

Response to Frost's Review of: "The 'then world' versus the 'now heavens and earth' in 2 Peter 3:6-7: Is Peter saying that 'world' equals 'heavens and earth'?"

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Introduction

This paper is a response to Sam Frost's Review (hereafter, "Frost") of my initial paper which critiqued his view of "world" and "heavens and earth" in 2 Peter 3. I appreciate Frost's willingness to dialogue with me and his extension of *philadelphia* to me. As his brother in Christ by faith, I would expect no less of him regardless of whether we agreed or disagreed on this matter. Still, it sets an audience at ease when two men can discuss disagreements without slander, sarcasm, or misrepresentation. For the most part, this was achieved in Frost's response to me.

I believe Frost did misrepresent some of my views, which I will address shortly; however he didn't start off very well with me with this sarcastic remark: "Let this be a lesson for you, kids. If you are going to write a refutation, do it this way." I appreciate the complement, but it appears to be a veiled insult toward those adherents of covenant creation who preceded me. I appeal to *all* involved in this discussion to grant mercy and peace to one another, to forgive each other "seventy times seven," and to refrain from such kinds of comments. As the great apostle said, "[Love] does not take into account a wrong suffered" (1 Corinthians 13:5 NASB). This plea is to both parties.

Through the writing of my initial paper it appears that I have "come out" siding with a particular viewpoint. That would be correct. However, in doing so, I am advocating my own conclusions. It would not be appropriate to associate the views of Jeff Vaughn, Tim Martin, Norm Voss or other covenant creation adherents with mine unless I directly state or imply an agreement with their particular views. It appears in several places Frost attributes positions to me I never claimed, and for the first two pages of his nine-plus page response he takes issue with matters that are not the subject of my paper. Furthermore, many of them are not even *relevant* to my paper. Regardless, I greatly appreciate his response and willingness to dialogue with me.

I will set forth the problems with Frost's critique and remind the reader of the arguments I made which are not addressed by Frost. It is fascinating that Frost does not even touch the most substantial *biblical* arguments of my paper, but instead spends a disproportionate amount of time discussing science and philosophy. The *most* fascinating part, however, is where Frost recants his original position that there is only *one* way¹ to grammatically understand 2 Peter 3:5-7. In his response to me he says that his grammatical interpretation is a "choice" (Frost, 4) and a "viable option" (Frost, 6). The original purpose of my paper was to refute the "one option" view of 2 Peter 3:5-7 that Frost initially presented, and the very fact that he now concedes that my grammatical conclusions are an "option" means my paper has succeeded in its intended purpose.

¹ See footnote 6, for example, in my initial paper, which documents this claim.

Now, I will begin with his “Preliminary Concern” section.

Concerns

Frost is concerned that I did not bring up the meaning of “first” as it relates to Revelation 21:1, and its use in Hebrews with the “first covenant” and “first tabernacle” (Frost, 1). I remind Frost that I did briefly bring up this very point on page 16 under the section “No More Death.” My paper was already 16 pages long by that point and I saw no need to further develop the various meanings of “first.” However, I will address this concern in more detail now.

As I said in my original paper, Frost and Bennett have correctly pointed out that “first” can mean “former”, or “first in order or existence.” Frost raises the comparison of the tabernacle and Mosaic covenant to “the first heavens and earth” in Revelation 21:1 in order to prove that since “first” doesn't mean “first in existence” with the Mosaic covenant and the tabernacle in Hebrews 8, it doesn't in Revelation 21:1 either (Frost, 1). The problem with this argument is that just because “first” in another book and another context can mean “former” to the exclusion of “first in existence” doesn't mean it always does. If the original readers of the Hebrew epistle knew that the Mosaic covenant wasn't the “first” covenant ever in existence, then they would know that writer simply meant the “former” covenant in comparison to the new covenant. Frost's argument does not prove that the first “heavens and earth” of Revelation 21:1 *must* mean “former” to the exclusion of “first.” His argument actually serves my position, not his.

