

24 Hours: Arguments for a Literal View of the Days of Creation

Genesis 1:5 ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

Different views

- 1) Day-Age View (also called “Progressive Creationism”)- A “day” means a long period of time.
Gen 2:4; Job 20:28; Psalm 20:1; Prov. 11:4; 21:31; 24:10; 25:13; Ecc. 7:14.
- **Genesis 2:4** ⁴ This *is* the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,
- **Proverbs 25:13** ¹³ Like the cold of snow in time of harvest *is* a faithful messenger to those who send him, For he refreshes the soul of his masters.
- **2 Peter 3:8** ⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.
(no morning and evening in 7th day – we are still in the 7th day).
- 2) Intermittent Day – the days in Genesis one are literal days, but they did not follow each other immediately; there were long periods of time between each day. (days 3 and 4 - see point 4 below).
- 3) Revelatory Days – the “days” in the creation account have nothing to do with creation, but have to do with the order which God revealed to Moses regarding creation.
- 4) Literal 24 Hour Days – this is the view I hold to.

Reasons to believe in a literal 24 hour day

1. The terms evening and morning argue for a single 24 hour day.

Evening - עֶרֶב - **erev** - (sun)set, **evening** -- **1. a. evening**, orig. sunset **2.** (late poet.) = *night*.
(Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 8:11; 19:1; 24:11, 63; 29:23; 30:16; 49:27; Exod. 12:6, 18; 16:6, 8, 12f; 18:13f; 27:21; 29:39, 41; 30:8; Lev. 6:20; 11:24f, 27f, 31f, 39f; 14:46; 15:5ff, 10f, 16ff, 21ff, 27; 17:15; 22:6; 23:5, 32; 24:3; Num. 9:3, 5, 11, 15, 21; 19:7f, 10, 19, 21f; 28:4, 8; Deut. 16:4, 6; 23:11; 28:67; Jos. 5:10; 7:6; 8:29; 10:26; Jdg. 19:16; 20:23, 26; 21:2; Ruth 2:17; 1 Sam. 14:24; 20:5; 30:17; 2 Sam. 1:12; 11:2, 13; 1 Ki. 10:15; 17:6; 22:35; 2 Ki. 16:15; 1 Chr. 16:40; 23:30; 2 Chr. 2:4; 13:11; 18:34; 31:3; Ezr. 3:3; 9:4f; Est. 2:14; Job 4:20; 7:4; Ps. 30:5; 55:17; 59:6, 14; 65:8; 90:6; 104:23; 141:2; Prov. 7:9; Eccl. 11:6; Isa. 17:14; Jer. 6:4; 25:20, 24; 50:37; Ezek. 12:4, 7; 24:18; 30:5; 33:22; 46:2; Dan. 8:14, 26; 9:21; Hab. 1:8; Zeph. 2:7; 3:3; Zech. 14:7)

Morning - בֹּקֶר - **boqer** - **morning** -- **1. morning** (of point of time, time at which, never during which, Eng. *morning* = forenoon): **2. morrow, next day; to-morrow morning**;
(Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 19:27; 20:8; 21:14; 22:3; 24:54; 26:31; 28:18; 29:25; 31:55; 40:6; 41:8; 44:3; 49:27; Exod. 7:15; 8:20; 9:13; 10:13; 12:10, 22; 14:24, 27; 16:7f, 12f, 19ff, 23f; 18:13f; 19:16; 23:18; 24:4; 27:21; 29:34, 39, 41; 30:7; 34:2, 4, 25; 36:3; Lev. 6:9, 12, 20; 7:15; 9:17;

19:13; 22:30; 24:3; Num. 9:12, 15, 21; 14:40; 16:5; 22:13, 21, 41; 28:4, 8, 23; Deut. 16:4, 7; 28:67; Jos. 3:1; 6:12; 7:14, 16; 8:10; Jdg. 6:28, 31; 9:33; 16:2; 19:5, 8, 25ff; 20:19; Ruth 2:7; 3:13f; 1 Sam. 1:19; 3:15; 5:4; 9:19; 11:11; 14:36; 15:12; 17:20; 19:2, 11; 20:35; 25:22, 34, 36f; 29:10f; 2 Sam. 2:27; 11:14; 13:4; 17:22; 23:4; 24:11, 15; 1 Ki. 3:21; 17:6; 18:26; 2 Ki. 3:20, 22; 7:9; 10:8f; 16:15; 19:35; 1 Chr. 9:27; 16:40; 23:30; 2 Chr. 2:4; 13:11; 20:20; 31:3; Ezr. 3:3; Est. 2:14; 5:14; Job 1:5; 4:20; 7:18; 11:17; 24:17; 38:7, 12; Ps. 5:3; 30:5; 46:5; 49:14; 55:17; 59:16; 65:8; 73:14; 88:13; 90:5f, 14; 92:2; 101:8; 130:6; 143:8; Prov. 7:18; 27:14; Eccl. 10:16; 11:6; Isa. 5:11; 17:11, 14; 21:12; 28:19; 33:2; 37:36; 38:13; 50:4; Jer. 20:16; 21:12; Lam. 3:23; Ezek. 12:8; 24:18; 33:22; 46:13ff; Dan. 8:14, 26; Hos. 6:4; 7:6; 13:3; Amos 4:4; 5:8; Mic. 2:1; Zeph. 3:3, 5)

