מקום (place), which is represented by 𝔐^{L}, 𝔐^{C}, 𝔗^{O}, 𝔗^{N}, 𝔖, 4QGen^{b}, and Jubilees 2:5, there is one witness among the DSS to מקוה (mass): 4QGen^{h1}. 𝔊 seems to have been copied from a manuscript with that same reading: εις συναγωγην μιαν (into one gathering).

It was so. — 𝔊 continues: "And the water that was below the sky was gathered into their gatherings and the dry ground appeared." A Hebrew scroll from the Dead Sea (4QGen^{k}) contains part of the original Hebrew from which 𝔊 was translated: [שה]יבה ותרא (and the dry ground appeared). It is possible that the sentence now only preserved completely in 𝔊, was originally part of the HB, but fell out due to a scribal error. Of course, it is also possible that someone expanded the original text. Whatever the case, there were multiple Hebrew MSS floating around with both readings.

1:10 **the watery mass** — Literally, "the mass of water." See 1:9.

ocean — Literally, "seas." The plural is an emphatic poetic marker, not numerical. It stresses the vastness of the sea. Skinner (ICC) calls it a "plural of extension." So our rendering "ocean."

how wonderful [it was]. — Literally, "that wonderful [it was]."

1:11 **produce produce** — Since the text purposely uses a noun דֶּשֶׁא and a verb תַּדְשֵׁא with the same root (דֶּשֶׁא), we have replicated that poetic word-play by using the same basic English word with each (produce/to produce). Alternatively, "Let the earth vegetate vegetation" (Skinner).

seeding seed — Since the text purposely uses a noun זֶרַע and a participle מַזְרִיעַ with the same root (זרע), we have replicated that poetic word-play by using the same basic English word with each (seed/to seed).

the fruit-tree — Following $\mathfrak{M}^{L}$, $\mathfrak{M}^{C}$, $\mathfrak{T}^{O}$, $\mathfrak{T}^{N}$, and 4QGen^{b}. However, $\mathfrak{Sam}$, $\mathfrak{G}$, $\mathfrak{V}$, and $\mathfrak{S}$ have *waw* (and) before "fruit-tree." Perhaps mimicking the *waw* that appears before "tree" in the next verse.

wherein it has seed — Literally, "which the seed of it [is] in it."

on the earth. — This last phrase connects with the first (Let the earth produce produce). So Skinner (ICC): "it is difficult to find any suitable point of attachment except with the principal verb."

1:12 Notice the subtle shifts between this and the previous verse. Now it is simply "tree" instead of "fruit-tree." And both plant and tree have seed "of its kind" instead of just the fruit-tree.

brought forth — A different verb is used here than in the previous verse (to produce), which is reflected by our translation.

how wonderful [it was]. — Literally, "that wonderful [it was]."

1:13

1:14 **Let there be luminaries** — The difference between "let luminaries be/appear" and "let there be luminaries" is a singular or plural verb. Here, it is singular (יְהִי).

the sky-vault — Literally, "the vault of the sky." $\mathfrak{Sam}$ adds here "to illumine the earth." See next verse. That reading is supported by 4QGen^{g} and $\mathfrak{G}$. It is absent, however, from 4QGen^{b}, 4QGen^{k}, $\mathfrak{M}^{L}$, $\mathfrak{M}^{C}$, $\mathfrak{M}^{O}$, $\mathfrak{T}^{O}$, $\mathfrak{T}^{N}$, $\mathfrak{V}$, and $\mathfrak{S}$.

the day and — There is no "from" here as many translations render it. It is a conjunction (and).

signs of sacred times — We take "signs" and "sacred times" as hendiadys. So Speiser (AB). מוֹעֲדִים never refers to natural seasons like fall or summer, but to feast days and the time of cultic assemblies. The luminaries exist partially to create sacred time. So LEB (appointed times), NIV (sacred times), HCSB and SET (festivals), and GW (religious festivals).

1:15 **to illumine the earth** — Literally, "to bring light over the earth."

1:16 **as well as** — Literally, "and." Like the phrase "on the earth" (v. 11), this is a continuation of the statement at the start of the verse.

1:17 **Elohim placed them** — Whereas before, $\mathfrak{T}^{N}$ referred to the YHWH's "word" doing such and such, here it is YHWH's "glory" that acts. YHWH's "glory" also appears in vv. 28 and 29 of $\mathfrak{T}^{N}$.