What Frost does is set up a false argument I never made. He states in representation of my position:

“Since the Mosaic covenant is called “first,” and since “the first heavens and earth” passed away in A.D. 70, then Gn 1.1 is the creation of the Mosaic, old covenant.” (Frost, 1)

This shows that either Frost wishes to attribute a false conclusion to me so he can prove it wrong, or he doesn't yet understand the basic premise of covenant creation. I certainly have never stated that the Mosaic covenant is the “first” in existence. As I said above, I agree with Frost that “first” can have more than one meaning. It is both the immediate context and the analogy of Scripture which determine and confirm the meaning. Frost should be more careful in making his arguments so that he doesn't make one out of straw. The “first” covenant in Hebrews does not mean, contextually, the “first one ever” because we find covenants in Scripture that preceded Sinai. But that doesn't mean “first” in Revelation 21:1 *must* have the same meaning as it does in Hebrews, since the constituent elements are not equal in meaning. I contend that the old heavens and earth is not equal to the Mosaic covenant, but would have *contained* it.

The question is, does Revelation 20-22 point to the removal of constituent elements found in Exodus 19ff, or in Genesis 1-3? One need not be a bible scholar to see that all of the constituent elements of Revelation 20-22, with the exception of Jerusalem², are found in Genesis 1-3. Therefore, I conclude that

² Jerusalem's inclusion had its own unique purpose as a part of the whole picture. Essentially, the Mosaic covenant came to embody all that God's covenants of law and sin and death meant, beginning with Adam. See Romans

the “first heavens and earth” of Revelation refers to Genesis 1:1. Frost does not touch the 11 connections between Revelation 20-22 and Genesis 1-3 that I made in my original paper; this is quite telling.

Frost’s next area of concern is the issue of young earth creationism (YEC) and the viewpoints put forth in BCS and how I didn’t “deal with this issue, either” (Frost, 2). Since my paper was about 2 Peter 3:5-7 and not “young earth creationism,” I chose not to discuss this “concern.” Frost shifts from me to the authors of BCS in one fell swoop as if I am trying to contend for an old earth. I critiqued Frost’s position on 2 Peter 3 and showed his theological conclusions to be false based on the preponderance of biblical evidence, and his response begins not with my arguments or the text but rather “geology,” “Thomistic two-fold theory of truths,” and “Aquinian point of views” (Frost, 2). This was wasted time on me or any other *bible* student who wish to discuss whether Peter saw three heavens and earths or two. By raising this subject, Frost is diverting the reader from the main issue: the text of 2 Peter 3:5-7. The issue of YEC and the role science must play in discovering truth that lies outside of biblical revelation, is a different subject. The age of the earth has no bearing on 2 Peter 3, as far as I’m concerned. However, if the biblical text requires me to abandon traditional views, orthodoxy, or even scientific views, then so be it. God always triumphs over man and his wisdom, creeds, and traditions.

Exegesis

It was quite surprising to read Frost’s admission that his viewpoint is “something new” (Frost, 3). His conclusion that the first heavens and earth of Genesis 1:1 is the physical creation; that Genesis 2:4 is a second heavens and earth—covenantal in nature while simultaneously geographically local and destroyed by the flood; and that a third heavens and earth was created at Sinai—is indeed a *unique* and *original* viewpoint which cannot be found in any commentaries. I contend it also can’t be found in the biblical text itself.

Frost charges in this section of his response that I have accepted the connection of Revelation 20-22 with Genesis 1-3 “without any question whatsoever” (Frost, 3). This is a lazy assessment and charge, and ignores 18 pages of biblical-based (not science- or philosophy-based) interpretation on my part, not to mention the biblical arguments proposed by other proponents of covenant creation³. Both in my paper and in my reply I have laid out a biblical case for their connection, as shown again above. It appears Frost is choosing to ignore these connections and just state, as if no one would question him, that I connect those two texts without any real exegesis. Frost never, for example, offered any exegesis of Hebrews 1:10-11 nor any response to my section titled “Back to the Beginning” on pages 14-16. If what God created “In the beginning” was about to “perish,” then doesn’t that tell us a lot about the nature of what God created “In the beginning”?

5:17-21; 7:7-11; and Hosea 6:7. Jesus had said all the righteous blood shed on earth since Abel would fall on that generation of Jews and on the city and the nation (Matthew 23:31f); therefore, the significance of the removal of Jerusalem reaches beyond Sinai and goes all the way back to Genesis! Frost did not address my arguments from Matthew 23 *at all* in his response to me.