When does evening and morning happen? At the beginning and end of one day single day. The text does not say evenings and mornings.

Daniel 8:26 ²⁶ "And the vision of the evenings and mornings Which was told is true; Therefore seal up the vision, For *it refers to many days in the future.*"

“Evening” and “morning” each occur more than 100 times in the Old Testament and every single time it refers to a literal evening or a literal morning.

“The first day commenced at the moment when God caused the light to break forth from the darkness; but this light did not become a day, until the evening had come, and the darkness which set in with the evening had given place the next morning to the break of day...But if the days of creation are regulated by the recurring interchanges of light and darkness, they must be regarded not as periods of time of incalculable duration, of years and thousands of years, but as simple earthly days.” (*Commentary on the Old Testament*, Keil and Delitzsch, vol. 1, p.51).

2. The term first (or one) is always used for a literal day.

אֶחָד - echad – One, First.

In every other Old Testament passage, the word “day” used with a numeral or ordinal always refers to a literal 24 hour day.

(Child illustration: “I have three sons.” “This is my first son...”)

3. Unless the context tells us otherwise, the term “Day” would argue for a 24 hour day (Car illustration: “I took my car to church this morning.”

“I took my toy car to church this morning”

“I took my car to church this morning in my pocket”).

Day - יוֹם - **yom - day -- 1. day**, opp. night. **2. Day** as division of time:

God could have used terms for age, such as *dor* or *olam*.

Occurrences of *yom* (day) and *echad* (one/first) together:

^{NKJ} **Genesis 1:5** God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the **first day**.

^{NKJ} **Genesis 27:45** "until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why

should I be bereaved also of you both in **one day**?"

^{NKJ} **Genesis 33:13** But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children *are* weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing *are* with me. And if the men should drive them hard **one day**, all the flock will die.

^{NKJ} **Numbers 11:19** 'You shall eat, not **one day**, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days,

^{NKJ} **1 Samuel 9:15** Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear **the day** before Saul came, saying,

^{NKJ} **1 Samuel 27:1** And David said in his heart, "Now I shall perish **someday** by the hand of Saul. *There is* nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand."

^{NKJ} **Ezra 10:17** By the **first day** of the first month they finished *questioning* all the men who had taken pagan wives.

^{NKJ} **Isaiah 9:14** Therefore the LORD will cut off head and tail from Israel, Palm branch and bulrush in **one day**.

^{NKJ} **Jonah 3:4** And Jonah began to enter the city on the **first day's** walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

^{NKJ} **Zechariah 14:7** It shall be **one day** Which is known to the LORD -- Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen *That* it will be light.

4. The Sabbath would have no meaning if these are not literal days.

Exodus 20:8-11 " Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. ¹¹ For *in* six days the LORD made 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.

Exodus 31:15-17 ¹⁵ 'Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh *is* the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. ¹⁶ 'Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations *as* a perpetual covenant. ¹⁷ 'It *is* a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.' "

The concept of the Sabbath (or even the week) would make little sense if the days of creation were not literal 24 hour days. Just as God made the heavens and the earth in six literal days and rested on the seventh, God commanded Israel to work for six literal days and to rest on the seventh.

If we are to take God's word as truth, and if we are to trust what God has revealed to us, then we need to trust that God's account of the beginning is true the way he presented it to us. If we start to allegorize the first verses of Genesis, then where would we stop? Does any of the rest of scripture mean what it says to mean? There is sufficient evidence

within the text of Genesis 1 and outside of it to believe that when God states that He created the world in six days, that He means six literal days. We need to believe that God's word is true from start to finish.

Six Arguments for Six Days

by Pastor Keith Graham

The plain sense of Genesis chapter one is that Almighty God created the universe and all it contains in a time period of six ordinary days. Apparently, many Christians do not appreciate that this truth under girds the Biblical world view. Some have abandoned it altogether, and opted for a "day/age" interpretation of Genesis one. Why is it Scriptural, as well as theologically crucial, to hold to the six day position? To demonstrate why, six considerations follow.

