

What Means Did God Use in Enabling the Earth to Sprout Vegetation?

The Creative Word, "Let the Earth Sprout Vegetation"

Gen 1:11 Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so.

The Result of the Creative Word: The Earth Brought Forth Vegetation

Gen 1:12 The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind;

The Means God Used for the Earth to Sprout Vegetation

The Problem (Gen 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.¹

The Answer to the Problem (Gen 2:6-7)

But a mist used to rise from the earth
and water the whole surface of the ground.²

Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground,
and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;
and man became a living being.

¹ Franz Deltizsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1888), 137, observes that "the world of nature was... designed to be tilled and tended, [and] it runs wild without man, who can and ought... to make it more useful and habitable..." (quoted in C. John Collins, *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* [Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R, 2006], 106. This does not mean that there was no vegetation before the creation of man.

² The main conclusion to be drawn from Genesis 2:5-6 is that God used the natural means of moisture causing seeds to sprout, rather than supernatural means.