³ See this article, for example: <http://www.newcreationministries.tv/Articles/languageofcreation.htm>

Frost then says, "I stress the principle that having a knowledge of Greek does not necessarily yield a correct translation, interpretation or understanding" (Frost, 3). This is contradictory to his initial position that "were" can *only* mean that they formerly were in existence but now no longer are. I quote him on page 5 of my original paper:

The heavens and earth "were" (imperfect tense, past completed action - Greek 101). The temporal adverbs "now" and "then" are contrasted. "heavens and earth WERE" parallel with "the THEN world" ("then" is a past temporal reference, parallel with the past imperfect, "were") in contrast with "the NOW heavens and earth" (the present ones). It would only make sense to add the word "now" if, in fact, they once "were". The "were" is contrasted with the "now."⁴

Frost calls his Greek analysis "Greek 101." But then on page 6 of his response to me, he says that my conclusion is based on a "beginners" grammar and attempts to discredit me by questioning my Greek training and appealing to more advance Greek grammars. It seems that Frost is now appealing to Greek 201 or 301, not 101. He questions my use of Machen and says that a more intermediate grammar states that the imperfect "can have the force of the aoristic or punctiliar." Yes, it can, but that isn't Greek 101, is it? The more important point is which form is it here in 2 Peter 3:5-7? Frost did not state why he is now appealing to a rarer and more obscure use of the imperfect, and he did not state why the normal use should be abandoned. After raising a diversionary tactic that instead of discrediting me actually discredits his own original "Greek 101" argument, Frost doesn't set forth any concrete option. And, even if "were" was punctiliar or aoristic, it still implies nothing of their existence or non-existence at the time of Peter's writing. Frost has not made his case, but simply states we have a "choice" (Frost, 6).

I quote my conclusion of the imperfect "were" from page 8 of my initial paper, in order to refresh the reader and help him "chose wisely":

The Greek does not demand that the heavens once existed and now no longer do (though that is an optional interpretation of the word "were"); however, the context *does demand* that the reader should see the connection of the ancient formation of the heavens *and* the earth, *by the word of God*. Peter's argument is masterful. The scoffers willingly ignored the power of the word of God: the heavens *were of old* and the earth *was formed* by the word of God (Genesis 1), and they both *were reserved* for fire and were about to be removed in Peter's day by the same word of God.

I had established from the context whether the "heavens and earth" that were of old ceased to exist at some point in time (the flood according to Frost) or whether they were of old and now are reserved for fire. From page 6 of my initial paper:

As we saw earlier, the scoffers (who were Jews) were ignoring that the same power of the word of God used in both the creation of "the heavens and earth" and in the flood of Noah's world

⁴ Footnote from the original paper: <http://preterismdebate.ning.com/profiles/blogs/local-or-global-genesis-flood?id=4171784%3ABlogPost%3A1896&page=5#comments>

would also be used in the destruction of “the heavens and earth.” This is what Peter is emphasizing:

3 First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts **4** and saying, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!” **5** They deliberately ignore *this fact* [singular-JK], *that by the word of God* heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water, **6** through which [plural-JK]⁵ the world of that time was deluged with water and perished. **7** But [or, “and”-JK]⁶ *by the same word* the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the godless. (NRSV)

The correlation I was making is this:

1. The scoffers were ignoring one singular fact: the means of judgment (the word of God).
2. The word of God is what “created” the heavens and earth out of and by means of water.
3. God destroyed the “world” of Noah through those same (plural) antecedent things: the water and the word.
4. And the climax: it was *by the same word* that the heavens and earth will be destroyed.

So, no matter what lexical or grammatical arguments I or Frost might make, what I did not do was attempt to “prove” my case through commentaries or grammar (as he falsely attributed to me), but rather I used the context from 2 Peter 3 to do so. Frost ignores the context of the surrounding text that I had brought up and simply employs diversionary tactics.