I. Exegesis

Consider Genesis one at face value. Does an exegetical grounds appear for concluding that Holy Spirit means something other than that creation took place in six real days? Even if it were granted that Moses is using a poetic style under inspiration, no justification for that view appears in the text. The phrase, "there was evening and morning" occurs after each day. Nothing in the context or elsewhere in Scripture would lead one to the notion that other time periods are intended. In Exodus 20:9,11, the six days of creation are mentioned. The Hebrew word for days (yamim, plural for yom, day) is used there. In all other Biblical passages where it appears, the word yamim refers to literal days. (Cf. Genesis 3:17; 5:5, 23; 7:4; 17:12; 21:4; 24:55; Exodus 7:25; Numbers 28:17; Deuteronomy 16:13, et. al.)

True, the apostle Peter wrote that one day is with the Lord as 1,000 years, and vice versa (2 Peter 3:8). Should that axiom be used to hypothesize that the Lord Jesus may have been in the grave for 3,000 years? Peter's point is that God is greater than time - he might have written with equal veracity that with the Lord, one second is as a trillion years and vice versa!

The words of the gospels and those elsewhere in the New Testament preclude the absurdity that our Savior's time in the grave was an era of thousands of years. Even so, the language and intent of Genesis chapter one make void the day/age concept.

What then is the reason that many feel constrained to hermeneutically force the Scriptures into a day/age mold? A significant motive arises from the fear of so called science (cf. 1 Timothy 6:20). Ostensibly desiring to not put a stumbling block in the way

of anyone who might be coming to Christ, some have allowed their precious Bible to be subjected to the judgment of the "worldly wise man". More will be offered below regarding the alleged scientific evidence against six day creation. Let it suffice for the moment to affirm that faith has compromised with unbelief all too often in this arena. Is it from studying the Word that Christians have arrived at the day/age (or old gap theory) views? Or, have they retreated from the Goliath of the world's "knowledge", in the attempt to keep the counsel of God from appearing foolish in the eyes of men? This compromising has actually hindered the advance of gospel. The apostolic gospel is the command of the Creator-Redeemer to all mankind to repent and believe! Its crystal purity and piercing simplicity do appear foolish...to those who are perishing (1 Cor. 1:18)! Christ's gospel is not a vapid message from a nebulous god capable of revealing nothing more than a muddled myth about the origin of His world. Why come in fear and trembling to a god like that? Why believe that a hapless creator will be an exacting judge?

One further comment in this vein: If we capitulate to human wisdom regarding creation, why not regarding a truth such as the resurrection? Perhaps the Lord Jesus did not literally rise, bodily, on the third day. Perhaps this age is a long period of time during which He is "spiritually rising" through His followers in an allegorical way. After all, does not our great human wisdom tell us that people just do not rise from the dead? Of course, God must not have meant that, even though all four gospels record it in plain language! Perhaps we need a day/age theory of the resurrection!

II. The Origin of the Sabbath

God "codified" or inscripturated His moral law for man through His servant Moses. The Lord Jesus summarized that law as "love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (See context at Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30, and Luke 10:27). This moral law has existed since man existed; its essence is revealed when human history begins. We see Adam and Eve worshipfully communing with and serving God at the very first. Marriage is instituted and made holy by God right at creation. The sanctity of the lives of God's image bearers - the sanctity of human life - is established at the dawn of history (Cf. Genesis 9:6). The sabbath is also instituted as a perpetual observance (Genesis 2:3).

In the book of Exodus, chapter 20, the Decalog is given and the sabbath is to be remembered because of the example set by God at creation. If all future weeks are patterned after those original six days with their seventh sabbath day, how can it be that those first seven days were of different duration than all future days?

God could have made His world in any length of time, for He is time's Creator. In fact, "time" only has meaning in the created world. God reveals that He chose six days to create the universe, with the seventh day as a Sabbath, in order to give His images a pattern for their lives in His service.

III. The Origin of Death

The Bible presents a cosmos that was pronounced "very good" by its Maker. At the future

consummation, God says that He will make all things new, and that there will be no more death, pain, etc. (Revelation 21:4). Certainly the inference is well justified that before the fall of mankind into sin, death did not exist at all.

After the fall, God keeps his promise: "In the day you eat of it, you will die!" He curses the serpent, puts enmity between his seed and the woman's seed, multiplies the woman's pain, curses the very ground, which will now bring forth thorns and thistles, subjects Adam to toil, and destines man to return to the dust from which he was taken. (See Genesis 3:14 - 19).

Paul further instructs on the massive changes which took place when our first parents plunged all humanity, and God's beautiful world, into misery: "...the creation was subjected to futility...the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption...the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now..." (See Romans 8:19ff; consider the "all is vanity" theme of Ecclesiastes).

