

How Long Were the "Days" of Creation?

Were the days of creation week "ages"? People insist that God could not set the world in order and create life forms in six literal days. Why?

by Kenneth C. Herrmann

WHY HAS doubt about creation entered Christian minds today? Why do men in this "enlightened age" reject the unmistakable meaning of the Word of God?

For over 3000 years men of God have believed the literal meaning of the account of creation recorded in Genesis 1 and 2. To them the Scripture said that in six 24-hour days God created the heavens and the earth and rested the seventh day.

Holy men of old rested on the Sabbath day believing that it had its beginning as the final day of that creation week — that it was a memorial of creation. For 3000 years righteous men have dared to take God's inspired record at face value.

No record is found of "ages" rather than days of creation in the ancient history of the Hebrews or of early Christians.

Why, then, does an "enlightened age" reject the truth of literal days of creation?

How the Idea of "Ages" Began

Since the days of Darwin a controversy has raged between the Bible proponents and atheists. The theory of evolution, a theory which remains unproven even today — and always will — became the entering wedge to separate the Bible scholars from their trust in the truth of the Scriptures.

The atheist looked to the evidence on hand — fossils of varying types in the earth and evidence of variation among living organisms. With his mind stubbornly set that he would not believe what could not be demonstrated before

his eyes, he preached the idea to the world that man had evolved from lifeless matter over a period of millions of years and that the Scriptural account of creation was gross superstition.

With few exceptions, religious circles denounced evolution with equal vigor. But they refused even to look at the facts the atheist presented, much less to question his faulty reasoning.

Between the two extremes a third group sprang up, accepting the facts of the atheist and swallowing his reasoning without question. Reverencing the Bible and not willing to give it up, *yet thinking that perhaps it didn't mean quite what it said*, this group concluded that perhaps Moses misunderstood, perhaps the record had become confused or altered. Evolution *looked* so plausible, evolutionists' arguments so sincere and the Bible so old and uncertain in meaning, so difficult to understand. "Ages" of creation became the cry of the modernists.

That is the history of the modernist teaching in regard to creation week. An attempt to believe contrary to Scripture and yet believe the "easier" portions of the Scripture.

What proof is there that God created the present order of things on this earth in six literal days? What difference does it make whether one believes in "ages" of creation or literal days of creation? Let's question the record and set aside doubts once and for all time.

What the Scriptural Record Really Says

Distorted interpretations of the creation record have resulted mainly from

two causes: (1) *a desire to read a false meaning into the Word of God*, and (2) *a pitiful ignorance of the account itself*.

A brief review of the account of creation is certainly in order here. Open your Bible and study the account thoroughly as you read further in this article and after reading it.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" — this tells about the original creation. The second verse of Genesis 1 refers to a destruction which came upon the earth following the sin and rebellion of Satan and the angels who followed him. (Request our free article, "Did God Create a Devil?" for details.)

Darkness was upon the face of the ocean. The renewing of our earth to a state of order followed in six days.

At dawn the first day, light penetrated the dense clouds. As it grew warmer the clouds rose the second day and an expanse or heaven was formed, the one in which the birds fly. Thus the waters on the earth were separated from the water-laden clouds above. The ocean receded, dry land appeared and grass and herbs were planted the third day. A mist watered them and as the fourth day progressed the sun became visible through the thinning clouds. Toward evening the moon and stars appeared.

Notice how agreeable with the laws of science this is. Birds and sea life were created the fifth day, the land animals with Adam and Eve the sixth, and a day of rest and worship for the man the seventh. Thus in one week order was restored to the earth.

But was it a literal week? Carefully

notice that no close is mentioned to the seventh day. Check this point in Genesis 2:1-3. All the other days were "an evening and a morning" but this expression does not follow the seventh day. Why?

Now if, as some teach, the seventh day hasn't ended yet, it would already be almost 6000 years long. And if it were that long couldn't the first six days be similar periods?

The Seventh Day Did End!

Here's proof not from the imagination of men but from God's Word *that the seventh day did end!*

Genesis 2:2. "He [God] *rested* on the seventh day from all His work." Not "*is resting*" from all His work!

Exodus 20:11. "The Lord... *rested* the seventh day."

Again Genesis 2:3. "In it [the seventh day] He *had rested*." He blessed the sabbath *AFTER HE had rested on it*.

Hebrews 4:4. "God *did rest* the seventh day from all His works." Not "*is resting*"!

The seventh day of creation is PAST, for on it God *rested*. No Scripture exists saying He *is resting* on a continuing seventh day! The seventh day of creation week did end.

Double proof of this fact is found in the scriptures telling of the WORK God has done *since* that day of rest. "My father WORKETH hitherto [even now], and I work" (John 5:17).

Jeremiah 50:25. "This is the WORK of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans."

Exodus 32:16. "The tables were the WORK of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables."

Joshua 24:31. "Joshua, and... the elders... which had known all the WORKS of the Lord, that He had done for Israel."

God has worked since that seventh day. Both the Father and the One who became Jesus Christ by flesh birth have worked since that first Sabbath day ended!

Man Still Disagrees!

Yet in the face of God's Word, men will believe "days" to be "ages" and that God is now resting and being

refreshed. Thus one sect teaches, "Measured by the length of the 'seventh day,' on which God *desists* from work and *is refreshed*, each of those days was 7000 years long." (From *Let God be True*, second edition, page 168.) How often error goes under the title of truth!

Reread the preceding scriptures: The 24-hour day upon which God rested *had passed* and has been followed by nearly 6000 years in which God has worked. Then compare the above quote with Exodus 31:17, "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he *rested* and was refreshed." Not *is* (being) refreshed!