On page 3 of Frost’s response, in his “opportunity to clear the air,” he takes aim at me and charges that I “begrudgingly” give him the point on the Greek syntax of the adverb/adjective “now.” I’m not sure how Frost knows my heart or my intentions. It seems he has made a judgment of me, and in so doing he discredits himself. He should have refrained from stating his personal opinion. Let me be clear: there was no “begrudging” on my part. I am interested in truth, *biblical truth*. I go where the Word leads me.

⁵ I didn’t include “plural” here in my initial paper though I was aware of it and chose not to discuss it.

⁶ From the footnote in the original paper: “According to Baker Analytical Greek New Testament, the Greek conjunction *de* (“but” or “and”) is a “connecting conjunction” in 2 Peter 3:7 (pg. 718). If Peter wished to make a strong contrast here between two different “heavens and earths”, one might expect a stronger adversative, like *alla*, than *de*. Baker, pgs 835-836: “[connecting conjunctions] occur between arguments that lead to the same conclusion” (Baker Book House Company, 1981).”

Also, I would add in this response that BDAG says: “When it is felt that there is some contrast between clauses – though the contrast is scarcely discernable – the most common translation is ‘but.’” [Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (3rd edition). University of Chicago Press, 2000; pg 213.] Frost is making the claim that the contrast between “the then world” and “the now heavens and earth” is quite strong; however, that claim falls far short of “scarcely discernable.” My point is that Peter could have used a stronger adversative in the Greek if he wished to make the kind of contrast Frost is making. At best, what we have here is a “scarcely discernable” contrast between two clauses “that lead to the same conclusion”: it was by *God’s word* that the heavens and earth were created and would be destroyed.

Next, Frost takes aim at my use of “world” being too narrow, relating only to “people” (Frost, 4). I remind him that in that section of my paper, I was discussing Peter’s use of world⁷, not all possible meanings of it in other places. My concern was: what did *Peter* mean? Frost appeals to using “the framework or some other *apriori* concern” in order to determine meaning (Frost, 4). That is exactly what I established: *Peter*’s framework, which Frost failed to consider. Frost first appeals to the lexicons for his proof that “world” can mean “heavens and earth” or “universe,” as if I didn’t know that myself. If I simply wished to follow the lexicons throughout my biblical studies, no doubt I would have remained a futurist, since when the lexicons say “world” means “heavens and earth” or “universe,” it is because they are futurist, not preterist in hermeneutic. What is Frost suggesting, that Peter meant “planet” or “universe” in his second epistle?

Frost then appeals not to Peter for Peter’s understanding of “world,” but to the Psalms (Frost, 4), which may or may not support his conclusion depending on whether one imports a physical or covenantal understanding to the text, and how one understands the operation of the Hebrew parallelism in those texts. For example, is “world” equal to “heavens and earth” in this passage?

a He raises the poor from the dust
a' And lifts the beggar from the ash heap,
b To set them among princes
b' And make them inherit the throne of glory.
c For the pillars of the *earth* are the LORD's,
c' And He has set the *world* upon them.
(1 Samuel 2:8 NKJV)

So, there is no biblical evidence that “world” *must* equal “heavens and earth.” The burden of proof is on Frost to prove “beyond a shadow of a doubt” the equality of meaning in 2 Peter 3:5-7, not me. He is not able to do it with the commentaries, lexicons, Greek grammar, Hebrew parallelism, and is not able to do it with the actual context of 2 Peter.

Since it wasn’t dealt with, I’ll quote it again. Here is what I originally wrote concerning the context of Peter’s “world,” from pages 9-10:

We know that the “world” of Peter and John was “passing away” (1 John 2:17). Since “the heavens and the earth” were also passing away, does that mean they are the same? Just because two things are being compared, does that mean they are equal? Peter’s use of “world” in 2 Peter 3:6 to describe Noah’s Flood means what it does the other times it is used in judgment passages⁸: the destruction of the arrangement, organization or “kosmos” of *the ungodly*, not the removal of an entire heavenly administration. Notice 2 Peter 2:5-9:

⁷ See pages 9-10 of my paper, and in particular footnote 20 where I state that I do not believe “world” only means the ungodly. My point was what did Peter mean when he used it? Throughout the whole letter, it is the judgment of God on the wicked that is in view with the “world.”