Since death originated with sin, how can a Bible believing person hold a view of origins which brings death into existence simultaneously with life? The day/age idea was evidently conceived to keep the basic fact of Divine creation intact, while accommodating Darwinism. A corollary concept to the day/age idea, "theistic evolution", developed. It might well be termed "theistic thanatology". It is a view of death which presents a creator who apparently loves death as much as life, or who considers death to be good. From its very cradle and for eons thereafter, the theoretical world of this god is one of savagery and doomed mutants. Survival of the fittest is the creation mandate. This loveless, primeval world is characterized by innumerable evolutionary dead ends. Creatures struggle to stay alive at the expense of other creatures. This is a doctrine of origins which normalizes and dignifies the horrors of death and misery. It makes the cursed order of this present fallen world indistinguishable from the order of the "very good" world, wherein was Eden and its bliss. According to Scripture, death and misery entered by sin.

The covenantal structure of God's redemption places Adam as the "federal head" of the fallen human race, dead in trespasses and sins. The Lord Jesus is the federal head of the redeemed, alive in Him. Covenant theology is discredited by theistic evolution, because it subverts the doctrine of original sin. It is in Adam that all die. We do not die simply because "death is natural". Death is fundamentally unnatural! Most day/agers have retained their belief in a literal Adam. They would agree that any doctrine of man which denies a literal Adam is a foundation for another gospel. Any doctrine of death which gives it an origin other than by sin is also erroneous and dangerous. A Scriptural view of death sees it as God's drastic judgment on the sinners who defiled the very good world He had made.

It is probable that death even for the lower creation originated with the sin of the higher. Perhaps the garments of animal skin given to Adam and Eve, to cover their nakedness (Genesis 3:11,21), also graphically portrayed death to their newly opened eyes. Perhaps the slaughter these garments would have required was their first encounter with physical

death. Also, note that it is only after the fall that God gives animal flesh as food for man. Before the fall, both man and beasts were given "green plants and fruit" as food (Compare Genesis 1:29,30 with 9:3). Of course, animal sacrifices were not made until after sin was in the world (See Genesis 4:3ff). Admittedly, some challenges exist for this thorough going view of the curse: Does the use of green plants and fruit as food mean that death existed in the vegetable kingdom before sin? What of those creatures that depend on the decay of corpses for their life? These are not insurmountable objections. Again referring to Genesis 3:14ff, we see that it is sound to infer that the curse introduced major physical changes in the created order, along with spiritual devastation. The predator versus the prey, thorns and thistles, deformities, and perhaps even the very existence of some life forms, is part of the curse, the groaning as Paul says, of the lower creation. It was not so in the beginning!

IV. Creation as General Revelation

"The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1). "Since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse." (Romans 1:20). God points out to Job the myriad natural wonders which proclaim His majesty. Other Scripture could be cited to show that the creation, though cursed, still reveals the Creator.

Of utmost importance here is that the universe does not merely tell us that there is "a creator", but it speaks eloquently about the Only True Creator! It declares the glory of the True God! It is man's blindness that obscures this natural revelation, not any inarticulateness on God's part! Therefore, the more we investigate natural revelation (and history), the more we shall see the outworking of what the true and living God has told us in special revelation (Scripture).

Consider the attributes of the "god" of theistic evolution: Is he all-wise? He arrives at finished products through the trial and error method (evolution). In the process, much life is wasted. Is he a kind and gracious god, who has no pleasure in the death of his creatures? Is this deity fallible and capricious? If so, he is not the God of the Bible!

God's glory is at the heart of this matter! His glorious majesty is maligned by any view of origins that includes evolution or vague "ages of creation", of uncertain duration or purpose!

V. The Witness of Other Scripture

All professing Christians would agree that Divine creation is a major teaching of the Bible. It is of the very fabric of the Old and New Testaments. However, this discussion is on a specific dimension of creation: God calling all things into being within a period of six days. What can we infer from the following passages about that specific aspect of God's fiat creation?

1) Psalm 148:5 - God commands creatures into existence. When the Lord Jesus commanded the winds and waves, instant obedience ensued. When He changed water

into wine, His fellow guests at the wedding commented on the excellence of the vintage moments later. How unlike God, and how out of keeping with His ways is the idea that the mighty Word of His power, which called all out of nothing, was sluggish in its effect! If anything, an inquirer might dare ask God why His "ex nihilo" creation required so long a time as six days! Again, as per the Ten Commandments statement, God worked six days and rested one: a model for His people of future weeks.

2) John 5:45-47 and Luke 16: 29-31. In both of these passages, the Lord Jesus evinces an extremely high view of the Scriptures that came through Moses. He says that those who refuse to accept Moses will not believe Him. If Moses (and the prophets) will not be believed, a resurrection will not convince!

