But some have thought that the nature of water is suspended above the firmament, not in view of vaporous thinness, but in virtue of icy solidity. After all, the crystal stone, which is of great solidity and great transparency, is made from water by freezing: so it should not be surprising that up there the upper waters should be solidified in one great crystal. But as Augustine says, “However it may be that those waters are there, and of whatever kind they may be, let us not have the slightest doubt that they are there. The authority of this text of scripture is greater than that of all the power of human ingenuity.” Robert Grossteste, *Hexaëdemeron*, 3.III.3, 7

This comment from the great Bishop of Lincoln (c. 1230–35) alerts us to the dangers of a facile identification of the meaning of Scripture with our own particular interpretation of the text. It also encourages us to reflect on the interaction of general and special revelation. Why most of us today do not immediately understand the reference in *Genesis 1* to the waters above the firmament in the way Augustine and Grossteste did is due to advances in natural science rather than biblical studies. As our understanding of nature has developed so it has impinged on our exegesis of the Bible. It is doubtful if any today hold that the authority of Scripture is tied to there being solid, icy, transparent, crystalline waters “up there.”

This article focuses on how the six days of creation in *Genesis 1* have been understood in exegetical history until the time of the Westminster Assembly. In recent years the idea has gained ground in conservative circles that these are to be understood as days of twenty-four hours. The books of John Whitcomb and Henry Morris have been instrumental in the popularity of this view. Many argue that to adopt any other interpretation is to capitulate to evolutionary theories. Herman Hoeksema suggested this and E. J. Young, while remaining agnostic on the question, opposed the framework hypothesis on the grounds that it undermined the authority of Scripture by departing

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