⁸ Footnote from my original paper: “I want to make clear that I am not arguing for “world” to only mean “the realm of the ungodly,” but am just using this narrow view of “world” as it fits in this context, especially how

5 *if* he did not spare the *ancient world*, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the *world of the ungodly*;

6 *if* by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;

7 and *if* he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked

8 (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard);

9 *then* the Lord knows how to rescue *the godly* from trials, and to keep *the unrighteous* under punishment until the day of judgment. (ESV)

This background text of chapter 2 is fundamental for a correct understanding of chapter 3. Notice Peter's logical "if/then" construction. *If* God punished the *world* of the wicked and preserved the righteous in both Noah's Flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, *then* he will do the same at the Parousia. At this point I raise the question: if "heavens and earth" means simply a "world" or God-ordained administration, wouldn't the perishing of that "heavens and earth" be a judgment on both the wicked and the righteous? But this is clearly not the case when "world" is used. Instead, what we find in chapter 2 are the righteous being rescued and the world of the ungodly being kept under punishment, with no hint that the destruction of this "world" means anything more significant than the destruction of the then-living wicked. It was a relevant message to Peter's contemporary audience that fit within the broader context of the whole epistle...

Now, the "Jewish world" was certainly going to pass away at the destruction of Jerusalem. The world of the "ungodly" perished both in the flood and the destruction of Jerusalem. But wasn't there more to this judgment in AD 70 than just the destruction of the then-living ungodly? What is unique here is that the passing of the "heavens and earth" represents more than just the "world of the ungodly." The passing of the "heavens and earth" in AD 70 was the overturning of death! It was what hadn't happened in the flood: the resurrection of the dead. No dead persons were judged in Noah's flood.

Contra Frost, I am not merely "picking" an interpretation to fit my view (Frost, 4); I'm letting Peter tell me for himself. Not only that, but Frost never *touches* the correlation with the dead being judged, which again demonstrates the failure of his model to differentiate between the significance of the "heavens and earth" being removed and the "world" being judged.

This, perhaps, was the most surprising part of Frost's response:

Peter uses it. For example, Christians were in the Roman "world," but in another sense were "not of the world" (see John 17)."

He [Kratt] quotes *Heb* 12.25-26 then writes, “Notice that the Hebrew writer says that in the past, when the Law was given through Moses, it was the earth that was shaken, but “now” (AD 65 or so) both the *Heavens and* the Earth were to be shaken. The context here is a comparison of what happened at Sinai with what would happen at the destruction of Jerusalem. The text is clear: *then* it was the earth that was shaken, but *now* it will be *the heavens and* the earth. The pattern is identical to the one Peter uses concerning Noah’s flood. Then it was the “world” that perished, now it is *the heavens and* the earth. This distinction utterly destroys Frost’s position” (Kratt, 4). Well, maybe it does in *Heb* 12.25-26, but we are not discussing that passage, are we? See, two can play this game, for I can simply find a passage where “world”, “earth” and “heaven” are all parallel, then impose that textual meaning on *II Pe* 3 and claim: “This distinction utterly destroys Kratt’s position.” Kratt is arguing that because a distinction exists between the lexemes “world”, “heavens”, and “earth” in some parts of the Bible, then it must have that distinction here in *II Pe* 3. He has only shown that if such a distinction exists in *II Pe* exists, then it hurts my case. He has not proven that it does exist. (Frost, 5)

Is Frost actually saying that 2 Peter 3 and Hebrew 12 are not discussing the same event? The desperation of Frost is so obvious at this point that I hardly feel the need to continue. I didn’t merely “find a passage where ‘world,’ ‘earth,’ and ‘heaven’ are all parallel,” I found a passage that is talking about the very same “heaven and earth” dissolution and judgment! How much clearer could it be? Are we to run in circles forever with the grammar, commentaries and lexicons concerning 2 Peter 3:5-7? If the lexicons and grammars point to two or more different options, shouldn’t *Scripture* be our guide? If we accept the words of the inspired writer of Hebrews, there was only a *shaking* of the “earth” at Sinai, but in AD 70 there was a *shaking and removal* of the “heavens and earth.” My case is proven and Frost is now found seriously lacking in any meaningful *biblical* exegesis to support his conclusion.