If the Lord so spoke of Moses, who dares assume for himself the authority to despise Moses? Who is wiser than the Lord Jesus? Has God allowed His people of all ages to believe in six day creation but reserved the privilege of a "higher" wisdom for smug, twentieth century gnostics?

3) Colossians 1:16 - All things were created "in Christ". This spiritually understood phrase, in Christ, is often used in the New Testament, and testifies of Christ's Deity (Compare Acts 17:28 - in Him, that is God, "we live and move and have our being"). Saints are said to be in Christ, all things will be summed up in Christ (Ephesians 1:10). That which is in Christ is acceptable to the Father, is good, is holy. If all things were created in Christ, surely the original creation must have been glorious, holy, and good - as God declared it to be in Genesis 1:31.

VI. The Witness of Science

The mathematical genius and philosopher Sir Isaac Newton believed implicitly in recent, special creation. Likewise did other great men of science such as Johann Kepler, Lord Kelvin, and Louis Pasteur. Real science corroborates God's inerrant, fully inspired, infallible Word, the Bible.

The court of natural science and its expert witnesses is appealed to last of all, in deference to the Bible. All mere human wisdom is completely subject to His Word. However, when "doing science", the believer is to take every thought captive to obedience to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). He is to reason about nature and investigate it, with the Scriptures as the guiding light for his inquest.

What is to be found when examining the "scientific evidence" for their theories offered by theistic evolutionists, gap theorists, and day-agers? Among the pieces of evidence offered, a few exhibits that have seemed like formidable giants in the land to God's people are: dinosaurs and their fossil remains; the "geologic column"; the vast light-year distances of interstellar space, carbon 14 dating, and other (radio metric) dating methods.

A few basic and brief observations are offered. Regarding the dating methods, the amounts of original substances are often **assumed**. Dates are calculated by measuring the rate of change of one substance to another, and comparing the present amounts with the

assumed original amounts. As for the travel of light through space, let us note that it is **assumed** that light always travels at the same speed, and that the light originated at the far distant point. The "geologic column" is a morass of circular reasoning. Fossils are dated by type of rock and type of rock dated by fossils. Anomalous formations abound, confounding expectations. Much is based on naturalistic (godless) **assumption**.

Assumption is a wonderful tool for creative, investigative postulation, but anathema for proof! True science begins with hypothesis, but does not conclude with it.

The dinosaurs and their extinction present no threat to six day creation, nor to the account of Noah and the ark. (To discuss the latter is outside the scope of this paper). Dinosaurs are merely animals which are now apparently extinct. Modern times have seen, and continue to see other created kinds become extinct. In fact, extinction itself is more evidence of the current fallen state of the world! It is unfortunate that the "ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan" (Revelation 12:9) has caused the bones of the "terrible lizards" to be a stumbling block. There is no fact pertaining to those amazing beasts or their fossil remains that conflicts with any Biblical statement.

Even as the apostle Peter prophesied that they would, men conveniently forget the Great Flood. (See 2 Peter 3:5,6). The fact is that even to this day, stupendous evidence remains of that great universal cataclysm. Much paleontological (fossil) data can be explained far more reasonably by "flood geology" than by uniformitarian geology. (Uniformitarianism assumes that the features of the earth's crust are best explained by forces of nature similar to those observable today, acting over vast ages. Example: the Grand Canyon was formed by millions of years of erosion by the Colorado river.)

The Noahic deluge was a world-wide event which surely changed the face of the earth fundamentally. Many fossils exist in "beds" of huge proportions, indicating sudden, mass loss of life for the creatures preserved. The fossil fuels themselves are likewise evidence of the Great Flood of Noah's time.

These scientific considerations are but a meager introduction to the great weight of real evidence supporting a very young universe formed by special creation. By digging deeper into this subject, the Christian reader will be delightfully surprised, and greatly built up in the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

Evolutionary/uniformitarian dogma is the current version of the perennial pagan ideas of the eternity of matter, and of order arising mysteriously out of chaos. Genesis chapter one, understood in its plain sense, remains unsullied by the folly of those who would gainsay it. Fashionable alternate theories on origins are ever springing up, and some in Christendom exhaust themselves to keep their theology in vogue. Again and again, these speculations wither into irrelevance; with all other chaff they blow away.

The Bible believing Christian can rest in knowing his God created the universe and all therein, in six ordinary days. This bedrock foundation of orthodoxy abides; it is God-breathed truth.

[Print Page](#)

Courtesy of Pastor Keith Graham
(original article November 1993)
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The necessity for believing in six literal days

First published:
Creation **18**(1):38–41
December 1995

by [Ken Ham](#)

The majority of Christians in churches probably aren't sure whether God really created everything in six literal days. Many believe it doesn't matter whether it took six days or six million years. However, it is vital to believe in six literal days for many reasons. Foremost is that allowing these days to be long periods of time undermines the foundations of the message of the Cross.