1:18 **the day** — Like v. 5, $\mathfrak{T}^{O}$, $\mathfrak{T}^{N}$, and $\mathfrak{S}$ have יוֹמָם (daytime) instead of יוֹם (day).

how wonderful [it was]. — Literally, "that wonderful [it was]."

1:19

1:20 **swarm . . . swarmer** — The poetic word-play between יִשְׁרְצוּ and שֶׁרֶץ is reproduced in English.

flier fly about — The poetic word-play between עוף and יעופף is reproduced in English. יעופף is Polel, a more intensive form of the verb "to fly," meaning "to fly to and fro."

1:21 **giant** — Literally, "great." That greatness has to do with size and magnificence. Thus, "mammoth" or "giant" would better represent the Hebrew.

sea creatures — In more mythological contexts, this refers to sea-serpents. Here, however, the primordial world has been entirely demythologized and broken down into categories—the larger, more amazing sea-creatures (like whales, squid, etc) are in view here.

how wonderful [it was]. — Literally, "that wonderful [it was]."

1:22 **ocean** — Literally, "seas." An emphatic poetic marker that stresses vastness. See v. 10.

let proliferate — The verb form is jussive, meaning "let X proliferate." This is supported by 4QGen^{b}. 4QGen^{g}, however, as well as 𐤎𐤀, have the regular imperfect form. See SOE.

1:23

1:24 **bring forth** — Interesting choice of words. It would seem to imply that the earth itself is going to cause animal life to come into being. It is only the next verse that tells us something else is happening.

quadruped — Usually a reference to domestic animals like cattle or livestock. In this case, however, domestication is not the issue (nor yet even a reality). Rather, it is the type of animal that would later be domesticated and herded—the larger, grass-eating, four-legged animals. Notice how the term "earthly creature" is made to include animals that both stand and crawl.

1:25 **how wonderful [it was].** — Literally, "that wonderful [it was]."

1:26 **humanity** — Both 𝔗^{N} and 𝔗^{P} say "Let us create a son of man" or more colloquially, "a mortal." 𝔗^{N} repeats this term at the start of v. 27.

1:27 **with his image** — Missing from 𝔊. Probably an instance of haplography.

With Elohim's image, he brought it into being. — A reversal of the first sentence. It clarifies exactly who this is an image of (it is the image of Elohim). The parallelism also enables us to understand how האדם functions in the first sentence. It is parallel to the "it" in the second sentence, thus functioning as a collective whole (humanity) instead of "the human" or "Adam." The definite article indicates the distinctiveness of class, not of individuality.

1:28 **and the birds of the sky, — 𝔊** adds "and every quadruped and the whole earth." Probably a harmonization with v. 26.

1:29-30 These verses interrupt the flow of the text, change from poetry to narrative, and differ significantly in their phraseology from what came before. They are probably a later insert.

1:29 **I [hereby] give** — Like the previous pronouncements in this chapter, the spoken word here is a performative speech-act. The utterance actually *does something*. Like saying "I find you guilty." Saying those words, in the appropriate context, actually makes someone guilty of a crime. In this case, by saying "I give" or "I have given," Elohim is actually *making them* herbivores.

you — This "you" is plural—referring to both the male and the female.

the seed-sowing produce — Apposition. Literally, "all the produce, the sowing of seed [kind]."

every single — The distributive sense of "all" is indicated by the definite article and the singular

suffix that comes shortly after.

seed-sowing tree that has fruit on it — Apposition. Literally, "every single tree that on it [is] the fruit of the tree, the sowing of seed [kind]."

1:30 **whatever has the breath of life** — Literally, "that which in it [is] the breath of life."

1:31 **done** — Not just all that he made, but all that he had done. Not only are his actions complete, but all that he intended is complete. It is done.

extremely — Josephus tells us that Vespasian deposited a Torah scroll in the royal palace in Rome that was confiscated from the Temple in AD 70. When Emperor Severus built a synagogue in Rome, it is reported that he gave that scroll to the Jews there. The "Severus Scroll" was compared to the standard text and a list of differences recorded. This is one of them. Instead of "extremely" (מאד), it had "death" (מות). Genesis Rabbah reports that the Torah of Rabbi Meir, a famous disciple of Rabbi Aqiba, also said "death [is] good" instead of "extremely good." Since "death" is an obvious error, "extremely" is to be preferred.

wonderful — $\mathfrak{C}^{O}$ says "steadfast/firm/stable" (תקין).

The sixth day. — The formula changes slightly here. Before, it was "day + number." Here, it is "day + definite article + number." That change is slight, but adds additional emphasis: this is the day toward which all other days accrued and is their completion.

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