In his paragraph responding to Hebrews 12:25-26, Frost appeals to the destructions of Egypt, Edom, Babylon, and Judah in 589 B.C. (sic 586 B.C.), suggesting that since “heavens and earth” is used in the language of each of these judgments, the conclusion is each of these nations is a “heavens and earth” (Frost, 5). Frost doesn’t give references, but I assume he is referring to Isaiah 13 (Babylon), Isaiah 19 (Egypt), Isaiah 34 (Edom), and Isaiah 64 (Judah). Since Frost didn’t develop in what way he believes each of these national judgments was a removal or dissolution of a “heavens and earth,” I will not spend time developing it. I remind Frost and the reader that I briefly stated my position for a biblical understanding of “heavens and earth” on page 8 of my original paper, quoted here again:

My position, for clarity’s sake, is that “heavens and earth” are God’s people in covenant relationship with Him. The “heavens” represent the consciences of the people of God, and “earth” represents living under a covenant law. This view coincides with how the Apostle Paul understood “the creation” as people in Romans 8:19ff. The substance of “heavens and earth” is people, not planets. If one wishes to explore more on this subject, I can direct them to materials which explain this view.⁹

⁹ Footnote from original paper: The podcast series on Isaiah by Ward Fenley and Tami Jelinek, specifically chapter 65 part 9, found here: <http://www.newcreationministries.tv/Audio/isaiah65.htm>. See also these articles: <http://www.newcreationministries.tv/Articles/heavensconscience.htm>.

I would also add that the substance of “heavens and earth” is not governmental administrations, either. What needs to be developed here is the role that Egypt, Edom, and Babylon played in God’s covenantal dealings with Israel. Babylon, Egypt, and Edom had some level of knowledge of God through the ministry of God’s servants. For example, consider the stories of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon), Joseph and Pharaoh (Egypt), and Jacob and Esau (Edom)¹⁰. The knowledge of God among the leaders of these nations led to the responsibility of these nations to listen to God’s word given to them. There’s more to a “heavens and earth” de-creation event than just “some really bad things happened when those nations were judged.”¹¹

On page 7, after stating that there is “choice,” Frost again presents his new viewpoint for three “heavens and earth” and this time appeals to “of water and by water” in 2 Peter 3:5 as referring to the garden of Eden rather than the Genesis 1 creation. This is where, for someone who is interested in “fitting in with the majority of scholarship” (Frost, 8), he takes a wrong turn. The majority of scholarship sees the Genesis 1 Creation as the subject of the phrase “formed of water and by water” (referring to Genesis 1:9). The verb Peter uses is “formed” (*sunestosa*, Greek). Concerning this phrase in 2 Peter 3:5, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say:

“earth standing out of” — *Greek*, “consisting of,” that is, “formed out of the water.” The waters under the firmament were at creation *gathered together* [emphasis mine-JK] into one place, and the dry land emerged *out of* and above, them.¹²

Robertson says:

“Out of water and amidst water” (*ex hudatos kai di' hudatos*). Out of the primeval watery chaos (Gen 1:2), but it is not plain what is meant by *di' hudatos*, which naturally means “by means of water,” though *dia* with the genitive is used for a condition or state (Heb 12:1). The reference may be to Gen 1:9, the *gathering together* [emphasis mine-JK] of the waters.¹³

The word “*sunestosa*” can carry the meaning of “stand together,” “put together” or “gather together.”¹⁴ What is fascinating about Peter’s choice of this word is that it is very closely related the Greek words used in the Septuagint version of Genesis 1:9.

And God said, Let the water which is under the heaven *be collected* [*sunachtheto*] into one *place* [*sunagogan*], and let the dry land appear, and it was so. And the water which was under the

<http://www.newcreationministries.tv/Articles/Psalm19p1.htm>, and

<http://www.newcreationministries.tv/Articles/heavensandearth.htm>

¹⁰ Tim Martin’s presentation at the [2009 Covenant Creation Conference titled "The Promised Land of Lot: Deep Structure of the Old Covenant Creation"](http://www.newcreationministries.tv/Articles/heavensandearth.htm) highlighted these principles in the wider structure of covenant history.