Why do people doubt the days?

Fossils are the remains of dead creatures and plants buried by water.

Many fossils clearly show death consistent with sudden, catastrophic burial, supporting the Bible's account of a worldwide Flood.

The major reason why people doubt that the days of creation are 24-hour literal days usually has nothing to do with what the Bible says, but comes from outside influences. For example, many believe that because scientists have supposedly proved the earth to be billions of years old then the days of creation cannot be ordinary days.

Many fossils clearly show death consistent with sudden, catastrophic burial, supporting the Bible's account of a worldwide Flood.

If people use Scripture to try to justify that the days of creation are long periods of time, they usually quote passages such as [2 Peter 3:8](#), '... one day is with the Lord as a thousand years ...'. Because of this, they think the days could be a thousand years, or perhaps even millions of years. However, if you look at the rest of the verse, it says, '... and a thousand years as one day'. This cancels out their argument! The context of this passage concerns the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This particular verse is telling people that with God, waiting a day is like waiting a thousand years, and waiting a thousand years is like waiting a day because God is

outside of time—He is not limited by natural processes and time. This has absolutely *nothing* to do with defining the days of creation. Besides, the word 'day' already exists and has been defined, which is why in [2 Peter](#) it can be compared to a thousand years. There is no reference in this passage to the days of creation.

What does 'day' mean?

The Hebrew word for day in [Genesis chapter 1](#) is the word *yom*. It is important to understand that almost any word can have two or more meanings, depending on context. We need to understand the context of the usage of this word in Genesis chapter 1.*

Respected Hebrew dictionaries, like the Brown, Driver, Briggs lexicon, give a number of meanings for the word *yom* depending upon context. One of the passages they give for *yom*'s meaning an ordinary day happens to be Genesis chapter 1. The reason is obvious. Every time the word *yom* is used with a number, or with the phrase 'evening and morning', anywhere in the Old Testament, it always means an ordinary day. In Genesis chapter 1, for each of the six days of creation, the Hebrew word *yom* is used with a number *and* the phrase, 'evening and morning'. There is no doubt that the writer is being emphatic that these are ordinary days.

The empty tomb

If we allow our children to doubt the days of creation, when the language speaks so plainly, they are likely to then doubt Christ's Virgin Birth, and that He really rose from the dead.

What if the days were millions of years?

The whole of the creation restored ... to what?

The Bible says there will be a future restoration ([Acts 3:21](#)), with no death or suffering. How could all things be restored in the future to no more death and suffering unless the beginning was also free of death and suffering? The whole message of the gospel falls apart if you allow millions of years (with death and suffering)

for the world's creation.

The idea of millions of years came from the belief that the fossil record was built up over a long time. As soon as people allow for millions of years, they allow for the fossil record to be millions of years old. This creates an insurmountable problem regarding the gospel. The fossil record consists of the death of billions of creatures. In fact, it is a record of death, disease, suffering, cruelty, and brutality. It is a very ugly record.

The Bible is adamant though, that death, disease, and suffering came into the world as a result of sin. God instituted death and bloodshed because of sin so man could be redeemed. As soon as Christians allow for death, suffering, and disease before sin, then the whole foundations of the message of the Cross and the Atonement have been destroyed. The doctrine of original sin, then, is totally undermined.

If there were death, disease, and suffering before Adam rebelled—then what did sin do to the world? What does Paul mean in [Romans 8](#) when he says the whole of creation groans in pain because of the Curse? How can all things be restored in the future to no more death and suffering, unless the beginning was also free of death and suffering? The whole message of the gospel falls apart if one allows millions of years for the creation of the world.

How should we approach scripture?

One of the major problems we all have (in fact, it is the same problem Adam and Eve had) is that we tend to start from outside God's Word and then go to what God has written in the Bible (or—in Adam's case—what God said directly to him) to try to interpret it on the basis of our own ideas. This is really the major reason why most people question the days of creation.

We need to realize that the Bible is God's Word. And as it is the inspired Word of the infinite Creator, God, then it must be self-authenticating and self-attesting. Thus, we should always start with what God's Word says regardless of outside ideas. Only God's Word is infallible.

If we allow our children to accept the possibility that we can doubt the days of creation when the language speaks so plainly, then we are teaching them a particular approach to all of Scripture. Why shouldn't they then start to doubt that Christ's Virgin Birth really means a virgin birth? Why shouldn't they start to doubt that the Resurrection really means resurrection?

In fact, there are many theologians who doubt these very things, as they have come to disbelieve the plain words of Scripture written in the foundational Book of Genesis.

Wrong foundation.