Here is the truth from which man seeks to shield himself. It was on a literal seventh day that God rested. It was a literal seventh day of the week that God hallowed for the human race. The observance of the seventh day and the origin of the week go back to Adam, not Moses!

Following that rest, God blessed the seventh day and set it apart for holy use. *The first week, creation week, had ended.*

The Witness of Nature

In the time of Moses the witness of two *men* was accepted as being the truth. Many "witnesses" have been given from *the Word of God* that these creation days were literal days and there is yet more proof. God leaves no room for doubt in the minds of those who diligently study His Word.

Consider the plants which were created on the third day. The sun did not appear until the next day. *If these "days" were each 7000 years long then these plants would have had to survive 7000 years without sunshine.* A few might possibly survive such an ordeal but the majority of plants require direct sunshine. Those who believe the days to have been ages which were millions of years long are faced with an even greater absurdity.

Or consider this, plants were made the third day, insects on the sixth. How did certain specialized plants continue to exist through ages without their insect partners? The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that two groups of insects which include *bees, wasps, butterflies and moths could not have existed with-*

out the honey or nectar bearing plants, NOR COULD THESE PLANTS HAVE EXISTED WITHOUT THE INSECTS. Without insects to pollinize them they could not bear seed.

The types of plants which require insects for pollinization are those with brightly colored flowers, having an odor to attract insects and containing nectar to provide them with food. They include such common plants as the maple tree, the strawberry, the blackberry, the honeysuckle, and the poppy. *The Bible states that these plants were made on the third day and that the insects were not made until three days later. Those who claim creation days were each 7000 years long are faced with the conclusion that these original plants must have had to live 21,000 years before they could produce seed — an utter impossibility!*

People find it easier to swallow a camel than to believe the plain simple statement of scripture: "In six days God made heaven and earth." You will either have to accept God's account of creation as being true or lose your faith and trust that His Word is dependable. Evolution will not mix with the Scripture any more than iron will mix with clay. Ages and evolution must go!

What Is the Meaning of "Day"?

The word "day" in the Bible is often used to represent an indefinite period of time. In fact the Hebrew word, *Yom*, translated day is occasionally translated "time." *But in EVERY CASE where the numerals first, second, third, etc. occur, the word day is obviously and clearly referring to a natural 24-hour day as we know it.*

The Scripture speaks of the day of vengeance, the day of adversity, the day of temptation, just as we do today, meaning a time or season. Yet when it speaks of the fourteenth day of the month (Lev. 23), the seven days of Unleavened Bread or the fifty days until Pentecost, *the word "day" can mean only a 24-hour period.*

Symbolically a day may represent a "year" (Ezek. 4:6), or a "thousand years" (II Peter 3:8), but symbolic interpretations may not be applied in all cases. The three days Christ was in the

grave were not 3 years or 3000 years. Neither would any symbolic interpretation fit in the first chapters of Genesis where we have proven from nature that they must have been natural days of twenty-four hours.

Another Bible meaning of the word "day" as a 12-hour period is also in common usage today. When it speaks of the three days and three nights Jonah was in the great fish's belly or the three days and three nights Christ was in His grave, the word "day" refers to the daylight part of the 24-hour period. This "day" is by Christ's own definition 12 hours. "Are there not 12 hours in the day?" (John 11:9.)

The scripture used by many as an excuse to believe the days of creation were ages really suggests no such meaning. It is Gen. 2:4 which refers to the time of creation, "In the *day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant... and every herb." Lacking a numeral before it, it can refer to a longer period of time than 24 hours and it does! This "day" refers to the first six days of creation week.

It takes a great deal of imagination to use this as a proof that a day means an age or even 7000 years.

The Obvious Meaning

Can the word *day* mean 24 hours in one part of a sentence and an age in another part? It would have to if one

were to believe in "ages" of creation! Exodus 20:9-11: "Six *days* shalt thou labour and do all thy work: but the seventh *day* is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God... for in six *days* the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh *day*: wherefore the Lord blessed the *Sabbath day*, and hallowed it."

The word *day* occurs five times in this one sentence. Can you believe that in the third and fourth occurrences it means an age while in the other three it means a day? *Had God meant an age*, wouldn't He have used the Hebrew word *dor* to mean age as in Job 8:8, "Enquire, I pray of thee, of the former age"?

In each of these five occurrences in Exodus 20, God is obviously speaking of the same unit of time, a 24-hour day. And as the word "day" means a twenty-four hour period here *it has to mean the same in Genesis!*

If God had created light, day and night, and then *waited* 1000 years (or 7000 years) to form the heavens, He would have been resting *before* the seventh day arrived!

If He formed the heavens on a second day and then waited 1000 years to form the seas and the land, He would have been resting again before the seventh day arrived. Note the Scripture again: "For *in six days* the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh

day he rested, and *was* refreshed." After six days of continual labor — six days spent in bringing our earth to a state of order — God rested. He *was* refreshed on the seventh day. If that seventh day were still continuing, the Scripture would read that He is *now* "being refreshed."

As a final proof that the days of creation were literal days, reread Genesis 1:3-5, 14-19 with special attention on the words *evening* and *morning*, *night* and *day*, *darkness* and *light*. All have continued since creation. We are not confused as to what they are.

Note that the sun was appointed "to divide the light from the darkness" — to divide day from night. Does sun-down divide anything but *literal days*?

No place in the Scripture does God imply that He took anything but a natural week of ordinary days to bring life and order to the earth.

Evenings and mornings have continued, the week has continued, the Sabbath set apart for rest at creation has continued, all pointing back to that first creation week. The truth is plain and without Scriptural contradiction. There is no room to believe in the ages which evolutionists require, when you accept the Scriptures as they are, explained not in the fog of human imagination but in the light of the Word of God and in accordance with nature, the handiwork of God.

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