¹¹ For more discussion about whether Edom and Babylon were their own separate “heavens and earth,” see this blog discussion: <http://preterismdebate.ning.com/profiles/blogs/is-babylon-another-heaven-and>

¹² Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary, entry for 2 Peter 3:5, e-sword module.

¹³ Robertson’s Word Pictures, entry for 2 Peter 3:5, e-sword module.

¹⁴ Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, entry #4921, Seventh printing (2005), page 605.

heaven *was collected* [sunachthon] into its *places* [sunagogas], and the dry land appeared.
(Genesis 1:9 Brenton's LXX)

The connection of Peter's "standing out of water and in water" to Genesis 1:9 is profound, especially when no such language exists in the Genesis 2 account of Eden. There, the one river watered Eden and then "divided" into four parts (Genesis 2:10); it wasn't "brought together" to form Eden. I believe this is desperate reaching on Frost's part, i.e., forcing a meaning on Genesis 2 that isn't there¹⁵. Unfortunately for Frost, he must abandon the "majority of scholarship" when claiming that Peter had the Garden of Eden, not the Genesis 1 creation, in view when he wrote. Again, I am not using commentaries to prove my point, I'm only showing that contra Frost's claims, he doesn't stand in line with "scholarship" on this point. For whatever reason, Frost accepts this divergence from scholarship as long as it doesn't have him giving up Genesis 1 as the physical universe.

Finally, in his conclusion, Frost takes final aim at my inability to see his position. Granted, I opened the door on that since I stated I didn't understand it completely. Also, I do not deny that there may be some sort of problem on my end in understanding him, but what I was actually saying was I don't get his conclusions, particularly how the "heavens" were destroyed in Noah's flood. "Land" (earth) I get; but "heavens," I'm still waiting for a scriptural answer from Frost on that one.

When I take his proposed model and apply it to the rest of the biblical story, it fails to measure up because it contradicts Matthew 23, Hebrews 1, Hebrews 11, and Hebrews 12, Romans 5-7 and Galatians 3. Frost encourages me to contact Don Preston. Actually, I have considerable contact with Preston. Frost can ask Preston, or Jack Scott for that matter, how much of "Max King" I understand if he wishes to obtain an unbiased opinion on that matter. Like Frost, I am sold on the corporate body view of resurrection. I was on my way there before reading King. King is a brilliant man, but by no means infallible. When I thought necessary, I have diverged with him (mainly on who were the "all" in Adam) and have backed that up with Scriptural exegesis, as seen in my lectures at the 2009 Preterist Pilgrim Weekend in Ardmore, OK. So bringing up King was again a diversionary tactic. My issue, in my original paper, is not with King but with Frost's model of three "heavens and earths" and that 2 Peter 3:5-7 can *only* be understood that way.

Conclusion

In summary, Frost has not dealt with the covenant continuity made clear in texts like Matthew 23, Hebrews 1 and Hebrews 11. He has no answer for Hebrews 12:25-26 and the shaking of only the earth

¹⁵ The problem for Frost is even more severe than I described. In Martin and Vaughn's first response to Frost's critique of Beyond Creation Science, they noted in their last section before their conclusion how "Frost argues that neither the universe nor planet Earth were "destroyed" by the flood. [Quoting Frost] "... [C]learly, it did not 'perish' if the meaning is the Universe (p. 16)" [end quoting Frost]. Therefore, Frost's literalism requires him to redirect Peter's statement toward details in Genesis 2 rather than Genesis 1 to avoid the problem: [Quoting Frost] "The Garden of Eden was formed "out of" water. The LXX reads, "and there arose a *fountain out of the earth* (*ek tes ges*) and watered the face *of the earth*" (Gen. 2.6) (p. 17)" [end quoting Frost]. Note the sleight of hand in the above statement. Frost says the Garden of Eden was formed "*out of water*," and then proceeds to quote Gen. 2:6 which says that a fountain came "*out of the earth*"! [end quoting Martin and Vaughn].

at Sinai in contrast to the shaking and removal of the heavens and earth at the Parousia. He has not dealt with Isaiah 51:16 and how it looks not to Sinai but to the new heavens and earth in Christ. He has recanted his initial position that the “Greek 101” grammar of 2 Peter 3:5-7 has only one interpretation, one which “destroys the BCS foundation.” Frost has multiple heavens and earths passing away before the promises made under them are fulfilled. He has a gap of no “heavens and earth” from Noah until Moses. I by no means have a firm grasp on what is going on in Genesis 1, but Frost’s model has me scratching my head.