The Apostle Paul was grieved when he found the city of Athens steeped in idolatry ([Acts 17:16](#)).

When he noticed the altar 'to the unknown god', he used the opportunity to tell the philosophers that their unknown god is God the Creator, Lord of heaven and earth.

Why did God take six days?

If you think about it, an infinite Creator God could have created everything in no time. Why, then, did He take as long as six days? The answer is given in [Exodus 20:11](#). Here we find that God tells us that He deliberately took six days

and rested for one as a pattern for man—this is where the seven-day week comes from. The seven-day week has no basis for existing except from Scripture. If one believes that the days of creation are long periods of time, then the week becomes meaningless.

The Bible tells us that Adam was created on the sixth day. If he lived through day six and day seven, and then died when he was 930 years old, and if each of these days was a thousand or a million years, you have major problems! On the fourth day of creation ([Genesis 1:14-19](#)), we are given the comparison of day to night, and days to years. If the word 'day' doesn't mean an ordinary day, then the comparison of day to night and day to years becomes meaningless.

Were the days 24 hours? Most definitely! 'Let God be true, but every man a liar' ([Romans 3:4](#)).

*For discussion on the few uses of *yom* in which the meaning is disputed, see [The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach](#), by James Stambaugh, [CEN Tech. J.](#), Vol. 5(1), 1991, pp. 70–78.

The Creation “Days” – Literal or Figurative?

Dr. George Wald of Harvard University was a militant proponent of the theory of evolution. He was, though, at least honest enough to admit that the theory was fraught with some very serious difficulties. These problems, however, in Wald's view, were not insurmountable.

He solved some of the “impossibilities” by appealing to time. Time itself, he said, “performs the miracles.” He characterized time as the “hero” of the evolutionary plot (1954, 48).

Similarly, Robert Jastrow, an agnostic, and one of the most popular science writers of this era, has appealed to time as a means of explaining the theory of evolution. Jastrow wrote: “The key to Darwin's explanation is time, and the passage of many generations” (1977, 112).

Was there death, pain, and suffering before Adam and Eve's sin?

At the close of the Creation Week, God called everything He had made 'very good'. This is powerful evidence against the idea that long ages of suffering and dying took place before the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, appeared.

The Time Motive

But why is time such a vital element in the evolutionary scheme of things? The answer is quite simple: there is no evidence, based upon scientific data, which proves that all living creatures have evolved from primitive inorganic substances by means of natural processes.

Dr. Jastrow concedes the point: “What concrete evidence supports that remarkable [evolutionary] theory of the origin of life? There is none” (Ibid. 49). The solution to this riddle is to suggest that evolution occurs much too slowly to be observed by humans; it has progressed over vast eras of time. We are thus told that we must accept the theory “as an act of faith . . . without having concrete evidence to support that belief” (Ibid. 52). And so, we are constantly bombarded with propaganda about the vast ages that are supposed to characterize the universe.

According to evolutionary chronology, the universe came into being (as a result of the big bang explosion) some fifteen to twenty billion years ago. Our earth is said to have been born approximately 4.5 billion years ago. It is alleged that biological life was spontaneously generated about two to three billion years ago, and finally, *Homo sapiens* (true man) appeared about 3.5 million years back in the past. These figures are glibly thrown out as if there were some sort of ancient history book that records the dates. The fact of the matter is, there is no proof that these enormous figures have any validity at all (see Jackson, 1989).

Unfortunately, however, many have been intimidated by this aspect of evolutionary dogma. They have sought, therefore, in various ways, to accommodate the biblical record to this system of chronology. One of the methods of doing this is to suggest that the days of the creation week are not **literal** days at all. Rather, the term “day” is a mere figure of speech which represents millions of years.

The Popularity of the Day-Age Theory

The day-age theory has made its impact in the community of Christendom at large, and its effect is apparent within the churches of Christ as well. In the denominational world, Hugh Ross, a sectarian scientist-theologian of sorts, contends vigorously for the day-age concept, employing the same hackneyed arguments that have been answered scores of times across the years (1994, 45ff). It is sad that some within the brotherhood of Christ are giving favorable reviews of Ross’s writings.

Within the church, the day-age view has had a number of defenders and sympathizers:

1. Jack Wood Sears, former chairman of the biology department at Harding University, has argued this position (see Jackson and Thompson 1992, 129).
2. John Willis, a professor at Abilene Christian University, speculated that the “days” of Genesis 1 could have been simply six points of argument—”literary

- devices”—in the author’s outline of the creation events, with no chronological order or duration intended (1979, 83).
3. Burton Coffman contended that the day-age theory does no injustice to the sacred record (1985, 29-31).
 4. Clem Thurman, editor of *Gospel Minutes*, wrote an article (April 4, 1986) responding to a reader’s question as to whether the “days” of Genesis 1 were literal or not. Thurman used eighty-four words to present possible reasons as to why the “days” might be viewed as literal. He used three times that amount arguing that the creation “days” might not be literal. He then suggested that the reader could draw his own conclusions as to the correct viewpoint. It was not difficult, however, to surmise where the editor’s sympathies lay. In reviewing this matter, one writer poignantly inquired: “Why not just be honest and openly advocate the day-age theory without going through all these machinations?”
 5. John N. Clayton of Southbend, Indiana has long preached that it is “totally inconsequential” as to the view one entertains relative to the length of the creation days, and so he can argue the case both ways—and does (see Jackson and Thompson, 83ff). In an issue of the *Christian Chronicle*, the editor opined that we just cannot “be sure” as to the meaning of “day” in Genesis 1 (Shipp 1994, 2).

It is quite unfortunate that these brothers have taken this compromising view of the clear text of Genesis 1. As well meaning as they may be in attempting to bring the Bible into harmony with what they perceive as good “science,” clearly, they have yielded to the influence of evolutionary chronology. And such capitulation is absolutely wrong.

Biblical Arguments for Literal Days

There are powerful arguments which absolutely force the knowledgeable Bible student to the position that the days of the creation week were **ordinary** days.

(1) A general rule of Bible interpretation demands that words be viewed literally unless there is a compelling reason for giving them a figurative sense. The term “day” is employed in Genesis 1 both of a twenty-four hour period (v. 5, 8, 13, etc.) and of the “light” portion of that span (v. 5). Obviously the word was used by Moses in precisely the same way we use it today.

It is ludicrous to contend that there is anything within that context which would suggest a day consisting of millions of years. Marcus Dods, not a conservative scholar, conceded: “[If] the word ‘day’ in these chapters, does not mean a period of twenty-four hours, the interpretation of Scripture is hopeless” (1903, 5).

(2) The expressions “first day,” “second day,” etc. (v. 5, 8) indicate ordinary days, just as similar language does regarding the rotation of offerings on certain days under the Mosaic economy, e.g., “first day,” “second day,” etc. (see Numbers 7:12, 18). Would one ever conclude that the “days” of Numbers 7 represented **eons** of time? Of course not. There is no motive to manipulate that context!

(3) The days of the creation week were of the same type as the ordinary Hebrew work week. Note:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto Jehovah thy God . . . for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is” (Exodus 20:11).

Notice the comparison between the “six days” of the Jewish work week and the “six days” of the creation week. Is anyone so obtuse as to believe that the Hebrew work week consisted of six ages consisting of millions of years? Did Moses really mean to say: “Remember the Sabbath age to keep it holy . . . for in six eons Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is”?

(4) The inspired writer clearly distinguished between days and years in Genesis 1:14. It is quite obvious that Moses was not employing the term “day” in some extraordinary sense. However, if the “days” of Genesis 1 signify years, then what does the term “years” mean?

Common Sense Arguments for Literal Days

In addition to solid arguments based upon the biblical text, there are some plain, common-sense points that buttress the case for twenty-four hour days.

(1) There are logical reasons to explain why we measure time in certain ways. For example, the earth revolves around the sun every 365 days. This determines our year. The moon circles the earth each thirty days. This marks the month. The earth completes one rotation on its axis each twenty-four hours, which constitutes our day.

The baffling question is: *why do we have weeks?* There is no astronomical phenomenon to explain this. Campbell observed that “nothing on earth or in heaven, can be assigned as an argument for the week, aside from the fact that the heavens and the earth were created in six days of twenty-four hours each” (1958, 96). The fact is, the Hebrew word for week means “that which is divided into seven” (Young 1964, 78).

(2) Each “day” of Genesis 1 was equally divided into periods of light and darkness. If the day represented millions of years, then there were obviously corresponding epochs of darkness. The vegetation which was brought into existence on the third day could never have survived those alternating periods of darkness.

Keil commented:

If the days of creation are regulated by the recurring interchange of light and darkness, they must not be regarded as periods of time of incalculable duration, of years or thousands of years, but simply as earthly days (1980, 51).

(3) As indicated above, the world of plants came into existence on the third day of the creation week. Living creatures (e.g., fish, birds, insects, and animals) were not created until the fifth and sixth days. Some plants are pollinated solely by insects. Clover is pollinated by bees and the yucca plant has the pronuba moth as its only means of pollination. How did these plants reproduce during the millions of years of that alleged fourth day-age?

There is neither biblical basis nor scientific reason for contending that the creation days were vast ages. This view is merely a subtle compromise with evolution. We simply must not attempt to manipulate the plain meaning of the biblical text for the sake of placating unbelievers. "Science" has yet to catch up with the Scriptures!

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