Frost now provides “choice” and encourages the reader to evaluate both sides of the argument and make their own decision. I am encouraged by Sam’s plea, and I am very pleased with the tone he has used here. Frankly, when I sent off my paper to be posted on the internet I was concerned what kind of “hell” would be unleashed on me. So I went pheasant hunting with some friends in eastern Washington for a couple of days to clear my mind. If only my wife hadn’t called me the first day of my trip and say “Sam has posted a response...”

I would encourage the reader to decide based on biblical arguments, not on philosophy, science, tradition, or orthodoxy. The reader should take an honest introspective look at whether their resistance to Genesis 1-3 being the correlative text to Revelation 20-22 is based on the strength of their correlation or the power of tradition.

As far as the \$100 to which Frost refers, I never asked him to pay me what he owes me. He was actually very clever in his offer; he offered to give \$100 to whoever could prove his Greek translation was “impossible.”¹⁶ What I demonstrated was his Greek may be a possibility, but not the only possibility, and that his conclusions are contradictory to the overall scriptural and biblical evidence from Genesis to Revelation. Therefore, his exegesis is wrong. Proving his “exegesis” wrong was part of his offer, but it was conditioned on a caveat that would protect him from ever having to pay (proving his Greek “impossible”). The two propositions he proposes, however, are not logically dependent on each another. I can prove his exegesis wrong, and his Greek as a “possibility,” at the same time. He then says:

“Please....show me where “were” and “are” are not in reference to “heaven and earth. And, if this cannot be done (and it can’t), then the WHOLE FOUNDATION of BCS crumbles, since in their book they MAKE THIS VERY ARGUMENT their foundation.”¹⁷

This is another false logical construct by Frost. “Were” and “are” definitely refer to “heavens and earth,” but the question is, which one(s)? Two different ones, or the same ones? I have proven that “were” and “are” refer to the same “heavens and earth” found in Genesis 1 based on the context of 2 Peter and the full theological picture presented by other related texts. Frost agrees the commentaries and grammars could be used in either of our favors, so what really is he offering? Not anything that would put him in a position to ever have to pay, from what I can determine.

¹⁶ See <http://preterismdebate.ning.com/profiles/blogs/response-to-jerel-kratt?id=4171784%3ABlogPost%3A7551&page=4#comments>

¹⁷ See <http://preterismdebate.ning.com/profiles/blogs/the-core-issue?id=4171784%3ABlogPost%3A6317&page=3#comments>

Also, contra Frost, the authors of BCS did not make 2 Peter 3 their foundation; Frost is the one who came out saying that 2 Peter 3:5-7 proves covenant creation false. The whole purpose of my original paper was to refute that proposition. Now, Frost is claiming “choice” but refusing to pay (which I don’t really care about since I never wanted the money in the first place). So, I have a proposal: why doesn’t Sam give that \$100 to the Preterist Research Institute, an organization we both wish to see succeed in its work?

Finally, like Frost, I would love to sit and discuss these issues with him. Lately, with a large growing family of 4 kids who are 6 years old and under, one of which is a newborn, and an upcoming move in 2 weeks 1200 miles away and the start of a new job, I wonder how I even have the time I do to put forth such an enterprise as this. Due to those constraints and other priorities which I must place ahead of this dialogue, this will be my only response. If Sam wishes to write another response to this one, that is fine; however I won’t be replying to it. At some point in time I’m sure he and I will sit down and talk; that may be where we need to go to next. I plan to sit and listen and let him explain his views to me. One caveat though: I’d better not hear the words “Clark” or “science” at any point in time. I just want it to be “two guys and a bible.”¹⁸ My fervent prayer is that the discussion of covenant creation can continue without disparity, sarcasm, or bitterness. Even if no one ends up agreeing with me or if I am wrong, if I have accomplished that goal, God will be glorified.

¹⁸ This is the title of a new radio program on AD70.net by Michael Loomis.